Staging Canova:
Sculpture, Connoisseurship and Display, 1780-1843

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Hailed in his time as the greatest living artist, Antonio Canova (1757-1822) expressed his genius not only through the masterful conception and carving of his sculptures, but also in the meticulous orchestration of their display. Enshrining his marble figures alongside plaster casts of ancient works, bathing them in candlelight, staining and waxing their surfaces, and even setting them in motion on rotating bases, Canova challenged his audiences to rethink the very nature of sculpture.

My dissertation argues, for the first time, that the meanings and impact of Canova's sculpture depended in significant part on the ways in which he and his patrons exhibited them. Canova himself began staging his work in Rome in the 1780s. His patrons, following the artist's lead, subsequently mounted their own dramatic exhibitions of Canova's work. Organized as a series of case studies, the dissertation examines four key exhibitions of Canova's work in four major European centers—Rome, Naples, Venice and Paris—from 1780-1843. These exhibitions had multiple functions. On the one hand, they enabled Canova to showcase his artistic talent and allowed his patrons to advertise their wealth and good taste. More importantly, however, these exhibitions required viewers to transform their interaction with Canova's sculptures into performative moments in which they displayed their own historical, cultural and artistic knowledge.

Viewers of Canova's work performed their own position as beholders, and, indeed, my dissertation is as preoccupied with the reception of Canova's sculptures as it is with his and his patrons' display strategies. Not only do viewers' accounts often reveal the particularities of the exhibitions themselves, but the intensity of beholders' responses to Canova's work also signals the way that his sculptures took on a wide-variety of meanings that he and his patrons could not always control. Equally striking is the way diverse visitors *continued* to find meaning, validity, and subjects for debate in Canova's work despite sixty years of political, historical, and social change. Throughout many transformations, Canova's sculptures remained a focal point for discussions of politics, cultural heritage, archaeology, connoisseurship, artistic production and the development of art history itself.

I have focused largely on three Italian centers because Italy was the center of origin for many of aspects of Canova's stagings. In Rome, for instance, Canova was introduced to serious study of the antique and it was there that he began to compare his works of art with ancient masterpieces. The display of *Triumphant Perseus* next to a cast of the *Apollo Belvedere*, for instance, generated conversations regarding the nature of imitation and the importance setting and political circumstances had on the understanding of his work. In Naples, on the other hand, the exhibition of *Venus and Adonis* in a *tempietto* in the garden of Francesco Maria Berio, Marchese di Salza, launched a city-wide debate regarding modes of artistic production and the best means of communicating those artistic possibilities to an audience. In Venice, in 1817, Leopoldo Cicognara juxtaposed Canova's *Polinnia* with recently restored Venetian Old Master paintings, including Titian's *Assumption of the Virgin*, in the Accademia di Belle Arti's new public

painting gallery. This exhibition reaffirmed the Veneto's artistic authority at a moment when Venice's political fortunes were at their nadir.

Given the primacy French art has held in the study of the nineteenth century, I hope serious reevaluation of this period will contribute to a renewed understanding of the importance Italy had for the history of art at the turn of the century. Yet, I conclude the project by focusing on Paris. It was there, in the French capital, where the exhibition of Canova's *Penitent Magdalene* in the townhouse of Giambattista Sommariva launched a discussion about expression and the emotional resonance of art. *Penitent Magdalene's* despair encouraged beholders' self-reflection, and in so doing reinforced notions of individuality and the self, established the sculpture as a particularly "French" and modern work, and perhaps more importantly, forged a direct link between emotional resonance and aesthetic value.

Throughout Europe, the staging of sculptures organized by Canova and his patrons generated discussion about the appropriate ways to look at, talk about, and write about sculpture. Reactions to Canova's works inspired wide-spread debates about the nature of artistic production, the writing of art history, the context and significance of exhibitions and personal emotional reactions to works of art. My dissertation reimagines Canova's keystone position in the larger art world of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century by bringing the contexts of exhibition and response into our understanding of the artist and his work.

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TO

MY MOTHER

AND

IN LOVING MEMORY OF

MY FATHER

Introduction

Hailed in his time as the greatest living artist, Antonio Canova (1757-1822) expressed his genius not only through the masterful conception and carving of his sculptures, but also in the meticulous orchestration of their display. Enshrining his marble figures alongside plaster casts of ancient works, bathing them in candlelight, staining and waxing their surfaces, and even setting them into motion on rotating bases, Canova challenged his audiences to rethink the very nature of sculpture. Yet these exhibitions, and the effect they had on beholders, have long been forgotten. My dissertation reasserts what made Canova the premier impresario of Neoclassicism.

One anecdote from late in Canova's life reveals the sculptor's unusual—and hardly discussed—relationship to his sculptures. In a letter dated July 23, 1819, Giovanni-Battista Manera, Canova's cousin, described several celebrations held in the small town of Possagno, Italy, Canova's birthplace. The festivities honored the proposed construction of a new church in the area by the town's celebrated native son (fig. 1). Extravagant lunches and processions were held to pay tribute to the artist, and the whole village turned up to celebrate the hero's homecoming (fig. 2). Small children, old men, and beautiful women all participated in the day's events, but it was the latter, the young women of the town, who caught Canova's eye. According to Manera, Canova, although captivated by their beauty, did not like the way the young ladies had dressed their hair. Selecting the loveliest one to serve as a model for the others, he proceeded to refashion

the young woman's tresses, "based on the style of his own statues."[1] A year later, Canova returned to Possagno, and his arrival was greeted with even greater festivities. "Six small girls dressed as little Angels," carrying bouquets of flowers, and forty young women "with appropriate hairstyles,"—presumably based on Canova's sculptures—led a parade of citizens to meet his carriage on the outskirts of town. When he arrived, the townspeople shouted thousands of times, "Long Live Canova," and followed him back to his natal home.[2]

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[1] In transcribing this document and other archival sources I have adhered as closely as possible to the original orthography and phrasing. Words in brackets [] indicate tentative transcriptions. Unless otherwise indicated, all translations are my own.

Giovanni Battista Manera was Canova's first cousin and brother of Domenico Manera, a sculptor who worked for many years in Canova's studio in Rome. Letter from Giovanni Battista Manera, July 13, 1819. The name of recipient is unavailable although it is likely the letter was addressed to Giuseppe Monico, priest of Postioma in Treviso, based on other letters in the folder. "[...] Il Celebre letterato Sig. [Pietro] Giordani, col quale furono quasi sempre abbracciati assieme, mi diceva che in tutti i suoi viaggi non vide più un spettacolo simile. Siccome non piaceva al Canova la pettinatura de capelli delle Possagnotte, così destinò un giorno per pettinarne una per campione, sul gusto delle sue statue. Venerdì invitò tutte le donne, e ragazze di Possagno in una vigna; e colà diede da merenda a tutte soto le piante; consumando tre mastelli di vino, gran pane, molte sopresse, e formaggi; soleccitando le più vistose a mangiare e bere; e scherzando con tutte. Dopo terminata la merenda ne pettinò una, per modello delle altre; sieglendo una giudicata bella. La inserisco una anacreontica relativa a questa festa. Domenica prossima scorsa poi si fecce la gran festa dell'impianto della prima pietra; al qual foncione il Sig. Canova assistè vestito in uniforme di Cavalier del Cristo, e gl'altri ordini appesi alla sua divisa; che parmi abbia egli detto, esser questa la sesta volta che si vestì così, compreso quella di Parigi, e quella di Londra [...]." Biblioteca Seminario Patriarcale di Venezia, Fondo Manoscritti. F. 1018, 4, letter 4.

I have only seen this event referred to once in secondary sources, in J. Coindet's history of painting in Italy, in which he also includes a biography of Canova. See J. Coindet, Histoire de la peinture en Italie, Nouvelle édition. (Paris: Librarie Renouard; Henri Loones Successeur, 1873) 356.

[2] Letter from Giovanni Battista Manera to Giuseppe Monico, Postioma, May 23, 1820. "Rev:^{mo} Sig.^{re}. [...] La Vĕcchia molto Amica del Sig.r Canova, il quale le usò tutti i riguardi, e attenzioni possibili; avendo permesso al Popolo di Possagno, (che voleva fare dimostrazioni di goigia al suo primo arrivo) che festeggiasse al suo arrivo, che farebbe con queste Sig.re ritornando da Bassano, dove andò ad ricontrarle. Fu dunque vestite con galanteria e con festoni di fiori, e pettinatura addatata 40. fanciulle da marito; delle quali si gittò la [verso] sorte quala doveva portare la bandiera davanti. Si vestì da Angiolette sei Fanciulline, con sei mazzi di fiori, da presentare al Canova, e alle Dame. Questa comition di fanciulle, con un seguito immenso di Popolo incontrarono le carrozze alli confini del Vilaggio. L'Abbate Bastarini fece il complimento a nome della Comune, intanto che tuonava una salva di Mortari e le campagne che siconava, il Popolo che gridava ad alta voce mille evviva, facendo due spaliere a tutta la strada sino la casa del Canova. A suo tempo si pranzò all'Inglese, dove eravamo a tavola 12 persone; essendovi il Co. Roberti, Bombardini, ed il Cav: Sterchini. Sulla sera alle 3'ore andarano al Tempio; dove erano disposti una quantità d'Artefici al lavoro per tutto l'intorno. I comunisti uomini erano impiegati a portar materiali, e le donne trascinavano le slitte cariche di sassi; e nel mezo vi era formato un padiglione, dove potevano, queste Signore, retirarsi dal Sole, e vedere. Tutte le persone di qualunque sesso erano vestiti con li migliori vestiti. Tutti i balconi erano forniti con coperte, fiori, e bandiere. Molti che hanno prevenuta questa venuta di

The bodily engagement described in Manera's letter is a fundamental part of Neoclassicism's historiography. In this mimicking of ancient social forms and interactions, beholders embodied the classical world and made their engagement with antiquity vigorous and corporeal. Women in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries regularly donned gauzy empire-waist gowns, *à la antique,* and men and women entertained themselves in *salons* through a variety of performances based on the classical past (fig. 3). *Improvisatrici*, female improvisators, would expound at length on subjects from antiquity, such as the glory of Rome.[3] *Tableaux vivants* derived from ancient themes were popular, and Lady Emma Hamilton's "attitudes" brought to life some of the most tragic theatrical characters of antiquity (fig. 4).[4] Canova himself certainly participated in such events; not only had he seen Emma Hamilton's attitudes, but a letter to the artist from her husband, William Hamilton, implies that Canova had "stolen" his wife's poses for his own work![5] Likewise, an 1808 drawing by Bartolomeo Pinelli shows

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Canova, hanno biancate le loro case; essendo già tutti i fondi di quel paese di individui del paese med:[mo.] [...] P.S. […] Il Giovedì sera si fece due ore coi festa da ballo, dove ballarono ancor le Dame, e un balletto fecce anco Canova in propria casa." Biblioteca Seminario Patriarcale di Venezia, Fondo Manoscritti. F. 1018, 4, letter 20.

[3] Maurice Andrieux describes one of the most famous *improvisatrice*, Corilla Olimpica, who gave a long improvisation on the glory of Rome in 1776. Maurice Andrieux, Daily Life in Papal Rome in the Eighteenth Century, trans. Mary Fitton (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1968) 169. Charlotte Eaton gives a first hand account of the *improvisatrice* Rosa Taddei. Charlotte A. Eaton, Rome, in the Nineteenth Century; Containing a Complete Account of the Ruins of the Ancient City, the Remains of the Middle Ages, and the Monuments of Modern Times, 5th ed., 2 vols. (London: H. G. Bohn, 1852) vol. 2, 277.

[4] For more on Emma Hamilton, see Kirsten Gram Holmström, Monodrama, Attitudes, Tableaux Vivants. Studies on Some Trends of Theatrical Fashion 1770-1815, Acta Universitatis Stockholmiensis. Stockholm Studies in Theatrical History; 1 (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1967); Flora Fraser, Emma, Lady Hamilton, 1st American ed. (New York: Knopf: Distributed by Random House, 1987); and Friedrich Rehberg, Drawings Faithfully Copied from Nature at Naples and with Permission Dedicated to the Right Honourable Sir William Hamilton. ... By ... Frederick Rehberg. ... Engrav'd by Thomas Piroli ([Rome?]: 1794).

[5] See the letter from William Hamilton to Canova, March 21, 1795. "La mia moglie vi saluta; non ha veduto ancora il bel gruppo, ma ha conosciuto nella vostra pubblicazione omerica, delle attitudini sue che avete rubato quando siete stato a Napoli." Cited in Paola Fardella, Antonio Canova a Napoli: Tra Collezionismo e Mercato (Napoli: Paparo, 2002) 150.

Canova in the company of numerous artists and literati of the period (fig. 5). These include, notably, the sculptor Bertel Thorvaldsen, the painter Vincenzo Camuccini, and the Danish writer Friederike Brun and her daughter Ida, the latter of whom was famous for her "attitudes." [6]

Modern art historians appreciate the vivacity that characterized these performances, yet this appreciation is all but absent from our understanding of neoclassical sculpture. In part, this is due to the fact that the image of Canova "consum[ing] three jugs of wine, lots of bread, salami and cheese, and jok[ing] with everyone" [7] does not conform with the vision of an ascetic, hardworking and modest artist propagated by his biographers.[8] At the same time, whenever nineteenth-century beholders did attribute greater animation to Canova's sculpture, it was intended as condemnation. British tourists in the early nineteenth century disparaged Canova's works for their "theatricality," employing the term precisely as Michael Fried has characterized it, in

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[6] Stefano Susinno, Sandra Pinto, Liliana Barroero, Fernando Mazzocca, Giovanna Capitelli and Matteo Lafranconi, eds., Maestà di Roma: Da Napoleone all'Unità d'Italia. Universale ed Eterna; Capitale delle Arti (Milano: Electa, 2003) 423.

[7] See introduction, note 1. The translation of "mastelli di vino" is difficult; "mastello" can alternately refer to a "tub" (i.e. a washing implement) or a measurement of liquid, used before the metric system. I have opted for "jug" in my translation to give a sense of the copious amounts of wine Canova apparently enjoyed!

[8] The number of times "modesty" is used to describe Canova is astounding. Isabella Teotocchi Albrizzi, Giuseppe Bossi, Leopoldo Cicognara, Henri de Latouche, Pier Alessando Paravia, Quatremère de Quincy, and Giovanni Rosini, to name only a few, all use the term to describe him. Isabella Teotochi Albrizzi, Opere di Scultura e di Plastica di Antonio Canova, 4 vols. (Pisa: N. Capurro, 1821 and 1823) 29; Giuseppe Bossi, Lettere di Giuseppe Bossi ad Antonio Canova (Padova: Tipi della Minerva, 1839) 8; Leopoldo Cicognara, Lettere Inedite di Leopoldo Cicognara ad Antonio Canova (Padova: Coi tipi della Minerva, 1839) 19; Henri de Latouche and Etienne Achille Réveil, Œuvre de Canova, recueil de gravures d'après ses statues et ses bas-reliefs (Paris: Audot, 1825) 32; Pier Alessandro Paravia, Notizie Intorno alla Vita di Antonio Canova: Giuntovi il Catalogo Chronologico di Tutte le sue Opere (Venezia: Presso G. Orlandelli editore co' tipi Picottiani, 1822) 23; Antoine-Chrysosthôme Quatremère de Quincy, Canova et ses ouvrages; ou, mémoires historiques sur la vie et les travaux de célèbre artiste (Paris: A. le Clere et cie, 1834) 105; and Giovanni Rosini, Saggio sulla Vita e sulle Opere di Antonio Canova (Pisa: Presso Niccoló Cappuro, 1825) 4 and 33.

opposition to "absorption."[9] Thomas Medwin, for instance, found Canova's "attitudes […] often overstrained. He seems to be always thinking of effect, and like the French painters, to have taken his models from the stage."[10] Charlotte Eaton and Henry Matthews censured works like *Triumphant Perseus* for its "studied"[11] air, which seemed overly "conscious of the presence of spectators (fig. 6)."[12] A reviewer of Eaton's book likewise agreed, adding that Canova's "personages have something in their attitude and expression that is either above or below nature."[13] John Edmund Read felt *Perseus*' "attitude […] is that of a dancer when pausing for applause in an artificial posture,"[14] while Anna Jameson deplored "that theatrical air" that was "the common fault of Canova's figures."[15] Grievances with the affected nature of Canova's work persisted in

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[9] Michael Fried, Absorption and Theatricality: Painting and Beholder in the Age of Diderot (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980).

[10] T. Medwin, "Canova. Leaves from the Autobiography of an Amateur," Fraser's Magazine for Town and Country XX.CXVII (September 1839): 373.

[11] Charlotte Eaton writes about *Perseus* length, calling him graceful, "but is it not the grace taught by art? His air and attitude, his very tread, have something in them studied, and of stage effect, remote from the truth and freedom of nature. He looks more like a being representing a part, than actually doing the deed—more like an actor of Perseus, than Perseus himself." Eaton, Rome, in the Nineteenth Century; Containing a Complete Account of the Ruins of the Ancient City, the Remains of the Middle Ages, and the Monuments of Modern Times, vol. 1, 107-08.

[12] "The more I see of the antique statues, the more I am struck with the nature and simplicity which constitute their great charm […] Canova, on the contrary, seems to have studied too much in the school of Michael Angelo. His muscles are all in action. His figures are all struck out, as if they were conscious of the presence of spectators. There is always something in their attitude and expression which would not be if it were not for this consciousness; just as it happens to second-rate actors, who are unable to preserve the simplicity of nature on the stage, but do every thing as if they were aware that an assembly of spectators were looking at them." Henry Matthews, The Diary of an Invalid, Being the Journal of a Tour in Pursuit of Health, in Portugal, Italy, Switzerland, and France, in the Years 1817, 1818, and 1819, 5th ed. (Paris: A. and W. Galignani and co., 1836) 95.

[13] "His figures appear too conscious, it were, of the presence of spectators. His muscles are too intensely in action, and his personages have something in their attitude and expression that is either above or below nature." "Rome in the Nineteenth Century," The Eclectic Review XV (May 1821): 408.

[14] John Edmund Reade, Prose from the South, Comprising Personal Observations During a Tour through Switzerland, Italy and Naples... 2d ed., 2 vols. (London: C. Ollier, 1849) vol. 2, 90.

[15] Anna Jameson, The Diary of an Ennuyée (Boston: Lilly, Wait, Colman and Holden, 1833) 113.

the twentieth century; Cesare Brandi referred to *Perseus* as "a nude in a *tableau vivant,*"[16] and Emilio Lavagnino scorned the work for resembling an "eighteenth-century dancer" "perfectly embalmed."[17]

These criticisms reflect an idea popular in the eighteenth century that theatrical undertones distracted and diminished the purity and seriousness of "high" art.[18] In addition to being condemned as theatrical, Canova's works were doubly damned by their censure as "cold" and "dead," lifeless imitations of antiquity.[19] Although late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century artists who emulated antiquity referred to their art as the "true style" and negotiated a fine balance between invention and imitation, their work was ultimately decried by later generations as lacking originality. The memory of the "true style" was replaced instead by "Neoclassicism" in a derogatory semantic shift.[20] The descriptive terms Neoclassicism then generated – "imitation," "reproduction," "replica," "copy," "pastiche" – all further ossified the movement's most negative implications. Sculpture, in particular, suffered the greatest disdain. To late-nineteenth and early-twentieth-century critics, neoclassical sculpture's marmoreal form seemed alternatively stagnant or falsely theatrical. Nevertheless, whatever the model of criticism

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[16] Cesare Brandi, quoted in Mario Praz, On Neoclassicism, trans. Angus Davidson (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 1969) 142.

[17] Emilio Lavagnino, Canova e le sue 'Invenzioni', Quaderni della VI Quadriennale Nazionale d'Arte di Roma; V, eds. A. Baldini and F. Bellonzi (Rome: De Luca Editore, 1954) 19.

[18] See Fried, Absorption and Theatricality: Painting and Beholder in the Age of Diderot and Anton W. A. Boschloo, The Limits of Artistic Freedom: Criticism of Art in Italy from 1500 to 1800 (Leiden: Primavera Pers, 2008) part III, esp. 209-65.

[19] See chapter VI, "Canova and Beauty" in Mario Praz's *On Neoclassicism* for a summary of the negative critiques of Canova's works by modern writers such as Lionello Venturi, Cesare Brandi, Kenneth Clark, Roberto Longhi and Matteo Marangoni. Praz, On Neoclassicism.

[20] See Hugh Honour, Neo-Classicism (Harmondsworth; New York: Penguin Books, 1977) 14.

adopted, it was Canova who was decried as the epitome of the period's lack of inventiveness.

What changed in the one hundred and fifty years after Canova's death that transformed his reputation so entirely? The historiography of the period can be summarized by two major shifts: the privileging of French art over Italian art and of painting over sculpture.[21] In addition to these factors, I would like to argue that later generations have also lost touch with an element critical to understanding the "true style," and that is the dialectic relationship between form and exhibition practice. The two went hand in hand in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, as form and exhibition

[21] The shift in art historical interest from sculpture to painting and Italian art to French art has its roots in a number of phenomena from the turn of the nineteenth century. Certainly the seizure of works of art by the French and their centralization in the Louvre contributed to this shift, as did the general decline of Italy as a Grand Tour destination. The belief that the "Greek" works exhibited in Rome were actually Greco-Roman copies hastened the process – and further devalued the neoclassical works which emulated them. The privileging of painting over sculpture was inspired in part by the Romantics and the new interest in gesture, paint handling and the trace of the artist's hand. These elements have dominated the discussion of Modernism ever since.

For more on the decline of the Grand Tour, see Brian Barefoot, The English Road to Rome (Upton-upon-Severn, Worcestershire: Images, 1993) 159; Wilhelm Treue, Art Plunder: The Fate of Works of Art in War and Unrest, 1st American ed. (New York: John Day Co., 1961) 161; and Cubberly's aptly named book of James Hakewill's drawings of Italy, *Twilight of the Grand Tour.* Tony Cubberley, Luke Herrmann and Valerie Scott, eds., Twilight of the Grand Tour: A Catalogue of the Drawings by James Hakewill in the British School at Rome Library = Il Crepuscolo del Grand Tour: Catalogo dei Disegni di James Hakewill dalla Biblioteca della British School at Rome (Rome: Istituto poligrafico e zecca dello stato; Libreria dello stato, 1992).

The burgeoning eighteenth-century realization that "Greek" works in Italy were Greco-Roman copies has been examined by several scholars, including A. D. Potts, "Greek Sculpture and Roman Copies; 1; Anton Raphael Mengs and the Eighteenth Century," Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes 43 (1980): 150-73; Philippe Sénéchal, "Originale e Copia. Lo Studio Comparato delle Statue Antiche nel Pensiero degli Antiquari Fino al 1770," Memoria dell'Antico nell'Arte Italiana, ed. Salvatore Settis, vol. 3. Dalla tradizione all'archeologia (Torino: G. Einaudi, 1986) 149-80; Ian Jenkins, "Gods without Altars: The Belvedere in Paris," Il Cortile delle Statue: Der Statuenhof des Belvedere im Vatikan: Akten des Internationalen Kongresses zu ehren von Richard Krautheimer, Rom 21.-23. Oktober 1992 (Mainz: P. von Zabern, 1998) 459-69; and most recently, Miranda Marvin, The Language of the Muses: The Dialogue between Roman and Greek Sculpture (Los Angeles: J. Paul Getty Museum, 2008) esp. chapter VI, 121-67.

The literature on the Romantics and Modernism in general is vast, but the works of Clement Greenberg, T.J. Clark, and Michael Fried – to name only a few – give one a sense of the powerful narratives and mythologies that surround nineteenth-century French painting and its legacy. See, for instance, Clement Greenberg, "Modernist Painting," The New Art: A Critical Anthology, ed. Gregory Battcock, 1st ed. (New York: Dutton, 1966) 100-10; Fried, Absorption and Theatricality: Painting and Beholder in the Age of Diderot; and T. J. Clark, The Painting of Modern Life: Paris in the Art of Manet and His Followers, 1st ed. (New York: Knopf, 1985).

practices were designed to complement and inform one another. Canova in particular understood how to use display techniques to draw attention to the stylistic aspects of his work on which he wished audiences to concentrate. Indeed, if we return to Manera's testimony, Canova's transformation of these women into his sculptural ideal reflects the intense physical engagement Canova had with the art of sculpture. That he would approach hair with the same sensibility as marble reflects both the highly tactile nature of sculptural production and the intensity of his commitment to the classical ideal—and to his own aesthetic vision. At the same time, however, I would argue that the way Canova transformed these women indicates his deep desire to engage viewers physically, intellectually, emotionally and psychologically with his work, a desire which emerges most intensely in his exhibition practices.

Canova's animated engagement with the world can be seen as part of a broader philosophy of the interconnected relationship between artist, art object and beholder. The artist creates both the art object *and* the beholder, transforming the latter into the ideal, animated subject of his art through the beholder's engagement with the art object. If, instead of dismissing Canova's works as "theatrical," we take Manera's testimony as a serious point of entry into Canova's sculptural practice, we see that Canova's *œuvre* demands to be reevaluated in light of the concept of "performativity."[22] "Performativity" breaks the actor/spectator dichotomy by acknowledging the agency of both actor *and* beholder, as well as their mutual influence on one another. If we apply the concept of

[22] Definitions of "performance" can vary, but in his introduction to performance theory, Marvin Carlson examines the way performance can affect everyday life. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, for instance, there was a broad recognition that all social behavior is a performance of sorts. This belief continued into the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. See Marvin A. Carlson, Performance: A Critical Introduction (London; New York: Routledge, 1996) esp. chapter four, "Performance in society—sociological and psychological approaches," 31-55.

performativity to Canova's work, the implications of its thesis for our understanding of his art are profound. Canova's refashioning of the women of Possagno in the image of his own sculptures reflects much more than simply a lighthearted approach to sculptural practice. His seemingly carefree gesture reveals a serious and deep engagement with the way sculptural practice could be "performed" in multiple ways. By blurring the boundaries between art and life, Canova transformed the world around him to reflect his aesthetic ideals. More importantly, he called attention to the highly dramatized nature of his sculptural process and demanded the active participation of his beholders.

Canova's compulsion to treat hair with the same care that he did marble is part and parcel of his reputation for perfectionism and indeed reflects the most extreme example of his attempt to manipulate his audience. In more ordinary circumstances, he dazzled patrons through his carving techniques and the special attention he paid to the surface of the marble (figs. 7-8). His skill with the chisel transformed hard stone into palpable flesh.[23] His finishing techniques were likewise fastidious and he employed wax and *aqua di rota* (grind water) to polish his sculptures to a warm glow.[24] By filling in the

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[23] Canova's *Venus Italica*, for instance, was admired for her verism. Henri de Latouche described the softness, sweetness and voluptuousness of her skin, carved with such delicacy that it seemed nearly transparent and perfumed. Pier Alessandro Paravia also described the exquisiteness of execution that seemed to give Canova's sculpture life. De Latouche and Réveil, Œuvre de Canova, recueil de gravures d'après ses statues et ses bas-reliefs, 32-33 and Paravia, Notizie Intorno alla Vita di Antonio Canova: Giuntovi il Catalogo Chronologico di Tutte le sue Opere, 19.

[24] For Canova's finishing techniques, see Hugh Honour, "Canova's Studio Practice II: 1791-1822," The Burlington Magazine 114.829 (April 1972): 218-19. For an excellent essay on Canova's habit of coloring his sculptures, see Mark Norman and Richard Cook, "'Just a Tiny Bit of Rouge Upon the Lips and Cheeks': Canova, Colour, and the Classical Ideal," Canova: Ideal Heads, ed. Katharine Eustace (Oxford: Ashmolean Museum, 1997) 47-58. A forthcoming project by David Bindman will also address "whiteness" in Canova's work in relation to racial theory.

Interestingly, recent conservation on *Paolina Borghese as Venus the Victor* did not reveal a wax coating on the work. Elisabetta Caracciolo and Elisabetta Zatti, "Il Restauro della Sala di Paolina Bonaparte = the Restoration of the Room of Pauline," Venere Vincitrice: La Sala di Paolina Bonaparte alla Galleria Borghese (Roma: Edizioni dell'elefante, 1997) 142-43.

For more on changing attitudes towards polychromy, see Roberta Panzanelli, "Beyond the Pale: Polychromy and Western Art," The Color of Life: Polychromy in Sculpture from Antiquity to the Present,

interstices and any unevenness in the marble, these treatments would create a lush, reflective surface—giving the stone a "new softness" according to one traveler.[25] This effect heightened the handiwork of Canova's chisel, enhancing the illusion of flesh and animating his works' expressions. Joseph Forsyth, for instance, commented on the boxer Creugas' surface, which "has a waxen gloss which dazzles the eye, and gives such illusion to the high finishing, that you imagine the very texture of the skin in the marble" (fig. 9).[26] We might go so far to suggest that in this case, the gloss mimicked the effect of sweat on the skin, emphasizing the laborious physical combat in which the pugilist was engaged. Canova even suggested that plaster casts receive careful treatment of their surface. The Harford Family Papers contains Canova's "recipe" for polishing plaster casts, [27] and in a letter to the architect Giannantonio Selva from 1795, Canova invites Selva to polish his casts with "walnut oil, with a little [linseed] oil mixed in, so that it [the

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eds. Roberta Panzanelli, Eike D. Schmidt and Kenneth D. S. Lapatin (Los Angeles: J. Paul Getty Museum: The Getty Research Institute, 2008) 2-17 and Alex Potts, "Colors of Sculpture," The Color of Life: Polychromy in Sculpture from Antiquity to the Present, eds. Roberta Panzanelli, Eike D. Schmidt and Kenneth D. S. Lapatin (Los Angeles: J. Paul Getty Museum: The Getty Research Institute, 2008) 78-97.

[25] After a visit to Canova's studio in 1799, for instance, Général Baron Thiébault remarked, "Une chose me surprit dans toutes ces statues, c'était la différence de la teinte du marbre qui, dans le même bloc, distinguait la chair et les vêtements. Je pensai que cette différence provenait de la manière de piquer le marbre ou de le polir; mais Canova me dit qu'il avait découvert une espèce de cire dont il faisait enduire toutes les parties représentant les chairs, et que ce procédé avait non seulement l'avantage de leur donner un velouté nouveau pour le marbre, mais encore de contribuer à préserver ces parties des effets de l'air." Paul Charles François Adrien Henri Dieudonne Thiébault, Mémoires du General B^{on} Thiébault, publiés sous les auspices de sa fille Claire Thiébault, d'après le manuscrit original, par Fernand Calmettes, 7th ed., 5 vols. (Paris: E. Plon, Nourrit et C^{ie}, 1893-1895) vol. 2, 549.

[26] Joseph Forsyth, Remarks on Antiquities, Arts, and Letters During an Excursion in Italy, in the Years 1802 and 1803, ed. Keith Crook (London; Newark; Cranbury, NJ: University of Delaware Press; Associated University Presses, 2001) 113.

[27] I particularly want to thank Dr. Catherine Roach for informing me of these documents. See the Harford Family Papers at the Bristol Record Office, Bristol, United Kingdom, documents 28048 C68/1 and 28048 C68/2, including a letter and recipe for polishing plaster casts, sent to John Scandrett Harford from Canova.

cast] obtains a nice tint and hardens even more [...]." [28] In another particularly lengthy letter to Selva regarding the unpacking and positioning of his *Hebe*, the sculptor went into great detail on how the work should be put into place and cleaned with very fine marble dust (fig. 10).[29]

Equally important, however, was the way Canova staged his sculptures, and it was through the display of his work that Canova perhaps best expressed both his engagement with sculptural media *and* stage-managed his viewers' experience. Countless works, for instance, were placed on rotating pedestals.[30] Since the artist himself periodically worked with a trestle that allowed him to rotate works easily in front of him, his insistence that viewers see his sculptures from all points of view was an extension of his own working process and his own experience with the materiality of marble (fig. 11). Small busts, for instance, had handles in their bases that could be used to rotate the work, but large works turned easily as well (figs. 12-14). In Canova's studio, an attendant turned *Triumphant Perseus* for visitors. *Venus and Adonis* was displayed in a small temple in a Neapolitan garden; encircled by deep red cloth, it too rotated in front of the

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[28] Letter from Canova to Giannantonio Selva, September 21, 1795. "Se non avete dato ancora all'Eccmō Battagia il bozzetto non sarà male. che gli basta due mani di oglio di noce con un poco di oglio cotto fra mischiato, perche così prende una buon tinta, e sindura ancora , che può assistere a poterlo lavare con aqua, se fosse sporco dalla macche. Tutte li gessi non sono suscettibili di questa operazione, perche quando sono stati raschiati o composti de più pezzi il gesso reste macchiato dandogli oglio, ma questo nostro e' gettato tutto in un tempo." Museo Biblioteca Correr PD 529 C.

[29] Letter from Canova to unnamed addressee, but most likely Giannantonio Selva, December 16, 1799. Museo Biblioteca Correr PD 529 C.

[30]For a short history of pedestals, see Nicholas Penny, "The Evolution of the Plinth, Pedestal, and Socle," Collecting Sculpture in Early Modern Europe, eds. Nicholas Penny and Eike D. Schmidt, Studies in the History of Art Symposium Papers: Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts (Washington and New Haven: National Gallery of Art; Distributed by Yale University Press, 2008) 461-81. For an examination of the various works by Canova that were placed on rotating pedestals, see Kristina Herrmann Fiore, "Sulle Virtù Dinamiche di Statue e Colossi del Canova," Sculture Romane del Settecento, II: La Professione dello Scultore (Rome: Bonsignori, 2002) 269-94.

rich fabric (fig. 15).[31] The sensuous display of *Paolina Borghese as Venus the Victor* revolving for tourists was so scandalous that Pope Pius VII soon insisted the work be hidden from view (figs.16-17).[32] Even *Cupid and Psyche,* arguably Canova's most well-known work today, could be rotated—giving new meaning to criticisms that it resembled a "windmill" (fig. 18).[33]

Sculptures that were conceived as a pair only rotated one hundred and eighty degrees, in order to maintain the logic of their relationship to one another. These included the famous *Boxers, Damoxenos* and *Creugas*, and *Hector* and *Ajax*, shown here in 1827 *in situ* in the Palazzo Treves (figs. 19-21). Works not placed on rotating pedestals were sometimes surrounded by mirrors. The *Venus Italica,* displayed in the Palazzo Pitti*,* was "seen to much advantage by means of the mirrors, four different views by reflection being seen from one place" (fig. 22).[34] In Giambattista Sommariva's villa outside Milan,

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[31] Quoted in Isabella Colucci, "Antonio Canova, la Marchesa Margherita Boccapaduli e Alessandro Verri: Lettere e altre Testimonianze Inedite," Paragone. Arte 49.579 (1998): 67.

[32] For more on *Paolina Borghese as Venus Victrix*, see Claudio Strinati, Venere Vincitrice: La Sala di Paolina Bonaparte alla Galleria Borghese (Roma: Edizioni dell'Elefante, 1997). For Pope Pius VII's censorship of the work, see Kristina Herrmann Fiore, "Lettere Inedite sulla Statua di Paolina = Unpublished Letters on the Statue of Pauline," Venere Vincitrice: La Sala di Paolina Bonaparte alla Galleria Borghese (Rome: Edizioni dell'elefante, 1997) 201-14.

[33] For an account of the Louvre's restoration of the work, see Jean-René Gaborit, "L'Amore e Psiche del Louvre," Antonio Canova: Atti del Convegno di Studi Venezia 7-9 Ottobre 1992 (Venezia: Istituto veneto di scienze lettere ed arti, 1997) 141-42. Fernow's reference to the work as a windmill reads as follows: "Überdies ragen die Flügel Amors ausgespannt über der lockeren, mehrere Löcher und Durchsichten darbietenden und dadurch das Auge noch mehr verwirrenden Gruppe hervor, um die beleibte Piramidalform hervorzubringen und machen durch ihre ansehnliche Masse einen Windmühle erinnert." Carl Ludwig Fernow, "Über den Bildhauer Canova und dessen Werke," Römische Studien, vol. 1 (Zürich: H. Gessner, 1806) 90, also quoted in Herrmann Fiore, "Sulle Virtù Dinamiche di Statue e Colossi del Canova," 270, but cited incorrectly there as being on page 30.

[34] William Archibald Cadell, A Journey in Carniola, Italy, and France, in the Years 1817, 1818: Containing Remarks Relating to Language, Geography, History, Antiquities, Natural History, Science, Painting, Sculpture, Architecture, Agriculture, the Mechanical Arts and Manufacturers (Edinburgh: Printed for Archibald Constable and Co. by George Ramsay and Company and Hurst Robinson and Co., 1820) vol. 1, 192. Henry Beste likewise described the work: "It is placed in the centre of a very pretty octagon room, the right sides of which are four windows and four mirrors." Henry Digby Beste, Italy as It Is; or, Narrative of an English Family's Residence for Three Years in That Country (London: H. Colburn, 1828) 140-41.

multiple views of *Palamedes* were likewise visible, and in his home in Paris *The Penitent Magdalene's* anguish was further pronounced by the glimpse of her sorrowful, hunched shoulders in the glass (figs. 23-25).[35]

Not satisfied with ensuring viewers' appreciation of all the angles of his work, Canova also insisted on controlling the lighting in which his sculptures were displayed. Viewing sculptures in torchlight, for instance, surged in popularity at the end of the eighteenth century because it was believed that the ancients themselves enjoyed looking at sculpture in this manner.[36] Attending the Vatican (or the Louvre) at night to see the *Laocoön* and the *Apollo Belvedere* was a popular pastime, and Canova likewise urged visitors to admire his works out of the undiluted light of day (fig. 26). In 1819, when Thomas Moore accompanied the artist to the Villa Borghese to see *Paolina Borghese as Venus the Victor*, Canova himself held the light, "pausing with a sort of fond lingering on all the exquisite beauties of this most perfect figure."[37] "To obtain the best effect," *Venus and Adonis* was also displayed at night and illuminated by three candles in a semicircular

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[35] Thomas Frognall Dibdin, A Bibliographical Antiquarian and Picturesque Tour in France and Germany, 2nd ed., 3 vols. (London: Robert Jennings and John Major, 1829) vol. 2, 198.

[36] The custom has a history dating back to the sixteenth century, but it became particularly popular in the eighteenth century. For more on this practice, see also Oskar Bätschmann, The Artist in the Modern World: The Conflict between Market and Self-Expression (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1997) 21-22.

A recent article by Claudia Mattos points out that this tradition was common in ateliers and in academies, where students would study casts by candlelight. She notes that Canova himself participated in such academic training, as his diary of his first trip to Rome makes several references to evening drawing classes. According to Mattos, Winckelmann encouraged the practice of viewing of works of art in torchlight. Most interesting, by examining the report of a visit to the Vatican in 1852, she points out that visits to the Vatican were highly structured and even the order in which works of art were viewed was standardized. Claudia Mattos, "The Torchlight Visit: Guiding the Eye through Late Eighteenth- and Early Nineteenth-Century Antique Sculpture Galleries," RES: Anthropology and Aesthetics 49/50 (Spring-Autumn 2006): 146, note 46, for the reference to Canova's artistic training.

[37] Thomas Moore, Memoirs, Journal and Correspondence of Thomas Moore, ed. John Russell (London: Longman, Green, Longman and Roberts, 1860) 241.

tin lamp.[38] The practice was immortalized in Madame de Staël's *Corinne, or Italy* (1807), in which Corinne and Lord Nelvil visit Canova's studio, where, "shadow, more pronounced by the light of torches, tones down the dazzling uniformity of marble; appearing as pale shapes, statues have a more touching quality of both grace and life."[39] In other instances, Canova ensured that his sculptures were well lit from above, creating apertures in the ceiling above his works. In 1803, he even ordered the niches in the octagonal courtyard of the Museo Pio-Clementino bricked up to control the lighting of *Triumphant Perseus* and *the Boxers* and to isolate the beholder from the surrounding sculptures (figs. 27-28).[40]

The sculptures' settings were equally important to the artist. Early in his career Canova applauded the intended placement of *Psyche* in Girolamo Zulian's home (fig. 29). Although Zulian died before obtaining the work, Canova felt that the room Zulian

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[38] See Colucci, "Antonio Canova, la Marchesa Margherita Boccapaduli e Alessandro Verri: Lettere e Altre Testimonianze Inedite," 67.

Description of what these torches looked like is fairly rare, but Louis Simond, describing his 1817-1818 visit to the Vatican, provides us with wonderful detail. "It is the fashion to see the Museum by torch-light; and a number of us (tourists) having mustered together, we last evening repaired in great force to the scene of action. The *custode* had received notice, and held himself in readiness with his picturesque apparatus, consisting of a large semi-circular tin skreen [*sic*] on a long pole, and inclosing a bunch of lighted tapers; the open side of the skreen [*sic*] being turned to the statues, and the dark side to the spectators. […] The night was cold, that marble pavement colder, and the very sound of the numerous fountains for ever splashing about the courts, imparted a sort of aguish feel, accompanied with yawns and shivering. The *custode* dwelt an unconscionable time before some of the *chefs d'œuvre,* which all of us did not think worthy of so much attention, and passed others rather too rapidly. […] The torches reached about the height of the larger statues, casting a level light glaring without shadows: the effect was much better on the low busts; but I thought upon the whole the sky-light and day-time preferable." Louis Simond, A Tour in Italy and Sicily (London: Printed for Longman, Reese, Orme, Brown and Green, 1828) 223.

[39] "Corinne et lord Nelvil terminèrent leur journée en allant voir l'atelier de Canova, du plus grand sculpteur moderne. Comme il étoit tard, ce fut aux flambeaux qu'ils se le firent montrer; et les statues gagnent beaucoup à cette manière d'être vues. Les anciens en jugeoient ainsi, puisqu'ils les plaçoient souvent dans leurs Thermes, où le jour ne pouvoit pas pénétrer. A la lueur des flambeaux, l'ombre plus prononcée amortit la brillante uniformité du marbre, et les statues paroissent des figures pâles, qui ont un caractère plus touchant et de grâce et de vie." Germaine De Staël, Corinne, ou l'Italie, Nouvelle édition ed. (New York: Leavitt et Compagnie, 1849) 149. English translation taken from Germaine de Staël, Corinne, or, Italy, trans. and ed. Avriel H. Goldberger (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1987) 154.

[40] See Paolo Liverani, "La Nascita del Museo Pio-Clementino e la Politica Canoviana dei Musei Vaticani," Canova Direttore di Musei. I Settimana di Studi Canoviani, ed. Manlio Pastore Stocchi (Bassano del Grappa: Istituto di ricerca per gli studi su Canova e il neoclassicismo, 2004) 97-98.

and the architect Selva had designed seemed "perfectly suited" for the work. The sculptor recommended adding a "simple frieze with a chiaroscuro festoon, with a few butterflies, with a simple coffered ceiling and greenish or yellowish walls [...], or to paint or tint with stucco some of the coffered panels of the vault. You know a thousand times better than me," he continued, "but I would think all in chiaroscuro."[41] In fact, Canova encouraged collectors to display his sculptures in architectural frames. These were meant to flatter the work, control the lighting, invite contemplation, and encourage movement around the sculpture. In addition to the tempietto created for *Venus and Adonis* in Naples, numerous other works were exhibited in settings constructed specifically for them (fig. 30). The Duke of Bedford famously ensconced *The Three Graces* in a chapel-like space at Woburn Abbey (fig. 31). *Hercules and Lychas* reigned in a similar apsidal alcove in the home of the Duke of Torlonia in Rome (fig. 32). A series of paintings, at least two of which may be by Canova himself, depict the sculptor presenting a drawing of the work to the patron and his family and also show the family seated in front of the final piece, *in situ* in their home (figs. 33-34).[42] In Vienna, Canova's involvement in the placement of his works is evident from correspondence between the artist and the architect Pietro Nobile, who designed a large temple to hold *Theseus and the Centaur*. Not only did

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[41] Letter from Canova to Giannantonio Selva, Oct. 11,1794. "La stanza che mi avete descritta mi sembra adattissima per la Psiche, di modo che pare affatto per tale statua, e il parere di farla a volta come dite mi sembra il meglio. Raporto poi alla fornitura io non vi farei che (se credete bene) un fregio semplice con festoni a chiaro scuro, e con qualche farfala, e la volta a semplici cassettoni, e le pareti di un colore verdigno o gialletto che sentisse delle [rose?], o dei riquadri dei cassettoni della volta il tutto dipinto, o in tinta di stucco (già voi sapete mille volte meglio di me) ma crederei tutto a chiaro scuro." Museo Biblioteca Correr PD 529 C, also cited in Ranieri Varese, "La *Psiche* Seconda: 'Ed ha un Occulto Magistero'," Studi veneziani, N.S. 45 (2003): 309.

[42] See, for instance, Antonio Pinelli, "Due Quadri in Cerca d'Autore: Canova, i Torlonia e l'*Ercole e Lica*," Studi in Onore di Giulio Carlo Argan, ed. Giulio Carlo Argan, 1a ed. (Firenze: Nuova Italia, 1994) 308-18; reprinted as Antonio Pinelli, "Canova Pittore," Antonio Canova: Atti del Convegno di Studi, Venezia, 7-9 Ottobre 1992 (Venezia: Istituto veneto di scienze, lettere ed arti, 1997) 37-59.

Canova suggest Nobile for the job, but he also weighed in with opinions on the architecture, suggesting, for instance, that the temple be modeled on the Temple of Hephaestus, in Athens, then known as the Theseion and believed to have housed the remains of Theseus himself (figs. 35-37).[43] The same architect had also designed a temple to house the *Monument to Maria Christina of Austria* in 1803, for which a series of drawings show his unrealized plans (figs. 38-40).[44] Although Prince Albert of Saxony, Duke of Teschen, ultimately was pleased with the placement of the monument in the Augustinian Church in Vienna, he "perhaps did regret" his decision not to place the work in a tempietto. As Canova himself wrote, "the church certainly could not have an extremely favorable light, even if it wasn't extremely bad, either." [45]

At other times, Canova used careful juxtapositions to draw attention to his works' aesthetic qualities. Before entering the collection of the Museo Pio-Clementino, for instance, *Triumphant Perseus* was exhibited in Canova's studio near a plaster cast of the

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[43] Monica Pacorig points out that there is a great deal of correspondence between Canova and Nobile on the form of the temple, and, quite interestingly, that the temple was connected to a subterranean museum of antiquities. Monica Pacorig, "Canova e il Tempio di Teseo," Arte documento 7 (1993): 239-42.

[44] See Selma Krasa, "Antonio Canovas Denkmal der Erzherzogin Marie-Christine," Albertina Studien 5/6 (1967/1968): 67-134 and Angelika Gause-Reinhold, Das Christinen-Denkmal von Antonio Canova und der Wandel in der Todesauffassung um 1800, Bochumer Schriften zur Kunstgeschichte (Frankfurt am Main; New York: P. Lang, 1990) 42-45. For more on Pietro Nobile, see Rossella Fabiani, "Pietro Nobile (1776-1854)," Contro il Barocco: Apprendistato a Roma e Pratica dell'Architettura Civile in Italia 1780-1820, eds. Angela Cipriani, Gian Paolo Consoli and Susanna Pasquali (Roma: Campisano, 2007) 447-52.

[45] Canova wrote to Giannantonio Selva regarding the placement of the Maria-Christina monument in the Augustinian Church in Vienna. The artist found the light "not as bad as he had suspected." In a later letter, he wrote that the Duke was "extremely happy, and possibly even regretted that he did not have a temple built to hold it [the work], the church certainly could not have an extremely favorable light, even if it wasn't extremely bad, either."

Letter from Canova to Selva, from Vienna, June 11, 1805, "Sono ottimamente alloggiato, [vicino] alla chiesa dove va collocato il monumento: il lume che questa avrà non mi pare debba essere tanto cattivo quanto io me lo sospettavo."

Letter from Canova to Selva, from Vienna, undated [1805]. "Il Duca è contentissimo, e forze anche pentito di non aver fatto fabbricare un tempietto a bella posta per collocarlo, perche nella chiesa non potrà certamente aver un lume tanto favorevole, ma nemmeno estremmo cattivo." Museo Biblioteca Correr PD 529C

Apollo Belvedere, its model (fig. 41).[46] Likewise, casts of other ancient masterpieces were exhibited both as inspiration and as a foil to Canova's own sculptures. A model of *Hercules and Lychas* was displayed next to a cast of its prototype, the *Farnese Hercules* (figs. 42-43). Even the fragments of classical works Canova collected and placed on the outer walls of his studio were organized to show "typological groupings" (fig. 44).[47] In Canova's museological installations, such as his plan for the Braccio Nuovo of the Museo Chiaramonti, objects were also grouped together and installed in order to invite comparisons between them (fig. 45).[48]

The exhibition techniques I have described reinforce Canova's dedication to his medium. At the same time, they also propelled viewers to pay heed to his works in a singular and dedicated manner that denied any possibility of detachment on their behalf. Rotating his works and using mirrors to reflect multiple views of his sculptures, for instance, reveal how insistently Canova imagined his work in three-dimensions—the unique province of sculpture. In so doing, he liberated viewers from the need to move around the work of art and ensured that regardless of beholders' stasis, they would see—and appreciate—all the different views and angles of the sculpture.

Likewise, the use of torchlight was designed to highlight Canova's carving techniques. The flickering light of the torch would reveal aspects of the sculpture that

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[46] See Christina Ferando, "Staging Neoclassicism: Antonio Canova's Exhibition Strategies for Triumphant Perseus," Das Originale der Kopie: Kopien als Produkte und Medien der Transformation von Antike, eds. Tatjana Bartsch, Marcus Becker, Horst Bredekamp and Charlotte Schreiter, Collaborative Research Centre (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2010) 139-63.

[47] Maria Elisa Micheli, "*Iudicium et Ordo*: Antonio Canova and Antiquity," The Rediscovery of Antiquity: The Role of the Artist, eds. Jane Fejfer, Tobias Fischer-Hansen and Annette Rathje, Acta Hyperborea (Copenhagen: Museum Tusculanum Press, University of Copenhagen, 2003) 277.

[48] See Maria Antonietta de Angelis, "Il 'Braccio Nuovo' del Museo Chiaramonti: Un Prototipo di Museo tra Passato e Futuro," Bollettino - Monumenti Musei e Gallerie Pontificie 14 (1994): 194-96 and 205-07.

were not visible in daylight, but that required the strong contrast between golden light and deep shade. Torchlight not only helped viewers become aware of aspects of the work they would not see during the day, but it also reinforced the sculptor's prowess—or lack thereof. At stake was an understanding of the sculptor's refinement of execution, which could accentuate or detract from the illusion that the marble was real flesh. Responding to criticisms of his sculptures, for instance, Canova asked Quatremère de Quincy if he had seriously contemplated the torso of *Genius* in torchlight,[49] and likewise suggested that Vivant Denon could not judge his sculpture of *Napoleon as Mars* accurately unless he viewed it by candlelight (figs. 46-47).

The comparisons between *Perseus* and *Apollo* and *Hercules and Lychas* and the *Hercules Farnese* likewise transformed Canova's studio into a dramatization of his own artistic skill, directing viewers' attention, demanding their participation, and transforming the studio into a space of active viewing. These juxtapositions reaffirmed the value of his sculpture by heralding the rebirth of antiquity and establishing the beginning of a neoclassical canon. Indeed, the comparisons that Canova staged between his sculptures and ancient masterpieces resonated for years to come in the public imagination, as seen in Giuseppe Sabatelli's print from 1833 in which Canova is seated among the *Venus de'Medici* and his *Venus Italica*, the *Hercules Farnese* and his *Hercules and Lychas*, and *Apollo Belvedere* and his *Triumphant Perseus* (fig. 48).

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[49] Letter from Canova to Quatremère de Quincy, Nov. 26, 1806. "Ditemi schiettamente la verità: mi avete voi mai fatta la grazia di considerare profondamente anche a lume di candela il torso del mio *Genio*, opera di sedeci o diecisette anni addietro? Avete con sierietà analizzate le gambe, le braccia, le coscie, i piedi, le mani del mio *Lottatore*? Avete veduto se ne è intesa con buona forma ogni parte? Datevi la pena di esaminar tutto ciò ben bene con un lume di notte e radente, per poterne vedere le più delicate avvertenze." Cited in Antonio Canova and Antoine-Chrysosthôme Quatremère de Quincy, Il Carteggio Canova-Quatremère de Quincy, 1785-1822, Quaderni del Centro Studi Canoviani; 4, eds. Giuseppe Pavanello and Francesco Paolo Luiso (Ponzano, Italy: Vianello, 2005) 91-92. For Canova's letter to Vivant Denon, see Bätschmann, The Artist in the Modern World: The Conflict between Market and Self-Expression 22.

The sensitivity, and at times, anxiety Canova revealed concerning the display of his work has broad implications for our understanding of his relationship to his sculptures and his relationship to their beholders. More important, however, is the way the performative nature of these displays impact our understanding of the discipline of art history itself. This was a liminal moment in the history of art, when models of looking and possibilities for the aesthetic experience were in flux. The display of Canova's works provided multiple means by which viewers could access, understand and enjoy his sculptures. At the same time, however, there was something fundamentally *serious* about the engagement that Canova demanded from viewers. His display tactics encouraged connoisseurship. Even though the multiple means by which beholders could engage with sculpture faded as the viewing experience was increasingly codified in museums over the course of the century, the complete engagement Canova demanded of viewers, the serious, considered, and intelligent viewing in which he wished them to engage, persisted in the discipline of art history itself. Embodied in his display tactics was an ideal model for the study of art.

The period around 1800 was therefore a crucial moment in the history of viewership. Beholders debated not only the proper means for displaying and viewing art but also precisely what the end result of that viewing should be. That is, viewing these works of art was simply a small part of the equation. Beholders, as we have seen, were meant to actively engage with the objects, debate with one another and discuss value and authenticity in a manner that supposedly mimicked ancient social forms. At the same time, however, their performance as beholders drove home the delta between simply seeing a work of art, and truly viewing and understanding it—between dilettantism and

connoisseurship. Canova's deliberate and sometimes provocative presentation of objects was meant to persuade viewers to take the process of looking quite seriously.

Broad cultural transformations in the eighteenth century contributed to a shift in viewing conditions for works of art—particularly sculptures. The new circulation of visitors throughout Europe, as the Grand Tour reached its peak,[50] the abundance of archaeological excavations that flooded new works on the market,[51] and the movement of works of art themselves as part of the art market and military conquest meant that viewers could *see* objects directly on a scale as never before (figs. 49-51).[52] In addition, the broadening audience for art merged with multiple arenas for spectatorship. Displays and exhibitions in a wide variety of locations—domestic spaces, artists' studios, and, significantly, newly founded museums —tested viewers' skills as never before (figs. 52-53).

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[50] For more on the history of the Grand Tour and its impact, see Barefoot, The English Road to Rome; Pierre Chessex, Images of the Grand Tour: Louis Ducros, 1748-1810 (Geneva: Editions du Tricorne, 1985); Andrew Wilton and Ilaria Bignamini, Grand Tour: The Lure of Italy in the Eighteenth Century (London: Tate Gallery, 1996); Kay Dian Kriz, "Introduction: The Grand Tour," Eighteenth-Century Studies 31.1 (1997): 87-89; Clare Hornsby, ed., The Impact of Italy: The Grand Tour and Beyond (London: The British School at Rome, 2000); and Jonathan Scott, The Pleasures of Antiquity (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003).

[51] There are numerous studies of the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century archaeological excavations in Rome and the broader Italian peninsula. See, for instance, Ronald T. Ridley, The Eagle and the Spade: Archaeology of Rome During the Napoleonic Era (Cambridge England; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992) and Ronald T. Ridley, The Pope's Archaeologist: The Life and Times of Carlo Fea (Roma: Quasar, 2000).

For the importance antiquity had in shaping modern Italian art, see the excellent essays in Salvatore Settis, Memoria dell'Antico nell'Arte Italiana, Biblioteca di Storia dell'arte, N.S. 1., 3 vols. (Torino: G. Einaudi, 1984-86).

[52] See especially Treue, Art Plunder: The Fate of Works of Art in War and Unrest and the essays in Roberta Panzanelli and Monica Preti, eds., La Circulation des œuvres d'art = the Circulation of Works of Art in the Revolutionary Era: 1789-1848 (Rennes, Paris and Los Angeles: Presses universitaires de Rennes; Institut national d'histoire de l'art; Getty Research Institute, 2007), as well as Ellinoor Bergvelt, Debora J. Meijers, Lieske Tibbe and Elsa van Wezel, eds., Napoleon's Legacy: The Rise of National Museums in Europe 1794-1830 (Berlin: G+H Verlag, 2009).

Indeed, the range of skills that viewers were forced to draw upon as they looked at works of art offers a glimpse at the very complex definition of connoisseurship that emerged during the period. One skill that remained important, for instance, was the identification of a statue's subject matter and the interpretation of its iconography. Identifying a new statue correctly opened a window onto the ancient world—and, perhaps more importantly, enabled the piece to be restored, sold, and compared to other sculptures of the same type. In fact, the identification of one statue often affected the identification of others, since, of course, one of the primary means of establishing attribution was through comparison to other works of art and to textual sources. [53] Yet, as more and more viewers had face-to-face encounters with original works of art, the comparative data on which they had previously relied—namely, ancient textual sources, written descriptions of works of art and reproductive engravings—revealed themselves to be increasingly dubious forms of identification. Object and textual description did not always accord with one another. [54] Likewise, engravings, although still a critical form of technical reproduction, were increasingly recognized as works of art in their own right,

[53] Gerard Vaughan, for instance, examines an interesting case in which a *Discobolus* was restored by Thomas Jenkins with a head that did not originally belong to it. Jenkins added the head so it turned to face the rear, and when a second *Discobolus* was restored by Carlo Albacini for the Vatican, it was restored on the model of the first, so that there too the figure looked backwards. Gerard Vaughan, "The Restoration of Classical Sculpture in the Eighteenth Century and the Problem of Authenticity," Why Fakes Matter: Essays on Problems of Authenticity, ed. Mark Jones (London: Published for the Trustees of the British Museum by British Museum Press, 1992) 44-45.

[54] The most famous example of this disjunction between text and work of art is that of Pliny the Elder's description of the *Laocoön,* which he asserts was carved from a single block of marble, and the sculpture itself, which is composed from several pieces. According to Nicholas Penny and Francis Haskell, however, this discrepancy damaged Pliny's reputation more so than that of the statue. See Francis Haskell and Nicholas Penny, Taste and the Antique: The Lure of Classical Sculpture, 1500-1900, 2nd printing with corrections (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982) 246.

and the liberties taken by engravers to assert their own artistic prowess meant that prints were not always reliable tools with which to judge sculptures.[55]

In addition, the question of "authenticity"—a slippery concept at best—became increasingly complicated as the century wore on. With the taste for antiquity strengthening, therefore, and the subsequent profusion of modern works modeled on the Greek revival it became critical to hone one's acumen.[56] Artists, after all, had the same access to ancient texts and reproductive engravings as theorists and scholars. With the advantage of their manual skills, they could easily create a work that mimicked the ancient style so well that, in the hands of an unscrupulous dealer, it could be sold as an antique.[57] Such was the case with Anton Raphael Mengs' *Jupiter and Ganymede* and Bartolomeo Cavaceppi's relief of a girl before a round temple, both of which had

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[55] Philippe Sénéchal studies the factors that inhibited the development of a theory of ancient copies until the end of the eighteenth century. Critical to his argument are both the dissemination of casts and engravings. The latter, in particular, did not allow accurate comparison between works of the same subject, since different sculptures were often represented from different points of view. Engravings were also reused indiscriminately to represent the same subject, regardless of how different the print might be from the original work. Reversals were a concern, and, of course, engravers wanted to show off their own bravura with fantastic flourishes. See Sénéchal, "Originale e Copia. Lo Studio Comparato delle Statue Antiche nel Pensiero degli Antiquari Fino al 1770," 149-80.

Marc-Antonio Raimondi is one example of an engraver whose fame equaled that of the artists whose works he reproduced. Lisa Pon, Raphael, Dürer, and Marcantonio Raimondi: Copying and the Italian Renaissance Print (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004). For more on the artistic aspect of engravings in the early nineteenth century and they way they were considered an art unto themselves, see Stephen Bann, Parallel Lines: Printmakers, Painters and Photographers in Nineteenth-Century France (New Haven, CT; London: Yale University Press, 2001).

[56] For an artist who relied heavily on ancient models, see Anne-Marie Leander Touati, "How to Choose Ancient Models: The Example of Johan Tobias Sergel (1740-1802)," The Rediscovery of Antiquity: The Role of the Artist, eds. Jane Fejfer, Tobias Fischer-Hansen and Annette Rathje, Acta Hyperborea (Copenhagen: Museum Tusculanum Press, University of Copenhagen, 2003) 147-79.

[57] Two particularly egregious dealers were Thomas Jenkins and Robert Fagan. See Brinsley Ford, "Thomas Jenkins: Banker, Dealer and Unofficial English Agent," Apollo 99.148 (1974): 416-25. For more on Fagan, see the documents in the Archivio di Stato, Roma, Camerale II, Antichita e Belle Arti, Busta 6, fasc. 175 which denounce Fagan for exporting objects from Rome without permission.

For art dealing in Rome later in nineteenth century, see John Fleming, "Art Dealing and the Risorgimento-I," The Burlington Magazine 115.838 (Jan. 1973): 4-17; John Fleming, "Art Dealing and the Risorgimento-II," The Burlington Magazine 121.917 (Aug. 1979): 492-508; and John Fleming, "Art Dealing and the Risorgimento-III," The Burlington Magazine 121.918 (Sep. 1979): 568-80.

Winckelmann himself convinced they were ancient pieces (figs. 54-55).[58] Confusing the issue even further were the restoration studios which made piece-meal additions to ancient fragments resulting in hybrid works, such as these four very different interpretations of theme of the *Discobolus,* noted by Seymour Howard (figs. 56).[59] Although it was commonplace in the eighteenth century to transform fragments into complete sculptures, restorers did sometimes misrepresent the degree to which an object had been restored and the percentage of modern statuary of which it was composed. The abundance of modern works made to appear ancient—not to mention outright forgeries—therefore required critically honed connoisseurship; conversely, beholders' abilities to scrutinize and judge works of art were constantly being tested because of the wide-spread dissemination of fakes brought to the fore by the vagaries of the art market. "Learning to look" took on utmost importance.

Insight and shrewd discrimination were more difficult when judging sculpture than when judging other media. At the most fundamental level, the belabored and lengthy

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[58] For more on Mengs' forgery, see Potts, "Greek Sculpture and Roman Copies; 1; Anton Raphael Mengs and the Eighteenth Century," 150-73.

Winckelmann called the relief, then in the collection of Thomas Jenkins, "one of the most beautiful works surviving from Antiquity." See Mark Jones, P. T. Craddock and Nicholas Barker, Fake?: The Art of Deception (London: Published for the Trustees of the British Museum by British Museum Publications, 1990) 143-44. Although Cavaceppi was heralded as one of the greatest restorers of the period, Seymour Howard has also shown that Cavaceppi was, at times, less than scrupulous, distressing the surface of the marble, staining it, creating "accidental breaks" along join lines to create modern works that were passed off as ancient. See Seymour Howard, Bartolomeo Cavaceppi: Eighteenth-Century Restorer, Outstanding Dissertations in the Fine Arts (New York: Garland Publishing, 1982) 213-16.

[59] See Seymour Howard, "Some Eighteenth-Century Restorations of Myron's 'Discobolos'," Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes 25.3/4 (July 1962): 238-55.

For an excellent discussion of these works' changeable position as authentic pieces of sculpture or as fakes, see Orietta Rossi Pinelli, "Artisti, Falsari o Filologhi?: Da Cavaceppi a Canova, Il Restauro della Scultura tra Arte e Scienza," Ricerche di Storia dell'Arte 13/14. Il Neoclassicismo tra rivoluzione e restaurazione (1981): 41-56.Two of the most popular restorers in Rome were Bartolomeo Cavaceppi and Vincenzo Pacetti. For more on restoration in Rome and on their work in particular, see Seymour Howard, Antiquity Restored: Essays on the Afterlife of the Antique, Bibliotheca Artibus et Historiae (Vienna: IRSA, 1990).

process of working in marble stymied viewers who did not understand the nuances of the technical process.[60] One thing that all Canova's exhibition techniques have in common, therefore, is the way they demand that viewers perform connoisseurship in *multiple* ways. Looking at Canova's works required viewers to test different skills, and to educate their vision and their judgment in numerous ways. The sculptor wanted viewers to admire his careful conception of subjects, to understand his selection of iconographic details, and to appreciate his talent as a carver. It was for this reason, for instance, that he explained *Triumphant Perseus*' Phrygian cap via a written label, ensuring visitors fully understood his choice of iconography. [61] Likewise, torchlight accentuated the rippling muscles and anatomical correctness of Canova's more heroic works, but only if a viewer looked closely.[62] His paintings, fake "Giorgiones," also required viewers to consider the

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[60] Richard Wrigley, for instance, points out that sculptural criticism in the eighteenth century was often devoid of any technical language. Critics sought out other means for discussing sculpture, often falling back on the question of propriety, seduction, and desire, particularly in the face of marble nudes. Malcolm Baker likewise argues that in the eighteenth century there was "an absence of any sustained discussion of sculpture"; as a result, viewers often focused on the sculpture's setting, which allowed them to create a narrative for the sculpture and interpret its meaning—regardless of whether the sculpture was conceived with the setting in mind. See Richard Wrigley, "Sculpture and the Language of Criticism in Eighteenth-Century France," Augustin Pajou et ses contemporains: actes du colloque organisé au Musée du Louvre par le service culturel les 7 et 8 Novembre 1997, ed. Guilhem Scherf (Paris: Documentation française, 1999) 75-89 and Malcolm Baker, Figured in Marble: The Making and Viewing of Eighteenth-Century Sculpture (London V & A Publications, 2000) 9 and 15-17.

[61] See Olga Raggio, "Canova's Triumphant 'Perseus'," Connoisseur 129 (1969): 212.

[62] Sometimes this strategy backfired, for the Second Earl of Minto felt that Canova's sculptures actually suffered in candlelight during his visit to the Vatican. "I was very curious to see how Canova's three statues would endure a test which added so much to the charms of the fine works about them. The first thing that struck me on entering was the exceeding deadness and coldness of the marble, which looked more like plaister [*sic*]. I think that the affectation of the Perseus was a little softened. But so far from gaining anything, neither that nor the boxers displayed so much of the merit (such as it is) of the execution as they do by daylight, and they all showed very distinctly how far Canova (the most laborious and patient finisher of all modern artists) falls short of the unwearied minuteness of the old masters. This I did not expect; the defects of his style and composition were apparent at first sight, but I was not conscious how much less work he put in his statues. The truth is that Canova's excellence consists in the delicacy & softness with which he finishes the surface of his marble after the clay or plaister model. It is in the modelling that he fails even in the execution of the subject such as he has conceived it. It is in general only the greater contours he exhibits; these are highly finished, but all the slight shading of anatomical detail is absolutely omitted, whilst in his male figures the details that are given are offensively exaggerated, and from strained

painting's technique, color, surface and style seriously. Certainly Canova at times was successful at fooling viewers, but beholders' who gave his paintings deliberate attention soon became aware of the joke. Nicola Passeri, for instance, "at first glance" was duped by Canova's portrait of the medieval warrior, *Ezzelino da Romano* (fig. 57). Once he "got closer" to the painting, however, the illusion that it was by an Old Master was destroyed and he realized it had been finished recently.[63] In other instances, Canova's finishing techniques created a "yellow tinge... [that gave his sculptures] a colour similar to that of parian marble, and an appearance of antiques."[64] Only a true antiquarian would know the work was not ancient. Finally, even the juxtapositions between *Perseus* and *Apollo* and *Hercules and Lychas* and the *Hercules Farnese* forced beholders into comparative viewing—still a basic tool for art historians.[65]

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muscles and starting sinews the eyes suddenly drop upon a surface of round marble without a shade in it. Torchlight, which shews [sic] every touch, betrays the poverty of Canova's work, for in his three statues in the Vatican a Greek artist would only have seen the sketch of the subject in which the great muscles were left to be softened down, and in which the whole of the lesser detail remained to be supplied. Having been much delighted with the progress of modern sculpture in Rome, I was sadly mortified to find how little the best living artists could bear the comparison with ordinary ancient sculpture, and how wide the interval by which they fall short of the models they profess to study." As quoted in Iain Gordon Brown, "Canova, Thorvaldsen and the Ancients: A Scottish View of Sculpture in Rome, 1821-22," The Three Graces, Antonio Canova, ed. Timothy Clifford (Edinburgh: National Galleries of Scotland, 1995) 77-78.

Likewise, an anonymous writer in the *New Monthly Magazine* wrote, "It is remarkable that when viewed by torchlight beside the production of the ancients, his [Canova's] works lose almost all their character, and sink into feeble copies." "Walks in Rome and Its Environs. No. VI. Thorwaltzen the Sculptor," The New Monthly Magazine and Literary Journal 19 (1827. Part 1. Original Papers): 229., reprinted in "Thorwaltzen the Sculptor (from the New Monthly Magazine)," Museum of Foreign Literature and Science X (May 1827): 458-66.

[63] Letter from Nicola Passeri to Canova, April 23, 1795. "Di egual sorpresa mi è stato il piccolo quadro rappresentante una grandiosa testa di un fiero guerriero, che l'accennato Sig[nor] Conte [Torre della Rezzonico] mi fece vedere, e vacillare per conoscere l'autore. A primo colpo mi parve un opera di Giorgione, ma avvicinandomi conobbi che il quadro era fatto di fresco." He goes on, unsurprisingly, to lavish Canova's skills with praise. Cited in Fardella, Antonio Canova a Napoli: Tra Collezionismo e Mercato 148-49.

[64] Baron d'Uklanski, Travels in Upper Italy, Tuscany, and the Ecclesiastical State, in 1807 and 1808, as quoted in Honour, "Canova's Studio Practice II: 1791-1822," 219.

[65] Maria Antonietta de Angelis argues that Canova played a large role in determining the decoration of and arrangement of objects in the "Braccio Nuovo" of the Museo Chiaramonti constructed by Raffaello Stern.

Throughout Europe, the staging of sculptures organized by Canova and his patrons generated discussion about the appropriate ways to look at, talk about, and write about sculpture. By stitching together the fragments of visual evidence with numerous textual citations, I trace four key exhibitions of Canova's work in four major European centers: Rome, Naples, Venice and Paris, spanning the period from 1780-1843. Indeed, one of the great challenges of the dissertation has been dealing with the politically and socially fragmented period around 1800.[66] Each of the exhibitions I examine therefore not only plays a central role in determining aesthetic experience, but also reflects the political vagaries of the period and the way Canova's sculptures could easily be co-opted into various political narratives—including some not of his own making.

An additional aspect that ties these exhibitions together is the way critics in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries relied on well-known aesthetic theories in their discussion of Canova's works: imitation, invention, execution, expression, and the *paragone*. These concepts had certainly concerned artists and theorists for centuries. Yet, the way they were understood in the period around 1800, particularly with respect to Canova's works, reflects a fundamental shift that was particular to that historical moment. Although these themes had been important concerns for artists working before the end of the century, these artistic concepts tended to be considered primarily from the point of view of artistic production. The importance placed on display and the subsequent emphasis consigned to the art of careful looking generated by Canova's works shifted the

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She argues that Canova's interest likewise extended to lighting and lighting effects. See De Angelis, "Il 'Braccio Nuovo' del Museo Chiaramonti: Un Prototipo di Museo tra Passato e Futuro," 208-09.

[66] For an overview of how divided the Italian peninsula was in the eighteenth century, see Paula Findlen, "Introduction," Italy's Eighteenth Century: Gender and Culture in the Age of the Grand Tour, eds. Paula Findlen, Wendy Wassyng Roworth and Catherine M. Sama (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2009) esp. 8-17.

focus. The logic of these exhibitions was such that these terms took on new and important meanings which were understood from the point of view of the beholder, rather than that of the creator.

Indeed, it is nearly impossible to overstress the role of the beholder when considering the dynamic relationship between Canova, his statues, and the manner in which they were displayed. Given that the historical record does not always reveal the details or motivations behind either Canova's or his patrons' sculptural stagings, it is often through viewer accounts that we learn not only how visitors reacted to Canova's works, but, in fact, the very arrangement of displays themselves. This dissertation, therefore, is as preoccupied with the reception of Canova's works of art as it is with his and his patrons' display strategies. More than simply revealing details of these exhibitions, however, the intensity of visitors' responses to Canova's work also signal the way that his sculptures took on a wide-variety of meanings that he and his patrons could not always control. At times these meanings were political, but they were also tied to larger aesthetic and historical issues. Certainly, the audience who saw Canova's works in private collections and museums was diverse and wide-ranging, composed as it was of Italians and foreigners alike, artists, connoisseurs, critics, statesmen, or simply educated members of the middle and upper classes. This range accounts, in part, for the breadth of potential meanings visitors discovered in Canova's works. But what is perhaps most striking is that these diverse visitors *continued* to find meaning, validity, and subjects for debate in Canova's work for such a *long* period of time. That is, the sixty-year span I interrogate, from 1780-1843, undergoes numerous political, historical and social transformations, to which I have already alluded above. Yet throughout *all* of these

changes, Canova's sculptures remain a focal point for discussions of politics, cultural heritage, archaeology, connoisseurship, artistic production and the development of art history itself. Perhaps no other artist's work from the period was so continuously at the heart of aesthetic and political issues.

I have focused largely on three Italian centers because Italy was the center of origin for many of aspects of Canova's stagings. Italy, with its profusion of ancient sculpture and Renaissance masterpieces, most inspired the "sculptural imagination," to use Alex Pott's phrase.[67] It was in Italy, I would argue, more than any other country, where viewers in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries contemplated, discussed, and engaged with sculpture on an unprecedented scale. It was also the center for artistic instruction in Europe, and no other place attracted so many young, enthusiastic and talented artists who hoped to absorb the lessons of the ancients while also making a name for themselves.

Rome, the setting of my first chapter, was *the* center of artistic training in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries for painters and sculptors alike. Canova himself traveled to the papal capital in order to seriously study the city's artistic legacy. It was there that he began to pay careful attention to the manner in which display affected beholders' interaction with his works of art. The encouragement of attentive, embodied viewing techniques became a regular part of Canova's artistic practice in the papal capital. For instance, Canova created paintings and sculptures that were presented as ancient and Renaissance masterpieces, yet these "fakes" could be identified as modern works if viewers paid careful attention to their style, surface, and composition. These

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[67] Alex Potts, The Sculptural Imagination: Figurative, Modernist, Minimalist (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2000).

works built Canova's reputation as an artist. He further reinforced the claims that his work was on par with works of the ancients by exhibiting *Triumphant Perseus* next to a cast of the *Apollo Belvedere*. Although this comparison was meant to highlight Canova's innovative "imitation" of antiquity, Canova soon lost control over the way his work was perceived by beholders. The changing political circumstances of the period, and the different locations in which this comparison took place—namely, Canova's studio and subsequently the Museo Pio-Clementino—altered the way "imitation" was understood. From 1801-1820, the term was increasingly understood in a pejorative light. Displays of Canova's work in Rome therefore generated conversations regarding the creative process, the definition of imitation, and the importance setting and political circumstances had on the understanding of his work.

In Naples, on the other hand, the exhibition of *Venus and Adonis* launched a city-wide debate regarding modes of artistic production and the best means of communicating those artistic possibilities to an audience. Naples has generally received short thrift in English scholarship, but as the third largest city in Europe at the time, a major archaeological center and thriving community of artists and literati, it too played an important role in the reception of Canova's work. Although the degree of Canova's involvement in the exhibition of *Venus and Adonis* in a tempietto in the garden of the palazzo of its patron, Francesco Maria Berio, Marchese di Salza, is unknown, the city's flourishing literary scene has left a rich record of reactions to the sculpture. Using Canova's statue as a jumping off point, writers imagined Canova's working process in detail, from it conceptual origins (invention) to the final carving of the piece (execution). Anchoring the sculptural process on these two poles not only simplified the real labor that

went into sculptural production, but it also established two opposing means by which to describe and communicate the sculptor's labor to a broader audience. Which of these two descriptions was the most effective, however, subsequently became the subject of heated debate, as writers argued not only about the way Canova himself approached the act of sculpting, but more importantly, about the relationship between art and writing. At the heart of the argument were discussions regarding the nature of *ekphrasis*, its relation to classical and contemporary education and the writing of art history.

In Venice, communicating Canova's artistic objectives to a broader audience remained a concern. More importantly, however, the exhibition of Canova's *Polinnia* in the Accademia di Belle Arti, which had recently opened a new public painting gallery in 1817, reflected the way the space of the museum could be easily co-opted for both personal and nationalist ambitions. Leopoldo Cicognara, one of the most prominent theoreticians and critics of the period, exploited his position as the director of the Academy to enforce what might be called a new curatorial focus. By exhibiting Canova's *Polinnia* in the Accademia's new *pinacoteca* with recently restored Venetian Old Master paintings, including Titian's *Assumption of the Virgin*, Cicognara constructed a clear, understandable narrative for a diverse audience that merged politics and aesthetics. He literally enacted the *paragone*, or competition between painting and sculpture, in order to reaffirm the Veneto's artistic authority in a moment of political decline.

Given the primacy French art has held in the study of the nineteenth century, I hope serious reevaluation of this period will contribute to a renewed understanding of the importance Italy had for the history of art at the turn of the century. Yet, I conclude the project by focusing on Paris. It was there, in the French capital, where Canova's *Penitent*

Magdalene launched a discussion about expression and the emotional resonance of art. Exhibited first in the 1808 Salon and subsequently in an intimate space in the townhouse of Giambattista Sommariva, *Magdalene's* emotional despair encouraged visitors to reflect on their own sentiments as they gazed upon her. This self-reflection on the part of beholders had numerous consequences. It reinforced notions of individuality and the self, and established Canova's *Magdalene* as a particularly "French" and modern work, but, equally important, it also forged a direct link between emotional resonance and aesthetic value. This interpretation, I argue, ultimately had the greatest impact on Canova's reputation and historiography. In Paris, the focus on expression established a more universal model by which sculpture could be appreciated—one that was in contradistinction to the more elitist model of art criticism that remained powerful in Italy.

Happily, reevaluation of Canova's *œuvre* in the 1950s by Italian scholars such as Giulio Carlo Argan and Elena Bassi revived Canova's reputation from the nadir to which it had descended in the early twentieth century.[68] In the 1970s, seminal writings by the art historian Hugh Honour not only clarified Canova's studio practice, but also established his close relationship to the British community in Rome. [69] Most recently, Honour has explored Canova's inventive relationship to printmaking and reproduction.[70] His studies

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[68] See Elena Bassi, La Gipsoteca di Possagno; Sculture e Dipinti di Antonio Canova, Cataloghi di Raccolte d'Arte; 3, 1. ed. (Venezia: N. Pozza, 1957); Elena Bassi, ed., Il Museo Civico di Bassano. I Disegni di Antonio Canova (Venezia: Neri Pozza Editore, 1959); and Giulio Carlo Argan, Antonio Canova, Università degli Studi di Roma. Facoltà di Lettere e Filosofia, ed. Elisa Debenedetti (Roma: Mario Bulzoni, 1968-69).

[69] Hugh Honour, "Canova's Studio Practice I: The Early Years," The Burlington Magazine 114.828 (March 1972): 146-59; Honour, "Canova's Studio Practice II: 1791-1822," 214-29; Hugh Honour, "Antonio Canova and the Anglo-Romans. Part I. The First Visit to Rome," The Connoisseur (May 1979): 241-45; and Hugh Honour, "Antonio Canova and the Anglo-Romans. Part II. The First Years in Rome," The Connoisseur (December 1979): 225-31.

[70] Hugh Honour, "Canova and His Printmakers," Print Quarterly 12.3 (1995): 253-75; Grazia Bernini Pezzini, Fabio Fiorani and Hugh Honour, eds., Canova e l'Incisione, 1. ed. (Bassano del Grappa Italy:

on the great artist have contributed to our understanding of Canova as a savvy, self-conscious businessman—not to mention the fact that they have added broadly to our understanding of the artistic production of the period. Indeed, Canova's relationship to Neoclassicism in general has also generated new interest, as in the excellent surveys of the movement by Carlo Sisi and Fernando Mazzocca.[71]

In the past thirty years Italian scholars have contributed immensely to the study of the artist. In the past twenty years alone, for instance, there have been no less than eleven exhibitions centered on his work, at least eight of which have been organized by Italian museums. Exploring both his sculptures and their formal values as well the visual culture of "the cult of Canova"—paintings of the artist, prints after his work, and an abundance of decorative and commemorative objects—these exhibition have brought to light some marvelous and understudied works of art.[72] The Istituto di ricerca per gli studi su Canova e il neoclassicismo, directed by some of the leading Canova scholars, including Gian Antonio Venturi, Giuliana Ericani, Hugh Honour, Fernando Mazzocca,

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Ghedina & Tassotti, 1993); and Hugh Honour, I Gessi di Canova per l'Ambasciatore Zulian: Una Testimonianza di Amicizia e di Mecenatismo Illuminato (Milano: C. Orsi, 2007).

[71] See also Fernando Mazzocca, ed., Il Neoclassicismo in Italia: Da Tiepolo a Canova (Milano and Firenze: Skira; Artificio, 2002) and Carlo Sisi, L'Ottocento in Italia: Le Arti Sorelle, 2 vols. (Milano: Electa, 2005).

[72] These exhibitions include Museo Correr and Museo canoviano, Canova, English language ed. (New York, N.Y.: Marsilio: Distributed in the U.S.A. by Rizzoli, 1992); Sergei Androsov, ed., Alle Origini di Canova: Le Terracotte della Collezione Farsetti (Venezia: Marsilio, 1991); Bernini Pezzini, Fiorani and Honour, eds., Canova e l'Incisione; Timothy Clifford, Hugh Honour, John Kenworthy-Browne, Iain Gordon Brown and Aidan Weston-Lewis, eds., Three Graces: Antonio Canova (Edinburgh: National Gallery of Scotland, 1995); Katharine Eustace, ed., Canova: Ideal Heads (Oxford: Ashmolean Museum, 1997); Fabrizio Magani and Paolo Mariuz, eds., Canova e l'Accademia: Il Maestro e gli Allievi (Treviso: Canova, 2002); Anna Coliva and Fernando Mazzocca, eds., Canova e la Venere Vincitrice (Milano: Electa, 2007); Museo Canoviano and Fondazione Canova (Possagno Italy), La Mano e il Volto di Antonio Canova: Nobile Semplicità, Serena Grandezza ([Treviso, Italy]: Canova, 2008); Sergei Androsov and Fernando Mazzocca, eds., Canova alla Corte degli Zar: Capolavori dall'Ermitage di San Pietroburgo, 1. ed. (Milano: F. Motta, 2008); and Sergei Androsov, Fernando Mazzocca, Antonio Paolucci, Stefano Grandesso and Francesco Leone, eds., Canova: l'Ideale Classico tra Scultura e Pittura (Cinisello Balsamo, Milano: Silvana, 2009).

Manlio Pastore Stocchi, Giuseppe Pavanello, and Fabrizio Magani, also organize an annual conference on the sculptor. Now in its eleventh year, the conference does an admirable job of bringing together international scholars for discussions of "Canovian" themes. These profoundly interesting talks have brought to light an immense amount of archival research on Canova, his patrons, and the cultural circumstances of his artistic production.[73]

This same institute has taken it upon itself to republish a significant number of volumes of nineteenth-century writing on the artist, making texts that were otherwise difficult to access available to a broader public.[74] They have also begun the ambitious

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[73] The publications of these conference proceedings include Manlio Pastore Stocchi, ed., Canova Direttore di Musei: I Settimana di Studi Canoviani, Studi (Bassano del Grappa: Istituto di ricerca per gli studi su Canova e il neoclassicismo, 2004); Manlio Pastore Stocchi, ed., Il Primato della Scultura: Fortuna dell'Antico, Fortuna di Canova: II Settimana di Studi Canoviani, Studi; (Bassano del Grappa: Istituto di ricerche per gli studi su Canova e il neoclassicismo, 2004); Fernando Mazzocca and Gianni Venturi, eds., Antonio Canova: La Cultura Figurativa e Letteraria dei Grandi Centri Italiani. 1. Venezia e Roma. III Settimana di Studi Canoviani (Bassano del Grappa: Istituto di ricerca per gli studi su Canova e il neoclassicismo, 2005); Fernando Mazzocca and Gianni Venturi, eds., Antonio Canova: La Cultura Figurativa e Letteraria dei Grandi Centri Italiani. 2. Milano, Firenze, Napoli. IV Settimana di Studi Canoviani (Bassano del Grappa: Istituto di ricerca per gli studi su Canova e il neoclassicismo, 2006); Fernando Mazzocca and Manlio Pastore Stocchi, eds., La Gloria di Canova: V Settimana di Studi Canoviani (Bassano del Grappa: Istituto di ricerca per gli studi su Canova e il neoclassicismo, 2007); Giulia Ericani and Fernando Mazzocca, eds., Committenti, Mecenati, e Collezionisti di Canova, I. VI Settimana di Studi Canoviani (Bassano del Grappa: Istituto di ricerca per gli studi su Canova e il neoclassicismo, 2008); and Giulia Ericani and Fernando Mazzocca, eds., Committenti, Mecenati, e Collezionisti di Canova, 2. VII Settimana di Studi Canoviani (Bassano del Grappa: Istituto di ricerca per gli studi su Canova e il neoclassicismo, 2009).

[74] These include Faustino Tadini, Le Sculture e le Pitture di Antonio Canova Pubblicate Fino a quest'Anno 1795, I Testi, ed. Gianni Venturi (Bassano del Grappa: Istituto di ricerca per gli studi su Canova e il neoclassicismo, 1998); Antonio d'Este, Memorie di Antonio Canova, ed. Paolo Mariuz (Bassano del Grappa: Istituto di ricerca per gli studi su Canova e il neoclassicismo, 1999); Giuseppe Falier, Memorie per Servire alla Vita del Marchese Antonio Canova, I Testi, ed. Giuseppe Pavanello (Bassano del Grappa: Istituto di ricerca per gli studi su Canova e il neoclassicismo, 2000); Pier Alessandro Paravia, Notizie Intorno alla Vita di Canova, I Testi, ed. Ranieri Varese (Bassano del Grappa Italy: Istituto di ricerca per gli studi su Canova e il neoclassicismo, 2001); Giovanni Rosini, Saggio sulla Vita e sulle Opere di Antonio Canova, I Testi, ed. Carlo Sisi (Bassano del Grappa: Istituto di ricerca per gli studi su Canova e il neoclassicismo, 2002); Isabella Teotochi Albrizzi, Opere di Scultura e di Plastica di Antonio Canova, I Testi, eds. Manlio Pastore Stocchi and Gianni Venturi, (Bassano del Grappa: Istituto di ricerca per gli studi su Canova e il neoclassicismo, 2003); Melchior Missirini, Della Vita di Antonio Canova: Libri Quattro, I Testi; 7, ed. Francesco Leone (Bassano del Grappa: Istituto di ricerca per gli studi su Canova e il neoclassicismo, 2004); Antonio Pochini, Biblioteca Canoviana, Ossia Raccolta delle Migliori Prose, e de' più Scelti Componimenti Poetici sulla Vita, sulle Opere ed in Morte di Antonio Canova, I Testi (Istituto di

project to transcribe all of Canova's letters—a feat that will no doubt take years, considering the six thousand letters that exist in the archive at Bassano del Grappa alone. But even if these works trickle out slowly—the most recent publication for instance, contained all the correspondence to and from Canova for the years 1816 and 1817—they will be a boon to scholars of sculpture and nineteenth-century art in general.[75] Likewise, a renewed interest in and awareness of the importance that plaster casts held for the period—as part of the process of sculptural production, as study collections, as gifts and as mementoes—has led to renewed appreciation for casts of Canova's work. This attention to his casts and to the Gipsoteca in general has also resulted in several conferences held at the Museo Canova in Possagno.[76]

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ricerca per gli studi su Canova e il neoclassicismo), eds. Arnaldo Bruni, Manlio Pastore Stocchi and Gianni Venturi, 4 v. in 2 vols. (Bassano del Grappa: Istituto di ricerca per gli studi su Canova e il neoclassicismo, 2005); Carl Ludwig Fernow, Über den Bildhauer Canova und dessen Werke, trans. Alexander Auf der Heyde, I Testi; 9 (Bassano del Grappa: Istituto di ricerca per gli studi su Canova e il neoclassicismo, 2006); Canova and Quatremère de Quincy, Il Carteggio Canova-Quatremère de Quincy, 1785-1822; Leopoldo Cicognara, Storia della Scultura dal suo Risorgimento in Italia Fino al Secolo di Canova del Conte Leopoldo Cicognara per Servire di Continuazione all'Opere di Winckelmann e di d'Agincourt, eds. Francesco Leone, Barbara Steindl and Gianni Venturi, 2 ed. riveduta ed ampliata dall'autore, 8 vols. (Bassano del Grappa: Istituto di ricerca per gli studi su Canova e il neoclassicismo, 2007).

Numerous documents in the archive at Bassano del Grappa, such as Canova's diary of his 1778-1779 trip to Rome, have also been published. The diary, first published by Elena Bassi in 1959, has been republished with still more primary materials in Hugh Honour and Paolo Mariuz, eds., Scritti (Roma: Salerno, 2007).

Two recent publications from institutions other than the Istituto di ricerca that contain a wealth of archival material include Pietro Giordani, Antonio Canova and Giovanni Battista Sartori, Carteggio, eds. Matteo Ceppi and Claudio Giambonini (Piacenza: TipLeCo, 2004) and Marco Albertiano, ed., Antonio Canova nelle Collezioni dell'Accademia Tadini (Lovere: Accademia di Belle Arti Tadini, 2009).

[75] See, for instance, Antonio Canova, Epistolario (1816-1817), eds. Hugh Honour and Paolo Mariuz, 2 vols. (Roma: Salerno, 2002).

[76] Bassi, La Gipsoteca di Possagno; Sculture e Dipinti di Antonio Canova; Elena Bassi, Antonio Canova a Possagno. Catalogo delle Opere, Guida alla Visita della Gipsoteca, Casa e Tempio (Treviso: Canova, 1972); Paolo Cusenza, Mauro Negro and Manlio Brusatin, Canova Gypsotheca (Treviso, Italy: Vianello Libri, 1987); Antonio Canova: Arte e Memoria a Possagno, (Ponzano (Treviso): Vianello, 2004); Mario Guderzo, Gipsoteche: Realtà e Storia: Atti del Convegno Internazionale di Studi: Possagno, 19-20 Maggio 2006, Quaderni del Centro Studi Canoviani (Treviso: Canova, 2008); Mario Guderzo, Gli Ateliers degli Scultori: Atti del Secondo Convegno Internazionale Sulle Gipsoteche, Possagno, 24-25 Ottobre 2008, Quaderni del Centro Studi Canoviani (Possagno and Crocetta del Montello,Treviso, Italy: Fondazione Canova; Terra ferma, 2010); and Honour, I Gessi di Canova per l'Ambasciatore Zulian: Una Testimonianza di Amicizia e di Mecenatismo Illuminato.

In Britain, numerous scholars have tackled the subject of Canova's British patrons. Malcolm Baker has examined the setting and staging of Canova's sculptures and has provided a valuable model for my own investigation of Canova's display practices.[77] The surfaces of Canova's work have also attracted attention, notably by Alex Potts, whose evocative exploration of the sensual nature of Canova's "surface values" have enabled him to be reappropriated into the modernist tradition.[78] Likewise Satish Padiyar has explored the erotic "skin" of Canova's sculptures in relation to modern subjectivity.[79] American scholars have also recently joined the discussion. Christopher Johns' important book on the malleable political connotations of Canova's work and Erika Naginski's identification of the *Penitent Magdalene* as an expiatory symbol of the guilt of the Terror are two significant contributions.[80]

This dissertation hopes to contribute to this impressive literature by arguing that these performative moments and ephemeral stagings, which have been omitted from more traditional art historical studies, were a central part of Canova's artistic practice. His fascination with the hairstyles of the young ladies of Possagno, in the end, is a logical, if extreme, conclusion to a lifetime of manipulating his audience's experience. Despite the reputation he has received as a staid and conservative artist, Canova was profoundly innovative in terms of his exhibition practices and theatrical sensibilities. Not

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[77] Baker, Figured in Marble: The Making and Viewing of Eighteenth-Century Sculpture.

[78] See Alex Potts, The Sculptural Imagination: Figurative, Modernist, Minimalist, esp. "Surface Values," 38-60.

[79] Satish Padiyar, Chains: David, Canova, and the Fall of the Public Hero in Postrevolutionary France (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2007) 119–41.

[80] Christopher M. S. Johns, Antonio Canova and the Politics of Patronage in Revolutionary and Napoleonic Europe (Berkeley, London: University of California Press, 1998) and Erika Naginski, "Canova's 'Penitent Magdalene': On Trauma's Prehistory," Trauma and Visuality in Modernity, eds. Lisa Saltzman and Eric M. Rosenberg (Hanover: Dartmouth College Press: University Press of New England, 2006) 51-81.

only did he employ innovative techniques in order to increase the value of his sculptures, but he likewise shrewdly relied on sculptural displays to engage his audience in a debate about the nature of looking at art. He understood that viewers needed to spend time looking at objects and did not hesitate to create environments and use techniques that would force them to do so. Viewers might respond simply with increased admiration for his works, or they might be drawn into serious reflection on originality, authenticity, and even the definition of art itself. Regardless, Canova's displays brought to the fore new models of viewing and connoisseurship. These remain fundamental to the discipline to this day, for performing connoisseurship continues to have far-reaching economic, social, and academic repercussions.

Chapter One

Rome:
Canova's Exhibition Strategies (or, Imitation)

"'*Ebbene*', said the Ambassador, '*andiamo a vederne l'originale*,'—'Come, let us terminate these disputes by going to see the original.'[1]

"Original," "imitation," "copy," "fake," or simply "academic exercise"? These terms took on a new, pregnant meaning in Rome at the end of the eighteenth century. Concerns regarding how to accurately pass judgment on a work of art came to a head in the exhibitions of Canova's work in Rome. After his permanent relocation to the city in 1781, the sculptor discovered that refined carving was only one part of the recipe for success. Equally crucial were the setting and display of his sculptures, and it was in Rome that Canova began to test new exhibition strategies, which included rotating pedestals, strategic lighting, and juxtapositions with casts of famous masterpieces. At the same time, he quickly learned that reiterating connections between ancient works and his own, modern ones—at times, even passing his own pieces off as antique sculptures or Old Master paintings—created a flourishing (if one-sided) rivalry which increased the value of his own work.

Rome, more than any other European city, was the center of the art world in the eighteenth century. The city had a vigorous and thriving art market, and the excavation of antique works occurring right in the heart of the city, the foundation of modern museums

[1] J. S. Memes, Memoirs of Antonio Canova, with a Critical Analysis of His Works, and an Historical View of Modern Sculpture (Edinburgh: A. Constable & Co., 1825) 295-96.

such as the Museo Pio-Clementino and the Capitoline, [2] and the abundance of Renaissance and Baroque art and architecture drew visitors from all of Europe.[3] It was a city to which artists flocked, so that they could study every branch of the arts, in the hope of obtaining artistic triumph (and financial success). This was certainly the case with Canova, whose art, biographers frequently stress, was dramatically altered by his encounter with the art and artists of the Papal capital.[4] It was in the midst of this environment that Canova created academic exercises that could be passed off as original, "ancient" works to vaunt his skills and reflect the profundity of his artistic education.

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[2] For a general history of the Vatican Museums, see the beautifully illustrated book, Carlo Pietrangeli, The Vatican Museums: Five Centuries of History (Rome: Quasar: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1993).

Several authors have reiterated the importance the Vatican Museums held in the eighteenth century. Jeffrey Collins, for instance, argues that Grand Tourists' vision of the Vatican influenced its evolving character and reception. In addition, Pope Pius VI used artistic patronage to help shape political discourse and to strengthen both his and the Church's position. See Jeffrey Collins, "The Gods' Abode: Pius VI and the Invention of the Vatican Museum," The Impact of Italy: The Grand Tour and Beyond, ed. Clare Hornsby (London: The British School at Rome, 2000) 173-94 and Jeffrey Laird Collins, Papacy and Politics in Eighteenth-Century Rome: Pius VI and the Arts (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

Paolo Liverani likewise explores the history of the Museo Pio-Clementino, arguing that the emphasis on classical antiquity in the museum's collections created a "neutral" non-religious space that enabled people from different background and faiths to commingle. Paolo Liverani, "The Museo Pio-Clementino at the Time of the Grand Tour," Journal of the History of Collections 12.2 (2000): 151-59. The Museo Pio-Clementino's collection was engraved and described by Ennio Quirino Visconti. Giambattista Visconti and Ennio Quirino Visconti, Il Museo Pio-Clementino, 7 vols. (Roma: 1782-1807).

[3] As Leopoldo Cicognara wrote in a letter to Canova, "It is true, according to me, that the promotion of excavations, the discovery of Herculaneum, the illustrations and monuments of the Greek figured vases, the disinterment and publication of the drawings of the baths, the prints of the Vatican loggias, the enlargement of the Museo Pio-Clementino, the works of Piranesi, the stay of English visitors in Rome all improved Rome before your arrival." Letter from Leopoldo Cicognara to Canova, March 8, 1817. "È vero secondo me, che gli scavi incoraggiati, la scoperta d'Ercolano, le illustrazioni dei monumenti e dei vasi greci figulini, il dissotterramento e pubblicazione dei disegni delle terme, lo stamparsi delle logge vaticane, l'amplificazione del Museo Pio Clementino; le stampe tanto di questo, che del Capitolino, le opere di Piranesi, il soggiorno degli inglesi in Italia avidi di antichità, il ristauro dei monumenti, tutte queste circostanze riunite contribuirono assai a migliorare prima che voi arrivaste a Roma il gusto dell'arte: e nel capire che la scossa maggiore venne ad ogni ramo di imitazione per le vostre opere, non parmi che esclude le altre cause, che vorrei però riconoscere quali fossero le precedenti, e quali le assolutamente contemporanee." Leopoldo Cicognara, Lettere Inedite di Leopoldo Cicognara ad Antonio Canova (Padova: Coi tipi della Minerva, 1839) 29. Also cited in Canova, Epistolario (1816-1817), vol. 2, 725.

[4] In addition to the letter by Leopoldo Cicognara quoted previously, see also Memes, Memoirs of Antonio Canova, with a Critical Analysis of His Works, and an Historical View of Modern Sculpture 290-91.

Whether these were perceived as fakes or forgeries—or merely extremely gifted modern productions—often had to with the way they were presented to and received by an audience.

Mimicking the antique was, in part, simply a tried-and-true aspect of artistic training. That is, "imitation," whether of antiquity, Old Master paintings, or nature itself was a critical part of artistic practice and authorship.[5] Originally intended as a generative act of creation, imitation had a positive connotation in the early eighteenth century. With, however, a powerful collision of concerns—of authorship on the one hand, and viewership on the other—the nature of imitation was radically transformed by the beginning of the nineteenth century. It was no longer understood as *emulation*, nor was it seen as a critical part of the creative process. As a strategy upon which the artist could rely for training and education, imitation became suspect. It was transformed instead into a term considered primarily from the point of view of the beholder. As a result, the meaning of imitation soon devolved and opened itself up—and all the works that used it as a guide—to increasing criticism as mere "copying."

The depreciation of imitation had a profound effect on the reception of Canova's work. Although Canova's commercial, political and critical success had fully secured his reputation by the turn of the century, his tendency to juxtapose his works with ancient masterpieces returned to haunt him. The endless search for sources on the part of viewers,

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[5] Perhaps the most well-known promoter of "imitation" was the famous eighteenth-century theorist Johann Winckelmann. See Johann Joachim Winckelmann, Reflections on the Imitation of Greek Works in Painting and Sculpture, trans. Elfriede Heyer and Roger C. Norton, Open Court Classics (La Salle, Illinois: Open Court, 1987). For the history of the theory, see also James Ackerman, "Imitation," Antiquity and Its Interpreters, eds. Alina Payne, Ann Kuttner and Rebekah Smick (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000) 9-15; Moshe Barasch, Modern Theories of Art, 1: From Winckelmann to Baudelaire (New York: New York University Press, 1990) 109-13; and François Quiviger, "Renaissance Art Theories," A Companion to Art Theory, eds. Paul Smith and Carolyn Wilde (Oxford: Blackwell, 2002) 55-56.

their contact with original antiquities, and their increased sensitivity to similarities between works—brought out, in part, by their fear of being duped—had the unfortunate effect of devaluing many of his pieces in the eyes of his beholders. Whereas once viewers may have seen creative ingenuity and an admirable reverence to his sources, by the 1820s, shortly after his death, they saw only replication and plagiarism.[6] The display of Canova's work in Rome, therefore, raised fundamental questions about the nature of authorship. These exhibitions, particularly in the context of new museums, were the center of a maelstrom of shifting and variable definitions of imitation, original and copy. It was in Rome where modern definitions of "original" and "copy" emerged, hand in hand—and where "original" and "copy" were juxtaposed to one another as never before.

Paintings and Parlor Games

As the embodiment of Neoclassicism's unique combination of sensuousness and severity, Canova was most often described by his biographers as devoted, hard-working, and, above all, "modest."[7] "Modesty," however, could hardly be used to describe some of his earliest forays into painting. Two of Canova's many biographers, Melchior Missirini,

[6] Not only did this determine the reaction to Canova's work in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries, this radical transformation in the understanding of imitation continues to have significant aesthetic—not to mention legal—implications more broadly, particularly for contemporary art. Imitation's dual-sided nature when considered from the artist's point of view, as inspiration and part of the creative process, has increasingly become seen as simply stealing on the part of many viewers—particularly those artists whose work has been the creative source for others. Imitation has devolved into a battle between fair use and outright plagiarism. See, for instance, the excellent coda in Elizabeth Cropper's study of Domenichino's *Last Communion of Saint Gerome*, criticized in the seventeenth century as plagiarism. She traces the way the search for sources has had a profound impact on the history of intellectual property legislation and contemporary art, citing recent cases involving the work of Jeff Koons. See Elizabeth Cropper, The Domenichino Affair: Novelty, Imitation, and Theft in Seventeenth-Century Rome (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005) especially 193-207. For more on intellectual property in the United States, see Martha Buskirk, "Commodification as Censor: Copyrights and Fair Use," October 60 (Spring 1992): 82-109.

[7] See note 8 in the introduction.

the secretary of the Accademia di San Luca and Canova's good friend, and Antonio d'Este, the supervisor of his studio, reported that early in Canova's career, the laborious process of working in marble inspired him to try his hand at painting. Sometime in the early 1780s, while at work on the *Monument to Clement XIV*, Canova completed the painting of a Venus, a reclining nude with a mirror, which he subsequently left propped up in an obscure corner of his studio (figs. 58-59). Over time, a patina of dust and dirt accumulated on the surface of the painting, giving it the appearance of a much older work. When Canova finally showed the painting to his patron Don Abbondio Rezzonico, a member of the Roman senate and nephew of Clement XIII, and the painter, Stefano Tofanelli, both of them believed it was a Renaissance work.[8]

His success at this first attempt motivated Canova to begin painting again, and this time he set out deliberately to fool his audience. Having heard of a lost self-portrait by Giorgione, Canova set out to imitate the master's style and recreate the portrait.[9] He did so by obtaining a fifteenth-century painting from an antiquarian, a "bad copy of the holy family," and used prints and a literary description as his guide. Canova carefully

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[8] D'Este recalls this painting in his biography of Canova. See d'Este, Memorie di Antonio Canova 70-71 and 348. For Missirini's account, see Missirini, Della Vita di Antonio Canova: Libri Quattro 123. In a 1795 biography of Canova, Faustino Tadolini claimed the painting's coloring caused people to believe it was a work by Titian. He continued, arguing that an "expert eye" not prejudiced against modern works would also find a "sublimity of line" similar to that in works of the Greek painter Zeuxis. Tadini, Le Sculture e le Pitture di Antonio Canova Pubblicate Fino a quest'Anno 1795 42-43.

Gilbert Bagnani compares intentionally forged works with "fakes in reverse"—"that of objects or documents which, though undoubtedly not authentic, cannot be considered either as fakes or as forgeries." These works of art— copies, studies, hoaxes, parodies or exercises—are produced without an intention to deceive by artists and scholars for their own amusement or instruction and have become "fakes" through ignorance and the passage of time alone. Canova's *Venus with a Mirror* could conceivably fall into this category. See Gilbert Bagnani, "On Fakes and Forgeries," Phoenix 14.4 (Winter 1960): 29.

[9] Wendy Wassyng Roworth also explores the case of Canova's fake Giorgione, including the variations between the biographical accounts. She sets these in the broader context of literary and biographical portrayals of jokes and tricks played by artists and also stresses the importance that Venetian painting held in Rome at the time. See Wendy Wassyng Roworth, "Pulling Parrhasius's Curtain: Trickery and Fakery in the Roman Art World," Regarding Romantic Rome, ed. Richard Wrigley (Bern; New York: P. Lang, 2007) 17-37.

imitated Giorgione's style, "finishing it in such a way that it appeared to be an old painting."[10] His patron, Senator Abbondio Rezzonico, was informed of the joke, and the two carried the ruse one step further (figs. 60-61; Canova's work, now lost, perhaps resembled the Giorgione self-portrait in the Herzog Ulrich Museum). Rezzonico had the painting carefully wrapped and packaged, as though it were a parcel he had just received from his nephew in Venice. During a dinner party attended by a number of artists and antiquarians, including the restorer [Giovanni Battista?] Burri, the scholar Giovanni Gherardo de Rossi, and the painters Angelika Kauffman, Antonio Cavallucci, Giuseppe Cades, and Martino de Bonis, among others, Rezzonico opened the package to the delight of his audience. It was immediately declared to be an "original" work, "una opera bellissima" by Giorgione. Only the restorer Burri expressed doubts, complaining that he thought the right eye was not restored well, to which Kauffman jauntily replied, "I wish I knew how to restore like that."[11]

This deception was not an isolated case in Canova's career. His biographers recount similar tales with regard to at least three different paintings, all of which misled the audience into thinking they were Venetian Renaissance works.[12] In Naples, in 1795, Antonio d'Este amused himself by circulating Canova's portrait of one of the great

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[10] "[...] lo termina in modo, che sembrava un vecchio dipinto." d'Este, Memorie di Antonio Canova 78. Later, d'Este noted, Canova abandoned the painting in his studio, "[...] finchè la patina della polvere e degli anni, prese aspetto di un vecchio quadro." D'Este, Memorie di Antonio Canova 348 and Missirini, Della Vita di Antonio Canova: Libri Quattro 123.

[11] d'Este, Memorie di Antonio Canova 78-79.

[12] For more accounts of Canova's "fakes," see Missirini, Della Vita di Antonio Canova: Libri Quattro 123-25. Memes, one of Canova's British biographers, likewise lists several of Canova's paintings which imitated Venetian masters. See Memes, Memoirs of Antonio Canova, with a Critical Analysis of His Works, and an Historical View of Modern Sculpture 373-75.

medieval warriors, *Ezzelino da Romano*, painted in the style of Giorgione (fig. 5).[13] The work entered the collection of Conte Torre della Rezzonico, who was soon let in on the joke, but other viewers such as Nicola Passeri were fooled by the painting—at least at first. In a letter to Canova on April 23, 1795, Passeri describes the moment when Rezzonico showed him the painting; "at first glance [it] seemed to be a work by Giorgione, but once I got closer I realized that the painting was recently finished."[14] It was only careful inspection that gave the painting's modernity away. Ranieri Calzabigi was equally taken aback by the work, which he felt intermingled the styles of the greatest Venetian artists, "Giorgione, Veronese, Bellini," not to mention "Vasari and the quattrocento Florentine painters." In short, "if the painting were placed in a Royal Gallery, one would attribute it to any one of the great masters and any of the schools, never to a modern."[15]

That Canova intended to deceive at least some of his viewers is clear in his private correspondence, including an exchange with his friend, the Venetian architect Giannantonio Selva from 1796. After exhibiting the faux Giorgione self-portrait in Rome, Canova wrote to Selva on May 14, 1796, and plotted to send him the painting in Venice.

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[13] d'Este, Memorie di Antonio Canova 83. See Marco Nocca, "Un Dipinto Inedito di Antonio Canova Ritrovato a Propaganda Fide: l'*Ezzelino da Romano* (1793)," Bolletino Monumenti, Musei e Gallerie Pontificie 22 (2002): 109-36.

[14] Letter from Nicola Passeri to Canova, April 23, 1795. Cited in Fardella, Antonio Canova a Napoli: Tra Collezionismo e Mercato148-49. See note 63 in the introduction for the full text.

[15] Letter from Ranieri Calzabigi to Canova, April 18, 1795. "Dal Sig[nor] d'Este che mi favorì mi fu fatto l'altro singolar piacere di farmi vedere il suo bel quadro d'un Cap[ita]no d'armi; originale che non ha maestro, non avrà discepoli. Vi è un misto di tutti i gran pittori de'pa[ssa]ti secoli dal tempo che quest'arte nobilissima risorse. Se il suo quadro si mettesse in una Real Galleria si darebbe a tutti i gran maestri e tutte le scole, mai ad un moderno. Il suo gran maestro è la Natura. La scola veneziana vi campeggia. V'è il Giorgione, il Veronese, il Bellini; vi trovo il Vasari, e i primi fiorentini; vi sono i romani ancora. In somma non si può decidere chi abbia messo in mano a lei il pennello. Michel Angelo rimane assai al di sotto. Gli fu dato il vanto di sublime pittore, e scultore; questo a lei veramente appartiene." Cited in Fardella, Antonio Canova a Napoli: Tra Collezionismo e Mercato 28, note 33.

Canova asked Selva to exhibit the work without revealing that he was the artist, in order to see how it was received. Although Canova felt he should not condescend to such deception, he knew word of the painting had arrived in Venice, and therefore was determined to hear how it was judged in circles outside Rome. In Rome proper, Canova was irked by the fact that "one of those people that never wants to make mistakes, but always does, now refuses to believe he was wrong." Indeed, he said, this same expert mistook one of his early Venus paintings—perhaps *Venus with a Mirror*—for a Padovanino.[16] Canova was stunned by the error, writing, "you can well see what a difference there is between Padovanino and the manner of my Venus."[17] Selva readily agreed to his friend's plan, happily anticipating a display which would help Canova "unmask these pretenders who are so often those who are wrong." [18]

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[16] Interestingly, Padovanino (1588-1649) was revered for the way his works imitated those of Titian, reflecting a strong Venetian thread of imitation that stretched from Giorgione, Titian, Padovanino—and finally to Canova. For more on repetition and imitation in Venetian art, see Maria H. Loh, Titian Remade: Repetition and the Transformation of Early Modern Italian Art (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2007).

[17] Canova to Giannantonio Selva, May 14, 1796. "Spedirò poi a voi da qua un mese (cioè quando partirà il senatore Rezzonico) quella testa che vi dissi di aver dipinto sopra una tavola vecchia, la quale poi diedi al Senatore, e che fù presa per antica. Qualcuno di quelli che non vogliono mai sbagliare (e che sbagliano sempre) ora non si degna di essere caduto, ed ha anche detto a persone tutto questo; sicchè io la spedirò a voi secretamente perciò la facciate vedere per terza mano, acciò sentiate il sentimento di qualcuno di costà. Io non dovrei degnarmi di far questo; ma so che costà è arrivata la voce di costui, voglio vedere come le trovano a Venezia.

Sappiate che questa persona infallibile quando vide la mia Venere prima, disse presente il Senatore: *Quest'è un quadro di Padoanino*! Voi ben vedete qual diferenza passi da Padoanino alla maniera della mia Venere. Vi basti dunque questo; ma quanto mai s'inganna! Credevo aver vostre nuove in quest'ordinario; ma forse sarete stato fuori." The original letter is in the Biblioteca Correr (PD 529C), but it has been published (with some modifications) in Lettere Familiari Inedite di Antonio Canova e di Giannantonio Selva. Per le Nozze Persico-Papdopoli (Venezia: dal premiato Stabilimento di G. Antonelli, 1835) 14.

[18] Letter from Giannantonio Selva to Canova, May 21, 1796. "Mandatemi pure il quadro che mi accennate, ed ho di già pensato al modo come farlo vedere, senza far cadere alcun sospetto da chi provenga. Certi pretendenti che vogliono esser infallibili, e che sovente sono quelli che più cadono in errore, è bene lo smascherarli; voi dite che me lo manderete fra un mese col Senatore, ma è facile ch'egli in quest'anno non venga, stante le correnti circostanze: ciò mi disse segretamente il di lui fattore: se ciò fosse, potreste mandarmelo con qualche corriere." Cited in D'Este, Memorie di Antonio Canova 369.

Although modern paintings were relatively easy to pass off as Old Masters because signs of aging could effortlessly be replicated, Canova's presentation of works that conflated modernity and antiquity extended to sculpture as well. Indeed, the *first* deception in which Canova engaged was in 1782, after the completion of *Theseus and the Minotaur* (fig. 62). This work has long been hailed as the beginning of Canova's engagement with Greek antiquity, and it retained a central position in his historiography even forty years later, as seen in Felice Giani's design for a never-realized funerary monument in honor of Canova (fig. 63).[19] According to John Smythe Memes, in 1782 Canova had been working on *Theseus and the Minotaur* clandestinely, and had yet not publicly exhibited the piece.[20] The Venetian Ambassador, Girolamo Zulian, invited artists, men of letters and others to a gathering to dramatize the work's unveiling. A model of *Theseus'* head, prepared by Canova, was placed on display for the guests, all of whom:

> were agreed that the cast must have been taken from a work of Grecian sculpture, and of great merit; but they were divided on what it represented, and where the original was to be found. Some affirmed that they had seen it in such a collection;—some said it was in a different gallery;—part maintained that such a personage of antiquity was pourtrayed;— others asserted a contrary statement;— in short, all acknowledged the beauty of the piece was the only common sentiment which experienced no opposition. Seizing the proper occasion, when he perceived every one to be thus deeply interested in the affair, "*Ebbene*", said the

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[19] Hugh Honour, "Canova's Theseus and the Minotaur," Victoria & Albert Museum Yearbook 1 (1969): 1-15.

I am particularly grateful to Julian Brooks, Associate Curator of Drawings at the J. Paul Getty Museum, for showing me this work.

[20] Early in his career, there were several occasions in which Canova preferred to keep his works hidden until their first public exhibition. Memes is quick to point out in a footnote that this was common academic practice. He described the way Sir Joshua Reynolds advised students not to exhibit their half-finished works of art because it both weakened the impression the work would ultimately make and also made students lazier. Memes, Memoirs of Antonio Canova, with a Critical Analysis of His Works, and an Historical View of Modern Sculpture 288-90, esp. 289, note 1.

> Ambassador, "*andiamo a vederne l'originale*,"—"Come, let us terminate these disputes by going to see the original."[21]

The guests naturally were shocked to think that the "ancient" sculpture they had been admiring was in possession of their host. When *Theseus* was also revealed to be a modern work by Canova, "every feeling was absorbed in surprise, delight, and admiration. The work was universally pronounced to be one of the most perfect which Rome had beheld for ages…."[22]

It is a common biographical trope in the lives of artists to include anecdotes of similar deceptions. Often the viewer—sometimes another artist—is tricked into thinking the work is ancient.[23] Perhaps the most famous eighteenth-century example was the fraud perpetrated on the renowned theorist, Johann Winckelmann himself, who was famously duped into believing Anton Raphael Mengs' *Jupiter and Ganymede* was a classical work (fig. 54).[24] Sometimes these "fakes" were even commissioned by prominent and well-

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[21] Memes, Memoirs of Antonio Canova, with a Critical Analysis of His Works, and an Historical View of Modern Sculpture 295-96. Leopoldo Cicognara likewise recounts this story. Leopoldo Cicognara, Biografia di Antonio Canova (Venezia: Editore Giambattista Missiaglia 1823) 11-12.

Antonio d'Este tells a slightly different version. According to his account, a French sculptor named Suasy often critiqued Canova's style. One morning d'Este ran into Suasy while he was carrying casts of an arm and hand of the Minotaur and a foot of Theseus. After Suasy saw them, not only did he beg to buy them, but he disdainfully suggested that d'Este bring them to Canova so that he might study and learn from the antique. D'Este gleefully replied that the pieces belonged to an original work by Canova himself—a prank that ended his friendship with Suasy. D'Este, Memorie di Antonio Canova 56-57, note 2.

[22] Memes, Memoirs of Antonio Canova, with a Critical Analysis of His Works, and an Historical View of Modern Sculpture 296-97.

[23] Benjamin West fell prey to a similar, but slightly more unusual, deception. He was fooled into thinking a treatise describing the secrets of Venetian colorism was authentic and even painted *Cicero Discovering the Tomb of Archimedes* (1797) using the techniques described in the manuscript. Unfortunately for him, the resulting painting was not a success. See J.D. Biersdorfer, "Be an Old Master, for 10 Guineas," The New York Times August 31 2008: AR23.

[24] See Potts, "Greek Sculpture and Roman Copies; 1; Anton Raphael Mengs and the Eighteenth Century." Thomas Pelzel argues that the painting was not by Mengs, but rather by Giovanni Casanova, younger brother of the much more famous—or infamous—Jacopo Casanova de Seingalt. Thomas Pelzel, "Winckelmann, Mengs and Casanova: A Reappraisal of a Famous Eighteenth-Century Forgery," The Art Bulletin 54.3 (Sept. 1972): 300-15.

respected art historians. Vivant Denon, for instance, the director-general of the Imperial Museums under Napoleon, engaged in similar deceptions, hiring artists to paint copies of original works of art and then displaying both works to a jury of professionals to see if they could distinguish the copy from the original.[25]

Sculptors were not immune to the charade either. Michelangelo famously made a sleeping cupid (now lost) in the style of a classical work. He carefully buried the piece in dirt in order to corrode the surface.[26] Even his famous *Bacchus* seems to have been taken for an antique. Indeed, there are some claims that Michelangelo intentionally left the *Bacchus* unfinished, neglecting to add his right hand and drinking cup; viewers' would be fooled into thinking the work had broken due to neglect and age (figs. 64-65).[27] Bernini's *Amalthea with the Infant Jupiter and a Faun* (ca. 1609), made when he was just ten years old for Cardinal Scipione Borghese was likewise believed to be an ancient sculpture (fig. 66) .[28]

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[25] In her article on the cultural milieu in Rome in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Maria Caraccioli points out that such pastimes were not uncommon. Maria Teresa Caracciolo, "La Rome de Canova," Antonio Canova e il suo Ambiente Artistico fra Venezia, Roma e Parigi, ed. Giuseppe Pavanello (Venezia: Istituto Veneto di Scienze, Lettere ed Arti 2000) 166.

[26] Ascanio Condivi, Vita di Michelangolo Buonarroti (Firenze: Rinascimento del Libro, 1938) 35-37 and 49-50.

[27] Lynn Catterson has recently argued that Michelangelo may have committed the most daring forgery of all time. She suggests that the famous *Laocoön* in the Museo Pio-Clementino is not a first century work, but rather a sculpture by Michelangelo himself. See Lynn Catterson, "Michelangelo's *Laocoön*?," Artibus et Historiae 52 (2005): 29-56.

[28] Irvin and Marilyn Lavin are responsible for dating this sculpture earlier than previously thought. See Irving Lavin and Marilyn Aronberg Lavin, "Five New Youthful Sculptures by Gianlorenzo Bernini and a Revised Chronology of His Early Work'," Art Bulletin 1.233-248 (1968): 229 and 31.

These types of deceptions are often attributed to the "magic" of the artist's hand.[29] One of the first accounts of such trickery occurs in Pliny's account of the rivalry between Zeuxis and Parrhasius. Zeuxis painted grapes so life-like he deceived birds into thinking they were real. Parrhasius triumphed over his rival, however, when Zeuxis asked him to unveil his painting so it too could be judged. The curtain he wished to draw, however, was merely a painted one.[30] As described by Pliny, this artistic rivalry was based in illusionism; whichever artist could produce the image that was most true to life declared his supremacy in the art of painting. The deceptions taking place in eighteenth-century Rome, however, adhered to a different logic entirely. The ability to create an illusionistic work was not at all part of the painters' —or the viewers'—concerns. Indeed, referencing the anecdote described by Pliny, the theorist Francesco Milizia was careful to distinguish between "imitation" and "illusion." The goal of the former, he argued, was not to deceive, nor to appear "too real." Illusionism, on the other hand, was an aspiration only targeted by the most mediocre artists. [31]

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[29] See Ernst Kris and Otto Kurz, Legend, Myth, and Magic in the Image of the Artist: A Historical Experiment (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979) esp. chapter 3, "The Artist as Magician," 61-90 and Otto Kurz, Fakes, 2d rev. and enl. ed. (New York: Dover Publications, 1967).

[30] See Pliny The Elder, Natural History, 10 vols. (Cambridge; London: Harvard University Press and Heinemann, 1940-1963) vol. 9, book 35, xxxvi, lines 62-65, 309-11.Wendy Wassyng Roworth, for instance, makes the connection between Parrhasius and later artistic deceptions. See Wassyng Roworth, "Pulling Parrhasius's Curtain: Trickery and Fakery in the Roman Art World."

[31] "ILLUSIONE/Le *arti d'imitazione* hanno per oggetto la *imitazione*. Debbono imitare la natura, ma in modo che si conosca che imitano. Imitare la verità, non è fare la verità. Se l'orchestra imitasse il tuono in maniera che sembrasse vero tuono, ognuna ne sentirebbe sbigottimento invece di diletto. Se il pittore rappresentasse un lione da vero lione, tutti scapperebbero. La *imitazione* dunque non ha da giunger mai alla *illusione* compita.

Chi non ha conosciuto, nè conosce l'arte, ne ha messa la perfezione nella *illusione* perfetta. Quindi decantato Zeusi per la sua uva beccata dagli uccelli, e Parrasuio per la sua portiera che ingannò Zeusi stesso. [...]

In alcune cose non semoventi, come frutti, mobili, rilievi, ornati d'architettura, può il pittore portar la imitazione alla *illusione* compita, come anche in alcune immagini di donne e di uomini, di svizzeri, di camerieri, poste solitariamente e distaccate, fanno una sorpresa d'illusione e saranno mal dipinte. Ma che un quadro di piani variati e d'un certo fondo possa fare una vera *illusione*, è impossibile, e sarebbe

In the eighteenth century, therefore, these deceptions had a radically different aim. Participants may well have thought they were imitating the gatherings and mannerisms of the ancients by participating in these games, giving historical significance to their behavior.[32] Part of the motivation behind the presentation of fake antiquities was also, of course, simply to impress viewers. By dazzling prospective clients, artists could both appeal to the current market place *and* prove their skills. In this sense, then, Canova's participation in these popular pastimes was akin to trial by fire, a test of his artistic proficiency.

Passing off modern works of art as ancient ones therefore served a number of functions. By underscoring the relationship between the modern work and the ancient one, the comparison made a claim for the modern work's greatness on the basis of the model of imitation dominant in so many eighteenth-century theories of art.[33] At the same

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contrario alla bellezza delle arti. Le *illusioni* perfette possono farsi da mediocri artisti, ma gli artisti di prima classe che maneggiano i soggetti classici di storia imiteranno la verità per dilettare, per istruire, e non mai per ingannare." Francesco Milizia, Dizionario delle Belle Arti del Disegno Estratto in Gran Parte dalla Enciclopedia Metodica da Francesco Milizia, 2 vols. (Bassano: 1797) vol. 2, 4.

[32] In 1817 Henry Sass noted that many of the city-wide and large scale entertainments of the Romans were held in imitation of the ancients. This could apply to smaller scale exhibitions and gatherings as well; for instance, the case I mentioned in the introduction where Canova braided the hair of young ladies in Possagno in the style of the antique, and, of course the famous improvisations of Emma Hamilton in Naples were both attempts to capture the lived experience of antiquity.

Sass writes, "Modern Rome: Exhibitions. The Romans—I should say—the inhabitants of modern Rome—have their exhibitions in *imitation* of the ancients. The mausoleum of Augustus is converted into a sort of ampitheatre, where, on Sunday evenings, they assemble to hear music, and see a grand display of fire-works, which often finishes by the ascension of a fire-balloon. On other days twice or thrice a week, bulls are baited by dogs and men. This however, is a very harmless sport, for neither men, bulls, nor dogs, exhibit much courage, each being afraid of the other, and glad to escape at the first opportunity. The line of Virgil, "*Furor arma ministrant*," could not be applied to them.

While we were in Rome there were no theatres open; but we were more than compensated by the conversaziones and private concerts. Both ladies and gentleman sing with great taste and execution, and many of their comic songs are inimitable. With Marquis Canova's study we were much pleased." Henry Sass, A Journey to Rome and Naples, Performed in 1817; Giving an Account of the Present State of Society in Italy, and Containing Observations on the Fine Arts (London: Longman Hurst Rees Orme and Brown, 1818) 128-29.

[33] Authors with strong theories of imitation included Winckelmann and Milizia, whom have already been mentioned, and Quatremère de Quincy. See Antoine-Chrysosthôme Quatremère de Quincy, Essai sur la

time, the fake highlighted the artist's thorough knowledge of the history of art. With both *Theseus and the Minotaur* and the fake Giorgione, for instance, we know Canova went to great lengths to include details that would seem authentic according to the standards set by ancient and Renaissance artists, respectively. On the level of iconography, for instance, Canova was anxious that Theseus's sword appear genuine. He was particularly concerned whether Theseus held a sword or a club, and since he himself had read Ovid only in translation, he set out to have someone check the original Latin text. [34] This attention to detail was critical to the work's success. Canova's circle of acquaintances in this period was full of enthusiastic antiquarians who would have undoubtedly noticed a gaffe on his part. [35]

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nature, le but et les moyens de l'imitation dans les beaux-arts (Paris: J. Didot, 1823). An English translation is available as Antoine-Chrysosthôme Quatremère de Quincy, An Essay on the Nature, the End, and the Means of Imitation in the Fine Arts, trans. and ed. J. C. Kent (London: Smith Elder and co., 1837).

[34] Letter from Canova to Giovanni Falier, December 29, 1781. "Non feci peloso il corpo del Minotauro nel modello, essendomi utile così per vedere tutte le parti, ma già nella Statua avevo sempre divisato di rappresentarlo con pelo. Che poi Teseo debba avere la clava in luogo di spada, potrebbe darsi, avendo egli portato quella sempre con sè come trofeo della prima impresa ch'egli fece. Ovidio, che io lessi tradotto, dice che Teseo punse, lacerò, e poi tagliò anco la testa al Minotauro, e perciò io gli feci la spada; ma poichè V.E. mi avvisò io farò guardare il testo di Ovidio, e si vi andrà la clava, più volentieri io gli farò quella, che la spada, giacchè tengo ancora pietra. Minotauro che portasse clava, io non lo ritrovai in alcun fatto; so bene che tal arma è sempre stata portata dai Centauri e dai Satiri. Se V.E. mi potesse accertare con qualche passo, che il Minotauro portasse la clava mi sarebbe sommo piacere. As cited in Giovanni Gaetano Bottari and Stefano Ticozzi, Raccolta di Lettere sulla Pittura, Scultura ed Architettura Scritte da' più Celebri Personaggi dei Secoli XV, XVI, e XVII, 8 vols. (Milano: G. Silvestri, 1822-25) vol.8, 169-70; and Alcune Lettere di Antonio Canova ora per la Prima Volta Pubblicate. In Occasione delle Nozze Auspicatissime del Conte Giordano Emo-Capodilista colla Contessa Lucia Maldura (Venezia: dalla Tipografia di Alvisopoli, 1823) 14.

[35] The artists, antiquarians, and archaeologists Canova encountered were not, however, all of one mind regarding the superiority of the ancients. They were engaged in a powerful debate regarding the status of ancient art in which the superiority of Greek art, supported by Johann Winckelmann's writings, was countered by Giambattista Piranesi's defense of Roman art. For more on the cultural situation in Rome during this period, see Caracciolo, "La Rome De Canova." For an account of the similarities between Canova's and Piranesi's sensibilities, see Elisa Debenedetti, "Piranesi e il Gusto Collezionistico di Canova," Artisti e Mecenati: Dipinti, Disegni, Sculture e Carteggi nella Roma Curiale (Roma: Bonsignori, 1996) 241-54.

Individuals such as Francesco Milizia, Quatremère de Quincy, Carlo Fea and a number of British artists including the painter Gavin Hamilton, who is credited with helping Canova conceive the pose of *Theseus and the Minotaur*, not only discouraged Canova from falling prey to the sensual pleasure of the Baroque, but also encouraged an attention to Greek antiquity that was scrupulous and fastidious.[36] They understood that such attention to detail was critical and that the successful deception of his audience could be an immense coup for an artist. If the audience were in fact misled, the deception would not only indicate that the creative model of imitation had been successful, but, that, in fact, the modern artist had *surpassed* his ancient models. He would have produced a work equivalent to those that had been created by ancient artists. At the same time, his work would arguably be timeless, fitting easily into both the classical and modern world. Comparisons made between ancient and modern works of art, therefore, were deliberate, instructive, and entertaining. They tested both the emulative talent of the modern artist as well as the antiquarian knowledge and deductive skills of his audience. In the cases described above, the nature of the venue—a dinner in a private home for an elite audience—tested Canova's artistic proficiency.[37] Also on trial, however, were the

[36] For more on Canova's relationship with British artists and collectors in Rome, see Honour, "Antonio Canova and the Anglo-Romans. Part I. The First Visit to Rome," and Honour, "Antonio Canova and the Anglo-Romans. Part II the First Years in Rome." For more on the impact Gavin Hamilton's painting style had in Rome, see Robert Rosenblum, "Gavin Hamilton's 'Brutus' and Its Aftermath," The Burlington Magazine 103.694 (Jan. 1961): 8-21. For more on his art dealings, see David Irwin, "Gavin Hamilton: Archaeologist, Painter, and Dealer," The Art Bulletin 44.2 (June 1962): 87-102 and Antonello Cesareo, "Gavin Hamilton (1723-1798): 'A Gentleman of Probity, Knowledge and Real Taste'," Saggi e Memorie di Storia dell'Arte 26 (2003): 211-322.

[37] Although these dinners cannot be understood in precisely the same manner as the French *salon*, there are similarities. Both types of gatherings were highly performative and guests were expected to fulfill certain functions. Maria Theresa Mori has examined nineteenth-century Italian salon culture in depth, and has argued that the artist in these venues had a role that vacillated between "cantor, and courtesan and gallant actor." She also points out how the *conversazione* was organized rather differently than the salon. It was understood that the host would open his doors to visitors, but he did so without assuming any special duties

connoisseurship skills of the guests. Indeed, pressure was perhaps greater on the spectators and judges than on the artist or the host, the latter of whom was of course in on the joke.

These salon games aided an epistemological shift in which the beholder's perception took on as much, or even more, importance than the artist's creative role. Of course, artist and spectator have always had a fundamental and dialectic relationship, but in the eighteenth century, in Rome, viewing demanded a new set of skills from the beholder. At stake was not simply the viewer's reputation, but, quite frankly, his purse. The abundance of academic exercises alone necessitated a new type of awareness on the part of the viewer, since those works could be sold as fakes if they fell into the hands of unscrupulous dealers. At the same time, the circulation of fakes *intended* to be sold as "original" works also had enormous financial repercussions. Indeed, determining authenticity was critical in an environment swarming with collectors and tourists who wanted to bring souvenirs of their trip home with them—not to mention the vendors who were more than thrilled to defraud them.[38] Peter Beckford, on his 1787 trip to Rome, made the financial repercussions of such fraud clear, warning future visitors to the city to

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himself; he simply provided a space in which people could converse with one another. See Maria Teresa Mori, Salotti: La Sociabilità delle Élite nell'Italia dell'Ottocento, 1 ed. (Roma: Carocci, 2000) 22.

Likewise, Norman Bryson points out how social codes and social formations are critical for a work of art's recognizability and interpretation; the artist must take into account the beholder and their point of view. Norman Bryson, Tradition and Desire: From David to Delacroix, Cambridge Studies in French (Cambridge Cambridgeshire; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1984) 23-34.

[38] For more on the souvenir market in Rome, see Denys Sutton, ed., Souvenirs of the Grand Tour: A Loan Exhibition from National Trust Collections in Aid of the Trust's Conservation Fund, 20 October - 1 December 1982, Wildenstein & Co., London, 2nd ed. (London: Wildenstein, 1982) and Antonio Pinelli, "L'Indotto del Grand Tour Settecentesco: l'Industria dell'Antico e del Souvenir = the Fallout of the Eighteenth-Century Grand Tour: The Antique and the Souvenir as an Industry," Ricerche di Storia dell'Arte 72.Viewing Antiquity: the Grand Tour, Antiquarianism and Collecting (2000): 85-106.

beware of copied paintings, antiques "made just for them," and fake medals and pearls.[39] Complicating matters further were modern works made in the Grecian manner (which may have been made by artists in response to the thriving antiquarian art market).[40] The ease with which tourists were fooled—or, more importantly, willing to be fooled—was astonishing. Their hunger for relics was so great that Romans bitingly commented that if the Colosseum were for sale, an Englishman would buy it.[41] Even Count Fries, a gentleman of otherwise quite good taste who ultimately bought Canova's *Theseus and the Minotaur*, was duped into buying fake antiquities (figs. 67-68).[42]

If private individuals could be fooled into purchasing fakes and legitimizing them through the very process of including them in their collection, much more problematic were the fakes that were being institutionalized in the new museums. Works of dubious

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[39] "Artists are chiefly supported by English travellers, who usually follow Mr. GRAY's advice, and buy every thing which is to be bought: and among other curiosities, copies for original pictures; and antiques made on purpose for them. Would you buy pictures, beware of counterfeits, and remember *Andrea*. Medals will also be brought to you in quantities, which science requires some caution also. It is the rarity that fixes the value: you would not think, perhaps, that an Otho in copper, is worth more than an Otho in gold.

False pearls are made here in the greatest perfection. If not too large, they may pass at a distance for real ones, and at any rate will answer the purpose full as well. The pearls CLEOPATRA wore were esteemed at one hundred and sixty-one thousand four hundred and fifty-eight pounds.—How much better might that money have been employed!" Peter Beckford, Familiar Letters from Italy, to a Friend in England, 2 vols. (Salisbury: Printed and sold by J. Easton, 1805) vol. 2, 317-18.

[40] Seymour Howard has argued that the art market had a distinct impact on Canova's style, pushing him towards increasingly Hellenistic works of art. He even suggests that *Theseus and the Minotaur* is indebted to Bartolomeo Cavaceppi's *Boy and Dolphin*. Seymour Howard, "The Antiquarian Market in Rome and the Rise of Neo-Classicism: A Basis for Canova's New Classics," Studies on Voltaire and the Eighteenth Century 153.Transactions of the Fourth International congress on the Enlightenment III (1976): 1057-168.

[41] After a trip to Italy in 1720-1722, Edwards Wright wrote, "[…] the Romans in particular, who have such a Notion of the English Ardour, in the Acquisition of Curiosities of every Sort, that they have this Expression frequent among them, *Were our Ampitheatre portable, the English would carry it off*." Edward Wright, Some Observations Made in Travelling through France, Italy, &C. In the Years 1720, 1721, and 1722. By Edward Wright, 2 vols. (London: printed for Tho. Ward and E. Wicksteed, 1730) vol. 1, vii.

[42] "We were only sorry that this well-meaning, wealthy art lover was not always served by the most reliable persons. His purchase of a falsely attributed carved gem gave rise to much talk and vexation. On the other hand, he could certainly be very content with his purchase of a beautiful statue depicting a Paris, or, according to another interpretation, a Mithras. Its counterpart now stands in the Pio-Clementino museum; both were found together in a sandpit." Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, Italian Journey, eds. Thomas P. Saine and Jeffrey L. Sammons (New York, NY: Suhrkamp Publishers, 1989) 303.

origin, or fragments that were "restored" into complete objects, were making their way into the newly created museums. Even these institutions, meant to be the bastions of the very best works of art of the ancient world, were not free from contamination. Although it is true that in the eighteenth century it was only restored and completed objects that were considered for purchase for the museums, it is equally true that restorers and dealers misrepresented the ancient status of certain sculptures in order to make the sale. Recently Giandomenico Spinola has pointed out several modern works that were knowingly sold to the Vatican as antiquities, including a bust of Sabina, and *Herakles Bibax*, purchased in ca. 1775 and 1803, respectively.[43] By the mid-nineteenth century, awareness that these works were indeed forgeries penetrated the consciousness of visitors. John Broughton, for instance, turned his critical eye on the Capitoline Museum, lamenting, "The antiquities of the Conservators' palace *if* they were all authentic, would be the most interesting of Roman remains." At least, he says, the modern works carry "no such uncertainty."[44] Even worse, a museum might bestow legitimacy on a work, merely by displaying it. Recall Calzabigi's comments that if Canova's painting, *Ezzelino da Romano*, "were placed in a Royal Gallery, one would attribute it to any one of the great

[43] Giandomenico Spinola, "La Manipolazione dell'Antico tra Restauro e Falso: Esempi dai Musei Vaticani," Roma e l'Antico: Realtà e Visione nel '700, eds. Carolina Brook and Valter Curzi (Milano: Skira, 2010) 52.

[44] Emphasis added. He continues, "….But many of the names given to the marbles and bronzes in this quarter of the Capitol are more than questionable. The Duillian column is modern, and the fragments of inscriptions on it are copies; the colossal bronze fragments, said to belong to a statue of Commodus, are not certainly his. The Geese called the saviours of the Capitol may be ancient, but they look like ducks. The Boy extracting the thorn is not what it is called, the Shepherd Martius; the bronze Junius Brutus is a baptism; the Caesar is a forgery; so are the Appius Claudius, the Mithridates, the Ariadne, the Sappho, the Virgil, the Cicero, and the Poppæa. No such uncertainty attaches to the collection of modern worthies on the Promoteca, many of them removed from the Pantheon; but most of the recent busts were supplied by the munificence of Canova." John Cam Hobhouse Broughton, Italy; Remarks Made in Several Visits, from the Year 1816 to 1854, 2 vols. (London: J. Murray, 1859) vol. 2, 39.

masters and any of the schools, never to a modern."[45] The entry of the work into the museum would be enough to convince visitors of its antiquity and its "originality."

If a city such as Rome, "swarming with *conoscenti*" could not trust even the greatest of its thinkers to determine what was authentic and what was not, belief in the most fundamental institutions of the state would be undermined.[46] By the early nineteenth century, the issue came to a head, and various measures were being taken to ensure the authenticity of the state's collections. Works entering the papal collections were no longer being restored and only untouched fragments were considered worthy of entering the state museums.[47] Likewise, handbooks such as Michelangelo Prunetti's 1822

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[45] Letter from Ranieri Calzabigi to Canova, April 18, 1795. Cited in full in note 15. Fardella, Antonio Canova a Napoli: Tra Collezionismo e Mercato 28, note 33.

[46] "The ancients have left us ten thousand monuments of their genius, but not much criticism on the arts in which they excelled. Modern Rome, on the contrary, swarms with *conoscenti*, and contains materials enough, above ground or below, to keep them for ages at work." Forsyth, Remarks on Antiquities, Arts, and Letters During an Excursion in Italy, in the Years 1802 and 1803 132.

James Sloan also describes the way discussion of the arts permeates the speech of everyone in Rome. "The multitude of distinguished artists, however, at Rome, gives an agreeable tone to the conversation of the higher classes. In a city where every artisan and *valet de place*, prides himself upon being able to point out the beauties of statuary and painting, and to display some knowledge of antiquities, it is easy to conceive, that artists occupy a much higher rank in society than they do in other places, where even those who have received a liberal education, are often destitute of the first rudiments, of a taste for these pursuits. To such, the language of artists must be perfectly unintelligible, and in a mind not enriched by reflections and observations on the works of genius, it would be as difficult to excite a perception of that beauty which is the object of them all, as to convey to a man born blind the idea of colour. But the Romans who from their earliest youth have constantly before their eyes, the fairest pieces of architecture, painting and sculpture, must delight to hear a language spoken which they understand, and which is associated with impressions coeval with the first dawn of their intellect. For this reason they talk at Rome of the paintings of *Benvenuti*, and the works of *Canova*, with the seriousness that they talk at Paris of the opera, or of the rival pretensions of *Mademoiselles George and Duchésnois*. […] Hence no atmosphere is so congenial as that of Rome, to a mind ambitious of excellence in the fine arts. Here *Michael Angelo* conceived the sublime model of St. Peter's, and here *Raphael* meditated the matchless performances of the Vatican. Here only, *Davide* thought he could study the principles of painting,—and this haunt of the muses, not all the allurements of Buonaparte and Paris could tempt *Canova* to abandon." James Sloan and Theodore Lyman, Rambles in Italy; in the Years 1816....17 (Baltimore: Published by N. G. Maxwell J. Robinson Printer, 1818) 355-57.

[47] Orietta Rossi Pinelli traces the financial implications of restoration and points out that by 1815, fragments were considered more valuable than restored works of art. Orietta Rossi Pinelli, "From the Need for Completion to the Cult of the Fragment: How Tastes, Scholarship, and Museum Curators' Choices Changed Our View of Ancient Sculpture," History of Restoration of Ancient Stone Sculptures, eds. Janet Burnett Grossman, Jerry Podany and Marion True (Los Angeles: J. Paul Getty Museum, 2003) 61-74.

Avvertimenti di Michelangelo Prunetti per Distinguere i Quadri Originali dalle Copie began to circulate to instruct viewers on how to tell original, authentic works of art from later copies.[48]

The salon games from the 1780s and 1790s highlight crucial issues that not only had a demonstrable effect on Canova' career, but also deeply alter the understanding of Neoclassicism in two principal ways. First of all, artists and audiences engaged in a more active relationship to neoclassical objects than previously has been understood. Secondly, these games encoded a manner of critical viewing that grew out of the social, historical and economic conditions in Rome, yet are still fundamental to the broader discipline of art history. The rise of new museums and the increased circulation of fakes brought to the fore new models for viewing and connoisseurship. Because authenticity simply could not be assumed, the viewer's role in the interpretation of art took on a more dominant and active role. These salon games were therefore part of a larger working through of how to establish and define authenticity in the period. Yet, as we shall see, there was simply no tried and true way to establish a work's originality. Viewers' judgments were as untrustworthy as the works of art themselves.

Critical Connoisseurship Tools: Style, Surface, and Restoration

Any analysis of these salon games compels a considered response to this salient question: How was it that intelligent art historians, critics, and connoisseurs could be so easily duped by these fakes? Clearly setting was essential to the ruse, as they were likely lulled into a false sense of security through food, drink, and generous hospitality. In

[48] Michelangelo Prunetti, Avvertimenti di Michelangelo Prunetti per Distinguere i Quadri Originali dalle Copie (Firenze: Per Niccolò Conti, 1822).

addition, salon culture at the end of the eighteenth century, despite seeming very informal, transposed court structure into the private sphere.[49] In a surprisingly strict code of behavior, it was understood that the host would be allowed to "win" whatever game was being played. Indeed, in the cases I have described this would hardly have been problematic, since the host's own knowledge necessarily trumped that of his guests. In the case of *Theseus and the Minotaur*, these social codes were adhered to even more rigidly since the salon took place in the Venetian ambassador's palace, which had a diplomatic and business function.[50] In addition, a sense of nationalist pride undoubtedly permeated the game since the Ambassador was promoting the work of a young Venetian artist in a foreign state.

What kind of strategies, then, were viewers using to judge these works of art? The techniques they relied upon included comparative judgment, knowledge of ancient texts and iconography, and connoisseurship—in short, the very skill set upon which art history as a discipline is based. In the case of *Theseus,* however, style was the critical means by which antiquity and authenticity were determined. Since most educated people were familiar with Greek works primarily through plaster casts and engravings, Zulian's guests

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[49] Mori, Salotti: La Sociabilità delle Élite nell'Italia dell'Ottocento 16. See also Maurice Andrieux, Daily Life in Papal Rome in the Eighteenth Century 152.

For wonderful visual examples of individuals gathered in salons and *conversazioni*, see Mario Praz, Conversation Pieces; a Survey of the Informal Group Portrait in Europe and America (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1971) and Mario Praz, An Illustrated History of Interior Decoration: From Pompeii to Art Nouveau (New York: Thames and Hudson, 1982).

Charlotte Eaton complained about Italian society: "But I found in the Italian circles, all the emptiness, the frivolity, the heartlessness, and the licentiousness of the French, without any of their polish and brilliancy; and with all, and more than all, our lifelessness and *ennui*. Like the French, the Italians live in perpetual *representation*; like them, they sacrifice *l'être au paroître*; but, unlike them, their efforts are unsuccessful." Eaton, Rome, in the Nineteenth Century; Containing a Complete Account of the Ruins of the Ancient City, the Remains of the Middle Ages, and the Monuments of Modern Times vol. 1, vii.

[50] For more on Palazzo Venezia, see Dante Bernini, "Canova a Palazzo Venezia," Sculture Romane del Settecento, ed. Elisa Debenedetti (Roma: Bonsignori, 2001) 245-59.

did not hesitate to pass judgment on *Theseus* even when presented with only a mere fragment of the work—and a cast at that. Not having the original object at hand was not seen as an impairment to their ability to make an educated judgment.

Yet the errors they made in evaluating Canova's works—both the sculpture and the paintings—indicates that style was not always an accurate way of assessing a work's authenticity. With regards to sculpture, "scholars had to be cautious" in establishing their opinions when viewing casts or reproductions, rather than the original work. Casts were often manipulated and altered, as Canova himself noted in a letter to Quatremère de Quincy in 1804.[51] The games, therefore, revealed flaws in the ways viewers had previously judged works of art. Their errors—and the nature of the games themselves—forced viewers into contact with works of art and developed a model of connoisseurship that depended on interaction with the original object. The very modernity of this encounter lay not in the physical contact between viewer and artifact, which of course has always been a critical part of the enjoyment of art, but of the triangular relationship between object, beholder and authorship. This relationship influenced both Canova's own engagement with works of art and his attitude towards the beholders of his sculptures. Indeed, Canova himself was preoccupied with seeing original works throughout his entire career. As a young man, he marveled at the Greco-Roman antiquities of the Vatican Museums, which he declared far more beautiful than any casts he had seen; later in 1817,

[51] In this fascinating letter, dated September 5, 1804, Canova describes his own examination of the arm of the *Gladiator* in the Borghese collection, including the way he climbed up on the pedestal in order to see "with his own eyes" the joints and pins holding it together. He then wrote, "Da ciò risulta, quanto mai deggiono andar circospetti gli eruditi nel fondare le loro studiose osservazioni, non sopra gli stessi originali delle opera, ma su de'gessi, i quali vanno soggetti ad essere tanto variati e alterati per molte cause che vi concorrono." Canova and Quatremère de Quincy, Il Carteggio Canova-Quatremère de Quincy, 1785-1822 56.

he was thrilled to see the Parthenon marbles in person.[52] Above all, his own sculpting practices, which reveal an obsessive dedication to the surface of the marble, reflect his belief that the encounter with the original object was a necessary part of both the aesthetic and evaluative experience.

Yet, even seeing the original didn't always provide the viewer with enough information to pass judgment on the work. As we saw with the case of the fake Giorgiones, for instance, the "pretenders" were deceived by Canova's paintings, even though they were examining the original object. The supposed experts were misled by two other elements which would so obsess Canova throughout his career—namely, the surface or finishing of the work and its restoration. Canova did use an old canvas as a support for the painting, yet it was also the surface of the work that deceived viewers, because the "finishing" also made Canova's false Giorgione look old. The status of Canova's *Venus with a Mirror* likewise was secured as an antique as a result of the "patina" of dust and grime that accumulated on its surface. Once rediscovered—and reworked—by him, careful attention to its finish further reiterated the painting's supposed antiquity, for "in the ornaments and accessories, which seemed to have been carefully re-touched by some more recent hand, slight cracks and other effects of time

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[52] For Canova's elation with the original works of art in the Vatican Museums, see Honour, "Canova's Studio Practice I: The Early Years" 156–57.

For more on Canova's reaction to the Parthenon marbles, see Massimiliano Pavan, "Antonio Canova e la Discussione sugli 'Elgin Marbles'," Rivista dell'Istituto Nazionale d'Archeologia e Storia dell'Arte (1974): 219-344, republished as Massimiliano Pavan, "Antonio Canova e la Discussione sugli 'Elgin Marbles'," Scritti su Canova e il Neoclassicismo, ed. Giuseppe Pavanello (Treviso: Canova, 2004) 181-318. For an interesting argument that French sculptors co-opted the Parthenon marbles as implicit endorsement for the use of life casts, see Meredith Shedd, "Emeric-David's 'Anatomical Vision': A French Response to the Elgin Marbles," Gazette des Beaux-Arts 102.1378 (1983): 158-64.

were skillfully imitated."[53] This presents an exceptionally complicated picture of the varying roles finish and restoration could play. On the one hand, the false *craquelure* was meant to authenticate the work by implying the passage of time, the marks of age. But, should it fail to deceive its viewer, who might note that it appeared to be a "modern" restoration, all would not be lost. The viewer could then juxtapose that apparently more recently restored section with the presumably "older" surface of the rest of the painting, a contrast that would suggest the work had a richly layered past. If the restoration was criticized, the rest of the painting would be judged—presumably for the better—in relation to that restoration. No wonder it was the restorer Burri who was most skeptical of the whole Giorgione affair.

It was this intersection between surface, restoration, exhibition techniques and authenticity that had a profound effect on every aspect of Canova's artistic practice. In terms of his sculpting techniques, Canova's insistence on finishing his sculptures himself and subsequently using wax and grind-water to give his sculptures a warm tone meant they were periodically mistaken for ancient works. The Baron d'Uklanski, for instance, noted that the "yellow tinge [gave] them a colour similar to that of parian marble, and an appearance of antiques." [54] John Gustavus Lemaistre was fooled into thinking *Triumphant Perseus* was an ancient work.[55] The English sculptor Sir Francis Chantrey

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[53] Memes, Memoirs of Antonio Canova, with a Critical Analysis of His Works, and an Historical View of Modern Sculpture 374; d'Este, Memorie di Antonio Canova 70; and Tadini, Le Sculture e le Pitture di Antonio Canova Pubblicate Fino a quest'Anno 1795 42.

[54] As quoted in Honour, "Canova's Studio Practice II: 1791-1822," 219.

[55] "I shall only mention at present, that Canova, the modern sculptor, whose reputation is already established in every part of Europe, has made two statues of such extreme beauty (the one representing a Pugilist; and the other, Perseus cutting off the head of Medusa) that I was deceived by the latter, and believed it ancient." J.G. Lemaistre, Travels after the Peace of Amiens, through France, Switzerland, Italy and Germany, 3 vols. (London: J. Johnson, 1806) vol. 1, 380.

claimed that if Canova's *Creugas* were buried and exhumed, "it would produce a great sensation."[56] Augustus von Kotzebue was even more cunning. He wished the sculptor would bury a work that could be then "discovered by accident." No doubt it would be believed to be a work by Phidias, and would lay to rest any criticisms about Canova's talent.[57]

Perhaps it was also his awareness of the deceptive nature of a work of art's surface and the slippery nature of restoration that led to one of the most important decisions of Canova's career—his staunch refusal to restore works of art. He refused to comment formally on the restorations of the *Laocoön*, for despite the fact that Canova was apparently convinced the Trojan priest's right arm should be bent back towards his head, he was unwilling to reopen the dispute among antiquarians (fig. 69).[58] He likewise

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[56] Noted by Thomas Moore in his diary entry of October 29, 1819, upon a visit to the Museo Pio-Clementino with the sculptor Sir Francis Legatt Chantrey. Moore, Memoirs, Journal and Correspondence of Thomas Moore 235.

[57] "Were he [Canova] desirous of obtaining the applause of his contemporaries, I could give him a piece of advice how to attain that aim very soon. He need but privately to execute a couple of new works, and as privately bury them in the baths of Caracalla or the villa of Adrian, and then cause them to be discovered as if by accident; he would then witness such exulation as would afford him much diversion. 'A Phidias!' would be the exclamation; 'a genuine antique! What modern artist can presume to rival this?' Instead of his merits being decried as at present, he would then enjoy the pleasure of hearing new talents ascribed to him in addition to those which he possesses. It is, however, doubtful, whether this would be doing him a service, for he is a very modest and a very amiable man." Augustus von Kotzebue, Travels through Italy in the Years 1804 and 1805, 4 vols. (London: Richard Phillips, 1806) vol. 3, 158-59.

[58] "L'ottimo Canova non volle palesare le sue idee, e contentossi di scrivere, ch'era assai meglio farle dormire giacchè avrebbe mosso con esse dispute, e liti fra gli antiquarii, e gli artisti, ed inquietudini per se stesso senza trarne alcun merito. Aveva egli creduto cosa sicura che quel braccio destro dovesse piegarsi verso la testa del Laocoonte ed alla testa di esso appoggiare la mano: le sue idee erano fondate sopra artistiche osservazioni, ed antiquarie indagini. Chi conosce il maneggio del marmo può da esso trarre delle osservazioni pratiche, che conducono allo scoprimento del vero. Ora aveva veduto il Canova nella sommità delle masse cadenti dei capelli appunto dal canto dell'orecchio destro una mancanza di marmo cagionata da rottura che in linguaggio artistico si direbbe *strappo*. L'orecchio destro poi non è che abbozzato, indizio sicuro, che un qualche impedimento doveva esservi in quel luogo, onde non potesse condursi colla medesima scienza di esecuzione, con cui è trattato tutto questo sublime marmo. Altri avrebbe forse qui scritto mecanismo di lavoro, ma non ho voluto prevalermi di questa parola, perchè pur troppo si far abuso di essa, e si applica a quella materiale pazienza che tanto poco influisce nella vera intelligenza dell'arte.[...]

Credeva l'ottimo Canova che se quel braccio s'avvicinasse alla testa, e posasse la mano sopra di essa, la disposizione del gruppo acquisterebbe forma più piramidale. Buon effetto produrebbe anche la

refused to replace the previous restorations on the Venus de'Medici (fig. 70).[59] Finally, he was so persuaded by the integrity of the Parthenon marbles that when asked to restore them—twice—in 1806 and 1815—he refused both times (fig. 71).[60] In fact, Canova's personal encounter with the Parthenon marbles in 1815 would have an important impact on modern museum practices in general.[61] For, as Orietta Rossi Pinelli has pointed out, in

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continuazione delle linee perpendicolari, che incominciando dalla mano che stringe il serpente proseguono dalla linea del braccio del giovine fino all'estremità della pianta. Pensava il Canova che nel dolore il moto del braccio doveva correre alla testa, e che con questo acquista molto il gruppo, e riguardando anatomicamente il petto, ed il collo, ed il braccio così collocato, il deltoide coll'inalzarsi forma una linea più elevata, e vicina alla clavicola, ed al mastoideo esterno del collo per cui acquisterebbero nuovo moto i muscoli dell'antibraccio, ed avrebbe così il gruppo disposizione migliore, e maggiore espressione.

Poichè ho riferito, ed esaminato il pensiero del Canova sù questo restauro, siamo lecito di riportare una sua massima che sovente ripetea: Essa è che chi intraprende restauro debba prima di tutto fare le più attente riflessioni sullo stile dell'Autore che condusse l'opera, e far poi in certo modo suoi i pensieri di quello. Per ottenere ciò, è necessario dimenticarsi affatto della propria maniera, e dimenticata quella accingersi al lavoro. Michelangelo non potè far questo totale abbandonamento, e però trasparisce il suo genio ne'suoi restauri." Giovanni Gherardo de Rossi, "Lettera sopra il Restauro di un Antica Statua di Antinoo, e sopra il Restauro degli Antichi Marmi nei Tre Secoli Precedenti al Nostro," Nuovo Giornale de'Letterati (Pisa: Sebastiano Nistri) XXVIII (July-August 1826): 25-26.

[59] "On sait que la Vénus antique, à laquelle un négociant de Florence a laissé son nom devenu royal, n'a point conservé les bras que son auteur inconnue lui avait donnés. Ces bras sont l'ouvrage d'une artiste moderne; et bien que les connaisseurs estiment ce travail, l'Italie demandait à Canova une restauration nouvelle. Notre sculpteur se refusa à cette entreprise. Soit délicatesse, orgueil, ou modestie, il opposa de constantes excuses aux instances les plus réitérées. Ce ne fut que lorsque sa patrie fut dépouillée par le droit de la guerre du chef-d'œuvre qu'on a long-temps admiré à Paris, qu'il s'occupa de faire cette Vénus [*Venus Italica*]. " De Latouche and Réveil, Œuvre de Canova, recueil de gravures d'après ses statues et ses bas-reliefs 32.

[60] This is recorded in Joseph Farington's diary entry of December 5, 1806. "He [Flaxman] said Lord Elgin had told Him (Flaxman) that on His way from Greece, being at Rome, He shewed several articles of Greek Sculpture to *Canova* & proposed to Him to restore such parts as were wanting. Canova advised his Lordship to let them remain as they were, but added that if you wish to have them restored there is one in England (Flaxman) who can do it as well as I should be able to perform such a task." Joseph Farington, The Diary of Joseph Farington, Studies in British Art, eds. Kenneth Garlick and Angus D. Macintyre, 16 vols. (New Haven: Published for the Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art by Yale University Press, 1978-1984) vol. 8, 2920.

[61] Surface was also critical for the evaluation of the Parthenon marbles and their comparison with the *Apollo Belvedere*. For instance, when the British Parliamentary commission was debating whether the Parthenon marbles should be bought by the state, the worn surface of *Theseus* diminished the value of the work in comparison to the perfect state of the *Apollo*. John Flaxman, when asked, "As compared with the Apollo Belvidere [*sic*], in what rank do you hold the Theseus?" responded, "For two reasons, I cannot at this moment very correctly compare them in my own mind. In the first place, the Apollo Belvidere is a divinity of a higher order then the Hercules; and therefore I cannot so well compare the two. I compared the Hercules with a Hercules before, to make the comparison more just. In the next place, the Theseus is not only on the surface corroded by weather; but the head is in that impaired state that I can scarcely give an opinion upon it; and the limbs are mutilated. To answer the question, I should prefer the Apollo Belvidere

1816, as the Ispettore Generale delle Belle Arti, Canova passed a decree that only "unrestored" works in their "ancient originality" could be purchased for the Vatican Museums.[62] Twenty-five years after those first parlor games, within the radically different exhibition space of the museum, Canova defined authenticity by an integral

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certainly, though I believe it is only a copy." Richard Payne Knight likewise stated that he considered the Parthenon marbles unequal to the *Laocoön* and *Apollo*, but "at the same time I must observe, that their state of preservation is such that I cannot form a very accurate notion; their surface is gone mostly." See House of Commons Parliament, Great Britain, Report from the Select Committee of the House of Commons on the Earl of Elgin's Collection of Sculptured Marbles; &c (London: Printed for J. Murray by W. Bulmer and Co., 1816) 72 and 92, respectively.

The difficulty of asserting whether a work was Greek or Roman—even if one had seen the original object, is reaffirmed by the fact that in 1811 Canova himself said he could not give opinion on whether the sculptures in the Casa Ruspoli collection were Greek or Roman, even though he had seen them several times. He was only willing to attest to the fact they were ancient and of excellent quality—barring some modern restorations. See, for instance, a series of letters from 1811 regarding the potential sale of the ancient sculptures of the Ruspoli family, orchestrated by Pietro Vitali in the Archivio di Stato di Napoli. Vitali is best known as an engraver, but it is clear from this correspondence that he likewise brokered art sales. Although this sale was never completed, since the export license from Rome was refused, the correspondence included a list of works for sale with their prices. Included, likewise, is an undated letter that affirms Canova's opinion that the sculptures were excellent works of art. "Il Cav. Canova in datas di 26 Gennajo fa presente al V.E. che le sculture della casa Ruspoli sono a lui note, e che tra questi ci sono alcuni pezzi di antichità rispettabili. Anzi si ricorda di aver fatto un attestato, col quale assicurava, che egli riconosceva in generale il merito di dette sculture, all'eccezione di qualche ristauro moderno; ma non disse se erano di scalpello Greco or Romano, lo che non potrebbe mai asserire, ancorché le vedesse più volte. Ed ora gli viene conteso appartenendo ad una nuovo Accademia, la quale è unicamente intesa ad impedire che non escano da Roma antichità di sorte alcuna." See Archivio di Stato, Napoli, Ministro degli Afari Interni, Busta 990 fasc. 4. (1810-1813).

[62] "Ove piaccia tal commissione prendesse piede, e che io dovessi avere il bene di seguitare a sottomettere il pensier mio a Vostra Eminenza, fra le prime cose che le affaccerei, sarebbe la convenienza di ripristinare l'avviso, che non verranno acquistati che quei monumenti che si conservano tuttavia non tocchi nella loro originalità antica, cioè senza restauro." The letter is taken from d'Este, Memorie Di Antonio Canova 248. See Rossi Pinelli, "Artisti, Falsari o Filologhi?: Da Cavaceppi a Canova, Il Restauro della Scultura tra Arte e Scienza," 52. She has written eloquently on the subject of restoration several times, in both Italian and English. See, for instance Orietta Rossi Pinelli, "Chirurgia della Memoria: Scultura Antica e Restauri Storici," Memoria dell'Antico nell'Arte Italiana, ed. Salvatore Settis, vol. 3. Dalla Tradizione all'Archaeologia, Biblioteca di Storia dell'Arte (Torino: G. Einaudi, 1986) 181-205; Orietta Rossi Pinelli, "The Surgery of Memory: Ancient Sculpture and Historical Restorations," Historical and Philosophical Issues in the Conservation of Cultural Heritage, eds. Nicholas Stanley Price, Mansfield Kirby Talley and Alessandra Melucco Vaccaro, Readings in Conservation (Los Angeles: Getty Conservation Institute, 1996) 288-305; and Orietta Rossi Pinelli, "From the Need for Completion to the Cult of the Fragment: How Tastes, Scholarship, and Museum Curators' Choices Changed Our View of Ancient Sculpture," 61-74.

Canova's decision also helped aestheticize the fragment as an art object. For more on this topic, see Linda Nochlin, The Body in Pieces: The Fragment as a Metaphor of Modernity (London: Thames and Hudson, 1994) and Orietta Rossi Pinelli, "Cultura del Frammento e Orientamenti nel Restauro del XIX Secolo," Bollettino d'Arte 98. Supplement. Giovanni Secco Suardo: la Cultura del Restauro tra Tutela e Conservazione dell'Opera d'Arte (1996): 11-20.

surface that *lacked* restoration, a decision intended to undermine the surface's slippery capacity to deceive its viewer.

Without any sure-fire ways to guarantee that one's judgment was correct, viewers relied on instinct, condition, restorations, surface, and style—to say nothing of iconography, provenance and literary sources—when giving their opinion about an object's authenticity.[63] But each of these criteria had the potential to deceive beholders, and it was often the viewing conditions that could manipulate a viewer's final opinion. It is unsurprising then that as Canova's success grew, he abandoned these deceptions in favor of more public presentations of his artistic and authorial talents, including devoting significant attention to the exhibition conditions within the public domain of his studio. [64]

From Salon Game to Studio, From Fake to Imitation

The salon games in which Canova engaged enabled him to showcase the skills he had learned in his more formal studies as a sculptor, studies which were likewise rooted

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[63] The fundamental impossibility of developing a tried and true criteria for assessing a work of art's authenticity remains a problem even today. One example, for instance, is the difficulty of assessing the authenticity of Jackson Pollock's work. The highly entertaining film, *Who the #$&% Is Jackson Pollock?* (2006), pits the instinct of connoisseurs against scientific "truth" and the skepticism of the lay person—and in the end still never successfully determines how to establish a Pollock's authenticity.

[64] In a letter from Canova to his Venetian patron Falier that is undated but likely from the late 1780s, Canova points out that his artistic production had become increasingly dominated by sculpture. It appears that in an earlier letter Falier had asked whether Canova was working on a new painting and cameos, which the sculptor denied. "Ella poi mi fa certe interrogazioni suggestive, alle quali non posso rispondere, tanto più che in parte v'è del falso, come in ciò ch'io incida cammei; cosa che mai mi sono sognato. Quella del Quadro che io stia facendo è falsa affatto; non falso però che, cinque anni sono, io abbia fatto in pittura una piccola Accademia, per vedere se avessi facilità in quell'arte; e per verità, essendo una prima cosa, non vi era male; ma dopo di quel tempo non ho fatto altro, e da galantuomo ne la accerto, come la accerto che ne avrei voglia se avessi tempo, ma sono così pressato da'miei lavori che non potrei nemmeno pigliarmi per altre cose un giorno solo." Published in Bottari and Ticozzi, Raccolta di Lettere sulla Pittura, Scultura ed Architettura Scritte da' Più Celebri Personaggi dei Secoli XV, XVI, e XVII vol. 8, 173 and Alcune Lettere di Antonio Canova ora per la Prima Volta Pubblicate. In Occasione delle Nozze Auspicatissime del Conte Giordano Emo-Capodilista colla Contessa Lucia Maldura, 19.

in a rhetoric of original, imitation and copy. As the eighteenth century progressed, artistic apprenticeships had gradually given way to an academic system of training. As a result, Canova's education, like that of most eighteenth-century sculptors, was dictated by the doctrine of imitation and the study of engravings and plaster casts after the antique. In Venice, for instance, before his arrival in Rome, Canova became well acquainted with plaster casts of ancient works in the Galleria Farsetti, such as the *Belvedere Torso*, the *Laocoön*, and the *Apollo Belvedere* (fig. 72).[65] Contact with the original objects was rare, if not impossible, and the ambiguity of imitation, copy, and reproduction informed the reactions of audiences when they finally did confront the original works of art. Emotions could run from enthusiasm and elation to disappointment and even despair when those works competed with the reproductions that travelers had seen long ago and upon which they had first based their aesthetic judgment. During Canova's first trip to Rome in 1779-1780 he felt the same wonder and shock in the Museo Pio-Clementino and the Museo Capitolino that characterized many tourists' experience (fig. 73).[66] These museums had an enormous impact on Canova's style and artistic practices, both in terms of his

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[65] For more on the Farsetti collection see the undated publication, Museo della Casa Eccellentissima Farsetti in Venezia, (N.D.), which lists the contents of the collection, and Giovanna Nepi Sciré, "Filippo Farsetti e la sua Collezione," Studi in Onore di Elena Bassi (Venezia: Arsenale Editrice, 1998) 73-94. For Canova's engagement with the Farsetti plaster casts, see Androsov, ed., Alle Origini di Canova: Le Terracotte della Collezione Farsetti.

[66] For a probing account of the tourist experience in general, see Dean MacCannell, The Tourist: A New Theory of the Leisure Class (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999). Chloe Chard has written eloquently about eighteenth-century tourists' reactions to works of art. See Chloe Chard, "Effeminacy, Pleasure and the Classical Body," Femininity and Masculinity in Eighteenth-Century Art and Culture (Manchester, New York: Manchester University Press, 1994) 142-61; Chloe Chard, Pleasure and Guilt on the Grand Tour: Travel Writing and Imaginative Geography 1600-1830 (Manchester; New York: Manchester University Press; Distributed exclusively in the USA by St. Martin's Press, 1999); and Chloe Chard, "Ancient Sculptures as Sights and Wonders: The Unease of Viewing and Commenting," Viewing Antiquity: The Grand Tour, Antiquarianism and Collecting, Ricerche di Storia dell'Arte (Roma: Carocci, 2000) 9-20.

sculptural practice and also his exhibition strategies.[67] Indeed, the relationship between the development of these museums and the tourist industry was a symbiotic one. The rise of the tourist industry affected the development of the museum as much as the museums promoted tourism. As Jeffrey Collins has argued, museums responded to this influx of visitors by dramatizing the presentation of their objects and amending their architectural layout to employ grand vistas, long galleries, and semi-circular alcoves and focal points to draw attention to individual pieces.[68] The institutionalization of these types of displays, formerly extolled in *palazzi* and gardens, in itself affirmed the appropriateness of both the presentation of the work *and* the works themselves. Canova's adoption of some of these exhibition techniques co-opted the clout engendered by the process of institutionalization and reflected his desire to endow still more authority on his own works of art.

With relation to his sculptural production, Canova's enthusiasm for the ancient objects that he saw in these museums frequently affected his choice of subject. The *Apollo Belvedere*, for instance, inspired him to begin *Triumphant Perseus* as early as 1787.[69] Although Canova expressed some trepidation over the sculpture,[70] when it was

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[67] For the history of museums in Rome in the eighteenth century, see Haskell and Penny, Taste and the Antique: The Lure of Classical Sculpture, 1500-1900 chp. IX, 62-73, republished as Francis Haskell and Nicholas Penny, "Museums in Eighteenth-Century Rome," Grasping the World: The Idea of the Museum, eds. Donald Preziosi and Claire Farago (Aldershot and Burlington: Ashgate, 2003); Orietta Rossi Pinelli, "Per una Storia dell'Arte Parlante; I Musei Capitolino (1734) e Pio-Clementino (1771-1791) e Alcune Mutazioni nella Storiographia," Ricerche di Storia dell'Arte 83 (2004): 5-23 and, more recently, Jeffrey Collins, "A Nation of Statues: Museums and Identity in Eighteenth-Century Rome," Architectural Space in Eighteenth-Century Europe: Constructing Identities and Interiors, eds. Denise Amy Baxter and Meredith Martin (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010) 187-214.

For catalogues of the museums from the period, see Visconti and Visconti, Il Museo Pio-Clementino and Filippo Aurelio Visconti and Giuseppe Antonio Guattani, Il Museo Chiaramonti Aggiunto al Pio-Clementino da N. S. Pio VII P. M., con l'Esplicazione de' Sigg Filippo Aurelio Visconti e Giuseppe Antonio Guattani (Roma: Antonio d'Este e Gaspare Capparone, 1808).

[68] Collins, "The Gods' Abode: Pius VI and the Invention of the Vatican Museum," 39.

[69] For a detailed history of the sculpture, see Antonio Pinelli, "La Sfida Rispettosa di Antonio Canova. Genesi e Peripezie del 'Perseo Trionfante'," Ricerche di Storia dell'Arte 13/14 (1981): 21-40 and Antonio

finally completed in May 1801, he exultantly wrote to his patron Giuseppe Falier that "people comment on this statue so much that I hardly dare report to you what they say."[71] Even now *Triumphant Perseus* is often held up as the epitome of Neoclassicism because of the way that it so clearly makes use of its ancient model (figs. 6 and 41). The formal similarities between *Triumphant Perseus* and the *Apollo Belvedere* – the striding posture, the outstretched arms, and even the tumbling drapery – perfectly exemplify Winckelmann's dictum that the only way for the modern era "to become great, or, if this be possible, inimitable, is to imitate the ancients."[72] Certainly Canova's decision to

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Pinelli, "Il Perseo del Canova," Piranesi e la Cultura Antiquaria; gli Antecedenti e il Contesto (Roma: Multigrafica Editrice, 1983) 421-38.

Matthias Winner also explores the way *Perseus* challenged the preeminence of the *Apollo Belvedere*, contextualizing Canova's sculpture in light of the work of other artists, notably Gian-Lorenzo Bernini and Baccio Bandinelli, who were also heavily influenced by the ancient work. Matthias Winner, "Paragone mit dem Belvederischen Apoll: Kleine Wirkungsgeschichte der Statue von Antico bis Canova," Il Cortile delle Statue: Der Statuenhof des Belvedere im Vatikan: Akten des Interationalen Kongresses zu Ehren von Richard Krautheimer, Rom, 21.-23. Oktober 1992 (Mainz am Rhein: P. von Zabern, 1998) 227-52.

[70] Undated letter from Canova to Giovanni Falier. "....ed un lavoro per me, ch'è segreto, e se non è terminato, non desidero che si sappia, come prego V.E. di non dire nemeno questa cosa ad alcuno." Cited in Bottari and Ticozzi, Raccolta di Lettere sulla Pittura, Scultura ed Architettura Scritte da' Più Celebri Personaggi dei Secoli XV, XVI, e XVII vol. 8, 173. On the basis of other works that Canova mentions, Antonio Pinelli dates the letter to early 1787. Pinelli, "La Sfida Rispettosa di Antonio Canova. Genesi e Peripezie del 'Perseo Trionfante'," 39, footnote 10.

[71] Letter from Canova to Giuseppe Falier, May 2, 1801. "...ed intanto ella gli dica che ora ho terminato una Statua, rappresentante Perseo trionfante, con la testa di Medusa nella mano sinistra, e con la spada nella mano diritta. Questa statua incontra assai, di modo che non oso dirle cosa venga detto di essa. Io voglio comperarmi quattro campetti con questa Statua, i quali si potranno chiamare *i Campi Persei.* Molti la vogliano, ma il primo che la chiese sino da quando si abbozzava, ora è a Parigi, onde convien attendere una sua risposta. V.E. non dubiterà di già che i campetti non abbiano ad essere a codeste parti, sapendo ella ben bene quanto io ami la patria mia." Cited in Bottari and Ticozzi, Raccolta di Lettere sulla Pittura, Scultura ed Architettura Scritte da' Più Celebri Personaggi dei Secoli XV, XVI, e XVII vol. 8, 185–86. In a letter to Giacomo Zustinian Recanati, written on May 9, 1801, Canova again mentioned the praise the statue received. "Giacchè V.E. ha la bontà di sentire con piacere le nuove che mi riguardono, le dirò che in questi giorni ho terminato una Statua, grande forse più che l'Apollo Belvedere, rappresentante un Perseo Trionfatore, con la testa di Medusa in una mano, e nell'altra la spada. Questa statua, a dir il vero, riscuote un compatimento così grande che io non oso scriverlo." Cited in Alcune Lettere di Antonio Canova ora per la Prima Volta Pubblicate. In Occasione delle Nozze Auspicatissime del Conte Giordano Emo-Capodilista colla Contessa Lucia Maldura, 29–30.

[72] Winckelmann, Reflections on the Imitation of Greek Works in Painting and Sculpture 5. Although striking, the similarities between the works are perhaps less remarkable than the subtle distinctions between the two. Though the poses are similar and the outstretched arms immediately recall one another, Perseus

emulate the *Apollo,* by far the most famous "Greek" sculpture of the time, was an assertion of his own place in the history of art, a justification of his claim to be the inheritor of antiquity, the "modern Phidias."[73]

Interestingly, comparisons between Canova's *Perseus* and the other well-known representation of that figure, Benvenuto Cellini's *Perseus,* are rare, despite the fact that both artists made use of the same subject matter (fig. 74). Certainly, it is curious that in emulating the *Apollo* Canova chose to use a different mythological figure.[74] Indeed,

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strides forward in an open position that appears more mobile and active than that of Apollo. Perseus is further animated by the sweeping diagonal rush of the drapery that lengthens his body and frees him from the tree trunk which acts as Apollo's support. For a lovely analysis and comparison between the *Apollo Belvedere* and *Perseus*, see Pinelli, "Il Perseo del Canova," 425–26.

[73] The terms "modern Phidias," "new Phidias," "the Roman Phidias," and "the Phidias of the age," are all used to describe Canova. See, for instance Giuseppe Carpani, Lettere Inedite a Isabella Teotochi Albrizzi (1805-1821), ed. Raffaele Ciampini (Firenze: Brunetti, 1973) 44; Melchior Cesarotti, Per l'Ebe del Sig. Kav. [*sic*] Canova che Trovasi in Casa Albrizzi. Sonetto del Commendatore Cesarotti (per il Penada, n.d.); and D.D.D., Ad Antonio Canova gli Abitori di Ponte Casale in Memoria di Essere Stati di sua Visita Onorati questo Piccolo Tributo (Venezia: Tipografia di Alvisopoli, n.d.); and Per la Venere Italica Scolpita da Antonio Canova. Versi d'Autori Toscani (Pisa: Co'Caratteri di F. Didot, 1812) vii, to name only a few examples.

[74] So far, I have come across only a handful of these comparisons. Interestingly, as the century progresses they both increase in frequency and become increasingly unfavorable to Canova. In 1804-05, for example, on his visit in Florence, Kotzebue writes, "Among these is the Perseus of Benvenuto Cellini, in bronze, of which Göthe [*sic*] makes so much parade; which is, however, far inferior to the Perseus of Canova." Kotzebue, Travels through Italy in the Years 1804 and 1805 vol. 1, 153.

Giorgio Grognet writes a much longer description after being showed Canova's *Perseus* by the sculptor Pietro Marchetti in his studio at Carrara. It is unclear whether Grognet is admiring a marble copy of *Perseus*, or a cast after the work. Interestingly, he also views a marble copy of the *Apollo Belvedere* at the same time. "Egli mi fece osservare la Ebe, ed il Perseo imitati così al naturale da quei dell'Immortale Canova, che sarebbe inutile anzi superflua ogni loda; che in mirare il Perseo di quel Principe de'moderni Scultori non si può affatto sostenere il paragone nel ricordarsi del Perseo di Benvenuto Cellini, che quel artista fuse in Bronzo ne'tempi de'Medici. Oh qual differenza mai fra Perseo, e Perseo! Quando però non vogliamo supporre che il Cellini facesse ciò come ritratto dell'intero ignudo di qualche signore della Corte dei Medici, e della testa di Medusa un ritratto di qualche bella infedele. In fatti il Perseo del Cellini ha un corpo informemente lungo e mal fatto, piantato su due gambe estremamente corte, mal fatte, e sproporzionate al restante della massa, dove quello dell'immortale Canova gareggia colle divine statue degli Antichi Greci, avente in pugno una spada a due punte, chiamata *harpe* dagli antichi nostri Greci e *falcatas ensis* dai Romani, e la Testa di Medusa che acciuffa colla sinistra ha forme invero egregie. Vidi inoltre Apollo di Belvedere così bene imitato, che l'occhio il più esercitato non lo distinguerebbe dall'antico se non fosse la candidezza del Carrarense marmo che tradisce il nostro Autore Moderno." Giorgio Grognet, "Lettera di Giorgio Grognet Ajutante del Genio Imperiale ed Architetto, al Signor D. Marco Mastrofini Institutore di Filosofia nel Seminario di Frascati, nella quale gli dà Ragguaglio di una sua Gita a Carrara," Giornale Enciclopedico di Firenze 2.16 (1810): 99.

Johannes Myssok has argued that reception theory and the later political significance given to *Perseus* have overly determined the comparison between it and the *Apollo Belvedere*. He instead traces the development of the statue to the commission of a (now lost) sculpture of Mars by Philipp August Hervey in the 1780s. Hervey wished to have a "new classic" created for him that corrected the "errors" of the *Apollo Belvedere*. *Perseus,* Myssok argues, was heavily indebted to this sculpture of Mars, and the two were meant to be viewed and compared to one another, since both were on display in Canova's studio in the early 1800s.[75]

John Scott likewise makes the comparison while viewing Canova's work in the Vatican. "Turning to the right, we find, (as in a temple consecrated to themselves,) two small doors for entry, the light from the top, through a shade, (suggesting a difference from Paris,) the three masterpieces of Canova, the Pugilists, the Perseus, with Medusa's Head. The last is altogether like that at Florence, open to much criticism; but there is life, spirit, and expression in all three, and these will always strike the greatest number of people more forcibly than the mere recondite merits of sculpture." John Scott, Sketches of Manners, Scenery, &C, in the French Provinces, Switzerland, and Italy. With an Essay on French Literature (London: Printed for Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, and Brown, 1821) 368-69.

More biting critiques also occur. James Wilson wrote, "His [Canova's] Perseus and Medusa is merely the bronze statue of Benvenuto Cellini at Florence, with a Phyrgian cap, and the delicate proportions of an Apollo." James Wilson, A Journal of Two Successive Tours Upon the Continent, in the Years 1816, 1817, & 1818, 3 vols. (London: T. Cadell and W. Davies, 1820) vol. 2, 114. Following a long critique of *Perseus*, John Edmund Reade compared both the overall sculptures to one another and the detail of Medusa's head: "He [Canova's *Perseus*] holds at arm's length Medusa's decollated head. Buonarotti would have made that head terrible; Cellini *has* done so. Canova's head is pretty: her delicate lips are half opened; she has the air of an exhausted belle. Canova embodied no conceptions of the grand in sculpture: he had no spark of that august mind which manifested itself in Apollo; nor of that which creates awe approaching to fear, in the terrible energy of the Laocoon. He is the expositor only of the serene and beautiful." John Edmund Reade, Prose from the South, Comprising Personal Observations During a Tour through Switzerland, Italy and Naples... 2d ed., 2 vols. (London: C. Ollier, 1849) vol. 2, 90.

Interestingly, Cellini's and Canova's two sculptures were placed together in front of the pavilion of the Gothic Renaissance Sculpture Court at the Crystal Palace exhibition in London in 1851. "As we quit this court, we remark in front of it two statues of Perseus: one by Cellini, and the other by Canova. That on the left, by Cellini, is characterized by a grandeur of conception and power of execution, which place his name among those of the greatest sculptors of his day." Samuel Phillips, Guide to the Crystal Palace and Park (London: Crystal Palace Library and Bradbury and Evans, 1854) 134.

[75] See Johannes Myssok, Antonio Canova: Die Erneuerung der Klassischen Mythen in der Kunst um 1800 (Petersberg: Imhof, 2007) 197-204, and Johannes Myssok, "Die 'Tröstende' Kopie. Antonio Canovas 'Neue Klassiker' und der Napoleonische Kunstraub," Das Originale der Kopie: Kopien als Produkte und Medien der Transformation von Antike, eds. Tatjana Bartsch, Marcus Becker, Horst Bredekamp and Charlotte Schreiter, 644, Transformations of Antiquity (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2010) 91-116.

This may well be true. However, we should not underestimate Canova's cunning in selecting his subject or the work's relationship to either Cellini's *Perseus* or the *Apollo Belvedere*. After all, on the one hand, the selection of *Perseus* was undoubtedly an opportunity for Canova to reposition himself in relation to the Renaissance. By selecting a subject that had been employed by Cellini, Canova challenged the preeminence of Renaissance artists, particularly those Florentine sculptors who represented the apex of the craft in the 1500s.[76] At the same time, there cannot be much doubt that even if *Perseus* was not begun as a challenge to the *Apollo* per se, it certainly was understood as such once it was completed. In a letter to Canova dated August 12, 1801, for instance, his half-brother Giovanni Battista Sartori asked the artist, "Has *Perseus* therefore decisively triumphed over its so powerful rival? This victory is all the more honorable, because with the aforementioned work it was more difficult to win a contest against an enemy to which the public's opinion had remained enslaved for so many centuries."[77] Although Sartori does not mention the *Apollo* by name, I would argue that he is undoubtedly referring to that well-known and long-admired work.

If *Perseus* was created at least in part as a response to the *Apollo,* what is perhaps most interesting, then, is the way that Canova's selection of his subject reflects his desire to push the boundaries of imitation and to avoid being accused of outright plagiarism.

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[76] While Cellini used bronze to flaunt his superiority to the ancients, Canova's return to marble may reflect the abundance of marbles being disinterred in contemporary excavations. Since so few ancient bronze sculptures survived, perhaps Canova's use of marble is a reflection of the permanence of marble in comparison to bronze.

[77] Letter from Giovanni-Battista Sartori to Canova, dated August 12, 1801. "Il Perseo ha dunque trionfato decisamente del si potente suo emolo? Questa è una vittoria tanto più onorevole, perché con il suddetto lavoro era più difficile il guadagnare la contesa con un avversario che erasi resa schiava l'opinione di tanti secoli. Ma non si sa ancora determinare qual sia per essere il soggiorno del nostro eroe. Io godrei che se ne andasse a Parigi, a far pompa di sue vittorie: oppure rimanesse in Roma, dove troverebbe in ogni tempo gran numero d'intelligenti conoscitori, ai quali somministrerebbe abbondante materia di dotte critiche, e di osservazioni erudite." See d'Este, Memorie di Antonio Canova 424.

The precise subject of Apollo, for instance, was debated in the eighteenth century. His broken arms and the strap of a quiver across his back suggested Apollo was holding an arrow, but at whom was he taking aim? Winckelmann provided the most popular theory that Apollo had just shot an arrow at his enemy the Python of Delphi.[78] But the *Apollo* is forever destined to remain incomplete and the enemy's identity inconclusive, since only one half of the narrative element is present. There are, however, *two* figures represented in Canova's sculpture—Perseus *and* Medusa. Of course the addition of Medusa's head recalls both Cellini's *Perseus* and the *Rondanini Medusa*—and would have hastened the iconographic transformation of the work from Mars to Perseus, as Myssok points out (fig. 75).[79] Yet, that Canova was also more broadly interested in the relationship between two figures is evident in the two paintings he made of the subject in 1798-1799, both of which show Perseus in the act of attacking Medusa (figs 76-77).[80] Canova's selection of this subject, therefore, essentially "completes" the sculpture's narrative; victor and vanquished are united in one pose.

Indeed, Canova's use of Perseus both defined and *defied* Winckelmann's ideas of the *beau ideal.* By including Medusa, Canova unambiguously incorporates Perseus' defeated enemy and leaves no uncertainty as to the sculpture's subject. At the same time,

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[78] The undisclosed enemy at which *Apollo* had shot an arrow was the subject of debate. Missirini challenged Winckelmann's view that it was the python, pointing out numerous possibilities for *Apollo*'s missing enemy. For Winckelmann's discussion, see Johann Joachim Winckelmann, History of the Art of Antiquity, trans. Harry Francis Mallgrave, Texts & Documents, ed. Alex Potts (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2006) 204 and 333-34. For Missirini's argument, see Melchior Missirini, Dell'Atto dell'Apollo di Belvedere. Commento di Melchior Missirini ... Recitato nella Romana Accademia di Archeologia il 25 Luglio 1822 (Roma: Nella Stamperia di Romanis, 1822).

[79] Myssok, "Die 'Tröstende' Kopie. Antonio Canovas 'Neue Klassiker' und der Napoleonische Kunstraub," 96 and note 25.

[80] Ottorino Stefani describes the nightmarish quality of these paintings. Ottorino Stefani, Canova Pittore: Tra Eros e Thanatos (Milano: Electa, 1992) 58-60.

the inclusion of Medusa changes the charged nature of the male/female balance of the work. Medusa was a popular mythological figure, well represented in ancient (and neoclassical) art. But, in Canova's sculpture, the position of Medusa's head reveals a certain playfulness and a reversal of the terms we would expect for the work. That is, in the mythological story, Medusa's head of fiery snakes would turn anyone who gazed on her into stone.[81] Perseus avoided petrification by looking at Medusa in the reflection of his shield, beheaded her, and subsequently placed her head upon his own shield in order to immobilize his enemies. In his sculpture, Canova plays on the act of petrification and the sculptural medium by having Perseus look directly at the head of the Gorgon. The hero has been quite literally turned to stone. Indeed, Canova's *Perseus* thematizes the issue of imitation, both thematically and formally. The similarity in scale between the heads of Perseus and Medusa and the way Perseus turns to ponder the head that is the "ur-creator" of sculpture itself establishes an uncanny mirroring. At the same time, of course, we cannot help but be reminded that Canova, as a sculptor, himself imitates the power of Medusa.

The petrification of the hero also intensifies the gendered nature of the work. For if the excessive musculature of some ancient sculptures was deemed inappropriate,[82] this was matched by a belief that extreme displays of emotion were also better suppressed—a belief that has been immortalized by Winckelmann's estimation of the "noble simplicity

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[81] Apollodorus, Gods and Heroes of the Greeks: The Library of Apollodorus, eds. Michael Simpson and Leonard Baskin (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1976) 72-73.

[82] Chard argues that assessments of antique statues in late eighteenth-century English and French travel writing and art criticism reflect the demand for a smooth-limbed male body that nonetheless was not overly effeminate. The *Hercules Farnese,* for instance, was particularly difficult for visitors to appreciate on account of its brawn. Chard, "Effeminacy, Pleasure and the Classical Body," 142-61.

and quiet grandeur" of another famed Graeco-Roman work, the *Laocoön*.[83] "Stillness," according to Winckelmann, "is the state most proper to beauty."[84] Winckelmann praised the *Apollo Belvedere*, therefore, largely because the violent action in which it was believed he had just been engaged, namely, slaying the Python of Delphi with his arrow, was not evident on his facial features. No signs of strain, agitation, or disgust manifest themselves in Apollo's expression; the only signs of his recent actions are the slight flair of his nostrils and the curled upper lip.[85] Similarly, though Perseus grasps the decapitated head of Medusa, he too, shows no emotion, despite looking squarely at his victim. Perseus remains the epitome of the beau ideal, unbothered, undisturbed, unmoved, and therefore, beautiful. Emotion, a negative trait, becomes aligned with the feminine. Medusa's open mouth hangs gaping as though she has just inhaled her last breath. Her eyebrows are furrowed, and the tension in her brow is exacerbated by the taut peak of her forehead, where Perseus grasps the mass of snakes that is her hair (fig. 78).

This morass of anguish, anger, and surprise would have been further enhanced by the tradition of looking at a work in torchlight—and by one of Canova's most surprising suggestions to a client. In 1808 Canova completed a replica of his famous *Perseus* for the Polish Countess Valeria Tarnowska (fig. 79).[86] When the Metropolitan Museum of Art

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[83] Winckelmann, Reflections on the Imitation of Greek Works in Painting and Sculpture 33.

[84] Winckelmann, History of the Art of Antiquity 204.

[85] Winckelmann, History of the Art of Antiquity 204.

[86] For details on the commission of the sculpture and a transcript of the contract between Canova and the Countess Tarnowska, see Olga Raggio, "The Tarnowska Perseus by Canova," The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin 26.4 (Dec. 1967): 185-91. Recent scholarship by Dominika Wronikowska suggests that the Tarnowska *Perseus* was not a replica, but Canova's *first* version of the sculpture, which was returned by the Vatican because the marble was imperfect. She suggests the Vatican *Perseus* is actually the second version of the sculpture, and that Count Jan Feliks Tarnowska saw the first version in Canova's studio and subsequently purchased it from him, rather than ordering a replica. Dominika Wronikowska, "Committenti Polacchi di Canova. I Tarnowski e la 'Replica' del *Perseo*," Antonio Canova. La Cultura Figurativa e

purchased *Perseus* in 1967 from Tarnowska's heirs, a plaster cast of Medusa's head was suspended from Perseus' hand through a concealed metal fixture.[87] In a letter to the Countess, Canova explained that he was shipping the plaster head as a replacement for the marble one, in case the latter proved too heavy for Perseus' outstretched arm. In addition, and more astonishingly, he added that the Countess could, if she wished, insert a candle into the hollow marble head to play with the transparency of the marble, and enjoy the eerie light effects it created.[88] Given that one of Canova's talents was the refined sculpting of marble – which included carving the material to a nearly ethereal slenderness – a lighted candle would not only emphasize the marble's translucence, but would also animate the sculpture itself. The constantly changing, flickering light would create the illusion of movement and animation, which would be further emphasized by the fact that the light source was hidden from the viewer. Medusa would appear as a flickering phantasm with an independent life-source, and the effect would be striking, eerie, and even terrifying. Certainly, Canova's recommendation reflects his sculptor's sensibility

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Letteraria dei Grandi Centri Italiani. 1: Venezia e Roma, eds. Fernando Mazzocca and Gianni Venturi, Terza Settimana di Studio Canoviani. 3 (Bassano del Grappa: Istituto di ricerca per gli studi su Canova e il neoclassicismo, 2005) 79-87.

[87] The marble head of Medusa that accompanied the sculpture showed no sign of ever having been attached. Raggio, "Canova's Triumphant 'Perseus'," 210.

I suspect that the plaster cast of Medusa's head is not considered valuable enough to be exhibited permanently in the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Although highly praised throughout the Renaissance until the nineteenth century, in the twentieth century plaster casts were considerably devalued and many collections were de-accessioned and sold. For more on the history of plaster cast collecting, see Haskell and Penny, Taste and the Antique: The Lure of Classical Sculpture, 1500-1900. For a powerful visual example of the devaluation of plaster casts, see Louise Lawler's photographs of the Metropolitan Museum of Art's plaster casts shrouded in plastic and hidden away in museum storage. See Douglas Crimp and Louise Lawler, On the Museum's Ruins (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1993).

[88] Canova's letter to the Countess, dated Feb. 21, 1807, reads: "la testa della medusa in pietra potria tenersi sopra qualche mobile di stanza da se, e prendersi pur anche volendo piacere d'introdurvi sotto una piccola candela per illuminarla a gioco di trasparenza: e porle in mano del Perseo una sua vece quell'altra di gesso messavi apposta per questo oggetto. Una simile precauzione è diretta a causare meno gravità al braccio steso della Statua [...]." The original letter remains in the National Museum in Warsaw. As cited in Wronikowska, "Committenti Polacchi di Canova. I Tarnowski e la 'Replica' del *Perseo*," 85.

and appreciation for the possibilities of marble. At the same time, Medusa's changeable expression would radiate passion and emotion and ultimately defy the beautiful. [89] The ugly, the terrifying, and the feminine become inextricably linked. Imitation would be pushed to its extreme.

For all of Winckelmann's admiration of the antique, however, he was not advocating that artists slavishly copy Greek works.[90] Canova himself refused to make copies of the *Apollo Belvedere* and the *Venus de'Medici* for clients because exact replication did not require intellectual engagement, or *invenzione*, to which he was particularly wedded.[91] Imitation, on the other hand, was the creative interpretation of antiquity. Romans imitated the Greeks in an attempt to surpass them, and Renaissance artists and eighteenth-century artists likewise used the Greeks as their models in their quest for perfection. By the time Winckelmann codified these ideas in 1755, imitation contained within it a steadfast idea of progress—in reverse. That is, by using the Greeks as its model, creative production seemed to look perpetually backward to a lost origin.

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[89] Quatremère de Quincy points out that the ideal need not be beautiful, and can, in fact, be ugly. Noted by R. Schneider, L'Esthétique classique chez Quatremère de Quincy (1805-1823) (Paris: Hachette, 1910) 42.

[90] Winckelmann, Reflections on the Imitation of Greek Works in Painting and Sculpture 5.

[91] A series of letters from July 1789 to November 1789 from the Marchese Marcello Bacciarelli reveals Canova's reluctance to make copies of works of art for clients. Although Canova's response is missing from these documents, it is clear that Bacciarelli's request for a copy of the *Apollo Belvedere* was rebuffed. See MBAB, Carteggio Canoviano, letters I.I.3.3-I.I.5.5. Indeed, one letter documenting Canova's reply survives in the Carte Bacciarelli in the Biblioteca Nardowa in Warsaw. In his response, dated August 29, 1789, Canova suggests that Antonio d'Este be given the commission instead. As cited in Honour, "Canova's Studio Practice II: 1791-1822," 221.

In another series of letters, dated August to September 1794, John Frank Newton requested copies of the *Apollo Belvedere* and the *Venus de'Medici* on behalf of a friend, and his requests were similarly refused. See MBAB, Carteggio Canoviano, letters I.4.2.85-I.4.3.86.

For more on Canova's dedication to the intellectual parts of the creative process, see both the journal from his trip to Rome, in which he makes frequent references to *invenzione*, and Lavagnino's examination of his terra-cotta *bozzetti.* Antonio Canova, "I Quaderni da Viaggio," Scritti, eds. Hugh Honour and Paolo Mariuz, Edizione Nazionale delle Opere di Antonio Canova (Roma: Salerno, 2007) 16-194 and Lavagnino, Canova e le sue 'Invenzioni'.

But to imagine imitation as monotonous or lifeless does it injustice. In the eighteenth century, antiquity was never taken "as is". It was, rather, always changed, modified and reestablished in a fundamentally modern way. This dynamic understanding of the past transformed the antique, and, indeed, this historicism was one distinctly modern approach to the appropriation of the past.[92]

Although Canova clearly conceptualized the doctrine of imitation both thematically and formally in *Perseus*, the rules by which a young modern artist—particularly a young sculptor—should go about practically employing the doctrine of imitation to create new works of art were never explicitly explained by Winckelmann or other theorists. Yes, young artists were taught to "imitate" both nature and the ideal in a conceptual sense, and certainly imitation exemplified a powerful, positive generative force through which a young artist could interact, study, modify, and perhaps even surpass the greatest productions of antiquity. Yet, nonetheless, imitation remained nebulous when considered from the very practical point of view of artistic—particularly sculptural—production. Canova therefore called attention to the larger project of imitation within the space of his studio through exhibition techniques, deliberately and intentionally manifesting his work as a staging of Classicism in the modern era.

Confronting the Classical: The Studio

Sculptural production was a messy craft that belied the idea that artistic creation was largely a conceptual process. The realities of working in marble, in particular, had little in common with the erudite and rational doctrine of imitation. In an early drawing

[92] I would like to thank Dr. Horst Bredekamp for his insightful comments to me regarding the vitality of imitation in the eighteenth century.

of Canova's studio by Francesco Chiarottini from the 1780s, for instance, it is impossible even to detect the figure of the sculptor, who may well be absent. Instead, assistants are busy using plumb lines to measure, transfer and enlarge the proportions of plaster models in order to rough out the marble blocks of the final works (fig. 80). The similarities between their actions and the engravings in Francesco Carradori's 1802 *Istruzione elementare per gli studiosi della scultura* reveal that the technical difficulties of the medium required a codified, methodical approach to sculptural production in which the conceptual enterprise was only part of the process (fig. 81).[93]

As a result of the mechanical nature of sculpture, the intersection between the theory of imitation and the space of the sculptor's studio was an uneasy one. As Canova's career progressed, for instance, it is notable that fewer and fewer paintings of the artist in his studio revealed the *practicalities* of the craft. Instead, paintings such as the portrait of the sculptor by Domenico Conti from around 1793 tended to hone in on his form, enclosing him tightly in the frame and revealing little about the studio's larger space (fig. 82). Gone are the assistants, plumb lines, and any tools that might signal that Canova's sculpture relied, to a degree, on the art of copying, as he moved from the terracotta bozzetti to the larger clay and plaster models and ultimately to the final marble. Instead,

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[93] Francesco Carradori, Istruzione Elementare per gli Studiosi della Scultura (Firenze: [s.n.], 1802). Carradori's book was recently translated into English as Francesco Carradori, Elementary Instructions for Students of Sculpture, eds. Matti Kalevi Auvinen, Hugh Honour and Paolo Bernardini (Los Angeles: J. Paul Getty Museum, 2002). See esp. 64-71, plates 8-12, for the techniques involved in enlarging plaster and clay models.

Johannes Myssok has recently explored Canova's technique of creating full-scale plaster casts after his full-scale clay models. According to Myssok, this new technique enabled Canova to focus on two phases of sculptural production—the conception of the work and the finishing of the marble surface. Perhaps more importantly, Myssok also suggests that this working technique privileged works of art that were conceived independently by the artist, signaling a changing model of patronage in which the artist was no longer reliant on patrons' commissions or ideas. See Johannes Myssok, "Modern Sculpture in the Making: Antonio Canova and Plaster Casts," Plaster Casts: Making, Collecting, and Displaying from Classical Antiquity to the Present, eds. Rune Frederiksen and Eckart Marchand, Transformationen Der Antike (Berlin and New York: De Gruyter, 2010) 269-88.

in later portraits of the artist, Canova is frequently the only figure depicted in the studio.[94] In these images, however, hammer and chisel are often prominently placed in the foreground, along with fine coating of marble chips and dust—signs that reveal his direct agency as a sculptor and identify him firmly as the only author of his works (fig. 83).

By establishing his direct contact with these works—his artistic touch—these paintings reflect one way Canova negotiated the friction between sculpture as craft versus sculpture as imitation or invention. At the same time, however, Canova also began to employ his studio as a space of display for tourists, potential clients, and critics.[95]

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[94] One exception is the well-known pastel in the Victoria and Albert Museum by Hugh Douglas Hamilton, *Antonio Canova in his Studio with Henry Tresham and a Plaster Model for 'Cupid and Psyche'* (1788-1791) which shows the artist in his studio accompanied by Tresham. Although he is not alone, Canova is, notably, covered by a fine dusting of plaster, holding a chisel and hammer in hand.

Other paintings depicting Canova in his studio or posing with his works—often with his sculptor's tools in hand—can be seen in the beautifully illustrated exhibition catalogues, Museo Canoviano and Fondazione Canova, La Mano e il Volto di Antonio Canova: Nobile Semplicità, Serena Grandezza, and Androsov, et al.,eds., Canova: l'Ideale Classico tra Scultura e Pittura, to name only two examples.

Letterio Subba's painting from about 1819 is one of the few later paintings that shows the larger space of Canova's studio, including its status as a "gallery". In this image, Canova remains clearly visible, at work on the marble of *Theseus and the Centaur*, while visitors circulate and admire completed works and casts of finished sculptures that had already left the studio. As Antonello Cesareo has pointed out, this is an idealized view of the sculptor's studio, for Canova would not have worked in such close proximity to finished pieces, out of concern that the marble dust would sully their surface. See Antonello Cesareo, "Su di un Dipinto di Letterio Subba Raffigurante *Antonio Canova nel suo Studio*," Arte Veneta 65 (2009): 175-78.

[95] For more on Canova's studio, which Honour argues cannot be compared to French ateliers, see Honour, "Canova's Studio Practice I: The Early Years" and Honour, "Canova's Studio Practice II: 1791-1822." For a recent exploration of the many functions of Canova's studio, see Mario Guderzo, "Antonio Canova 'Ebbe la sua Officina'," Gli Ateliers degli Scultori: Atti del Secondo Convegno Internazionale sulle Gipsoteche, Possagno, 24-25 Ottobre 2008, ed. Mario Guderzo, Quaderni del Centro Studi Canoviani (Possagno and Crocetta del Montello, Treviso, Italy: Fondazione Canova; Terra ferma, 2010) 17-32. The studio space was also recently the subject of technical inquiry and restoration. See Laura Donadono, Lo Studio di Antonio Canova: Storia e Restauro, I Palazzi di Roma; 3 (Roma: Gangemi, 2007).

To give a sense of the sheer numbers of visitors to the studio, I have noted a few of the most interesting accounts of trips made while Canova was still alive. Mary Berry visited Canova's studio as early as 1784 and stopped by on numerous occasions over the years, until 1820. See Mary Berry and Theresa Lewis, Extracts from the Journals and Correspondence of Miss Berry, from the Year 1783 to 1852, 2nd ed., 3 vols. (London: Longmans Green, 1866) vol. 1, 102-03 and vol. 3, 262, 65 and 74. Hugh Honour describes several visitors' impressions, including François-Marius Granet's 1809 visit. Honour, "Canova's Studio Practice I: The Early Years," 147. Other visitors include Catherine Wilmot (1802), Joseph Sansom (1801-1802), Mario Pieri (1811), Joseph Hippolyte de Santo-Domingo (ca. 1817), Henry Sass (1817), and Henry Matthews (1818).

John Mayne described Canova's studio on his visit of November 19, 1814. His belief that Canova had not yet touched the sculpture of *Theseus and the Centaur* reflects the growing misconception that

Connections between ancient and modern works continued to be made formally, but far more interesting is the way that those connections were then continually reiterated via exhibition practices. In the studio, for instance, Canova relied on comparisons with antique and classical sculptures in order to establish his own artistic prowess—and to visualize the doctrine of imitation for beholders. Unlike the salon games that were meant to deceive viewers, these displays made an overt claim for his work's equivalency with the masterpieces of antiquity. They likewise confirmed Canova's understanding of the dialectic between form and exhibition practice.

Canova did not sculpt his own works. "To Canova's workshop, which is, by his order, opened in the most liberal manner to all strangers. One room is hung with his designs, and prints of his works admirably executed; one of the designs is for a monument to Lord Nelson. There are many of his casts to be seen [...] Another [marble sculpture], of Theseus vanquishing the Centaur, is greatly advanced; it seemed to me nearly finished, but we were told that Canova had never touched it yet. This visit was one of the highest interest; we saw works in every state, from the first placing of the rough block to the last finishing of the master. The actual work done by him is but little. He makes the design, and models the cast from it. The marble is then wrought from the block by workmen and pupils, till it is ready to receive its final polish."

Likewise, Lady Morgan wrote an evocative description of her visit in 1820 that is worth quoting at length. It makes an interesting counterpoint to Mayne's description, for she sees Canova working on a marble block. "The studio of Canova is by far the most extensive in Rome; and his most arduous industry can only be estimated by those permitted to wander through his various work-rooms and galleries. Masses of marble, almost mountains, fresh hewn from their native quarries, fill the inferior chambers; others, exhibiting the first sketched rudiments of creation, succeed; then come the outlined forms starting into being, resembling a metamorphosis of ancient fable, where life has "half forgot itself to stone." Further on, are almost living groups of beauties, wits, kings, and pontiffs, with all their insignia, the wreath, the stylus, the crown, the tiara. […] At the extremity of this suite is the cabinet of the master-genius himself, far from the din and bustle of less inspired workmen; and there was, in our estimation, nothing in Rome more worthy to be seen than Canova himself at work, habited in his nankeen jacket and yellow slippers; his frail and delicate frame energized to Herculean strength; now striking off from the mass, now finishing some trait so delicate as to escape all eyes, save that of Art."

For accounts of visits to Canova's studio, see Catherine Wilmot, An Irish Peer on the Continent (1801-1803) Being a Narrative of the Tour of Stephen, 2nd Earl Mount Cashell, through France, Italy, Etc. (London: Williams and Norgate, 1920) 179-80; Joseph Sansom, Letters from Europe, During a Tour through Switzerland and Italy, in the Years 1801 and 1802, 2 vols. (Philadelphia: Printed for the author by A. Bartram and sold by T. Dobson, 1805) vol. 2, 230-31; Mario Pieri, Memorie 1804-1811, Biblioteca Neoclassica; 4, ed. Roberta Masini (Roma: Bulzoni, 2003) 357 and 411-12; Joseph Hippolyte de Santo-Domingo, Tablettes Romaines, contenant des faits, des anecdotes et des observations sur les mœurs, les usages, les ceremonies, le gouvernement de Rome; par un français qui a récemment séjourné dans cette ville (Paris: Chez les Marchands de nouveautés; Imprimerie de Guiradet, 1824) 114-16; Sass, A Journey to Rome and Naples, Performed in 1817; Giving an Account of the Present State of Society in Italy, and Containing Observations on the Fine Arts 129; John Mayne and John Mayne Colles, The Journal of John Mayne, During a Tour on the Continent Upon Its Reopening after the Fall of Napoleon, 1814 (London and New York: John Lane The Bodley Head and John Lane company, 1909) 197-98; and Lady (Sydney) Morgan, Italy, 2 vols. (New York: J. Seymour, 1821) vol. 2, 169-70.

In the studio, for instance, Canova regularly exhibited casts of ancient sculptures. Casts were, as we already know from the Farsetti collection, an educational tool for young sculptors. When Canova visited what he described as "the studio, or, better said, museum" of restorer and sculptor Bartolomeo Cavaceppi in 1779, he also found that many casts were for sale, which reminds us that the trade in plaster casts was also a viable – and indeed profitable – business.[96] In Canova's case, however, the display of casts seems to have served a different purpose. In part, casts were exhibited for inspiration, but it is important to note that they also regularly served as a foil to Canova's own sculptures. The theorist and critic Carl Ludwig Fernow argued in his *Römische Studien* of 1806 that this was regular practice for Canova.[97] In 1801, for instance, Canova reiterated the formal similarities between *Triumphant Perseus* and the *Apollo Belvedere*

[96] See the entry for Nov. 12, 1779 in Canova, "I Quaderni da Viaggio," 62-63. It is possible that Canova's comment about Cavaceppi's studio was a slight to the other sculptor, for Canova may have felt the abundance of casts for sale stultified Cavaceppi's artistic production.

[97] "Auch der Künstler selbst scheuet die Vergleichung seiner Arbeiten mit der Antike so wenig, dass er vielmehr, so oft sich dazu eine Veranlassung darbeitet, klassische Werke vom ersten Range neben die seinigen stellt, und dadurch den Beschauer zu einer solchen Vergleichung selbst auffordert." See Carl Ludwig Fernow, "Über den Bildhauer Canova und dessen Werke," Römische Studien, vol. 1 (Zürich: H. Gessner, 1806) 24.

Fernow's text was widely disseminated and translated shortly after its publication. In 1807 extracts appeared in Italian, French and English in various journals. An additional English reprinting appeared in 1844. The German text, along with a new Italian translation, was published again in 2006. See Carl Ludwig Fernow, "Notizia sul Celebre Scultore Canova; e sulle sue Opere," Giornale Enciclopedico di Napoli 2.iv (April 1807): 90-109; Carl Ludwig Fernow, "Notizia sul Celebre Scultore Canova; e sulle sue Opere," Giornale Enciclopedico di Napoli 2.v (May 1807): 245-62; Carl Ludwig Fernow, "Notizia sul Celebre Scultore Canova; e sulle sue Opere," Giornale Enciclopedico di Napoli 3 (August 1807): 210-25; Carl Ludwig Fernow, "Beaux-Arts. notice sur le célèbre sculpteur Canova, et sur ses ouvrages," Magasin encyclopédique, ou journal des sciences des lettres et des arts 1 (Jan. 1807): 87-136; Carl Ludwig Fernow, "Account of the Life and Works of M. Canova, the Celebrated Italian Sculptor," The Monthly Magazine, or, British Register XXIV.160 (August 1, 1807): 43-48; Carl Ludwig Fernow, "Account of the Life and Works of M. Canova, the Celebrated Italian Sculptor," The Monthly Magazine, or, British Register XXIV.161 (September 1, 1807): 151-60; Carl Ludwig Fernow, "Canova and His Works," The Dublin University Magazine: A Literary and Political Journal XXIII.CXXXVI (April 1844): 469-78; Carl Ludwig Fernow, "Canova and His Works," The Dublin University Magazine: A Literary and Political Journal XXIV.CXL (August 1844): 43-48; and Carl Ludwig Fernow, "Canova and His Works," The Dublin University Magazine: A Literary and Political Journal XXIV.CXLI (Sept. 1844): 289-300; and, finally Carl Ludwig Fernow, Über den Bildhauer Canova und dessen Werke, trans. Alexander Auf der Heyde, I Testi; 9 (Bassano del Grappa (Vicenza): Istituto di ricerca per gli studi su Canova e il neoclassicismo, 2006), respectively.

by forcing a direct comparison between the two sculptures in his studio, exhibiting his marble work next to a plaster cast of the *Apollo*.[98] A tantalizing letter from the Count Tiberio Roberti regarding Canova's *Hercules and Lychas* also suggests that a model for this work was displayed in Canova's studio next to a cast of its prototype, the *Farnese Hercules.* This calculated comparison worked in Canova's favor, for Roberti reports that visitors preferred Canova's *Hercules* to the ancient work.[99] By staging these

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[98] The presence of the plaster cast is confirmed by at least three sources: Fernow, an anonymous Italian author in *Lettera di un Amatore delle Arti*, and the American Presbyterian Minister, Samuel Miller. The latter wrote, "Canova resides in Rome. The author is informed, by Mr. Murray, that this artist is undoubtedly the greatest sculptor now living, and fully equal to the second class of Grecian sculptors. Mr. Murray, when at Rome, was often in the workshop of Canova, and declares, that, on comparing a statue of *Perseus,* executed by him, with a cast from, the *Belvidere Apollo,* placed in the same room, the former suffered very little by the comparison." See the footnote in Samuel Miller, A Brief Retrospect of the Eighteenth Century. Part the First; in Three Volumes: Containing a Sketch of the Revolutions and Improvements in Science, Arts, and Literature During That Period, 3 vols. (New York and London: J. Johnson, 1805) vol. 2, 140.

According to his biographer Memes, Canova did the same thing with his small *Apollo Crowning Himself* (currently in the J. Paul Getty Museum), which he exhibited next to a work by the sculptor Giuseppe Angelini. "...but though very beautiful, a work of this nature [the statue of Apollo] would scarcely have merited notice, did it not mark the first of Canova's triumphs in his earliest rivalry with cotemporaries [*sic*] at Rome. It so happened that this piece was finished about the same time, and exposed to public inspection along with the *Minerva Pacifica*, a statue of nearly similar dimensions, and one of the best works of *Angelini*, who has already been described as one of the first sculptors then in Italy. Notwithstanding this formidable competition, which, without striking excellences in the composition, must have altogether thrown into shade the work of a youth unknown and unpatronized, the Apollo obtained general and very high applause. Comparisons were even made, little favourable to the Minerva." Memes, Memoirs of Antonio Canova, with a Critical Analysis of His Works, and an Historical View of Modern Sculpture 293-94.

Canova himself mentions Angelini's work in a letter to Falier dated December 29, 1781, and specifically mentions Angelini's work was made as a companion to his own. "La statuina che fo per il Senatore di Roma non è ancora finita. Questa credo che la sarà nota rappresentare un Apollo che si pone la corona. Il sig. Angelini, scultore dei delli primi di Roma, ha fatto la compagna di questa mia, e rappresenta Minerva Pacifica." As cited in Bottari and Ticozzi, Raccolta di Lettere sulla Pittura, Scultura ed Architettura Scritte da' Più Celebri Personaggi dei Secoli XV, XVI, e XVII vol. 8, 170.

[99] "Posso assicurarla e con ingenuità, che l'offerto Gruppo è un capo d'opera, e che parecchi viaggiatori intelligenti lo preferiscono all'antico e glorioso Gruppo dell'Ercole Farnese, vagheggiati avendo in Roma nello studio stesso del Canova e il suo modello e l'altro." Letter from Tiberio Roberti, dated May 1799, MBAB, Carteggio Canoviano, I.9.12.194. Fernow also confirms the juxtaposition between the two Hercules sculptures. Fernow, Über den Bildhauer Canova und dessen Werke 24–25.

Catherine Wilmot likewise references the *Hercules Farnese* when viewing Canova's *Hercules and Lychas* in 1803. "His Perseus after having cut off the Gorgon's head, is one of his most celebrated works, but that by which he expects to immortalise himself is his Hercules in the act of flinging a man into the sea. This is particularly opposed to the Farnese Hercules, which is in a state of repose leaning on his knotted club. If you choose to see through my eyes, you will prefer Canova's a thousand times beyond the other, for I cannot help thinking the Farnese Hercules one of the most lubberly preposterous wretches I ever saw

comparisons, Canova may well have been picking up on Francesco Milizia's entry for *exhibitions* in his *Dizionario delle Belle Arti* of 1797, in which Milizia encourages artists to display their artworks next to well-established masterpieces. This, he claims, will inspire young artists to produce better work. Significantly, however, Milizia also explores how these comparisons affect not just the artists but the beholders of works of art as well. Juxtaposing two works renders the display more useful by combating the "ignorance" and "absurd judgments" that Milizia laments exhibitions usually engender.[100]

Certainly by staging a comparison between *Perseus* and *Apollo*, Canova transformed his studio into a dramatization of his own artistic skill, by visually manifesting the argument that he *was* the greatest imitator of the antique. In Canova's studio, the confrontation between ancient and modern masterpiece constituted a positive enactment of the doctrine of imitation. At the same time, the comparison between the two works directed the viewers' attention, demanded their participation, and transformed the studio into a space of active viewing. This was then further enhanced by a label that was posted next to *Perseus*. Concerned that the details of the sculpture, namely the Phrygian

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in my life." Wilmot, An Irish Peer on the Continent (1801-1803) Being a Narrative of the Tour of Stephen, 2nd Earl Mount Cashell, through France, Italy, Etc. 179.

Even public journals in Italy saw Canova's *Hercules and Lychas* as a challenge to the ancient masterpiece. "[…] nell'*Ercole, che scaglia Lica nel mare*, (gruppo colossale che ha già modellato, e cha ha destata l'ammirazione di tutti) si prepara a rendere in convulsione (per così dire) quell'Ercole (il *Farnese*) che l'antichità ha tanto ammirato in riposo." "Novelle Letterarie. Scultura," Nuovo Giornale de'Letterati 2 (1802): 85-86.

[100]"L'*esposizione* delle opere al giudizio del pubblico mantiene l'emulazione degli artisti. In queste occasioni l'ignoranza moltiplica i giudizj assurdi, l'intelligenza e il gusto rettifica: dal concorso del gusto e dell'ignoranza si forma quel giudizio che dà ai talenti il luogo che meritano. Queste *esposizioni* diverrebbero più utili, se vi si mettesse a canto qualche capo d'opera di qualche gran maestro. Che fuoco non sentirebbero i giovani vedersi rivali un Raffaello, un Palladio!" Milizia, Dizionario delle Belle Arti del Disegno Estratto in Gran Parte dalla Enciclopedia Metodica da Francesco Milizia vol. 1, 230.

In general, Milizia also writes that the circumstances of a work of art's exhibition and display are crucial to its success. "Per quanto bello sia un oggetto, se non è ben situato, non spicca. Onde gli Artisti debbono badare all'*esposizione* delle loro opere, e farle convenienti al luogo e alle circostanze. Gran vantaggio, se si può sceglier il sito." Milizia, Dizionario delle Belle Arti del Disegno Estratto in Gran Parte dalla Enciclopedia Metodica da Francesco Milizia vol. 1, 230.

cap and the shape of the sword, might be misinterpreted—perhaps as references to the French Revolution—Canova's text described the classical motifs and their motivation.[101] The text both recalled the mythological story of Perseus and reiterated the archaeological accuracy of Canova's work. In addition, by comparing *Perseus* to an ancient work in the collection of Cardinal Gualtieri, Canova not only legitimized his choice of iconographic details but once again reinforced the importance that modern collections themselves had in determining the authenticity and value of an object.

In the studio, therefore, Canova's exhibition techniques emphasized the aesthetic importance of his work. Critical response, however, reveals that the exhibition engendered debates that not only addressed the complicated nature of imitation and artistic creation, but also the *appropriateness* of such exhibitions. Fernow, for instance, argued that the exhibition exemplified Canova's lack of modesty, by imposing a challenge to antiquity that was both naive and audacious.[102] Not only did Canova dare his audience to compare the two works, but Fernow suggests Canova intentionally manipulated the display to enhance his own sculpture. Indeed, Canova placed *Perseus* on a higher pedestal than the *Apollo* and also enhanced its illumination.[103] More damning,

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[101] For the full text, see Raggio, "Canova's Triumphant 'Perseus'," 212.

Memes also records the inclusion of this text, which "completely silenced every detractor, and is not less honourable to the author's knowledge of antiquity, than to the careful research employed to preserve fidelity in even the most minute details." Memes, Memoirs of Antonio Canova, with a Critical Analysis of His Works, and an Historical View of Modern Sculpture 384.

[102] "Jeder Unbefangene fühlte die Unbescheidenheit dieser Zusammenstellungen, und Kenner bemerkten ausserdem noch die Unschiklichkeit der ersten, welche den Misgrif des Künstlers im Karakter seines Perseus um so auffallender zeigte; und nur das seltene Glük Canova's keinen Feind zu haben, konte ihn vor den unangenehmen Folgen einer so naiv-kühnen Herausforderung der Kritik sichern." Fernow, "Über den Bildhauer Canova und dessen Werke," 25. Fernow's irritation at Canova's hubris is amusing given the number of times Canova is praised for his modesty by contemporaries.

[103] "So sah man neben seinem Perseus, wärend derselbe zur öffentlichen Beurtheilung, oder vielmehr Bewunderung, in seiner Werkstatt ausgestellt war, einen Abgus des Vatikanischen Apollo, der in seinem unscheinbaren Gipse, und auf niederem Gestelle, vor gemeinen Augen freilich neben dem mit höchster

however, was the juxtaposition between marble and plaster. The juxtaposition of different materials inevitably made the *Apollo* look "wretched," for plaster lacked the luminosity, warmth, and vibrant surface of marble.[104] The contrast between media would have been accentuated by the fact that Canova was particularly adept at finishing and polishing the surfaces of his sculptures–treatments which have faded completely yet would have provided a very different sight from the way his sculptures currently appear.[105] One imagines this comparison would have put the *Apollo* at quite a disadvantage in Canova's studio. When visitors saw the marble *Apollo* in the Vatican, after all, they applauded the sculpture's refined materiality. Both James Simpson and Goethe commented on the semi-transparency of the *Apollo's* marble, which seemed almost translucent in direct light.[106] Goethe even credited the marble's luminosity with keeping the god in the "first bloom" and "eternally young"—an effect, he stated, which was lost even in the finest plaster cast of the work.[107] Material *did* matter. In the studio, therefore, the "original" marble Perseus

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Vollendung meisterhaft in Marmor ausgeführten, hoch in günstiger Beleuchtung aufgestellten Gorgonentödter eine demüthige Figur spielte." Fernow, "Über den Bildhauer Canova und dessen Werke," 24.

[104] Fernow, "Über den Bildhauer Canova und Dessen Werke," 24.

[105] See Honour, "Canova's Studio Practice I: The Early Years" and Honour, "Canova's Studio Practice II: 1791-1822" for an account of Canova's polishing and finishing techniques.

[106] James Simpson likewise admires the marble *Apollo* in Paris in 1815. "The only drapery of the Apollo is the scarf which hangs from his left arm, with an indescribable grace. It is almost transparent as you look at it between you and the light." James Simpson, Paris after Waterloo; Notes Taken at the Time and Hitherto Unpublished, Including a Revised Edition--the Tenth--of a Visit to Flanders and the Field (Edinburgh: W. Blackwood and sons, 1853) 151.

[107] "Marble is a remarkable material, which is why the *Apollo Belvedere* is so immensely pleasing. For the finest bloom of this living, youthfully free, eternally young being fades at once even in the best plaster cast. Across from us in the Rondanini stands a Medusa mask which expresses the anxious stare of death with ineffable prevision in the nobly beautiful form of its larger than life-size face. I already possess a good cast of it, but the spell of the marble has been lost. The elegant semitransparency of the yellowish, nearly flesh-colored stone has disappeared. The plaster always looks chalky and dead in comparison." Goethe, Italian Journey 123-24.

confronted a plaster reproduction of its model, not the authentic work itself. Within this particular comparison, the superiority of *Perseus* over the *Apollo* was established by drawing attention to the tension between the model and its imitation, the copy and the original, the marble and the cast.

If Fernow felt that *Apollo*'s association with *Perseus* glorified the latter work, the comparison was also potentially unflattering and even dangerous. One anonymous writer—alternately named as Gherardo de Rossi, or possibly Alessandro Verri—published a small pamphlet in 1801, *Letter from a lover of arts, regarding a statue representing Perseus.*[108] In the text, a panegyric to Canova, the author recounts his visit to Canova's studio and eavesdrops on one visitor's reaction to *Perseus*. Confused and distraught to hear Canova's work compared to the *Apollo*, the author is relieved when he "fortunately" sees that it was the plaster cast of the *Apollo* proper that inspired comment, rather than any intrinsic similarities between the two works. In fact, the author then spends a large portion of the text accentuating the *differences* between the two sculptures, namely their pose and dynamism. He goes so far as to say that any similarities between the two works must arise solely because the two artists have treated comparable subjects,

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[108] The authorship of this pamphlet is debated. The compilation of writings about Canova's work published in 1823 as *Biblioteca Canoviana* lists Giovanni Gherardo de Rossi as the author. This attribution appears to be confirmed by two letters from Giovanni-Battista Sartori, Canova's half-brother, to the artist, dated May 27, 1801 and July 22, 1801, respectively, in which Sartori writes that he is eager to hear Canova's opinion on de Rossi's critique. Canova himself, however, in a letter to Leopoldo Cicognara on May 17, 1817, suggests it was written by the Count Alessandro Verri. See Pochini, Biblioteca Canoviana, Ossia Raccolta delle Migliori Prose, e de' Più Scelti Componimenti Poetici sulla Vita, sulle Opere ed in Morte di Antonio Canova vol. 1, 129; d'Este, Memorie di Antonio Canova 422-23 and Canova, Epistolario (1816-1817) vol. 2, 822.

Johannes Myssok likewise examines the way the meaning of Canova's sculpture varied by comparing the texts of Fernow and Verri, as I do above. He also explores the reception of Canova's *Perseus* in several other contexts, namely the writings of Isabella Teotochi Albrizzi and Leopoldo Cicognara. See Myssok, Antonio Canova: Die Erneuerung der Klassischen Mythen in der Kunst um 1800 especially 204-06.

heroes who have slain their combatants.[109] By distancing *Perseus* from its model, and using the exhibition in the studio to stress differences between the two works, the author provides us with two diverse possibilities for the interpretation of imitation. On the one hand, for an eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century audience, subtle variations and distinctions between works were more important than what we might think of as glaring similarities. On the other hand, however, we can perhaps more cynically consider that this attempt to distance the two from one another signals the way imitation held the dangerous potential to devolve into mere plagiarism. And plagiarism, it is important to note, is another criticism that Fernow leveled against Canova, disparaging *Perseus* as "nothing more, and nothing less than an *Apollo* disguised as and transformed into a hero, but in a different pose."[110] In a letter dated November 26, 1806 to his lifelong friend and correspondent, the theorist and academician Quatremère de Quincy, Canova defended himself against these charges. "It takes more than stealing here and there from ancient

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[109] "Ma seppe ben distrarmi l'urto villano di un servo, che m'intimò d'allontanarmi perche entrava il suo padrone. Obedii al cortesissimo invito, mi trassi in disparte, ed entrarono due uomini, dei quali l'abito, e il portamento annunciavano un pianeta, e un satellite. Mentre il primo guardava con meraviglia la statua, udii confusamente, che nominava coll'altro l'Apollo; e questa parola mi fè credere, che al primo momento colui avesse ritrovato qualche somiglianza fra l'attitudine del Perseo, quello dell'Apollo di Belvedere. Fortunatamente dall'angolo, ove io mi era umilmente ritirato, vedeva di fronte un gesso dell'Apollo, miserabile avanzo di tanta perdita. Quindi mi posi subito a confrontare la mossa dell'uno, e dell'altro; e vidi bene che l'impressione, che avea provato quel Signore, quanto a prima vista parea giusta, altrettanto svaniva ridotta ad esame; e che fra queste due statue non v'era (dirò così) che una somiglianza d'intenzione, quale è quella, in cui debbonsi necessariamente incontrare due artisti, che trattano non dissimili argomenti. Ma il movimento del corpo del Perseo, quello della testa, delle gambe, del torso sono diversi, e quasi contrapposti a quello dell'Apollo; avendo poi singolarmente la figura del Perseo una certa maggiore energía di moto: anche l'Apollo è in moto, ma muovesi più placidamente. Il Signore, che avea nominato Apollo, voltossi indietro, vide quel gesso, che io esaminava, e si mise anch'egli ad osservare le diversità, che io avevo tacitamente fra me rilevate, coll'andare magistralmente insinuando al satellite delle riflessioni, talora ragionevoli, talora no, ma sempre approvate." Giovanni Gherardo de Rossi, Lettera di un Amatore delle Arti Sopra una Statua Rappresentante Perseo, Scolpita in Marmo di Carrara da Antonio Canova (Pisa: Tipografia della Società Letteraria, 1801) 6–7.

[110] "Der Perseus ist zwar nicht schlechthin eine Nachahmung des Apollo von Belvedere, aber doch, was auch seine Vertheidiger dawider vorbringen mögen, weder mehr noch weniger als ein travestirter, mit veränderter Stellung in einen Helden umgestalteter Apollo." Fernow, "Über den Bildhauer Canova und dessen Werke," 196-97.

pieces and sticking them together indiscriminately to make a great artist!" he wrote. "You have to sweat night and day over Greek models, absorb their style, take them into your blood, and create your own work by always having the beauties of nature beneath your eye and by reading there the same maxims."[111]

That creative imitation and inspiration could devolve into charges of plagiarism signals one of the greatest threats that occurred once a work was finally completed and displayed. The generative and creative power of imitation could be easily transformed into plagiarism in the eyes of the viewer; the very exhibition techniques with which Canova intended to increase the value of his works threatened to devalue them. The artist increasingly lost control over the way his work was interpreted, despite the attention he paid to controlling the viewing construct.

Once Fernow decried *Triumphant Perseus* as plagiarism, his ideas helped shape the responses of future tourists. These ideas, in turn, became intractable. Tourists, for instance, reiterated these negative responses by quoting Fernow, who was very widely read. One such traveler, Henry Matthews, essentially paraphrased Fernow's ideas about Canova's work in his visit to Canova's studio on January 19, 1818:

> He [Canova] is too fond of borrowing from the ancients. This is to be lamented, for it does not seem to be necessary for him to borrow; and his best works perhaps are those in which he has borrowed the least[...]. But you can too often trace every limb and feature to it corresponding prototype in the antique. This is pitiful. It is no excuse to say that all the beautiful attitudes have been forestalled, and that repetition is necessary. There certainly is nothing new under the sun; but

[111] Letter from Canova to Quatremère de Quincy, November 26, 1806. "Vi vuol altro che rubbare qua e là de' pezzi antichi e raccozzarli assieme senza giudizio, per darsi valore di grande artista! Convien sudare dì e notte su' greci esemplari, investirsi del loro stile, mandarselo in sangue, farsene uno proprio coll'aver sempre sott'occhio la bella natura, con leggervi le stesse massime." Cited in Canova and Quatremère de Quincy, Il Carteggio Canova-Quatremère de Quincy, 1785-1822 90.

> invention is displayed in a new *arrangement* of the same materials; and the human figure may be varied, in its attitudes and contours, *ad infinitum*.[112]

Matthews' reaction was precisely the type that Canova tried to forestall with his exhibition techniques. In the studio, Canova had tried to control the viewing environment in order to compel positive reactions to his works. The varied responses to the comparison between *Perseus* and *Apollo*, however, signals that Canova ultimately lost control over the way beholders interpreted his work. It was within the space of the museum, however, that the nebulous understanding of imitation led to the most divergent responses to Canova's sculpture.

Publicizing the Political/Politicizing the Public: The Museum

Within the space of the studio, *Perseus* challenged the *Apollo's* artistic authority through the superior conditions of its display. The work was well-lit, on a high pedestal that could be rotated, [113] and these more flattering exhibition conditions engendered primarily *aesthetic* judgments to the work of art. The aesthetic nature of this comparison, however, was muted in the face of historical events which added a new political dimension to the works, namely the confiscation of many of the city's treasures by the French as a result of the Treaty of Tolentino. Certainly the eighteenth century had seen an upsurge in the number of exports of ancient objects from the Papal States. This had been lamented by artists and writers such as Goethe, who was dismayed that the incessant loss

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[112] Matthews, The Diary of an Invalid, Being the Journal of a Tour in Pursuit of Health, in Portugal, Italy, Switzerland, and France, in the Years 1817, 1818, and 1819 88-89.

[113] Our anonymous writer describes how the statue was rotated in front of visitors. "...e quando cominciarono a risuonare fra loro interrotte voci di approvazione, e di plauso, il buon garzone si pose a far girare sul billico la statue onde fosse veduta da tutti i lati." De Rossi, Lettera di un Amatore delle Arti Sopra una Statua Rappresentante Perseo, Scolpita in Marmo di Carrara da Antonio Canova ix.

of objects disrupted "the total concept" of Rome.[114] It was the Napoleonic invasions of 1796, however, that most damaged the city's cultural patrimony.[115] By the time Canova completed *Triumphant Perseus* in 1801 French troops had deprived Italy of many of its artistic treasures, including the *Apollo Belvedere*, which found a new home in the Musée Napoleon (fig. 84). Citizens throughout Europe objected to the wholesale spoliation of Italy, including Quatremère de Quincy, whose famous *Lettres de Miranda* argued that the entire city of Rome was itself a museum whose integrity should be protected.[116]

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[114] Goethe also had the foresight to suggest that a cast should be made of every object being exported. Goethe, Italian Journey 133.

[115] The loss of works of art to the French led to increasingly strict laws governing the exportation of works of art from the Papal States. In 1802 Pope Pius VII wrote legislation that prevented the exportation of works of art from Rome without his approval. For a brief introduction to this topic see Orietta Rossi Pinelli, "Carlo Fea e il Chirografo del 1802, Cronaca Giudiziaria e Non, delle Prime Battaglie per la Tutela delle 'Belle Arti'," Ricerche di Storia dell'Arte 8. Storia dell'arte e politica della tutela. Scavi, processi, editti, musei, mercanti, ispettori, inventari, restauri (1979): 27-41 and Antonio Pinelli, "Storia dell'Arte e Cultura della Tutela. Le 'Lettres à Miranda' di Quatremère de Quincy," Ricerche di Storia dell'Arte 8. Storia dell'arte e politica della tutela. Scavi, processi, editti, musei, mercanti, ispettori, inventari, restauri (1979): 43-63.

In the early nineteenth century, Canova himself was put in charge of controlling exports of works of art from Rome. In a letter to Cardinal Pacca in 1815, for instance, the sculptor asks for more guidance from the Cardinal, and questions whether there has been any new legislation regarding the exportation of objects. "Ella si è degnata rimettere a me una nota di antichità, che si vorrebbero estrarre dallo Stato. Avrei avuto bisogno di qualche sua particolare istruzione per mio governo. Io non ho presentemente altra guida che il Chirografo Ss.mo del primo Ottobre 1802, il quale all'Articolo 1° e 2° vieta espressamente l'estrazione di qualunque statue o pittura antica, anzi d'ogni frammento sia grande o piccolo, il quale abbia odore d'antichità greca o romana, ecc. e con tal rigore, che fino all'EMO CAMERLENGO PRO TEMPORE s'inibisce di dare veruna licenza per estrarre li nominati oggetti, de'quali permettersi all'articolo 5° la vendita e il commercia libero solamente dentro Roma e nello Stato.

Se rimangono in vigor tuttavia le medesime disposizioni, io vengo autorizzato e comandato dal mio uffizio d'Ispettor generale a provedere e invigliare che abbia il suo pieno adempimento la volontà e gli ordini del Sovrano. Sono in attenzione di nuovi suoi comandi; e nell'atto di trasmetterle i fogli mandatimi, ho l'onore di ripeterle i sensi della mia più alta venerazione." See Alcune Lettere Canoviane. Per le Nozze Malvezzi-Fabrello (R. Stabilimento Tipografico Burato, 1883) n.p.

[116] See Antoine-Chrysosthôme Quatremère de Quincy, Considérations morales sur la destination des ouvrages de l'art: suivi de lettres sur l'enlèvement des ouvrages de l'art antique à Athènes et à Rome, Corpus des œuvres de philosophie en langue française (Paris: Fayard, 1989); Jean-Louis Déotte, "Rome, the Archetypal Museum, and the Louvre, the Negation of Division," Art in Museums, eds. Donald Preziosi and Claire Farago, New Research in Museum Studies (London and Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Athlone, 1995) 215-32, reprinted as Jean-Louis Déotte, "Rome, the Archetypal Museum, and the Louvre, the Negation of Division," Grasping the World; the Idea of the Museum, eds. Donald Preziosi and Claire Farago (Ashgate: Aldershot, 2003) 51-64.

Despite Quatremère's objections, the idea that Italy's artistic treasures were up for grabs was reiterated in the comments overheard in Canova's studio, which, once again, our anonymous author recorded. He recalls hearing a group of foreigners arguing over the appropriate destination for *Perseus*, citing among the possibilities, St. Petersburg, London, or even Paris, where it could be accompanied with the *Apollo*.[117] It was precisely the prospect of the work's loss that created a new national consciousness about cultural treasures,[118] and the idea that *Perseus* might leave Rome sent the author into despair.

Nonetheless, the suggestion that *Perseus* could be displayed with the *Apollo Belvedere* in the Musée Napoleon meant that pairing the two works seemed logical even outside the bounds of Canova's studio. Despite the eagerness of those foreign visitors, however, Giuseppe Bossi, secretary to the Accademia di Brera, purchased *Perseus* for the Bonaparte forum in Milan, where it was destined to go until Pope Pius VII refused to grant an export permit for the sculpture and purchased it himself.[119] *Perseus* therefore

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[117] "I forestieri tornarono a parlare fra loro, e sempre imponendo silenzio all'antiquario, si fecero a discorrere sul destino della statua. Allora riconobbi le diverse nazioni, e perchè quel taciturno non si familiarizzava col più vivace, che incominciò ad esclamare: – Quest'opera deve venire a Parigi. – E perchè no a Pietroburgo? (diceva l'altro). Il silenziario voltando le spalle disse: – La mia nazione conosce troppo il merito dell'artista: Londra avrà il Perseo. Partì, e l'altro vivacemente riprese: – Parigi, Parigi deve possedere sì bell'opera, ed accoppiarla all'Apollo. – Io irritato udendo nominare Pietroburgo, Londra, Parigi, e non Roma, esclamai: – Povera Roma! E partii dolente da quel luogo, fra i tristi pensieri delle nostre perdite delle Belle Arti, e della nessuna cura, che hassi di ripararle. Così tristamente finì la mia visita, e così tristamente finisce ancor la mia lettera." De Rossi, Lettera di un Amatore delle Arti sopra una Statua Rappresentante Perseo, Scolpita in Marmo di Carrara da Antonio Canova xv-xvi.

[118] Myssok, "Die 'Tröstende' Kopie. Antonio Canovas 'Neue Klassiker' und der Napoleonische Kunstraub," 105-07.

[119] According to Fernando Mazzocca, Giambattista Sommariva, one of Canova's most prolific patrons, worked with Bossi to purchase the *Perseus*. See Fernando Mazzocca, "L'Immagine dell'Italia, Mito e Celebrazione Napoleonica negli Anni della Repubblica," Napoleone e la Repubblica Italiana: 1802-1805, eds. Carlo Capra, Franco Della Peruta, and Fernando Mazzocca (Milano: Skira, 2002) 31.

See the appendix of Jacques Perot's article which contains letters from Cardinal Consalvi to François Cacault, the French ambassador in Rome, including one dated Nov. 3, 1801, informing him of the papal decision to buy the work. Jacques Perot, "Canova et les diplomates français à Rome; François Cacault et Alexis Artaud De Montor," Bulletin de la société de l'histoire de l'art français (1980): 226–27.

Memes describes the event in dramatic overtures. Memes, Memoirs of Antonio Canova, with a Critical Analysis of His Works, and an Historical View of Modern Sculpture 380-83.

remained in Rome and entered the collections of the Vatican Museums, a gesture which was well received by other Italians.[120]

Perseus was placed in the Belvedere courtyard, on the very pedestal that had once held the *Apollo*, an unprecedented act that was an enormous honor for Canova.[121] Although Canova reportedly objected to having *Perseus* occupy the abandoned plinth of

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In a letter to Giacomo Zustinian Recanati, from May 9, 1801, Canova speculated that the *Perseus* might wind up in France. "Credo di già ch'essa andrà a finire in Francia, ove ora si trovano i denari di gran parte di Europa, e particolarmente della povera Italia." Alcune Lettere di Antonio Canova ora per la Prima volta Pubblicate. In Occasione delle Nozze Auspicatissime del Conte Giordano Emo-Capodilista colla Contessa Lucia Maldura 30.

In a letter from Canova to Recanati over a year later, dated September 26, 1802, Canova points out that Bossi was going to buy *Perseus* until the Pope demanded the work. "Giacchè V.E. ha tanta bontà di sentire con piacere le notizie delle cose mie, così le dirò che la statua del mio Perseo mi venne ricercata da parecchie parti, e che per certe combinazioni alquanto singolari strinsa l'affare col sig. Giuseppe Bossi pittore, segretario dell'Accademia delle Belle Arti di Milano. Questo esborserà la metà della somma, e l'altra metà altri amici suoi, tra' quali credo qualche altro artista. Quando poi questo governo ha rilevato che la Statua del Perseo dovea andare fuori di Roma, diede ordine che la Statue restasse comperata (malgrado la ristrettezza delle finanze) per Sua Santità, per doverla poi collocare nel Museo Pio Clementino. Sono certo che a quei signori spiacerà alquanto la cosa, ma giacchè il sovrano vuole così, dovranno darsi pace." Letter from Canova to Giaocomo Zustinian Recanati, September 26, 1801 as cited in Bottari and Ticozzi, Raccolta di Lettere sulla Pittura, Scultura ed Architettura Scritte da' Più Celebri Personaggi dei Secoli XV, XVI, e XVII vol. 8, 186-87, also reprinted in Alcune Lettere di Antonio Canova ora per la Prima Volta Pubblicate. In Occasione delle Nozze Auspicatissime del Conte Giordano Emo-Capodilista colla Contessa Lucia Maldura 30.

[120] Isabella Teotochi Albrizzi, one of Canova's first biographers, was pleased by the pope's purchase. Isabella's original letter no longer survives. But Ippolito Pindemonte's reply, in which he argues that Rome did indeed have several Canova works—notably the monuments to Clement XIII and Clement XIV—suggests that she complained that Rome did not have any sculptures by Canova. It is interesting, however, that she does not appear to consider the funerary monuments sculptures—perhaps because they are not in museums? See the letter from Pindemonte to Isabella Teotochi Albrizzi, October 12, 1801. "Lessi con piacere e con ammirazione nella Gazzetta ciò, che mi scrivete intorno a Canova. Ma non intendo perchè diciate, che l'azion del Papa toglie a Roma il rossore di non posseder nulla di quell'artista. Non possiede i due mausolei, che sono le due maggiori opere sue?" Ippolito Pindemonte, Lettere a Isabella (1784-1828), Biblioteca di "Lettere Italiane", 45, ed. Gilberto Pizzamiglio (Firenze: L.S. Olschki, 2000) 119.

[121] A similar fate awaited Canova's *Venus Italica*, which replaced the looted *Venus de'Medici* in the Uffizi, Florence. With respect to the *Venus Italica*, Myssok astutely points out the variants and copies produced to "replace" this work because of its loss to the French not only question the status of "original" works of art, but are likewise reflective of a fundamental break with antiquity itself. Myssok, "Die 'Tröstende' Kopie. Antonio Canovas 'Neue Klassiker' und der Napoleonische Kunstraub," 108, note 72. For more on the commission of the *Venus Italica,* see Antonio P. Torresi, ed., Antonio Canova, Alcune Lettere a Firenze (1801-1821): Inedita dall'Accademia di Belle Arti, dagli Uffizi, dalla Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale e dall'Archivio di Stato (Ferrara: Liberty House, 1999) esp. 46-55 and 93-98. For an account of the various replicas of this work, see Hugh Honour, "Canova's Statues of Venus," The Burlington Magazine 114.835 (Oct. 1972): 658-71. For Canova's lifelong interest in Venus as a subject, see Elena Bassi, "Canova e Venere," Arte Veneta Venezia 32 (1978): 464-68.

the *Apollo Belvedere*,[122] very little is known as to who dictated its display within the museum.[123] It is tempting to speculate, however, that Canova wished to have *Perseus* replace the *Apollo*, since an undated draft of a letter in the Archivio di Stato di Roma asserts that Canova had in fact initially offered *Perseus* to one of the Pope's agents, Cardinal Litta, Treasurer of the Papal States, before agreeing to sell it to Bossi. However, according to the document, the Pope knew nothing of that initial offer, for Cardinal Litta acted "without his [the Pope's] knowledge" and rejected the work based purely on "*his own private feeling*" and "*his own opinion*" – a fact which is repeated four times throughout the document. Once, of course the threat of *Perseus'* departure for Milan was known, "not even *twenty-four hours* passed" before the Pope expressed his desire to purchase that "rare production that was an honor to the age," for "after the immense loss of works of art that formed one of the principle ornaments of this capital, he knew that it was in his interest to obstruct [the sale], so that it [the city] would not remain deprived of this monument as well." The fact that Canova had already sent a letter to Bossi offering him the work, was "a mere accident," and Bossi "as a foreigner and private individual" could not claim the right to purchase the work over the Pope. The Pope further justified

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[122] In a letter to Canova, Cardinal Consalvi implies that Canova had originally objected to the placement of *Perseus* on the *Apollo's* empty pedestal. This might well be true, however, it is interesting to note that he severely objected to the removal of his *Venus Italica* from the Uffizi once the *Venus de'Medici* returned from Paris. See the letter from Ercole Consalvi to Canova on Jan. 28, 1816 in Canova, Epistolario (1816-1817) vol. 1, 67. For Canova's objections regarding the repositioning of the *Venus Italica*, see Canova's letters to Giovanni degli Alessandri on Feb. 27, 1816 and Ferdinando III Granduca di Toscana, on November 16, 1816 in Canova, Epistolario (1816-1817) vol. 1, 113 and 514, respectively. I discuss this incident at length in chapter three.

[123] Given Canova's position as the *Ispettore Generale delle Antichità e Belle Arti* of the Papal States, a post he occupied in 1802, and his direct involvement with administrative matters relating to the papal museums, it is quite possible he was actively involved in these exhibition strategies. See Liverani, "La Nascita del Museo Pio-Clementino e la Politica Canoviana dei Musei Vaticani," 75-102.

his decision by arguing that eighteenth-century laws prohibiting the exportation of works of art could be applied not only to ancient works, but to modern ones as well.[124]

There are a number of ways to interpret this letter. Was this insistence that the Pope did not know of Canova's offer to sell him the *Perseus* merely an attempt to placate Canova's wounded ego in the wake of the work's initial rejection? Or was it an attempt on the part of the Pope to save face, to declare that he recognized the importance of the work and would have certainly purchased it had he known of the offer? Or, was the assertion that the sculpture had first been offered to the Pope and not to Bossi an attempt to distance the work from any possible Republican significance? Does this merely represent part of the larger working out of issues of cultural heritage, brought to the fore by the exportation of objects by tourists in the eighteenth century, and which finally came to a head with the spoliation of the city through the Treaty of Tolentino? Certainly, at least, by implying that Canova offered the work to the Pope soon after it was completed, the letter suggests that Canova hoped that *Perseus* could substitute for the lost *Apollo*. More importantly, Canova may have understood that by offering the work to the Pope, the sculpture would enter the papal collections, and, therefore, the Vatican Museums. By this early date, Canova had already identified the power of the museum as an institution which could endow a work with a broad viewing public, notoriety, and, of course, fame, better perhaps, than any other private or public domain.[125]

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[124] Emphasis in the original. See Appendix A for the full text of the letter draft. Archivio di Stato di Roma, Camerale II, Busta 6, Antichità e Belle Arti, fasc. 188. Undated document, [ca. 1802?].

[125] For more on the museum's power as an institution, see Tony Bennett, The Birth of the Museum: History, Theory, Politics (London; New York: Routledge, 1995) 1995.

I disagree with David Carrier's argument that Canova was a "museum skeptic". It is true that in an 1816 speech to the Roman Academy of Archaeology Canova argued that works of art should be bound to a fixed location. I, however, interpret this as a denunciation of Napoleonic looting, since, of course, Rome had just recuperated its works of art. Carrier's interpretation of this speech does not give enough weight to

During the Peace of Amiens, in 1802 and 1803, visitors to the Vatican Museums were struck by the absence of the great masterpieces they had come to associate with Rome. French visitors, needless to say, gloated over the absence of the works, describing their presence in the Louvre as the privilege of victory.[126] Italians lamented the loss via biting and humorous *pasquinades* posted on the city's "talking statues." One exchange between Marforio and Pasquino played on anagrams of Napoleon's name. Marforio asked, "Is it true that the French are all thieves?" To which Pasquino replied, "All, no, but a good part (a Buona-parte)."[127] British and American visitors were less sanguine. Joseph Forsyth, a British traveler touring the continent in 1802-1803, exclaimed in the Vatican Museums, "Who, but a Frenchman, can enter the present museum without some

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Canova's close relationship with the Vatican Museums and his position as *Ispettore Generale*. I believe Canova well understood and appreciated the power of museums. His primary concern was that special consideration be given to a work of art's placement and setting; he did not denounce the museum as an institution per se. See David Carrier, Museum Skepticism: A History of the Display of Art in Public Galleries (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006) 54.

[126] A visitor wrote on August 1, 1813, "J'ai consacré plusieurs matinées à visiter les musées que renferment *le Vatican* et *le Capitole*. Dans le premier de ces palais, l'imagination, déjà préparée à trouver en abondance des objets dignes d'admiration, s'étonne pourtant de la profusion avec laquelle ils y sont amoncelés. C'est là qu'est le *Belvédère*, petit pavillon qui forme l'extrémité d'une des immenses galeries du palais. Ce *Belvédère* a donné son nom au chef-d'œuvre de sculpture grecque qui y était déposé, et ce nom depuis lors est devenu illustre dans tout l'univers. L'Apollon, le Laocoon, la Diane, n'y sont plus; nous les possédons à Paris. C'est le privilège de la victoire. Les Romains vainqueurs avaient apporté dans leur ville ces précieuses dépouilles. Vaincus, et conquis à leur tour, ils ont perdu ce qu'ils avaient enlevé à leurs ennemis. Quels trophées plus beaux que les monumens des arts, peut, en effect, vouloir un grand peuple pour prix de ses conquêtes.... !

Ainsi le Vatican a fourni au musée Napoléon les plus précieuses productions du génie des anciens et modernes, et nous n'avons plus besoin de chercher hors de chez nous ces œuvres sublimes que nos armes nous ont gagnées." Lettres sur les principales villes d'Italie ècrites à sa mère par le Comte D** en 1813 (Grenoble: Imprimerie de F. Allier, Cour de Chaulnes, 1828) 109-10.

[127] "Marforio. È vero che i francesi sono tutti ladri? /Pasquino. Tutti no, ma Buona-parte." Another dialogue between Marforio and Pasquino includes "Marforio. Che tempo fa? Pasquino. Tempo da ladri!" Ridiculers even critiqued the fact that Canova's allegorical representation of Italy in the *Monument to Vittorio Alfieri* was draped; she should have been denuded, as the country's museums had been. "Questa volta, Canova, l'hai sbagliata. /Tu 1'hai fatta vestita ed è spogliata." Mario Fagiolo, Pasquino e le Pasquinate (Milano: Aldo Martello, 1957) 237, 227, and 238, respectively.

regret?"[128] Reverend John Chetwode Eustace, a British traveler whose journal became a popular guide to the city, lambasted the French for the way they "laid their sacrilegious hands on the unparalleled collection of the Vatican, [and] tore its masterpieces from their pedestals…"[129] He compared the French invasion to a "*blast from hell* [that] checked the prosperity of Italy in every branch and in every province [...]."[130]

Visits to the museums *were* fundamentally affected by the absence of these works of art. Indeed, the overall structure of the museum was altered to cope with the dearth of the originals. The octagonal courtyard, a highlight of the museum, had been remodeled in 1772-73 by Michelangelo Simonetti, who had erected a portico to protect the sculptures and emphasize the niches in which they stood. These discrete views highlighted each individual work and called attention to its uniqueness,[131] but once the originals were missing the vistas only emphasized the Papal State's tragic loss. When Canova was elected *Ispettore Generale* of the museum, he deflected attention away from the *gabinetti* in the octagonal courtyard. In 1803, he ordered the niches bricked up, no doubt to prevent visitors from immediately noticing the lack of the original works (fig. 28). [132]

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[128] Forsyth, Remarks on Antiquities, Arts, and Letters During an Excursion in Italy, in the Years 1802 and 1803 111.

[129] John Chetwode Eustace, A Classical Tour through Italy, An. MDCCCII, 6th ed., 4 vols. (London: J. Mawman, 1821) vol. 2, 58.

[130] Eustace, A Classical Tour through Italy, An. MDCCCII vol. 2, 56.

[131] Collins, "The Gods' Abode: Pius VI and the Invention of the Vatican Museum," 183-84.

[132] Paolo Liverani suggests Canova ordered the alcoves bricked to protect the works that did remain from the elements and illuminate them from above. He argues that these walls were not built with the intent of hiding losses to the French since they were not taken down after the objects returned and indeed remained in place until 1956. Liverani, "La Nascita del Museo Pio-Clementino e la Politica Canoviana dei Musei Vaticani," 97-98.

Visitors' entire itinerary to the museum was affected. Forsyth, citing Cicero, explained that the guides who once used to talk about the marvelous works in the museum now spoke at length about their absence.[133] Ironically, more shocking than the want of the original sculptures was the fact that the niches and halls of the gallery did not remain empty. In fact, even within the Vatican Museums, *Perseus* was forced to confront its model, for a plaster cast of the *Apollo*—along with those of other looted masterpieces—remained on display. Guinan Laoureins, for instance, remarked that "the Vatican had conserved only sad plasters of its masterpieces."[134] Eustace was stunned by the way the "absence" of these great works was "not so much supplied as rendered remarkable by the casts that now occupy their places."[135] The casts, therefore, seemed

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[133] "'Hi, qui hospites ad ea quæ visenda sunt ducere solebant—ut ante demonstrabant quid ubique esset, ita nunc quid undique ablatam sit ostendunt.'Cic." Cicero's quotation is then followed by a note by the modern editor of the text including a translation and explanation of the citation. "['Those who acted as guides to the visitors and showed them the various things worth seeing, formerly showed one what things were everywhere; now they explain everywhere what has been taken away.'" Cicero, In Verrum, 2, 4. 132. This refers to the rapacity of Verres as governor of Sicily. It makes covert allusion to the French removal of and treasures from the Vatican.]" Forsyth, Remarks on Antiquities, Arts, and Letters During an Excursion in Italy, in the Years 1802 and 1803 111 and editor's note, 234.

Kiesewetter also echoed Forsyth's sentiment by pointing out how custodians spoke of the missing works with bitter pain. "— Wenn ich auf meiner Reise in Italien im Jahr 1804, die öffentlichen Bildergallerien und Sammlungen von Alterthümern besuchte, so stieß ich sehr oft auf leere Rahmen und Fussgestelle, und der Custode klagte mit bitterm Schmerz, das fehlende kostbare Kunstwerk SEI nach Paris abgeführt worden." Johann Gottfried Kiesewetter, Reise durch einen Theil Deutschlands, der Schweiz, Italiens und des Südlichen Frankfreichs nach Paris. Erinnerungen aus den Denswürdigen Jahren 1813, 1814, Und 1815, 2 vols. (Berlin: Duncker und Humblot, 1816) vol. 2, 328.

[134] "La Vatican ne conserve de ces chefs-d'œuvre qu'un triste plâtre." Guinan Laoureins, Tableau de Rome vers la fin de 1814 (Bruxelles: de l'Imprimerie de Weissenbruch, 1816) 150.

[135] Eustace, A Classical Tour through Italy, An. MDCCCII vol. 2, 59

In his guide book, Angelo Dalmazzoni likewise mentions the casts in the Vatican. "This museum a few years ago was the wonder of all the world, and the admiration of all the connesseurs [*sic*]; but sixty four chosen pieces taken away, no doubt, have much abated its value. However so vast was the number of the ancient monuments, which it contained, and so great their excellency, that it is still a very great, and beautiful collection. Of all the above mentioned pieces, which are gone, there remain the gessi; but, as the originals now are the property of another nation, I shall not mention them, as I did in regard to those of the Capitoline museum." He likewise points out that the Capitoline Museum was also filled with casts after the French invasion. "With regard to these, notwithtstanding [*sic*] we have here the gessi, as I suppose, you have already seen the originals at Paris, I do not think it necessary to speak of them[.]"Angelo Dalmazzoni, The Antiquarian; or, the Guide for Foreigners to Go the Rounds of the Antiquities of Rome (Rome: 1803) 206 and 197, respectively.

only to enhance the sensation of loss of the original works; as place markers and *reproductions*, they did not have the impact of the originals which travelers had come to expect and hoped to confront.[136] Although the very same comparison between the marble *Perseus* and the plaster *Apollo* took place within Canova's studio, in this context imitation of the antique took on a quite different meaning. By confronting a reproduction of its model within this ideologically charged space, *Perseus* took on an important political significance. *Triumphant Perseus* became Perseus "the Consoler," according to Leopoldo Cicognara's moniker.[137]

Although one might have expected that the introduction of plaster casts and the physical obstruction of the alcoves would have prevented people from making comparisons between works of art in different *gabinetti*, the comparisons continued apace. Indeed, comparisons between *Perseus* and *Apollo increased*. From 1801–1815,

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[136] In one unique instance, the casts themselves were judged for their aesthetic qualities. In his diary entry of December 13, 1814, John Mayne recorded his trip to the Vatican. "The fine statues taken away by Napoleon are replaced by their casts, which are far superior to any casts I have seen." Mayne and Colles, The Journal of John Mayne, During a Tour on the Continent Upon Its Reopening after the Fall of Napoleon, 1814 219-20.

[137] "Questa opera [Perseus] da'buoni italiani fu chiamata *consolatrice* al momento che venivano trasportati dall'Italia i gran monumenti delle antiche e delle moderne arti, i quali avvinti al carro della vittoria, ci lasciarono il lutto della privazione e la vergogna di non averli difesi; ma la comparsa del Perseo dopo i monumenti di Rezzonico e di Ganganelli, e l'altra grand'opera dei Pugilatori rattemprarono il dolore della pubblica calamità, e convinsero il mondo che se possono rapirsi le sostanze, le vite, i monumenti, non si carreggia il genio degli studj e dell'arti, unica indigena risorsa del nostro suolo, dopo di aver perduto quella del valore, che la sola disperazione ridestar potrebbe nei petti italiani." Leopoldo Cicognara, Storia della Scultura dal suo Risorgimento in Italia fino al Secolo di Canova del Conte Leopoldo Cicognara, Ed. 2. riveduta ed ampliata dall'autore ed., 7 vols. (Prato: Frat. Giachetti, 1823) vol. 7, 149-50. Also quoted in Pinelli, "La Sfida Rispettosa di Antonio Canova. Genesi e Peripezie del 'Perseo Trionfante'," 36.

Likewise, the political connotations of another of Canova's sculptures, *Hercules and Lychas* (completed 1815), were also affected by changes in ownership. For more on the political ambiguity of Canova's works, see also Antonio Pinelli, "La Grâce de Persée et la fureur d'Hercule: Canova héroïque et politicien malgré lui," Histoire de l'histoire de l'art, vol. 2: XVIIIe et XIXe siècles (Paris: Musée du Louvre, 1993) 115-39 and Johns, Antonio Canova and the Politics of Patronage in Revolutionary and Napoleonic Europe. The ultimate example of a museum as political statement, is, of course, the Louvre. For its origins as a revolutionary museum, see Andrew McClellan, Inventing the Louvre: Art, Politics, and the Origins of the Modern Museum in Eighteenth-Century Paris (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994).

with the Vatican Museums emptied of many of their treasures, visitors did find solace in *Perseus*. They judged the work quite highly and continued to make formal comparisons between *Apollo* and *Perseus*. Joseph Forsyth, for instance, conceded that "perhaps the hero [*Perseus*] is too delicate and smooth for a mortal warrior…", but he goes on to add that "… it is criminal to object; for marble has seldom received a form so perfect."[138] At the same time, it must be noted that during this period, and I repeat, within the context of the museum, the *similarities* between the two works were reiterated. Forsyth noted that "the statue of Perseus stands fronting the cast of the departed Apollo, and seems to challenge comparison. Like in sentiment, in occasion, and in point of time, Apollo has just shot the arrow, Perseus has just cut off the beautiful head of Medusa."[139] One anonymous commentator, reviewing a dissertation on the progress of the fine arts, juxtaposed French artists' lack of talent – for they could only plunder works of art – with that of modern Italian artists, such as Canova, who had the capacity to make great art. Largely a back-handed compliment, for he disparages the *Apollo* for being an Italian rather than Greek work of art (i.e. a mere Roman copy of a Greek original), nonetheless, he suggests that Canova is capable of making a work on par with the *Apollo* itself:

> Leave the Parisians to exhibit their lumber-rooms of plunder, and to worship creations which they cannot rival; become it ours to produce what they have only learnt to rob. The Belvedere Apollo is no result of Greek art. It is of Carrara, that is of Italian, marble, and it existed not yet in Pliny's time, or he would have described it: it was found and restored by Montorsoli, the pupil of Michelagnolo [*sic*], and the additions approach in merit the original mass. Canova trembles not

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[138] Forsyth, Remarks on Antiquities, Arts, and Letters During an Excursion in Italy, in the Years 1802 and 1803 112–13. Thomas Moore paraphrases Forsyth in his own diary entry of Oct. 28, 1819, reminding us how travel diaries also shaped future visitors' reactions to works of art. "Moore, Memoirs, Journal and Correspondence of Thomas Moore 233.

[139] Forsyth, Remarks on Antiquities, Arts, and Letters During an Excursion in Italy, in the Years 1802 and 1803 111.

> at placing his Perseus in the nich [*sic*] whence the Apollo was dislodged: what should forbid that which has been done once from being done again?[140]

Even Augustus von Kotzebue admired the "capital statue of Perseus by Canova, which in my opinion makes up for a great deal of what has been taken away, and may boldly assert its place among the best works of antiquity."[141]

In the absence of the marble *Apollo*, and within this locus of cultural loss, therefore, comparison with the plaster cast served only to heighten the value of *Perseus*. Nostalgia over the missing, ancient patrimony intensified praise for Canova's sculpture, and honor accrued to the new work on both aesthetic and political grounds. As one of the few "original" works remaining in the museum, and as the most prominent modern work, Canova's *Perseus* became both a solemn reminder of the ancient works that had been removed from the Vatican Museums as well as a proclamation of the pre-eminence of Italy's modern artists.[142]

It was the reaction of visitors to the looted objects within the space of the Louvre, however, that perhaps best reflects the way ideas about the condition of exhibitions and originality were undergoing rapid transformations, particularly with regard to the *Apollo*. The Musée Napoléon was packed with the most prestigious sculptures of all of Europe, and the space itself had been redesigned and expanded to showcase the plunder to its best

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[140] "Miscellanies, Art VI. [Review of] Dissertations, Essays, and Parallels, 8 Vol. pp. 382 by John Robert Scott, D.D.," The Annual Review, and History of Literature for 1804, ed. Arthur Aiken, vol. 3 (London: 1805) 655.

[141] Kotzebue, Travels through Italy in the Years 1804 and 1805 vol. 3, 183-84. A reviewer of Kotzebue's book mocked his enthusiasm for Canova's sculpture, writing sarcastically, "It is a lucky thing for the Belvedere Apollo that he chanced to be at the Louvre." "Art IX. Travels through Italy in the Years 1804 and 1805. By Augustus von Kotzebue," The Annual Review, and History of Literature for 1805, ed. Arthur Aiken, vol. IV (London: Printed for Longman, Hurst, Rees and Orme, 1806) 48.

[142] Canova's two pugilists, *Damoxenos* and *Creugas,* were soon added to the collection, so that three of the most prominent modern sculptures in the museum were by Canova himself.

advantage. Organized around two, parallel central axes, one with a vista leading to the *Laocoön* and one to the *Apollo*, seven galleries were filled with hundreds of works.[143] The organization was not meant to highlight the teleological progression of the art of sculpture, however. As Andrew McClellan has shown, the commissioners charged with removing works from Italy had been instructed only to obtain the *best* works for the Louvre. The organization of the space therefore reflected an overwhelming concentration of the most wondrous works of art, with periodic moments of repose.[144] One can imagine, for instance, how breathtaking the sensation must have been to walk into a space and see before oneself the *Diana, Jupiter*, the *Discobolus*, the *Venus de'Medici* and, beckoning in the distance, *Laocoön* in the throes of agony (fig. 85). Works which travelers had only read about or seen in prints or casts, and which previously would have required months of difficult travel to multiple nations to visit, could be taken in at a glance. As Henry Milton tried to make his way to the *Apollo*, for instance, he was continually distracted by other "*unpassable*"[145] works of art and was "almost oppressed" [146] his astonishment that "so

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[143] McClellan, Inventing the Louvre: Art, Politics, and the Origins of the Modern Museum in Eighteenth-Century Paris 150-51.

[144] McClellan has also pointed out that problems in dating ancient sculpture—the nascent idea that many of the most renowned sculptures were Roman instead of Greek—made a chronological installation difficult. McClellan, Inventing the Louvre: Art, Politics, and the Origins of the Modern Museum in Eighteenth-Century Paris 153.

[145] "The halls containing the statues are placed irregularly; and I hastened on from one to another in search of the Apollo: but my progress, frequently checked by some *unpassable* figure, was at last stopped by the Venus. [...] I pursued my search for the Apollo; but just as I caught a glimpse of it at a distance, my attention was arrested by another Venus." Emphasis in original. Henry Milton, Letters on the Fine Arts, Written from Paris, in the Year 1815 (London: Longman Hurst Rees Orme and Brown, 1816) 5.

[146] "We enter the Halls of the Antique, and are almost oppressed by the sensation, that we stand surrounded by treasures which the world cannot equal,—that there is but one Belvidere Apollo, one Medicean Venus, one Laocoon,—and they are before us. On entering the gallery of pictures we breathe more freely." Milton, Letters on the Fine Arts, Written from Paris, in the Year 1815 19.

many works of antiquity […] should thus be brought together in one rich assemblage." [147] Even within these vast halls, however, the most celebrated works of art were focal points, set apart from the others. The *Laocoön*, for instance, could be seen even from the entrance, enticing visitors into the galleries. The *Apollo* likewise stood apart at the end of a long gallery, flanked by large columns and elevated in a recess to which led a small set of stairs—a veritable altar that isolated the sculpture for worship, as seen here in the painting by Hubert Robert (fig. 86).[148]

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[147] "The first impression, on entering the Halls of Sculpture, is astonishment that so many works of antiquity should have escaped destruction amidst the perpetual tumult of events which have passed around them; and, after the lapse of so many ages, should thus be brought together in one rich assemblage." Milton, Letters on the Fine Arts, Written from Paris, in the Year 1815 3.

[148] There are several detailed descriptions of the sculpture *in situ.* Francis William Blagdon wrote, "The Apollo stands facing the entrance-door of the apartment, in an elevated recess, decorated, as I have before observed, with beautiful granite pillars. The flight of steps, leading to this recess, is paved with the rarest marble, inlaid with squares of antique mosaic, and on them are placed two Egyptian sphynxes of red oriental granite, taken from the Museum of the Vatican." Francis William Blagdon, Paris as It Was and as It Is; or, a Sketch of the French Capital, Illustrative of the Effects of the Revolution, with Respect to Sciences, Literature, Arts, Religion, Education, Manners, and Amusements; Comprising Also a Correct Account of the Most Remarkable National Establishments and Public Buildings (London: C.and R. Baldwin, 1803) 62.

John Gustavus Lemaistre was not pleased with the space. "I certainly think, that it [the *Apollo*] is not now seen to the greatest advantage. The room is not either high enough or large enough for the purpose, and too many statues are crowded together." J.G. Lemaistre, A Rough Sketch of Modern Paris, or Letters on Society, Manners, Public Curiosities, and Amusements in That Capital Written During the Last Two Months of 1801 and the First Five of 1802, 2nd ed. (London: Printed for J. Johnson, 1803) 17.

A review of Lemaistre's text in the *Annual Review* includes another detailed description of the museum. "We are of the opinion also that the Apollo is not seen to the greatest advantage, but for a different reason: as the Apollo is not a colossal statue, the room seems to be quite lofty enough, and large enough for the purpose; nor is its effect by any means diminished by surrounding statues, over which it is elevated by a pedestal on a perron, two steps high, so that it produced a striking impression even from the hall of the Laocoon. The Apollo, indeed, is by no means crowded by other statues. The further end of the saloon, if our memory does not deceive us, is railed off from side to side; in front of the railing, and near to it, there are but four statues; by the left wall stands *Mars Victor*, of Pentelican marble; to answer this, on the opposite side stands *Hercules and Telephus*, or the *Hercules Commodus*, as it is usually called, a statue from the Belvidere: between these, and nearly on a line with them, are *two sphinxes*, of red oriental granite, from the Museum Pio-Clementinum. Between the sphinxes, and behind them, forming as it were the apex of a triangle, stands the Apollo, separated by two beautiful pillars of red oriental granite, from the *Venus of Arles* on one side, and the *Capitoline Venus*, a statue of most exquisite Parian marble on the other. These pillars are answered by two others at the opposite extremity of the saloon, on either side of the entrance from the hall of the Laocoön. There are no other statues which at all interfere with the Apollo; for as to the *Indian Bacchus* on the right hand wall, and the small statues of *Juno* and *Melopmene* on the left, they are too distant to disturb the attention. The objection that we have to the position of this statue is, that it is impossible to examine it from one point: the front view of it is fine, but we can take no stand on either side or behind it. […] we do not approve of concealing half the workmanship of a statuary by placing the

Since so many visitors had recently seen many of these statues in other museums, and since the architecture of the Louvre had intentionally been designed to enhance the collection, viewers were very attentive to space and setting. Some were not at all bothered by the change of location. For them, the enthusiasm generated by the sculptures was timeless and would not be affected by the statues' new location. Archibald Alison, for instance, felt that the "general character" of the works was "universal"; they "excite the same feelings at the present time, as when they came fresh from the hand of the Grecian artist, and are regarded by all nations with the same veneration on the banks of the Seine, as when they sanctified the temples of Athens, or adorned the gardens of Rome." [149] Henry Milton was even more perspicacious. He responded directly the criticisms of John Chetwode Eustace, the French's greatest detractor, who was distressed

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production of his chisel close against a wall." "Art XVIII. A Rough Sketch of Modern Paris; or Letters on Society, Public Curiousities and Amusements in That Capital, Written During the Last Two Months of 1801, and the First Five of 1802," The Annual Review, and History of Literature; for 1803, ed. Arthur Aiken, vol. 2 (1804): 83-84.

James Simpson also described the deep red niche in which the sculpture was exhibited, protected by a railing. "THE APOLLO BELVIDERE. If ever human imagination stamped a god in the perfection of the human form, it is done here. Much attention has been paid to the placing of the noble figure suitably to its rank. A recess of red Oriental granite, of the finest polish, is railed off to contain the pedestal, which last is about four feet high. The deep colour in which the statue is placed gives a still more noble effect to its white marble, which has the freshness and sharpness of a work newly finished." Simpson, Paris after Waterloo; Notes Taken at the Time and Hitherto Unpublished, Including a Revised Edition—the Tenth—of a Visit to Flanders and the Field 149.

[149] "The greater statues of antiquity were addressed to the worshippers in their temples; they were intended to awaken the devotion of all classes of citizens—to be felt and judged by all mankind. They were intended to express characters superior to common nature, and they still express them. They are free, therefore, from all the peculiarities of national taste; they are purified from all the peculiarities of local circumstances; they have been rescued from that inevitable degradation to which art is uniformly exposed, by taste being confined to a limited society; they have assumed, in consequence, that general character, which might suit the universal feelings of our nature, and that permanent expression which might speak to the hearts of men through every succeeding age. The admiration, accordingly, for those works of art, has been undiminished by the lapse of time; they excite the same feelings at the present time, as when they came fresh from the hand of the Grecian artist, and are regarded by all nations with the same veneration on the banks of the Seine, as when they sanctified the temples of Athens, or adorned the gardens of Rome." Archibald Alison and Patrick Fraser Tytler, Travels in France, During the Years 1814-15: Comprising a Residence at Paris During the Stay of the Allied Armies, and at Aix, at the Period of the Landing of Bonaparte, 2nd ed., 2 vols. (Edinburgh: Printed for Macredie Skelly and Muckersy, 1816) vol. 1, 131-32.

by the way the works looked in the "dull sullen halls, or rather stables" of the Louvre.[150] Contemplating Eustace's dismay, Milton could not help but feel that the "effect" of these works could not be altered by their setting, which was soon forgotten by the viewer, or even by comparison with other works. Admiring the *Apollo,* for instance, he wrote "the merit of the statue is intrinsic." [151]

Other visitors, however, echoed Eustace's sentiments. Some, such as Charlotte Eaton, felt the loss of these works of art would hamper artistic education. The difficulties encountered trying to *see* these works had been an education unto itself;[152] more worrying was the fear that Italy's loss of some of its strongest attractions would diminish the

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[150] "But the joy of discovery was short, and the triumph of taste transitory! The French who in every invasion have been the scourge of Italy and have rivaled or rather surpassed the rapacity of the Goths and Vandals, laid their sacrilegious hands on the unparalleled collection of the Vatican, tore its masterpieces from their pedestals, and dragging them from their temples of marble, transported them to Paris, and consigned them to the dull sullen halls, or rather stables, of the *Louvre*." Eustace, A Classical Tour through Italy, An. MDCCCII vol. 2, 58.

[151] "An elegant and accomplished writer [John Chetwode Eustace], who visited Italy before it was plundered by the French, speaks in strong terms of the difference in the effect produced by the masterpieces of sculpture, as viewed each in its separate and splendid shrine; and now when they are crowded together in one collection.—This I can easily conceive; but is *effect* of so much consequence? The Apollo, standing in dignified solitude, may perhaps appear, the first time it is viewed, more awful than when surrounded by other figures. This effect cannot, I think, be permanent; the real awfulness of the figure is in itself; and very soon we look at it without any attention to the place where it stands, or the objects which surround it.

It may even be argued, that on the contrary, an advantageous effect is produced by the presence of other statues; and that the merit of the *most* excellent is brought out by comparison with the excellent. We contemplate the glorious statue of the Belvidere Antinous, and declare it to be perfection: we turn to the Apollo, feel its infinite superiority, and have no resource but to pronounce it, divine! But this effect also is in my opinion transitory, the merit of the statue is intrinsic;—it is positive, and not by comparison with any other." Milton, Letters on the Fine Arts, Written from Paris, in the Year 1815 10-11.

[152] In one of his literary works, based on his own experience of a trip through Europe, Sir Walter Scott expressed this sentiment in his discussion of the repatriation of the works from Paris. "[…] the artist, though he must in the future extend his travels, and visit various cities in search of those excellences which are now to be seen collected in the Louvre, will have greater benefit from the experience which has cost him some toil; and if he must traverse Switzerland and Italy, to view the sculptures of ancient Greece, and the paintings of modern Rome, he will have the double advantage of taking lessons on his route from nature herself, in the solitary grandeur of the one, and the profuse luxuries of the other. He will judge of the scenery which trained these great artists, as well from his own experience, as from their representation, and may perhaps be enabled to guess how they composed as well as how they executed." Sir Walter Scott, Paul's Letters to His Kinsfolk, The Miscellaneous Prose Works of Sir Walter Scott, Bart. In Twenty-Eight Volumes, 28 vols. (Edinburgh and London: Robert Cadell and Houlston & Stoneman, 1850) vol. 5, 249.

temptation to travel there entirely, preventing young artists from encountering works of art that were truly "unremovable," such as ancient frescoes. [153] The sculptor John Flaxman was reputed to have said that the sculptures had "lost half their magic" as a result of their removal from Rome.[154] For John Scott, the statues became simply one of many tourist attractions in Paris. Before their arrival in Paris, he lamented:

> [e]ach of these had before held an undivided empire, and drew wise men to worship them in their sacred recesses. But in Paris they were but as feeble auxiliaries to the Champaign of Beauvilliers, and the profligacies of the Palais Royal: they were included in the guides to the amusements of this gross city, along with the *Marionettes*, and the exhibition of a living hermaphrodite. Thus have objects, that formerly gave fame and attraction to a number of towns and spots of Europe;—which stood singly, or in small collections, fastened to their placed by all that men knew of the past, or felt for the present,—which had connected themselves with the foundations of property, as well as with all received and cherished recollections and associations,—been violently torn away, packed up, and crowded together, to fill long tawdry halls, to give employment to a tribe of cleaners, keepers, and porters, and conversation to the mob of the most heartless city in the world.[155]

Scott could not bear the way these bastions of high art were now mere entertainment to Parisians and visitors alike; no longer the isolated subjects of attention and admiration, they were crammed together, merely one of many (low-class) amusements in the city.

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[153] "The French, in permanently placing the most celebrated portable productions of art at Paris, would have committed an irreparable injury to sculpture and painting; for, by removing the apparent strongest temptations to artists to travel through Italy they would have excluded the majority of them from the true schools of art, which are the frescos of ancient masters, and the innumerable and unremovable works of Grecian sculpture,—especially bassi rilievi,—to the study of which painting itself owes much that is great and beautiful in its design, conception, and execution. " Eaton, Rome, in the Nineteenth Century; Containing a Complete Account of the Ruins of the Ancient City, the Remains of the Middle Ages, and the Monuments of Modern Times vol. 2, 49-50.

[154] "Another sculptor, an Englishman, whose name is dear to the arts, *Flaxman*, speaking on this subject, declared the Laocoon, the Torso, the Apollo Belvedere, and all the statues taken from the Capitol and the Vatican seemed to have lost half their magic: they were no longer in their place; no longer in the neighbourhood of the Pantheon, the Collisseum [*sic*], the tombs of the Scipios, and of the proud republicans, that held the world in awe. In the Capitol and the Vatican, they had a grandeur that, in Paris, had utterly disappeared." Thomas Holcroft, Travels from Hamburg, through Westphalia, Holland, and the Netherland, to Paris, 2 vols. (London: Richard Phillips, 1804) vol. 2, 456.

[155] John Scott, Paris Revisited, in 1815, by Way of Brussels: Including a Walk over the Field of Battle at Waterloo, 3rd ed. (London: Printed for Longman Hurst Rees Orme and Brown by A. Straham, 1816) 382.

A close look at these divergent reactions, however—Milton's on the one hand, and Scott's on the other— reveals that something much more than mere irritation at the display conditions is at work here. In effect, these opposing reactions reflect a working through of Walter Benjamin's ideas about the "aura" of works of art over one hundred years before his seminal article was written.[156] Milton, for instance, may have felt that the movement and displacement of the *Apollo* from its earlier position in the Vatican had no effect on the statue's "intrinsic" power as a work of art, but Scott's, Eustace's and Eaton's reactions all reflected a nascent understanding that a change of setting could indeed affect the impression rendered by an object. In fact, it was not simply the *displacement* of works that upset viewers—for, after all, works had been moved and taken as war booty for centuries—but, rather, it was the very congregation of them together in the space of the new universal museum that was so disturbing.[157] Their uprooting and repositioning in a new environment, which brought together so many works of art from different times and places, effectively rendered physical the disruption

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[156] Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in Its Age of Technological Reproducibility," Selected Writings, eds. Marcus Paul Bullock, Michael William Jennings, Howard Eiland and Gary Smith, vol. 3 (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2002) 101-33.

[157] Carlo Fea, the Commissioner of Antiquities of the Papal States, reiterated the disgust felt in these tourist accounts in a document outlining why he felt the works of art should be returned to their original locations and not be placed in a centralized museum in Rome. Addressed to the Cardinal Camerlengo, Bartolomeo Pacca and dated February 16, 1816, Fea wrote, "Anche in Parigi, chi lodava quel magazzino indigesto, quell'ammasso informe, di quadri di ogno scuola, di ogni Paese, di ogni grandezza? Quale ne era il pregio, la vera utilità delle arti, il piacere degli Amatori, e dei Professori, disappassionati e intelligenti? All'opposto questi stessi, tuttochè Francesi, e Parigini, dicevano energicamente in pubblico, e scrivevano libri per provare, che stavano meglio e dovevano lasciarsi nei rispettivi Loro Paesi, e località, specialmente se in Roma." As cited in Donato Tamblé, "Il Ritorno dei Beni Culturali dalla Francia nello Stato Pontificio e l'Inizio della Politica Culturale della Restaurazione nei Documenti Camerali dell'Archivio di Stato di Roma," Ideologie e Patrimonio Storico-Culturale nell'Età Rivoluzionaria e Napoleonica: A Proposito del Trattato di Tolentino: Atti del Convegno Tolentino, 18-21 Settembre 1997, ed. Ufficio centrale per i beni archivistici, Pubblicazioni degli Archivi di Stato: Saggi (Roma: Ministero per i beni e le attività culturali, Ufficio centale per i beni archivistici, 2000) 475.

that Benjamin felt occurred with the photographic representation of objects. The "cult value" of the works was destroyed by their translocation and inclusion in the Louvre.

Many visitors realized this disruption would have longstanding implications for the display and reception of works of art. The idea that art objects on such a vast scale could be unmoored from their original locations—the sheer *mobility* of art works[158] —shattered any sense that a work of art's placement could ever be conceived of as permanent again. Ironically, however, this impermanence was not reflected in the French's own discourse on the looted objects. Not only was the arrival of these works greeted with great public fanfare, processions and triumphs, but works of art commemorating their arrival situated the pieces firmly within the context of the Louvre. Medals minted to celebrate the *Laocoön*'s and *Apollo's* presence, for instance, show the two works within the museum's long galleries, recreating the enticing vistas that had been produced by the museum's architecture (fig. 87). The *Apollo* stands proudly under the recessed arches, flanked by the many other masterpieces one would encounter on the way to see it. Over the portal to the museum, overseeing all of these treasures, is a bust of Napoleon, the "hero" who had obtained the works.[159] The plinth on which the statue

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[158] Louis Simond, for instance, wrote about the *Apollo Belvedere*'s "travels". "In his travelling age, all the world has seen the Belvedere Apollo, and the Belvedere Apollo has seen all the world. […] While nations visited foreign countries *en masse*, cumbrous marbles travelled post over the Alps and back again, with bronze horses galloping after them." Louis Simond, A Tour in Italy and Sicily (London: Printed for Longman, Reese, Orme, Brown and Green, 1828) 219.

[159] "Ce fut là [in the Belvedere courtyard] que pendant plus de trois cents ans, elle fut l'objet de l'admiration de tout ce que l'Europe a produit d'hommes instruits, d'amis des arts, de véritables connaisseurs, lorsqu'enfin la victoire, constante amie du bienfaiteur de la France, enrichit à son tour le Musée Napoléon de cette belle statue, dont l'importance méritait que nous en parlassions avec un peu d'étendue.

Le rang qu'elle tient justement dans l'histoire et dans l'opinion du monde, la fit, après son arrivée à Paris, juger digne d'une inauguration solennelle. Le héros dont elle était la conquête daigna se prêter à cette cérémonie. Le 16 brumaire an 9, il se rendit au Musée Napoléon, et inaugura cette statue." Antoine Michel Filhol and Joseph Lavallée, Galerie du Musée de France, publiée par Filhol, graveur, et rédigée par Lavallée (Joseph), 11 vols. (Paris: Filhol, 1814-28) vol. 9, 11-12.

stood was likewise decorated with a plaque detailing the works' movement from the Vatican to "here".[160] The French also celebrated their ownership over these masterpieces in the museum's official catalogue, originally published by Ennio Quirino Visconti in 1800 and republished numerous times during the years the works remained in Paris,[161] as well as other books that inventoried the great museum's contents.[162] It was Visconti's catalogue, however, that reveals the French's arrogant naiveté regarding these works, for in the text describing the *Apollo*, it was proudly written that the *Apollo* stood in the Vatican "for three centuries, where it received universal admiration, until a hero, guided by victory, removed it to bring it and fix it *forever* on the banks of the Seine."[163]

Not surprisingly, the self-assurance with which the French made this claim irritated some foreign visitors. They were astounded that the French could not recognize that the *Apollo's* position in the Louvre could well be fleeting. John Scott was shocked that "…the French coxcombs dare to speak and write about destiny decreeing to France from eternity and perpetuity, these immortal works of genius! What Rome could not

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[160] "La statue d'Apollon, qui s'élève sur ce piédestal, trouvée à Antium sur la fin du XV.^{e} siècle, placée au Vatican par Jules II, au commencement du XVI.^{e} conquise en l'an V de la République par l'armée de l'Italie, sous les ordres du Général Bonaparte, a été fixée ici le 21 Germinal an VIII, première année de son consulat." Filhol and Lavallée, Galerie du Musée de France, Publiée par Filhol, graveur, et rédigée par Lavallée (Joseph) vol. 9, 12.

[161] Musée du Louvre, Notice des statues, bustes et bas-reliefs, de la galerie des antiques du Musée Napoléon, ouverte pour la première fois le 18 Brumaire an 9 (Paris: P.-L. Dubray, 1811) 120.

[162] Such as Filhol and Lavallée, Galerie du Musée de France, publiée par Filhol, graveur, et rédigée par Lavallée (Joseph) and C. P. Landon, Annales du musée et de l'école moderne des beaux-arts; recueil de gravures au trait, contenant la collection complète des peintures et sculptures du Musée Napoléon ... paysages et tableaux de genre, 4 vols. (Paris: C.P. Landon, 1805).

[163] Emphasis added. "*Jules II* n'étant encore que cardinal, fit l'acquisition de cette statue, et la fit placer d'abord dans le palais qu'il habitait près l'église de *Santi-Apostoli*; mais bientôt après étant parvenue au pontificat, il la fit transporter au Belvédère du Vatican, où, depuis trois siècles, elle faisait l'admiration de l'Univers, lorsqu'un héros, guidé par la victoire, est venu l'en tirer pour la conduire et la fixer à jamais sur les rives de la Seine." Louvre, Notice des statues, bustes et bas-reliefs, de la galerie des antiques du Musée Napoléon, ouverte pour la première fois le 18 Brumaire an 9 120.

preserve, they flatter themselves Paris can, and the triumph which has been denied to the Capitol, they assign by anticipation to the Palais Royal."[164] James Forbes "could not forget" that he had seen these masterpieces in Rome and Florence. Responding to the French claim the Apollo would remain in Paris forever, he retorted, "So much for the Apollo."[165] Henry Redhead Yorke was more explicit, noting, "This "*for ever*" is very problematical. It is not improbable, that it [the *Apollo*] may decorate the future National gallery of the empire of Botany Bay. There is nothing like the rotatory motion of the *circle of causation*, which none but the learned members of the National Institute understand. It is an Eleusinian mystery."[166] J.G. Lemaistre also chimed in. Although he could not compare the *Apollo*'s placement in the Louvre to its situation in Rome, having not seen it there himself, he was aware of the permanent disarticulation that had occurred between the *Apollo* and any fixed location:

> I hope, my friend, you admire the modesty with which it is declared, that the Apollo is forever fixed on the banks of the Seine! After the singular fate which this statue has experienced, it required all that happy confidence, with which the french [*sic*] determine the most difficult questions in their own favour, to make so bold an assertion. The Apollo lay two thousand years under the ruins of Antium, and yet preserved its beauty. It was drawn thence, placed in the Vatican, and after receiving there, for three centuries the applauses of mankind, is carried over the

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[164] John Scott, A Visit to Paris in 1814: Being a Review of the Moral, Political, Intellectual, and Social Condition of the French Capital (London: Printed for Longman Hurst Rees Orme and Brown, 1815) 304-35.

[165] Forbes wrote, "I have lost, in a great measure, that delightful enthusiasm with which I once viewed these precious relics; and in Paris I shall never find it." Later he continued, "Alas! I cannot forget that I have seen these wonders of art at Rome and Florence! The French catalogue informs us that the Apollo, after its destination in the Vatican by Pope Julius the Second, remained for three centuries near the banks of the Tiber, when a hero, conducted by victory, transported it to the borders of the Seine, and fixed it there for ever! So much for the Apollo." James Forbes, Letters from France, Written in the Years 1803 & 1804, Including a Particular Account of Verdun and the Situation of the British Captives in That City (London: J. White, 1806) 241 and 412, respectively.

[166] Henry Redhead Yorke, Letters from France, in 1802, 2 vols. (London: Printed for H.D. Symonds, 1804) vol. 2, 103, note.

> Alps, and seen at Paris in all its original symmetry. If it be the destiny of this matchless figure to follow the tide of fortune, and to change its residence with the changes of empire, and the casualties of human affairs, who shall decide where it may next be found? If Julius II, when he placed the Apollo in the Vatican, had been told, that, three hundred years afterward, a French warrior would attach it to his car of victory, in entering the city of Paris, would even the pope himself have had faith enough to believe such a prophecy? After this, no conjecture becomes improbable. Who knows that this celebrated statue may not, some centuries hence, be discovered on the frozen plains of Siberia, or in the burning sands of Egypt?[167]

The idea of the potential transitory nature of a work of art's setting, therefore, was embedded in the very status of the *Apollo* as a trophy and the dislocations it had undergone. In the Louvre, viewers admired works with which they had long been familiar, but did so with a new awareness of the way those works functioned in relation to the setting and space around them. Even as they were conscious of the malleability of a work of art's placement, they were likewise cognizant that an object, however transportable, might have a "secret sympathy" with the place where it had been originally displayed and the nature, architecture, and other immoveable works of art in that primary location.[168]

No one, perhaps, had a better awareness of how placement could affect a work of art than Canova himself, as evidenced by his own desire to see his *Perseus* placed in the Vatican. Although Canova was not opposed to the concept of the museum *per se*, having

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[167] Lemaistre, A Rough Sketch of Modern Paris, or Letters on Society, Manners, Public Curiosities, and Amusements in That Capital Written During the Last Two Months of 1801 and the First Five of 1802 20-21.

[168] Such, for instance, were the words of Helena Williams. "It may be better for the world that these *chefs-d'œuvre* of the arts are disseminated. Paris ought not perhaps to be the spot where all were accumulated. There is also an intimate connexion [*sic*] between moveable objects of art and those which are fixed,—such as the great monuments of architecture, and the frescos. There exists perhaps a sort of secret sympathy between the Apollo, the Transfiguration, and the Dome of St. Peter's and the School of Athens." Helen Maria Williams, A Narrative of the Events Which Have Taken Place in France, from the Landing of Napoleon Bonaparte, on the 1st of March 1815, until the Restoration of Louis XVIII, with an Account of the Present State of Society and Public Opinion (London: John Murray, 1815) 365-66.

himself seen so many works of art in both the Vatican and the Capitoline museums, and working, as he did, for the Vatican, he could not have relished seeing so many of the treasures that had provided him with artistic inspiration uprooted and placed in the new universal museum of the Louvre. He was certainly deeply pained by the havoc the French created in Rome and returned to Possagno for a year in 1798-1799 because he could not bear to remain in the city while it was being plundered. His despondency was well known enough to be remarked on in travelers' accounts.[169] It seems fitting, then that after Napoleon was defeated in the battle of Waterloo, many of the Papal treasures were returned to Rome, through the aid of Canova himself.[170] The French diplomat Talleyrand, livid at Canova's role in the repatriation, insisted on referring to Canova as "*l'emballeur*" rather than "*l'ambassadeur.*"[171] The removal of the most important statues was fraught

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[169] Thomas Holcroft, for instance, mentioned Canova's despondency twice in the account of his travels. "The artist, I am told, is of no party in politics; devoting his life to the studies in which he delights, and on which his thoughts are intense, he has paid little attention to the fate of empires. To rob Rome however of the statues which were so lately her boast, and afforded the model on which he formed his taste, is a crime he can never forgive […]." Later, he continued, "How numerous are the recollections to which both these national museums give birth! I have mentioned the deep regret of Canova, that Rome had been robbed of those monuments of genius from which she had derived splendor so great in her decline." Holcroft, Travels from Hamburg, through Westphalia, Holland, and the Netherlands, to Paris vol. 2, 284 and 456, respectively.

[170] For more on Canova's role in the repatriation of these works of art, see d'Este, Memorie di Antonio Canova 198-238; Carlo Pietrangeli, "Ambassador Extraordinaire," Canova, English language ed. (New York, N.Y.: Marsilio: Distributed in the U.S.A. by Rizzoli, 1992) 15-21; Johns, Antonio Canova and the Politics of Patronage in Revolutionary and Napoleonic Europe 171-94; Jean-Michel Leniaud, "Canova et la question des spoliations d'œuvres d'art," Antonio Canova e il suo Ambiente Artistico fra Venezia, Roma e Parigi, ed. Giuseppe Pavanello, Studi di Arte Veneta (Venezia: Istituto veneto di scienze, lettere ed arti, 2000) 481-91; Tamblé, "Il Ritorno dei Beni Culturali dalla Francia nello Stato Pontificio e l'Inizio della Politica Culturale della Restaurazione nei Documenti Camerali dell'Archivio di Stato di Roma," 457-513; and Franca Zuccoli, "Le Ripercussioni del Trattato di Tolentino sull'Attività Diplomatica di Antonio Canova nel 1815, per il Recupero delle Opere d'Arte," Ideologie e Patrimonio Storico-Culturale nell'Età Rivoluzionaria e Napoleonica: A Proposito del Trattato di Tolentino: Atti del Convegno Tolentino, 18-21 Settembre 1997, ed. Ufficio centrale per i beni archivistici, Pubblicazioni Degli Archivi di Stato: Saggi (Roma: Ministero per i beni e le attività culturali, Ufficio centrale per i beni archivistici, 2000) 611-31.

[171] Francis Henry Taylor, The Taste of Angels, a History of Art Collecting from Rameses to Napoleon, 1st ed. (Boston: Little Brown, 1948) 587. William Treue suggests this very same title was given to Vivant Denon as he looted objects from the subjugated states of the Empire to bring them to Paris. Treue, Art Plunder: The Fate of Works of Art in War and Unrest 165-66.

with tension, anger, and disappointment on the part of the Parisians, particularly the artists, who were often caricatured sobbing in front of the empty museum.[172] (Fig. 88) Crowds came out in full force to see the dismantling of the collection.[173] No longer were the *Apollo,* the *Laocoön*, the *Venus de'Medici* or Raphael's *Transfiguration* to remain "forever" fixed on the banks of the Seine.

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[172] Scott described the event. "The removals of the statues were longer in commencing, and took up more time;—they were still packing these up when I quitted Paris. I saw the Venus, the Apollo, and the Laocoon removed: these may be deemed the presiding deities of the collection. The solemn antique look of these halls fled forever, when the workmen came in with their straw, and the plaster of Paris, to pack them up. The French could not, for some time, allow themselves to believe that their enemies would dare to deprive them of these sacred works:—it appeared to them impossible that they should be separated from France—from *la France*—the country of the Louvre and the Institute;—it seemed a contingency beyond the limits of human reverses. But it happened nevertheless:—they were all removed. One afternoon, before quitting the palace, I accidentally stopped longer than usual to gaze on the Venus, and I never saw so clearly her superiority over the Apollo, the impositions of whose style, even more than the great beauties with which they are mingled, have gained for it an inordinate and indiscriminating admiration. On this day, very few, if any of the statues had been taken away,—and many said that France would retain them, although she was losing the pictures. On the following morning I returned, and the pedestal on which the Venus stood for so many years, the pride of Paris, and the delight of every observer, was vacant! It seemed as if a soul had taken its flight from a body. The other statues followed rapidly. When I quitted the French capital, there were not a dozen articles in the three principal halls, and they were very quickly emptying the others." Scott, Paris Revisited, in 1815, by Way of Brussels: Including a Walk over the Field of Battle at Waterloo 339-40.

[173] The British miniature painter Andrew Robertson spent several days watching the removal of the work. On September 21, 1815, he wrote in his diary: "As I came out [of the Louvre] I surveyed the crowd of common people who were there all day long. There used to be nobody. I saw fury and despair in their looks like the brewing of an insurrection and the awful scenes of the revolution coupled with what I hear in the coffee houses – there is a volcano at hand and as soon as the Allies are gone from Paris it will burst forth and the whole will light on the poor King [...]." Two weeks later, after describing the Louvre as "doleful" and "full of dust, ropes, triangles and pulleys with boards, rollers etc.," he wrote on October 2, 1815: "The public mind of Paris still continues in a state of extreme agitation; the people appear every day more and more exasperated against the allies. The stripping of the Louvre is the chief cause of public irritation at present; the long gallery of the museum presents the strongest possible image of desolation; here and there a few pictures giving greater effect to the disfigured nakedness of the wall. I have seen several French ladies in passing along the galleries suddenly break into ecstatical fits of rage and lamentation; they gather around the Apollo to take their last farewell, with the most romantic enthusiasm; there is so much passion in their looks, their language, and their sighs, in the presence of this monument of human genius that a person unacquainted with their character or accustomed to study the character of the fair sex in England where feeling is controlled by perpetual discipline would be disposed to pronounce them literally mad – not the least of their griefs is the report that the Apollo goes to England, the Venus Medici was removed yesterday." As cited in Taylor, The Taste of Angels, a History of Art Collecting from Rameses to Napoleon, 578 and 585-86, respectively. The rumor that the *Apollo Belvedere* would be given to the British circulated widely in Paris, but that was not the case.

Despite French opposition, Canova was successful in securing not only the return of the bulk of the works, but even obtained funding from the British to pay for their shipment back to Rome. Upon their arrival in the papal city, great fanfare and enthusiasm were expressed by the public, who rushed to meet the caravans despite the fact that the government "prudently" tried to prevent these celebrations.[174] Canova was hailed as the restorer of the arts, and popular prints depicted him presenting the *Laocoön*, *Apollo*, *Torso Belvedere* and the *Transfiguration* to Pius VII, himself only recently restored to full authority after his return from exile in May 1814 (fig. 89).[175] The Pope also honored Canova's success by bestowing on him the title of the Marchese d'Ischia and providing him with an annual income of 3,000 *scudi*.

The celebrations, however, did not stop with these personal honors. In 1816, in his official capacity as Ispettore Generale delle Belle Arti, Canova commissioned a series of lunettes to decorate the Galleria Chiaramonti, part of the new Museo Chiaramonti which had been founded in 1806 and filled with recently excavated works.[176] Intended in part to replace some of the works taken to Paris, the gallery had been installed by Canova himself and opened to the public in 1810. Clusters of busts intermingled with larger statues line the long corridor, promoting the examination of individual pieces while also

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[174] d'Este, Memorie Di Antonio Canova 240.

[175] Pius VII was continually at odds with Napoleon. In 1809, while in Vienna, Napoleon incorporated the Papal States into the French Empire. In defiance, Pius VII published a bull of excommunication against all those who had invaded the territories of the Holy See. He was then promptly imprisoned and exiled. The Pope did not return to Rome until May 24, 1814, after the abdication of Napoleon. For a general history on Pius VII, see Robin Anderson, Pope Pius VII 1800-1823: His Life, Reign and Struggle with Napoleon in the Aftermath of the French Revolution (Rockford, Illinois: Tan Books and Publishers, Inc., 2001). Roberta Olson provides a fascinating introduction to Pius VII's status as a proto-Risorgimento hero. See Roberta J. M. Olson, "Representations of Pope Pius VII: The First Risorgimento Hero," The Art Bulletin 68.1 (March 1986): 77-93.

[176] For a detailed account of the commissions, see Ulrich Hiesinger, "Canova and the Frescoes of the Galleria Chiaramonti," The Burlington Magazine 120.907 (Oct. 1978): 654-65.

inviting comparisons and establishing a broader context for the works (fig. 90). Canova commissioned young Italian and German artists to fresco the fifteen lunettes that punctuate the bays of the 390-foot long gallery. He paid them 3,000 *scudi*—the very amount that had been given to him as an honorarium by Pius VII.[177] The theme of the lunettes was intended to honor Pius VII's generosity as a patron of the arts, but several of the lunettes either directly or indirectly refer to the repatriation of the looted masterpieces. One, for instance, the *Recovery of Works of Art Taken from Rome*, by Francesco Hayez, showcases the homecoming of the objects. Two putti point to a caravan transporting crates into Rome, reversing the act of departure that had been celebrated by the French in a print from 1798, almost twenty years before (figs. 50, 91-92). In the foreground, a bust of William Richard Hamilton (1777-1859), the British Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, pays homage to the role he had in the negotiations with the restored French monarchy for the return of the objects. The inclusion of Hamilton's portrait as a bust not only recalls the busts of Roman emperors that had been looted by the French and returned to Rome, but also alludes, of course, to the portraits that line the walls of the Galleria Chiaramonti itself. Finally, an allegorical figure of the Tiber looks on, and one cannot help but note the similarities between the way that figure is represented and the ancient sculpture of the *Tiber*—one of the few works that was left behind in Paris, for it was deemed too costly to transport (figs. 93-94).[178]

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[177] Canova's generosity was well known throughout his life, and Antonio d'Este points out in his memoirs of Canova that beginning in 1817, the 3,000 scudi Canova received from the Pope was donated to the Academies in Rome. d'Este, Memorie di Antonio Canova 251-52.

[178] The statue *Tiber* was paired with a statue representing the river Nile. The two had been displayed in the Sala degli Animali of the Museo Pio-Clementino before being taken by the French. Both were also exhibited in the Musée Napoléon and discussed in the museum's catalogue. Interestingly, Susan Jenkins has pointed out that the French had hoped to keep the sculpture of the Nile by offering Canova the opportunity to re-purchase his *Napoleon as Mars* instead. It was, however, one of the first works he

Even the more ostensibly allegorical frescoes, *Sculpture Honoured*, by Francesco Hayez, and *Painting Honored,* by Giovanni Demin, recall the recent political events (fig. 95). In *Sculpture Honored* an allegorical female figure representing the art—with a hairstyle that resembles those of Canova's female works!— holds a clay modeling tool. Chisel and hammer rest beside her. She admires the *Bust of Jupiter*—a work that at the time had been thought to be by Phidias and which had been displayed in the Louvre in the Salle de Laocoön (fig. 96). [179] *Painting Honoured*, on the other hand, shows an allegorical figure of painting seated in front of what certainly was the most famous piece of war booty the French had taken—Raphael's *Transfiguration*. This painting was the first work of art which the French demanded from the Pope in the Treaty of Tolentino (figs. 97-98). In these lunettes, therefore, Canova reiterated the link between works of art and their settings. He celebrated their return to Rome, embedding into the very walls of the museum the image of its most important pieces and their homecoming. Canova thus ensured that generations of visitors to come would recall the long journey these works of art had made from Paris to Rome, in order to be restored to their rightful location.

For most people, however, the memory of looting was distasteful. It left a bitter taste for Romans and non-Romans alike. When Charlotte Eaton met Pope Pius VII, his anger was clear, for he felt that the damage the French had done could never be

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shipped back. The *Nile* returned to the Vatican, where it was installed in the newly formed "Braccio Nuovo" of the Museo Chiaramonti; the *Tiber* remained in Paris. For a description of the two works in the Louvre, see Louvre, Notice des statues, bustes et bas-reliefs, de la galerie des antiques du Musée Napoléon, ouverte pour la première fois le 18 Brumaire an 9 8-10. For the behind-the-scenes machinations regarding the French's attempt to keep the *Nile* and the purchase of *Napoleon as Mars* by the British, see Susan Jenkins, "Buying Bonaparte," Apollo (Nov. 2010): 50-55.

[179] See Louvre, Notice des statues, bustes et bas-reliefs, de la galerie des antiques du Musée Napoléon, ouverte pour la première fois le 18 Brumaire an 9 96 and Filhol and Lavallée, Galerie du Musée de France, publiée par Filhol, graveur, et rédigée par Lavallée (Joseph) vol. 5, 7-8 and plate vi.

repaired.[180] That the Papal States had suffered extraordinary economic, cultural and personal losses is certain. Perhaps even more interesting, however, is the way the French seizure of works of art fundamentally altered the way people conceived of the Vatican Museums themselves. Eaton, for instance, confessed that she had never even heard of the Vatican Museums before her arrival in Rome.[181] On the one hand, Eaton's statement reflects the way the fame of the Louvre both eclipsed the fame of and damaged the memory of the museums in Rome. Eaton, after all, was born in 1788 and for most of her

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[180] Eaton records their conversation: "He was polite enough to choose to think 'it was scarcely possible we could be English, though he had heard so—we spoke Italian so well;' and could hardly believe we had only been a few months in Italy. He said he particularly dislikes speaking French—he supposed because he spoke it particularly ill; but, indeed, he had little reason to like anything French. Seizing upon this opening, we made some remarks on the occupation of Italy by the French, which drew from him a most energetic picture of the miseries which they had committed, and the curse they had entailed upon it. 'You see now,' he added, 'a changed country, exhausted and bleeding under the wounds of its enemies. Their rapacity, not content with despoiling it of its ornaments, has robbed it of its prosperity, and of the spirit of internal peace and concord, which no time can restore.'

He spoke of Venice, his native state, of its flourishing condition before they seized it—of the rapid destruction to which it has ever since been hastening.

I happened to observe, how fortunate it was that they had been compelled to restore all they had plundered from Rome (meaning works of art). 'All!' he exclaimed—'What! have they restored the blood they have spilt—the wealth they have squandered—the morals they have corrupted? Have they restored the noble families they reduced to beggary—the sons to the mother they rendered childless—the husband to the widow?'

When venerable age is roused to the energy and emotion we expect only from youth—when the quenched eye lightens, and the hoary locks are shook with the bitter sense of wrongs and regrets, there is something sacred in its feelings, which commands our respect and awe.

This burst of feeling over, he spoke of the French with that mildness of spirit, which is the governing principle of his truly Christian character. 'In sorrow more than anger,' he seemed to look on the past; and throughout, that indescribable something far stronger than words—in the tone, eye, mind, and gesture, made us feel that it was abhorrence of injustice, violence, oppression, and impiety, and not the sense of personal injury and insult, that moved the virtuous indignation of this venerable old man; whose meekness, patience, and humility, have through life been his most characteristic qualities." Eaton, Rome, in the Nineteenth Century; Containing a Complete Account of the Ruins of the Ancient City, the Remains of the Middle Ages, and the Monuments of Modern Times vol. 2, 174-75.

[181] "I had heard from my cradle of St. Peter's: it has been my imaginary standard of all that was greatest and most wonderful in the works of man. But of the Vatican—except of its now dormant thunders—I knew nothing, and it stood in my fancy only as the gloomy and hateful residence of a bigoted and imperious Pontiff. The gallery of Florence was consecrated to my mind, as the chosen repository of the choicest monuments of ancient art, of revived taste, and classic elegance. But I had scarcely heard of the existence of the Museum of the Vatican, which, though incomparably superior, has, perhaps from its more recent formation, never attained the same popular fame; and thus its transcendent wonders burst upon me with all the delightful charm of unexpectedness." Eaton, Rome, in the Nineteenth Century; Containing a Complete Account of the Ruins of the Ancient City, the Remains of the Middle Ages, and the Monuments of Modern Times vol. 1, 92.

young adult life the Louvre was the most celebrated museum in the world. On the other hand, however, her comment also implies that people did not think of the Vatican *as a museum* in the same sense *until* they had had the experience of the Louvre. The universal nature of the Louvre created, to a degree, the modern idea of the museum, which in turn caused people to view the Vatican in a different light. Visitors could not help but then compare the Vatican to the Louvre itself, and consider it in these new terms.

Part of the lesson visitors to the Louvre had learned was, of course, that the link between art object and site could be easily broken. In these new museums, works of art were mobile and unrooted; the connection between them and their setting could no longer be guaranteed or taken for granted. It was this idea that permanently altered the way visitors—and Romans themselves—perceived the Vatican. Indeed, perhaps there are no images more poignant than the medals that were minted by the Papal State in honor of the return of the looted works of art. One paired Pius VII and the *Laocoön*; the other, Canova and the *Apollo Belvedere* (figs. 99-100).[182] Despite the fact that both works of art had been reinstated to their place of honor, pedestal prominently visible, both works float against a blank background. Unlike the French medals, which heralded the placement of the *Apollo* and the *Laocoön* in the Louvre, the empty void in which they are situated reflects the impossibility of imagining the works permanently embedded within the setting of the Vatican.

These conceptual shifts had long term effects on the way people viewed works of art in the Vatican. Inevitably, upon their arrival in Rome, visitors remembered seeing the ancient sculptures in the Louvre in recent years, and made comparisons between the ways

[182] Cesare Johnson, "Avvenimenti e Personaggi di Antonio Canova in Medaglie," Medaglia Torino 9.16 (1981): 32-33.

they were displayed.[183] Some visitors were dismayed at their presence in the Vatican, which they thought poorly maintained. [184] Most, however, were thrilled to see the works in their rightful places. One Frenchman was able to look beyond nationalistic fervor and agreed that "in the Louvre, the Apollo was a mere sculpture: he became a God in the Vatican."[185] Felicia Hemans thought the arrival of the works was a portent of Rome's

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[183] "The museum Pio-Clementinum, is so called from its founder Clement the sixteenth, and from the circumstance of its being further augmented and enriched by the late pope Pius sixth. An immense gallery lined on each side with statues, ancient sarcophagi, and inscriptions, leads to a court, a hundred feet square, cooled with fountains and perfumed with orange-trees. Within the portico of this court stand those unrivalled masterpieces, the Apollo, the Laocoon, and the Antinous, and I did not fail to gaze with renewed admiration on these matchless forms, which four years before I had seen in the gallery of the Louvre. To each of one of these great masterpieces a separate apartment is allotted worthy to enshrine its divine inhabitant, and where it now reposes in solitary beauty. These chambers open upon a court along whose airy and silent colonnade, the breeze waft the perfume of a multitude of exotick [*sic*] flowers, which seem more readily to exhale their sweets in an atmosphere peopled with these angelick [*sic*] forms. The works of Canova have not been thought unworthy of a place near these unequalled performances. Here Perseus stands holding in his hand the head of Medusa, and the divine face of the young hero like that of Apollo, is ennobled by an expression of triumph as he extends to view the countenance of the Gorgon. The same apartment contains the ancient pugilists. Two figures in which a great knowledge of muscular anatomy is displayed, but which are ill calculated to give a proper idea of Canova's genius." Sloan and Lyman, Rambles in Italy; in the Years 1816....17 333-34.

[184] "But what a lamentable account am I to give of their present state! The most culpable negligence, the blindest indifference, seem to pervade the Papal government. While an outcry has been raised at the statues being removed to France, where they were better seen, and while, with much affected feeling, they have been calling for their restitution, they are permitting such injuries to those fine works which could not be removed, as nothing will repair." Sass, A Journey to Rome and Naples, Performed in 1817; Giving an Account of the Present State of Society in Italy, and Containing Observations on the Fine Arts 119.

[185] Santo-Domingo was even able to praise Canova's role in the negotiations for the works. "Canova jouit d'une réputation plus qu'européenne, bien justifiée par son mérite dont sa modestie et son désintéressement relèvent encore l'éclat. On lui en a beaucoup voulu d'avoir présidé, au Louvre, à l'enlèvement des chefs-d'œuvre d'Italie; on a qualifié sa conduite de *vandalisme*; son titre d'ambassadeur a été parodié par celui d'emballeur. N'y a-t-il pas dans ces reproches plus d'acrimonie que de justice? Ne sont-ils pas dictés par un sentiment national exagéré qui, s'étant identifié avec la conquête, appelle dépouillement ce qui n'est que restitution. Mais les traités nous garantissaient implicitement cette possession! Était-ce à Canova qu'il convenait de discuter la lettre ou l'esprit de ces actes diplomatiques? Je le demande à ses accusateurs: s'ils pouvaient affranchir leurs amis, leur parens, d'une longue captivité, balanceraient-ils? Eh bien! si les liens du génie sont aussi forts que ceux du sang, Canova, en ramenant en Italie l'*Apollon*, la *Vénus*, et tant d'autre marbre vivans, délivrait aussi des parens et des amis. Ils étaient nos prisonniers: quel scrupule pouvait-il se faire de les rendre à la terre des beaux-arts, leur patrie natale ou adoptive? Ces créatures du génie étaient tristes de notre triste climat; notre froide température les pétrifiait; elles redemandaient le soleil de l'Italie, ce soleil qui, à leur naissance, les avait enveloppées de ses réseaux lumineux. Réchauffées enfin par ses rayons, elles ont repris leur animation primitive; leur membres se déploient avec plus de noblesse; le gaz pur et léger qui circule autour de leurs formes harmonieuses leur donne une beauté aërienne qui semble être une émanation des divinités qu'elles représentent. Au Louvre, l'*Apollon du Belvédère* s'était fait statue: il est redevenu dieu au Vatican. La *Vénus de Médicis*, prostituée sur les bords de la Seine aux regards d'une multitude qui n'eut jamais le sentiment des beaux-arts, a repris, sur les bords

resurgence and recorded her ecstasy in a poem, exclaiming "Then from the sacred ashes of the first,/ Might a new Rome in phoenix grandeur burst!"[186]

After the return of the works of art from Paris in 1816, the *Apollo Belvedere* was reinstated on its pedestal while Canova's *Perseus* and his *Pugilists* were removed to a nearby alcove.[187] In fact, in what seems like an ironic gesture from our perspective, *Perseus* was placed on the pedestal and in the same alcove that the *cast* of the *Apollo* had occupied in the marble's absence.[188] Once this relocation occurred, the unexpected, negative consequences of incorporating *Perseus* into the Vatican Collections emerged.[189] Visitors' perceptions of *Perseus* were transformed as a result of their heightened awareness of the relationship between works of art and their setting. They were even more cognizant of *Perseus'* placement within the Vatican and its relationship to the

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de l'Arno, l'empire de la pudeur, premier empire de la beauté." Santo-Domingo, Tablettes Romaines, contenant des faits, des anecdotes et des observations sur les moeurs, les usages, les ceremonies, le gouvernement de Rome; par un français qui a récemment séjourné dans cette ville 113-14.

[186] Felicia Dorothea Hemans, "The Restoration of the Works of Art to Italy, 1816," The Poetical Works of Felicia Dorothea Hemans (London: Oxford University Press, 1914) 663.

James Sloan preferred the Christian impulse the Vatican gave to the works. "Notwithstanding the astonishment and delight with which I used to behold the *Musée Napoleon*, the enjoyments I derived from my visits to the Louvre were far less intense than those I experienced within the walls of the Vatican. Taken altogether, the latter appears much better adapted to the culture of the taste and the imagination, and to the encouragement of the higher feelings of moral and religious enthusiasm. Should the student here, ever become so enamoured of the works of the ancients, as to believe that the religious idea and fictions of heathen mythology, furnish the happiest subjects for poetry and painting, this idea is refuted by the presence of St. Peter's, and the monuments of painting and sculpture that it contains. Here the works of *Canova*, of *Guido, Dominichino, Raphael* and *Michael Angelo* show with what bright conceptions, christianity is capable of enriching the artist's invention, and how much its divine truths and moral precepts have contributed, to "Raise the genius, and to mend the heart." Sloan and Lyman, Rambles in Italy; in the Years 1816....17 337-38.

[187] It is quite interesting that the pedestals themselves were never removed, as though by remaining in place they still ascribed a certain permanence to the collection, or a hope that the originals might someday be returned.

[188] Letter from Ercole Consalvi to Canova on Jan. 28, 1816. "Il Santo Padre più per appagare i di Lei desiderj, che per contentare se stesso, acconsente che nel piedistallo, in cui attualmente trovasi collocato il *Perseo* si riponga l'*Apollo*; vuole però che la egregia statua del *Perseo* sia collocata in quello stesso luogo del museo in cui attualmente si trova il gesso dell'*Apollo* [...]." Canova, Epistolario (1816-1817) vol. 1, 68.

[189] Pinelli, "Il Perseo del Canova," 432.

ancient masterpieces surrounding it. The return of the "original" marble *Apollo* and the dislocation of *Perseus* from its place of honor to the pedestal that had held the *Apollo*'s cast rendered the sculpture little more than a superfluous placeholder, a replacement which, like the plaster cast of the *Apollo* itself, was no longer needed.[190]

Visitors expressed this new understanding of the two works' relationship one to another, once again emphasizing the differences between the works.[191] Johann Kiesewetter could not understand why anyone would even want to establish a parallel between the two sculptures.[192] Another German author, Herman Friedländer, traveling in 1815-1816, was disappointed by the juxtaposition between Canova's modern works and ancient sculptures, describing their placement in the Museo Pio-Clementino in great detail:

> It [a central fountain] is surrounded by an octagonal portico, supported by 16 columns of granite, and filled with sarcophagi, antique bathing-apparatus, and other curious sculptures. The first of the four rooms underneath contains the statue of Antinous Belvidere; the second and third, the Vaticanus Apollo, and the groups of the Laocoon, and the last – the Perseus and two Gladiators, by Canova, together with his bust. This strange exhibition is now the more inexcusable as all the originals are returned, and the Apollo needs no longer to be represented by the smooth Perseus. But it does not tend to Canova's honour either, since there cannot be a greater contrast than there is between the flimsiness and sweetness of his figures and the grand energy of the antiques.[193]

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[190] This cast was purchased by John Scandrett Harford, who was quite proud to own it. When the cast was shipped to him, Canova included the recipe for varnish that is referenced in the introduction in note 27.

[191] One of the few neutral reactions comes from John Sloan. Cited in note 183. Sloan and Lyman, Rambles in Italy; in the Years 1816....17 333-34.

[192]Recalling a trip he had made to Rome a few years previously, Johann Kiesewetter wrote, "Alle Achtung für Canova und sein Künstlertalent, aber anmaβend war dies doch. Die Bildsäule des Perseus hat übrigens unstreitig große Verdienste, nur mit dem Apoll von Belvedere, wer will sie damit in Parallel stellen?" Kiesewetter, Reise durch einen Theil Deutschlands, der Schweiz, Italiens und des Südlichen Frankreichs nach Paris. Erinnerungen aus den Denswürdigen Jahren 1813, 1814, und 1815 vol. 2, 328, note.

[193] Herman Friedländer, Views in Italy, During a Journey in the Years 1815-1816, English translation ed. (London: Sir Richard Phillips and Co., 1821) 108.

Although I have cited the English translation from 1821 here, in the original German, the text is even more biting. Friedlander includes a parenthetical expression of amazement that Canova's *Perseus* and

John Scott thought the comparison "a reward indeed for Canova. [...] Lightness, expression, and air, are the merits of the Apollo; soul, form, and look, all going off together in an air of indignant triumph. Go back again to Canova's Perseus, and you will see at once the imitation, and the (not failure) but inferiority."[194] Hugh William Williams, traveling in 1816, likewise pointed out that "Canova is much beholden to the Apollo for [the *Perseus*]; indeed, it is a palpable imitation."[195] Louis Simond, also traveling in 1817-1818, complained *Perseus* "is perhaps too close an imitation of the Belvedere Apollo,"[196] while Edward Buron and Friedrick Sickler were more convinced that the sculpture was a "certain imitation of the Apollo."[197] Even Charlotte Eaton, who was fond of Canova and his works, suggested that "[t]o turn from the contemplation of the *Apollo* to look on any

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Boxers are in the museum. "Can you believe it?" he writes. "Doch das köstlichste ist in vier Gemächern enthalten, die unter ihm sich befinden. Im ersten steht der sogenannte Antinous des Belvedere, in den andern der vaticanische Apollo, die Gruppen des Laocoon und im letzten (sollte man es glauben?) der Perseus und die beiden Ringer von – Canova mit dessen Büste." Hermann Friedländer, Ansichten von Italien, Während einer Reise in den Yahren 1815 und 1816, English translation ed., 2 vols. (Liepzig: F.M. Brodhaus, 1820) vol. 2, 147.

Friedländer also notes that Canova's bust was placed in the alcove as well. According to Missirini, this bust was created by the sculptor Benedetto Naro and was placed in the Vatican until Canova's extreme modesty required its removal. Missirini, Della Vita di Antonio Canova: Libri Quattro 225-26.

[194] Scott, Sketches of Manners, Scenery, &c, in the French Provinces, Switzerland, and Italy. With an Essay on French Literature 370.

[195] Hugh William Williams, Travels in Italy, Greece, and the Ionian Islands. In a Series of Letters, Descriptive of Manners, Scenery, and the Fine Arts, 2 vols. (Edinburgh: A. Constable and co., 1820) vol. 2, 13.

[196] Simond, A Tour in Italy and Sicily 220-21.

[197] "In einem der erstern befinden sich drei moderne von Canova. Sie wurden an die Stelle der nach Paris abgeführten Antiken hier ausgestellt und sind bis jetzt noch nicht entfernt worden, obwohl die Antiken weider zurückgebracht worden sind. Da sie auf diese Weise den trefflichsten Werken der Bildhauerkunst der Alten zur Seite stehen, so müssen sie nothwendig zur Vergleichung auffordern. Vielleicht lässt sich auch in dem Perseus (von Canova), der unter den drei die beste ist, eine gewisse Nachahmung des Apollo entdecken." Edward Burton and Friedrich Sickler, Rom und Latium, von Burton und Sickler: nach den neuesten Forschungen, vol. 1 (Weimar: Landes-Industrie-Comptoir, 1823) vol. 1, 596.

other sculpture, ancient or modern, is exposing it to a fearful test and the *Perseus* unfortunately recalls to us, with peculiar force, the image of that inimitable work."[198]

Although Eaton does mitigate her censure, ultimately declaring *Perseus* to be "an honour to modern statues," these criticisms imply that Winckelmann's model of imitation was rapidly losing its hold by 1816. Indeed, some visitors referred to *Perseus* as a mere *copy* of the *Apollo*. Jane Waldie adored Canova's female figures, but found his males to suffer in comparison. She decried "his Perseus [...] which is almost a copy from the Apollo,—how inferior to that heaven-descended God!"[199] In 1818 Toussaint von Charpentier was scandalized by Canova's "cheekiness,"—dubbing him a "preening rooster"— for exhibiting his modern works in the museum. *Perseus* might be "the best" of the three sculptures, but "the good in him is only a copy of the Apollo."[200] James

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[198] "In a similar alcove of this court, we were shown the Perseus, and the two Pugilists of Canova, the only modern statues which have been admitted into the Museum of the Vatican. To turn from the contemplation of the Apollo to look on any other sculpture, ancient or modern, is exposing it to a fearful test; and the Perseus unfortunately recalls to us, with peculiar force, the image of that inimitable work. At fist glance the resemblance strikes us, and we see that it was in the mind of the artist when he conceived his own. Unconsciously, perhaps, the idea predominated; yet as it was destined to replace the Apollo, when carried off, as it was believed, for ever, by the French, Canova might wish to recall it to those who could see it no more.[....] It has been censured, and not perhaps altogether without justice, as effeminate; it is in feminine beauty that Canova excels, and its character, rather than that of the hero, he has impressed upon his work. It is, indeed, a being too soft and refined for a man, much less for a warrior, yet it does not bear the character of a god. The head is fine, and its expression, as well as that of the Medusa's head, have been deservedly admired. The arms and the contour of the limbs are beautiful – perhaps too delicately beautiful. But with all its faults, (and comparing it, as one cannot help doing, with the standard of the Apollo, is it wonderful we should see all these and more?) the Perseus is an honour to modern statues, and worthy of the genius of its distinguished artist." Eaton, Rome, in the Nineteenth Century; Containing a Complete Account of the Ruins of the Ancient City, the Remains of the Middle Ages, and the Monuments of Modern Times vol. 1, 107–08.

[199] Jane Waldie, Sketches Descriptive of Italy in the Years 1816 and 1817 with a Brief Account of Travels in Various Parts of France and Switzerland in the Same Years, 4 vols. (London: John Murray, 1820) vol. 2, 322.

[200] "In einem andern solchen Kabinet steht der Beweis, dass Canova seine eigenen Werke nicht gehörig schätzt: denn schätzte er sie gehörig, so würde er wahrlich nicht die Keck- und Geckheit haben, seinen Perseus und seine gottlosen Pugillatoren in der Nachbarschaft eines Apoll von Belvedere auszustellen. Ich will diesen Kunstwerken von Canova's Meißel durchaus nicht vieles Verdienst absprechen: aber in der Nähe eines solchen Meisterwerks halten sie durchaus die Critik nicht aus. Der Perseus ist gewiss die beste dieser drei Figuren, aber das Gute an ihm ist nur Copie des Apolls, den er hier mit etwas mehr Fleisch vorgestellt, und mit der andern Schulter vorwärts gedreht hat. Er hat in seinem Perseus dem Apollo den

Galiffe found him "handsome," but added *Perseus* "has too much the appearance of having been copied from the Apollo who stands in the adjoining compartment."[201] Henry Matthews put it even more bluntly: "It is a pity that Canova's works are placed in the Vatican. The Perseus might have attracted admiration while the Apollo was at Paris, but the Apollo is come back; and who could ever tolerate a copy by the side of the original?"[202]

Since *Perseus* was no longer substituting for the *Apollo*, therefore, viewers could be more critical of what they perceived as the sculpture's flaws and aesthetic failures. Similarities to the *Apollo*, which just fifteen years previously heightened its value, now denigrated the work. Within this second comparison in the Vatican, therefore, the confrontation between *Perseus* and *Apollo* enacted the idea of the copy as a negative term. This was brought out symbolically by the Vatican officials themselves. Although they may have intended to honor the statue by placing it on the plinth the cast of the *Apollo* had occupied, they inadvertently promoted and reaffirmed the negative reactions of visitors who demoted the work's status. At the same time, the confrontation of these two originals and the juxtaposition between the "smooth" marble surface of Canova's work with the rougher stone of the more venerable antiquity likewise reminded visitors of the *modernity* of Canova's work. It was a usurper in the museum. Finally, the

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Kopf auf den rechten Fleck gefetzt, aber zum grossen Nachtheil des Perseus, des Kopfs und seiner selbst." Touissant von Charpentier, Bemerkungen auf einer Reise von Breslau über Salzburg, Tirol und der Südlichen Schweiz nach Rom, Neapel und Paestum im Jahre 1818, 2 vols. (Leipzig: G.J. Göschen, 1829) vol. 2, 132-33.

[201] Jacques Augustin Galiffe, Italy and Its Inhabitants: An Account of a Tour in That Country in 1816 and 1817: Containing a View of Characters, Manners, Customs, Governments, Antiquities, Literature, Dialects, Theatres, and the Fine Arts; with Some Remarks on the Origin of Rome and of the Latin Language, 2 vols. (London: J. Murray, 1820) vol. 1, 250.

[202] Matthews, The Diary of an Invalid, Being the Journal of a Tour in Pursuit of Health, in Portugal, Italy, Switzerland, and France, in the Years 1817, 1818, and 1819 94-95.

transformations in language that occurred reflected the revolutionary manner in which Winckelmann's model of imitation lost its original significance. In both English and German, "imitation" or "die Nachahmung," took on an increasingly pejorative sense. Although Winckelmann himself had opposed "imitation" and "copy,"[203] by the early nineteenth century the line between the two had become blurred. "Imitation" had once been a variant on "original," but now it reflected an *inferior* reproduction. The sense of innovation which lay behind "imitation" as an act of creative production was lost. Within the context of the museum, therefore, the concept of the "original" was even more opposed to the "copy" than before.

By 1817, even Canova himself denied the similarities to the *Apollo* in a letter to Leopoldo Cicognara. He wrote, "There are an infinite number of ancient and modern statues that resemble the *Apollo* much more than my *Perseus*."[204] Even he became increasingly conscious of the pejorative significance of imitation, for, when discussing his *Napoleon as Mars,* he reportedly stated that his work would "never be an imitation, nor a copy."[205] The sculptor himself, therefore, was very attuned to the negative reactions

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[203] An English translation from 1765 by Henry Fuseli reads: "To original ideas, we oppose copied, not imitated ones. Copying we call the slavish crawling of the hand and eyes, after a certain model: whereas reasonable imitation just takes the hint, in order to work by itself. […] Copying I call, moreover, the following a certain form, without the least consciousness of one's being a blockhead." Johann Joachim Winckelmann, Reflections on the Painting and Sculpture of the Greeks, trans. and ed. Henry Fusseli (London: A. Millar, 1765) 256-57.

[204] Letter from Canova to Cicognara, August 9, 1817. "Finalemente il mio *Perseo* pianta diversamente all'*Apollo*, stende diversamente, ed ha un carattere differente, e sonovi infinite statue antiche, e moderne, che assomigliano all'*Apollo* molto piú del mio *Perseo*, se si vuole esaminare giustamente la massa." Cited in Canova, Epistolario (1816-1817) vol. 2, 952.

[205] "Dicea esso sulla sua statua di madama Bonaparte: pare ad alcuni delitto avere io in questo marmo ricordato il motivo dell'Agrippina; ma non potrebbe essere ancora, che l'autore dell'Agrippina avesse fatto altrettanto, tenendo essa tanta somiglianza col Menandro? Si pongano queste due statue allato, e se ne vedrà la differenza: anche il mio Perseo senza l'Apollo accanto vorebbe prendersi nell'atto medesimo; ma il confronto dissipa l'immaginata somiglianza nel tutto e nelle parti."

Sarà parimenti facile trovare nelle medaglie una mossa e una attitudine che riferisca al Napoleono: posso giurare non averne veduta nessuna prima del bozzo; ma tuttavia la mia non sarà mai una imitazione,

to his work. His initial enthusiasm for comparative study between *Perseus* and *Apollo* faded as criticism of *Perseus* increased, and Canova distanced himself further and further from the ancient masterpieces that had once been his models. Even after his death Canova's biographers felt the need to stand up against critics who implied he lacked originality.[206] Missirini, for instance, defended the artist against those who accused him

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nè una copia; e se l'esempio degli antichi mi è in ciò favorevole, me ne compiaccio. Le statue delle divinità antiche, come Apollo, Pallade, Diana e le altre ricordano presso a poco lo stessso motivo d'azione e di positura. Specialmente in quelle della Venere o in piedi o sedenti osservasi d'ordinario una certa analogia e conformità di attitudine e di movimento: da ciò vuolsi inferire che la somma delle mosse semplici e naturali, sopratutto nelle figure ignude e stanti, è di numero minore delle attitudini espressive e violente. In queste può ognuno facilmente inventare senza tema di comparire plagiario. Perciò gli antichi medesimi non si sono incontrati mai nella stessa mossa d'una azione esagerata e violenta, mentre in quelle semplici e nobili quasi sempre dovevano ritornare nello stesso motivo, sebbene le differenze dell'opera fossero sempre essenziali e di primo ordine. Il Mercurio o Antinoo di Belvedere ha molto del Meleagro, ma non pero alcuna somiglianza nel carattere e nello stile. Al contrario non è probabile, che un artefice senza un certo presentimento s'incontri naturalemente nell'attitudine del preteso Gladiatore Borghese, essendo difficile avvenirsi in un'azione imposta dalla particolarità del tema; e molto meno in quella del Discobolo de'Massimi. E con ciò intendo dire, l'arte nostra sotto quest'aspetto non esser sì ricca, come si crede. Nelle azioni in risposo non è permesso spaziare con gran libertà, che ogni minima confidenza presa coll'arte ci guida all'affettato e manierato." Missirini, Della Vita di Antonio Canova: Libri Quattro 307-08.

[206]Memes, for instance, comes to the sculptor's defense twice. "To the objections of prejudice—that it was a species of profanation to place the labours of a living master on a level with those of the ancients, the remark of the artist to his private friends affords the best reply: 'It has been thought proper, by those who have a right to dispose of it as they may, that the Perseus should be removed to the Vatican;— for me to have interfered in this matter, would have displayed scarcely less arrogance, than if I had insisted on its occupying the deserted pedestal of the Apollo.' The spirit of much professional criticism, however, is more judicious, as also less easily obviated. The beauty and perfection of the forms, considered without reference to the higher aims of art, were universally allowed; but it has been urged, that, in originality of invention, as in unity of character, there were great deficiencies. The design of the Perseus is obviously copied from that of the Apollo, nay the dissimilarity of action is evidently studied, as if with the intention of obtaining diversity, or of concealing imitation. Again, in respect to propriety of character, this statue, it was said, presented the irreconcilable union of a divinity and of a hero, as they are realized in the works of ancient masters; and that it must be regarded '*un Apollo coi tratti di un guerriero*,' as an Apollo with the traits of a warrior. Of this latter objection, the practice of antiquity itself perhaps supplied the best refutation; since in composition of antique sculpture, a similar combination of soft or almost luxurious beauty, with an expression and action of athletic vigour, may frequently be remarked. But while criticism was thus estimating the work by abstract precepts of excellence, the more practical science of the artist detected irregularities overlooked by theory. In a long course of observation, Canova had himself discovered various defects in the muscles and divisions of the abdomen, which once more applying the chisel to the marble, he rectified only a few years previous to his decease." Memes, Memoirs of Antonio Canova, with a Critical Analysis of His Works, and an Historical View of Modern Sculpture 387-89.

In the note on the same page, Memes writes, "As in the statues of Bacchus, and even in those of Apollo; 'for why,' as he has been judiciously asked, 'may not a *Perseus* and an Apollo in similar modes of action resemble?' – 'Perche Apollo saettatore del serpente e *Perseo* vincitore della Gorgone, non possono aver lo stesso carattere.' In the Museum of the capital also is a *basso rilievo* of a Perseus the size of nature, which might easily be mistaken for an Apollo." Memes, Memoirs of Antonio Canova, with a Critical Analysis of His Works, and an Historical View of Modern Sculpture 388, footnote 1.

of "plagiarizing."[207] Cicognara tried to reintroduce the original meaning of "imitation" in his writing, arguing that those individuals who could find no faults with the execution of *Perseus* inevitably chose to critique the concept of the work instead.[208] If the work did recall the *Apollo,* he argued, it was not due to any "poverty of genius" but rather to the fact that the human body naturally adopted certain postures that varied little from one to the other.[209] Perhaps most amusingly, Cicognara even relied on Canova's own vocabulary to defend the author, citing, almost word for word, the very letter the sculptor had written him in 1817.[210] Despite, however, his defenders best efforts to argue that he

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[207] " […The critics of Canova] diceano, essersi egli anche ne'lavori dell'arte usurpato una fama superiore al suo merito, essendo talora accusabile di plagio." Missirini, Della Vita di Antonio Canova: Libri Quattro 305.

[208] "La piena e pubblica ammirazione, anzi convien meglio dire l'entusiasmo cagionato dal Perseo, parve ad alcuni poter equivalere a una sentenza della posterità; se non che gli emuli dell'arte attribuirono la magia di questo incanto all'ascendente che hanno sovra di tutti le bellezze delle forme esaminate partitamente, in preferenza dell'unità del carattere: e non potendo attaccare l'artista nell'esecuzione, che il consenso universale disse perfetta, si tentò di temperar tanta gloria col censurare il concetto. Condottesi dalla critica ad analisi profondissima le bellezze e i difetti di questa statua, si trovò non esser questo che un *Apollo presentato coi tratti di un guerriero*; intendendosi con ciò di dedurne piuttosto censura che elogio, per la differenza che supponesi essere fra un nume e un eroe; e attribuendo per conseguenza alla statue del Perseo un carattere diverso da quanto aver essa dovrebbe." Cicognara, Storia della Scultura dal suo Risorgimento in Italia Fino al Secolo di Canova del Conte Leopoldo Cicognara vol. 7, 151-52.

[209] "Ogni parte di quella figura presenta infinite bellezze di esecuzione e di disegno: e se si vorrà ricusare all'artefice il merito della prima invenzione, perchè in qualche maniera ricorda l'Apollo, ciò non si dirà derivare certamente da povertà di genio, dopo le immense prove da lui date di nuove e fertilissime invenzioni; ma convien ritenere, che egli non isfuggì mai con affettazione certe rassomiglianze nei movimenti generali delle figure, quando riconobbe essere ciò acconcio al suo oggetto; e si osserverà inoltre che i movimenti più naturali della figura umana nella parità dell'età, dei sessi e delle circonstanze si ripetono e variano tra loro con piccole modificazioni soltanto; altrimenti, come abbiamo detto più volte, la troppa smania di novità condurrebbe al manierato ed allo strano con grandissima facilità. E in fine se alcuno notasse a difetto del Perseo l'essere d'un troppo divino aspetto, è da bramarsi che gli artisti moderni piuttosto che fuggire, imitino tali mancanze conducenti alla maggiore sublimità delle arti. Lo stesso non si potrebbe dire se un tal genere di nobiltà fosse da un artista applicato ad una figura pastorale, ad un fauno, ad un gladiatore; ma Apollo saettatore del serpente e Perseo vincitore della Gorgone possono avere lo stesso carattere. Le tavole XL e XLII presentano anche un'idea dell'Apollo, e le due teste più in grande di queste due statue." Cicognara, Storia della Scultura dal suo Risorgimento in Italia Fino al Secolo di Canova del Conte Leopoldo Cicognara vol. 7, 153.

[210] "Quanto poi all'atteggiamento, ognuno riconosce come il Perseo pianta in diverso modo dell'Apollo di Belvedere, stende diversamente, ed ha un carattere differente; e sonovi infinite statue antiche e moderne che assomigliano allo Apollo assai più del Perseo di Canova quando si voglia ben giustamente esaminarne la mossa." Cicognara, Storia della Scultura dal suo Risorgimento in Italia Fino al Secolo di Canova del Conte Leopoldo Cicognara vol. 7, 152-53.

would "emerge truly original,"[211] the critiques against Canova as imitator, copier, and plagiarist remained inviolable.

Imitation to Copy: The Ossification of Art History

By the 1830s the comparison between *Perseus* and *Apollo* was actively suppressed by Italian authors, who perhaps realized the association between the two works did not honor Canova's sculpture. In a large-format luxury edition of the Vatican Collections issued in 1830, although Canova is discussed with high praise, *Perseus* and *Apollo* were neither compared to one another in the text nor the engravings. *Apollo* was depicted alone, with its pedestal prominently occupying a quarter of the plate, announcing its repositioning in the Vatican. *Perseus* was instead paired with a different statue entirely, a *Mercury* (formerly known as the *Belvedere Antinous*) (figs. 101-102).[212] Although this too was an extremely well-known statue that was prominently displayed in the Belvedere Courtyard, and it too had traveled to Paris after the Treaty of Tolentino, the outstretched *Perseus* bears almost no formal resemblance to the ancient work's restrained contraposto. The only similarity is the pronounced musculature of the abdomen. Certainly this particular pairing was designed to stop short any comparisons between *Perseus* and the *Apollo*—as was the way *Perseus* itself was depicted. In the engraving the

[211] "Quantunque Canova possa non aver raggiunta l'eccellenza de'greci maestri, specialmente in quelle pochissime opere, ove si ravvisa una qualche imitazione dell'antico, benchè troppo a discapito del moderno Scultore tornar dovea la greca perfezione, e le prevenzioni ben giuste, e la fama di cui godevano da tanti secoli quegli aurei modelli, non dimeno Canova è il solo finora che abbia ciò osato con non comune fortuna, siccome attestano le sue statue del Perseo e della madre di Napoleone, le quali ricordano con grande evidenza, senza rimaner di troppo oscurate, l'Apollo e l'Agrippina. E altresì ognuno vedrà come poi allorquando non si trattò di spigolar sui campi mietuti, ma di emergere veramente originale, produsse tali opere da onorare assai giustamente il suo secolo." Cicognara, Biografia di Antonio Canova 52-53.

[212] Erasmo Pistolesi, Camillo Guerra and Tommaso de Vivo, Il Vaticano Descritto ed Illustrato, 8 vols. (Roma: Tip. della Società editrice, 1829) vol. 4, 170-72.

work appears significantly squatter than the marble; its upper torso is turned almost parallel to the viewer. At the same time, one also cannot help but wonder if the fact that by 1820 Ennio Visconti had reidentified the *Belvedere Antinous* as a figure of *Mercury* had somehow lessened the importance of the work.[213] Either way, it was a comparison that did not benefit Canova's *Perseus*.

Visitors to the museum, however, continued to compare *Perseus* and *Apollo* as they made their way through the collections. Anna Jameson pointed out that visitors could not help but do so—"We make comparisons involuntarily," she wrote, "in a case where comparisons are odious."[214] For most visitors, *Perseus'* presence in the Vatican was no longer considered an honor to Canova. Although some found the comparison between the two works "a tribute" to the sculptor,[215] more and more were affronted by

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[213] For more on the history of the sculpture and its reidentification, see Haskell and Penny, Taste and the Antique: The Lure of Classical Sculpture, 1500-1900 141-43.

[214] "It is absolutely necessary to look at the Perseus before you look at the Apollo, in order to do the former justice. I have gazed with admiration at the Perseus for minutes together, then walked from it to the Apollo, and felt instantaneously, but could not have expressed, the difference. The first is indeed a beautiful statue, the latter 'breathes the flame with which 'twas wrought,' as if the sculptor had left a portion of his own soul within the marble, to half animate his glorious creation. The want of this informing life is strongly felt in the Perseus, when contemplated after the Apollo. It is delightful, when the imagination rises in the scale of admiration, when we ascend from excellence to perfection: but excellence after perfection, is absolute inferiority; it sinks below itself, and the descent is so disagreeable and disappointing, that we can seldom estimate justly the object before us. We make comparisons involuntarily, in a case where comparisons are odious." Jameson, The Diary of an Ennuyée 113-14.

[215] "In a temple near the Apollo are Canova's Perseus, and his two Boxers. My opinion of this living sculptor, and descriptions of these productions, I have already given at some length. The affinity of the two subjects of the Apollo and the Perseus has induced a similarity of attitude. Being near each other, many spectators occupy themselves in critically comparing the two. What a tribute! For, even allowing that the antique exceed the modern—yet—to bear comparison with the finest statue in the world!" A Classical and Historical Tour through France, Switzerland, and Italy, in the Years 1821 and 1822: Including a Summary History of the Principal Cities, and Most Memorable Revolutions: A Description of the Famed Edifices, and Works of Art, Ancient, as Well as Modern: With an Account of Some of the Most Striking Classical Fictions and Ceremonies; and of Such Relics Still Remaining, 2 vols. (London: Printed for Baldwin, Cradock, and Joy, 1826) vol. 2, 6.

the presence of the modern work in the octagonal courtyard. [216] "What misjudging ambition could have led him to permit their invasion of such a neighborhood?" H. Noel Humphrey's asked of Canova's modern works.[217] In 1839, Thomas Medwin reiterated the thoughts of visitors who had seen the work twenty years before, for he agreed that "[t]he charge of plagiarism so often made against Canova is not altogether groundless."[218] An 1850 history of sculpture commented that "connoisseurs [....] stigmatized [the work] as a parody or copy of the Apollo Belvidere," [219] and in 1849, J. Coindet dismissed *Perseus* as a "dandified Apollo."[220] Canova's sculpture had been firmly delegated to inferior status.

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[216] In 1828 the Duke of Buckingham wrote, "The Apollo Belvidere, which I now see again, having seen all these statues in Paris, I think now, as I thought then, the finest statue in the world. The Perseus of Canova is a splendid statue, but it ought not to be shown under the same roof or on the same day with the Apollo, as, although Canova has not copied the latter, it is yet plain that he had the idea of it in his head, and it has entirely occupied his mind and pervaded his work." The Private Diary of Richard, Duke of Buckingham and Chandos, K.G., 3 vols. (London: Hurst and Blackett, 1862) vol. 3, 28.

[217] "Another cabinet of this famous cortile is occupied by a celebrated Mercury, and in the fourth stand three figures by Canova; but I will not do this artist the injustice of examining them here; what misjudging ambition could have led him to permit their invasion of such a neighbourhood, I am at a loss to conceive. We will not take advantage of it." H. Noel Humphreys, Rome and Its Surrounding Scenery; Illustrated with Engravings by W.B. Cooke (London: 1840) 29.

[218] He continued, "Almost all he did may be traced to some statue, cameo, vase or coin of antiquity. […] His 'Perseus' is a weak imitation of the 'Apollo Victor;' and should not have ventured to look at the 'Medusa's' head, itself the exact copy of a gem." T. Medwin, "Canova. Leaves from the Autobiography of an Amateur," Fraser's Magazine for Town and Country XX.CXVII (September 1839): 374. This was then reprinted in T. Medwin, "Canova. Leaves from the Autobiography of an Amateur," The Corsair. A Gazette of Literature, Art, Dramatic Criticism, Fashion and Novelty 1.30 (October 5, 1839): 469-71.

[219] "Among discussions of the connoisseurs upon the subject of this statue, it is stigmatized as a parody or copy of the Apollo Belvidere, with a position unnatural, and even physically impossible for a living man to assume." Sculpture and the Plastic Art, (Boston: John P. Jewett, 1850) 180.

[220] "Il [Canova] était destiné à remplir les vides que Bonaparte avait faits dans les musées de l'Italie; sa *Vénus* occupant le piédestal de la *Vénus de Médicis*, son *Persée* vint remplacer au Belvédère du Vatican l'*Apollon Pythien.* L'enthousiasme qu'excita cette production peut paraître exagéré, maintenant que, plus accoutumés à la réaction qu'il fit dans les beaux-arts en faveur du goût, de la vérité et du style, nous apprécions mieux la distance qui le sépare encore des chefs-d'œuvre de l'antiquité. Non-seulement la lutte est trop inégale entre son *Persée* et l'*Apollon*, mais Canova ne soutient guère la comparaison avec Benvenuto Cellini, qui a traité le même sujet et en tenait pourtant pas, comme statuaire, le premier rang au seizième siècle.

By the twentieth century, criticisms against the sculpture had become even more vicious. Cesare Brandi deplored Canova's work and dubbed him the "first conscious bureaucrat of art" in a tirade against *Perseus*:

> ….Perseus, sheathed in his pumice-polished skin as in the silk tights of an acrobat, is of a trite and indecent nakedness: a nude in a *tableau vivant*. He is neither alive nor true to life: nothing could be more congealed and lifeless….If the Gorgon he is brandishing had turned him to stone, no stone could be stonier than this…As a statue he is neither stone nor flesh. He is a fiction created in cold blood….[221]

Another modern critic, Emilio Lavagnino, referred to *Perseus* as an eighteenth-century actor who seemed "perfectly embalmed."[222] But perhaps the reaction that most signals Canova's fall from grace was that of Alberto Galli, the Artistic Director of Sculpture of the Vatican Museums and Sacri Palazzi Apostolici. In 1927, in a document entitled, "Project for a more convenient and logical arrangement of some principal sculptures of the Pontifical Museums," Galli suggested that Canova's "three statues, that is the *Perseus* and two boxers […] contrast enormously with all the other ancient sculptures that constitute the immense collection of the Pontifical Museums," and so suggested they be removed from the Belvedere courtyard and exhibited instead in an alcove in a separate room. This, he continued, "would enable visitors to admire them separately from the

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Le *Persée* est gracieux sans héroïsme; c'est un Apollon *dandy*. Dans le repos même du demi-dieu, il faudrait pressentire, deviner cette ardeur de gloire, cette inspiration guerrière qui l'animent; or la statue de Canova, pleine de délicatesse, de langueur et de suavité, ne répond point au caractère poétique du libérateur d'Andromède. Son attitude est indolente, ses contours sont féminins, une morbidesse tout asiatique règne dans son ensemble." First published in 1849, Coindet's text was republished as J. Coindet, Histoire de la peinture en Italie 358.

[221] Cesare Brandi, quoted in Praz, On Neoclassicism 142.

[222] "Un danzatore settecentesco, non certo un mitico eroe, la cui bellezza di superifici levigate, di linee eleganti ed armoniose è come di certi 'falsi', che danno il senso di una perfetta imbalsamazione." Lavagnino, Canova e le sue 'Invenzioni' 19.

other ancient sculptures."[223] Although this relocation might enable visitors to "admire" Canova's sculptures independently from the other works in the Belvedere courtyard, the underlying message, of course, is that they are simply not of the same class as the ancient works. We might interpret this in a way that reflects kindly on Canova's neoclassical works; perhaps, we might argue, the fact that they stand decisively apart from the museum's antiquities reflect their success as modern works of art. Or, we might see Galli's suggestion as the ultimate condemnation of Canova's sculptures. The fact that *Perseus* and the two boxers were so discordant with the ancient works around them was a sign that the sculptor's creative project of imitation had failed completely.

Throughout his career Canova shrewdly relied on sculptural displays to engage his audience and debate the significance of imitation, originality and authenticity. Exhibitions were a central part of his artistic practice. Innovative displays were meant to increase the value of his sculptures, and the significance of his works was *visually staged* in terms of its likeness and difference from its model. In these displays Canova's *Perseus* could take on a wealth of meanings, depending on the current social and political conditions. After the widespread circulation of works of art in the Napoleonic period, however, and the return of Rome's looted masterpieces, the subsequent immobility of the

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[223] The archive includes three typed copies of the proposal, as well as a handwritten copy by his son, Guido Galli. Dated November 30, 1927 and entitled, "Progetto per una più conveniente e logica sistemazione di alcune principali sculture dei Musei Pontifici," the relevant passage reads: "Le tre statue di Antonio Canova, cioè il Perseo e due lottatori, custoditi e visibili al pubblico in un gabinetto del Cortile Ottagano (Vaticano), contrastano enormemente con tutte le altre sculture antiche, che costituiscono l'immensa raccolta dei Musei Pontifici.

Sarebbe opportuno, a mio avviso per conservare queste opere del Canova, costruire un gabinetto, simile a quello esistente, nel Cortile dell'Andatora, dare al nuovo gabinetto l'ingresso dalla Sala a Croce Greca, o preferibilmente dalla Sala degli Animali, per dare modo ai visitatori di ammirarle separate dalle altre sculture antiche, percorrendo i Musei stessi. La nuova sistemazione non richiederebbe, che l'ingresso odierno rimanesse unico per la visita di tutte le sculture.

Nell'attuale gabinetto e propriamente nella nicchia centrale potrà trovare più conveniente posto la pregevolissima statua della Venere Gnidia, che ora trovasi sul ripiano della Scala Simonetti." It is signed by Galli, "Il Direttore Artistico per le sculture dei musei e dei SS.PP. AA." Archivio Storico dei Musei Vaticani, Vatican City, b. 41, 1927, cfr. inv. 969.

Vatican Collections rendered the detrimental interpretations of *Perseus* immutable. Neither it nor the *Apollo Belvedere* ever changed location again, and Canova's work was always doomed to be compared unfavorably to the ancient work that had once been its inspiration. No longer a positive "imitation" of the *Apollo*, *Perseus* was a mere "copy"; it had lost all claims of being an "original" work of art. The incontrovertibly negative opinions about his sculptures and his dismissal as a mere plagiarist had a long-standing effect on Canova's reputation. More importantly, however, the profusion of negative reactions to Canova's work over the course of the past two centuries reflects the ossification of imitation into a derogatory term. Reactions to the *Perseus/Apollo* comparison reflect and, indeed, helped shape the definitions of "original," "imitation," and "copy."

Chapter 2

Naples:
The Classical Education (or, Invention and Execution)

"Through Sgr. Antonio d'Este, I saw your group, *Venus and Adonis*. I cannot express the pleasure it gave me […] and entering in that little temple I felt how much ideal beauty touches our senses […]."[1]

From October 16 to December 21, 1795, the Marchesa Sparapani Gentili Boccapaduli took in all the sights Naples had to offer, including one of its most recent additions, the exhibition of Canova's *Venus and Adonis* in the garden of the Palazzo Berio (figs. 103-105). An aristocrat well-known in Rome for her literary *salon* and her relationship with the Milanese author Alessandro Verri,[2] her description of the work, perhaps the most detailed that remains, gives us an intriguing glimpse into some of the issues surrounding the exhibition of Canova's sculptures. *Venus and Adonis* was displayed in a small temple bathed in shades of blue and green, encircled by deep red

[1] Letter of Marchesa Sparapani Gentili Boccapaduli to Antonio Canova, Nov. 14, 1795. "Mediante il Sig[nor] D'Este ho veduto il vostro gruppo Venere e Adone. Il piacere che mi ha fatto non posso esprimerlo; era molto ben illuminato, ed entrando in quel tempietto ho sentito quanto il vero bello produce ne' nostri sensi, una verità eroica ispira un sentimento di venerazione. Io non mi contentai di riguardarla in tutte le possibili maniere, la volli toccare e quasi dimenticavo che fosse marmo. Canova mio, io sono ben lontana dal voler fare un complimento, questo ne voi lo curareste, ne io ardirei di farlo, intendo solo esprimere le mie sensazioni benché ignorante come voi mi conoscete. […] Dentro questa capitale [Naples] voi sapete che non vi è molto, ed ho tutto veduto, ma nei contorni tutto è interessante. Si [paseggia?] la storia e la mitologia." MBAB I, 72, 1492, cited in Paola Fardella, Antonio Canova a Napoli: Tra Collezionismo e Mercato (Napoli: Paparo, 2002) 149-50. For an in-depth view of Canova's relationship with his Neapolitan patrons, Fardella's study, with its excellent appendixes and use of primary sources, is unparalleled. I am heavily indebted to her work, which I have found a wonderful resource.

[2] For more on the Marchesa, her collection and her relationship with Verri, see Colucci, "Antonio Canova, la Marchesa Margherita Boccapaduli e Alessandro Verri: Lettere e Altre Testimonianze Inedite," 64-74 and Isabella Colucci, "Il Salotto e le Collezioni della Marchesa Boccapaduli," Quaderni Storici Nuova Seria 116 (2004): 449-93.

cloth that alternately highlighted the creamy marble of the work or shielded it from viewers' prying eyes. Unveiled at dusk in the glimmer of candles that were themselves hidden from the viewer, the image of *Venus and Adonis* rotating against rich silk fabrics shatters any cynical descriptions of Canova's works as cold and dead.

The exhibition of Canova's work in such circumstances in Naples seems fitting, as the city in the eighteenth century was experiencing a "golden age."[3] Teeming with 400,000 inhabitants, the third-largest city in Europe after London and Paris, Naples offered itself to viewers on a daily basis as "the theater of the world." [4] The general chaos of the urban center, the impoverished population, street urchins, *lazzaroni*, and haughty aristocrats were the main actors in this open-air theater, where half a million people went about their daily lives in breathtaking natural surroundings with the vision of Vesuvius looming in the distance (fig. 106). Everything in Naples was, indeed, lived and performed in public—musical performances and operas, artistic production, markets, shops, religious ceremonies and *presepii,* even the landscape itself were all on view. The discovery of Herculaneum and Pompeii in 1738 and 1748 respectively further animated

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[3] See the aptly name catalogue, The Golden Age of Naples: Art and Civilization under the Bourbons, 1734-1805, 2 vols. (Detroit and Chicago: Detroit Institute of Arts and the Art Institute of Chicago, 1981).

[4] For more on the history of Naples in the eighteenth century, See R. Burr Litchfield, "Naples under the Bourbons: An Historical Overview," in The Golden Age of Naples: Art and Civilization under the Bourbons, 1734-1805, vol. 1, 1-14.

For the "theater of the world" and the resurgence of this idea in eighteenth-century Enlightenment thought, particularly in France, see Alain Schnapp, "Introduction: Neapolitan Effervescence," Journal of the History of Collections, trans. Mark Weir, 19.11 (2007): 161-64. For the performative nature of Neapolitan culture and Italian culture in general, see Letizia Norci Cagiano de Azevedo, Napoli: Capitale, Giardino, Museo nell'Europa del Primo Settecento (Firenze: Il Ventilabro, 1997) and Ilaria Bignamini, "The Italians as Spectators and Actors: The Grand Tour Reflected," The Impact of Italy: The Grand Tour and Beyond., ed. Clare Hornsby (London: The British School at Rome, 2000) 29-47.

The resonance of the "theater of the world" finds itself repeated in the travel journals of the time, as visitors to Naples often commented on the city's extremely dynamic and visual culture. Augustus von Kotzebue, for instance, described Naples as "one large house […] for everything passes in the streets that is in other countries done within doors." Kotzebue, Travels through Italy in the Years 1804 and 1805 vol. 1, 229.

the city, for the excavations transformed the conception of antiquity from dry, dusty ruins to *lived* history, endowing contemporary Neapolitans' daily life with greater significance.[5] Much like Rome, the entire city was a museum. Rome, however, was defined by its ancient monuments, while Naples had a more complicated relationship to the past.[6] The strange mix of antiquity and modernity, mediated by a sublime, dramatic and sometimes devastating natural landscape, distinguished Naples' magnetic and spectacular appeal, making it truly "un museo all'aperto."[7]

Given the city's natural *dramaticità* and considering eighteenth-century Neapolitans' great love of popular spectacles, it is hardly surprising that within this context Canova's sculpture was exhibited in such a theatrical fashion. But Marchese Berio's decision to exhibit the work in a garden nonetheless seems unusual. We are unused to thinking of works as highly praised as Canova's sculptures –known, as I have

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[5] The impact that the discovery of Pompeii and Herculaneum had on the eighteenth- century imagination would be hard to overstate. The discovery of artifacts of daily life impacted museum displays, which were filled with lamps, silverware, surgical instruments, jewelry and even papyri and scrolls. The Museo Ercolanese even went so far as to recreate an ancient kitchen excavated at Pompeii, perhaps one of the first examples of a period room in the history of museums. For more on the museums in Naples in the eighteenth century, particularly the Museo Ercolanese and its installation, see Arturo Fittipaldi, "Museums, Safeguarding Artistic Heritage in Naples in the Eighteenth Century: Some Reflections," Journal of the History of Collections, trans. Mark Weir, 19.11 (2007): especially 197.

[6] There has been a concerted effort in the literature of late to distinguish the cultural mores of Southern Italy from the rest of the peninsula, a regional distinction that is fundamental in understanding the impact Canova's work had in Naples. For more on the cultural history of Campania see, Campania: Arti e Cultura = Art and Culture, ([Naples]: Electa Napoli, 2005).

For more on the manner in which Rome was defined by its ancient monuments, see Quatremère de Quincy's passionate argument against the spoliation of Italy, particularly Rome, after the French invasions of 1796, in which he refers to the city as "the great museum that is called Rome." This stands in contradistinction to Naples' more "modern" appeal. See "Lettres au Général Miranda sur le préjudice qu'occasionnens aux arts et a la science le déplacement des monumens de l'art de l'Italie, le démembrement de ses écoles, et la spoliation de ses collection, galeries, musées, etc.," in Quatremère de Quincy, Considérations morales sur la destination des ouvrages de l'art: suivi de lettres sur l'enlèvement des ouvrages de l'art antique à Athènes et à Rome especially 223.

Norci Cagiano de Azevedo makes a similar point regarding the differences between Rome and Naples in Norci Cagiano de Azevedo, Napoli: Capitale, Giardino, Museo nell'Europa del Primo Settecento 7.

[7] Norci Cagiano de Azevedo, Napoli: Capitale, Giardino, Museo nell'Europa del Primo Settecento 7.

already pointed out, for their luminous finish and lustrous marble—as garden decorations, where exposure to the elements would certainly destroy the refined surface.[8] Unfortunately, witnesses like the Marchesa and Canova himself are silent on the decisions and motivations behind the display of his highly prized *Venus and Adonis*. Certainly, however, the exhibition seems to have served a different purpose than that of *Triumphant Perseus* or *Hercules and Lychas,*[9] discussed in chapter one. The display of *Venus and Adonis* was never intended to place the work in direct confrontation with the antique. Displayed on its own, the secluded and evocative setting encouraged a focused admiration of the sculpture's sensuous qualities. Even Canova himself viewed it as an opportunity to "vent himself on the nude."[10]

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[8] That exposure to the elements all but destroys the beauty of Canova's surface finishing is made readily apparent in the *Amorino* discovered in the 1990s in an outdoor garden in England. In the exhibition of Canova's work at the Villa Borghese in 2007, this work was exhibited with three other *Amorini,* and its degraded state was clear. See Hugh Honour, "Canova's Amorini for John Campbell and John David la Touche," Antologia di Belle Arti 48 (1994): 129-39 and Coliva and Mazzocca, eds., Canova e la Venere Vincitrice 168-77.

There are very few instances in which Canova's sculptures were intended for an outdoor setting. Six statues were commissioned by Ludovico Rezzonico for his villa at Bassano; only two, *Apollo* and *Daphne*, were completed. See Fardella, Antonio Canova a Napoli: Tra Collezionismo e Mercato 26-27, note 29. *Orpheus* and *Eurydice* were also meant for Falier's garden. See Museo Correr and Museo Canoviano, Canova 214, no. 117. Philipp Fehl has suggested that *Dedalus* and *Icarus* were also meant as garden sculptures. Philipp P. Fehl, Monuments and the Art of Mourning: The Tombs of Popes and Princes in St. Peter's, eds. Raina Fehl and Richard Bösel (Roma: Unione Internazionale degli Istituti di Archeologia Storia e Storia dell'Arte in Roma, 2007) 113.

[9] Canova's long and complicated relationship with Neapolitan patrons, perhaps best represented by the formidable *Hercules and Lychas*, has already been amply discussed by Giuseppe Pavanello and Paola Fardella. Pavanello's discussion of Canova's relationship to Naples is an excellent and brief summary of the artist's many Neapolitan commissions. See Giuseppe Pavanello, "Canova e Napoli," Antonio Canova: La Cultura Figurativa e Letteraria dei Grandi Centri Italiani. 2. Milano, Firenze, Napoli, ed. Fernando Mazzocca, Quarta Settimana di Studi Canoviani (Bassano del Grappa: Istituto di ricerca per gli studi su Canova e il neoclassicismo, 2006) 279-94 and Fardella, Antonio Canova a Napoli: Tra Collezionismo e Mercato. Another useful resource is Angelo Borzelli, Le Relazioni del Canova con Napoli al Tempo di Ferdinando 1. e di Gioacchino Murat. Memoria con Documenti Inediti di Angelo Borzelli (Napoli: E. Prass, 1891).

[10] Letter from Canova to l'Abate D. Giuseppe Foschi. "Ho finito sì il Gruppo del Marchese Berio; e mi dispiace d'averlo finito, tanto era il piacere, con cui mi vi occupava. E l'opera, e il committente non potevano essere di mio maggior genio: l'opera, perchè ho potuto sfogarmi sul nudo; il committente, perchè l'ho trovato uno di quei pochi uomini che possono meritare il titolo d'amatori; e pel rimanente vi dissi già

It was certainly the lure of the nude and the sculpture's "grace, sentiment," and "sublime and heroic truth" that brought streams of visitors to Berio's gates.[11] Yet, although they were desperate to see the "modern Phidias'" incarnation of the two lovers, viewers like the Marchesa quickly forgot the work's erotic delights. Instead, a virulent and surprising polemic, sparked in part by Canova's working practice, absorbed the Neapolitan literati. At stake was not only knowledge about Canova's creative process, but also how his sculptural practice could provide access to a more profound understanding of classical antiquity. Although this argument had its roots in a personal vendetta between two writers, Tommaso Gargallo and Conte Torre della Rezzonico, it quickly spiraled off into an argument about the identity, education and refinement of the Neapolitans themselves.

Gargallo and Rezzonico were preoccupied with how *Venus and Adonis* could reveal the most critical aspect of artistic creation. Was it the conception of the subject? Or the physical act of carving the marble? Invention and execution, respectively, had long been seen as twinned aspects of the creative process. From the point of the view of the artist, each was fundamental. The two worked reciprocally with one another, as the concept of a work was no doubt affected by limitations in technical execution, and vice versa. The exhibition of Canova's *Venus and Adonis* and the dispute that followed, however, suggests that for beholders, invention and execution were distinct and could be understood independently of one another. Beholders were encouraged to consider how

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da principio quanto nobile, quanto egli sia." Cited in Dorillo Dafneio, Lettera di Dorillo Dafneio a Diodoro Delfico (Serafino Petroncelli, 1795) 16-17.

[11] Marchesa Boccapaduli, cited in full in note 52.

each aspect of production could affect their senses and engage their intellect in a different manner.

The texts by Gargallo and Rezzonico that circulated, therefore, insisted on the performative nature of viewing. Beholders were encouraged to read critical and analytical texts, both ancient and modern, and use them to interpret Canova's sculpture. Of greater import, however, was the way this polemic also facilitated a new discussion about the writing of art history. What did it mean to describe a work of art? To whom should these texts be addressed? What type of language should be used? What are the differences between explanation, criticism, and art history? The exhibition of Canova's *Venus and Adonis* therefore provides us with a new lens through which to view Neapolitan culture and its relationship to the antique in the late eighteenth century, for the work brought to the fore deep tensions regarding the aims of connoisseurship itself.

Marchese Berio's Commission

The emphasis on modern life in Naples and its inherent theatricality inevitably affected the city's relationship to artistic production. Although Naples had its share of excellent painters and sculptors, decorative arts were a prominent part of contemporary commissions. These included porcelain and crèche figurines, elaborately landscaped gardens, and, of course, anything and everything to do with Vesuvius (fig. 107). The greatest patrons were by far the royal family and the aristocracy.[12] The latter, in particular, was pushed to new levels of consumption in response to eighteenth-century

[12] In Rome, on the other hand, artists relied heavily on papal commissions and also on the foreign academies, which were abundant. For more on the patronage system in Rome, see Collins, Papacy and Politics in Eighteenth-Century Rome: Pius VI and the Arts and Christopher M. S. Johns, "Papal Patronage and Cultural Bureaucracy in Eighteenth-Century Rome: Clement XI and the Accademia di San Luca," Eighteenth-Century Studies Vol. 22.1 (Autumn 1998): 1-23.

laws requiring proof of nobility. At the same time, the introduction of great numbers of individuals from the provinces into the aristocratic ranks encouraged Neapolitan nobles in the city proper to turn to the fine arts to cement their status at the top of the hierarchy.[13]

Confronted by political and cultural transformations, the Berio family was likewise entangled in these social pressures. The family itself was of Genovese origin and had moved to Naples in the early eighteenth century. They rose to power as a result of their mercantile activities and their success as grain merchants, acquiring so much wealth that by the 1760s they were able to purchase the feudal lands of Salza and the title of marquis.[14] Giovan Domenico Berio (1732-1791) became the first Marchese di Salza, and his son and Canova's patron, Francesco Maria Berio (1765-1820; henceforth Berio), became the second marquis upon Giovan Domenico's death (fig. 108). Berio continued to expand his family's business activities, and both men invested heavily in establishing

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[13] For details on eighteenth-century laws requiring families to prove their nobility, and, in particular, the way nobles turned to the arts as a way of further cementing their status, see Anna Maria Rao, "Antiche Storie e Autentiche Scritture. Prove di Nobiltà a Napoli nel Settecento," Signori, Patrizi, Cavalieri in Italia Centro-Meridoniale nell'Età Moderna, ed. Maria Antonietta Visceglia, Biblioteca di Cultura Moderna (Bari: Gius. Laterza e Figli, 1992) 279-308.

[14] For a brief biography of Francesco Maria Berio, see P. Giannantonio, "Berio, Francesco Maria," Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani (Roma: Istituto della Enciclopedia Italiana, 1967), vol. 9, 106-08.

I am heavily indebted to the generosity of Dottoressa Maria Iannotti, from the Biblioteca Nazionale di Napoli, for sharing her thesis with me. Most of my information regarding the Berio family comes from her study of Francesco Maria Berio's cultural activities. See Maria Giovanni Regina Iannotti, "Francesco Maria Berio: Mercante, Barone, Letterato," Università degli studi di Napoli, 1989-90.

One of only seven merchants who trafficked quantities of grain that valued more than 20,000 ducats a year, the family was a firm member of the Neapolitan monopoly— "'i monopolisti napoletani'." The success also lent them a predominant position in the shipping industry, where their ships could travel not only to Neapolitan ports, but Genovese, English, Dutch, and Austrian ones as well. See Iannotti, "Francesco Maria Berio: Mercante, Barone, Letterato," 16.

The family's acquisition of titles is as follows: Patrizi di Genova, 1754; Baroni di Salza, Parolise, Volturara e Montemarano, 1760; Marchesi di Salza, 1761; Principi di Sant'Angeli, 1825; Principi di Faggiano, 1831; Duchi di Carasino, 1831. See Iannotti, "Francesco Maria Berio: Mercante, Barone, Letterato," 12. For more on the history of the Montemarano feudal lands, see also Erasmo Ricca, Istoria de' Feudi delle Due Sicilie di qua dal Faro Intorno alle Successioni Legali ne' Medesimi dal XV al XIX Secolo, vol. 3, 4 vols. (Napoli: Stamperia di Agostino de Pascale, 1865) 259-66. Apparently, Charles III's and Ferdinand IV's prime minister, Bernardo Tanucci, disagreed with the decision to ennoble the family.

I have also seen "Salza" written as "Salsa" in various sources.

the family's cultural authority as well. In Genoa the family had cemented their cultural status by founding a large library that was eventually inherited by Berio, with the explicit understanding that it be open to studious researchers.[15] Giovan Domenico ultimately founded a large library in Naples, too, and built a grand palace in the center of the city that he filled with a large collection of works of art, including paintings by Antonio Dominici (1730-before 1800) and Giuseppe Cammarano (1766–1850). [16] A poet himself, the elder Berio passed his passion for the arts on to his son.[17]

Berio's interest in the arts manifested itself at an early age and was much noted by visitors who passed through Naples. Even Canova recalled meeting him in 1780, when Berio was only fourteen. The young man had been busy copying a painting in his father's collection.[18] When Goethe met Berio in 1787, he was likewise impressed with Berio's

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[15] This library was sold in 1817 by Francesco Maria Berio to the King of Sardegna, Vittorio Emmanuele I, who then gave it to the city of Genoa. It remains one of the major public libraries of Genoa, the Biblioteca Civica Berio. See Paola Corso, "La Biblioteca di Francesco Maria Berio Tra '700 e '800," Università degli Studi di Napoli, 1989-90.

[16]Corso, "La Biblioteca di Francesco Maria Berio Tra '700 e '800."

In the Biblioteca Nazionale di Napoli, there are six handwritten volumes, in English, cataloguing the contents of Berio's library in 1826 before it was sold. The books are organized according to subject matter and provide an extremely interesting glance into the man's reading and collecting habits. See Catalogue Raisonnée of the Berio Library, Biblioteca Nazionale di Napoli, Manuscript Department. MSS. XVIII, 13-20.

[17] According to Maria Iannotti, Giovan Domenico's poetry was never published, but was collected by his son Francesco Maria Berio. Iannotti, "Francesco Maria Berio: Mercante, Barone, Letterato," 23.

There appears to be no detailed account of the works of art in Berio's collection, although Canova, in his own travel journal from 1780, records some of the works he saw in the Berio home. These include paintings by Polidoro Caldara, also known as Polidoro da Caravaggio, Mattia Preti, also known as the Cavaliere Calabrese, Giuseppe Bonito, and Francesco de Mura. See Canova's journal entry of February 13, 1780 in Honour and Mariuz, eds., Scritti 128.

Fardella attributes the lack of information regarding the Berio's art collection to the fact that the collection was likely a minor one, given Francesco Maria Berio's primary interest in books and literature and to the possibility that Canova's work outshone all the others. See Fardella, Antonio Canova a Napoli: Tra Collezionismo e Mercato 63, note 123.

[18] "Si portassimo a riverire il signore abbate Corazza alla botegha del Veneziano, lui poi si procurò mezo di andare dal marchese [Giovan Domenico] Berio, dal quale ebbimo la sorte che si fecce vedere molti quadri di pittori napoletani, non noti ma di molto merito[.] Ne vidi anco uno di Polidori da Caravagio e di diversi del cavalier Calabrese[,] in particulare una *Pietà* di una bellezza non ordinaria. Si fecce vedere un quadro

intellectual acumen, describing him as "a young man who seems to know a great deal. Naturally he too wanted to meet the author of *Werther*."[19] Berio's interest in the fine arts translated into his own literary production, for he wrote two now-lost treatises on the beautiful and the immortality of the soul,[20] as well as librettos for two of Gioacchino Rossini's operas, *Othello* and *Ricciardo e Zoraide*. [21]

Berio was already prominent figure and promoter of the arts in Naples by the time his father died in 1791 and he assumed the title of marquis. The precise date of his commission of *Venus and Adonis* is not known, and may be as early as 1789. It is possible that Berio's commission of the sculpture was prompted by a desire to own a work of art from one of Italy's best known artists, thereby cementing his personal position in Naples' cultural hierarchy.[22] Certainly Berio was willing to pay a high price

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che stava copiando suo figlio di età di 14 anni il qualle è meraviglioso. Vidimo molti soffiti dipinti, e anco che vi stavano depingiendo de'pitori napoletani, ma il migliore fu quello di signor Bonito, il qualle [*ne dipingeva uno*] mi piaque molto più di Francieschelo." See the entry in Canova's travel diary for February 13, 1780 in Honour and Mariuz, eds., Scritti 128.

[19] See Goethe's journal entry for March 26, 1787 in Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, Italian Journey, eds. Thomas P. Saine and Jeffrey L. Sammons (New York, NY: Suhrkamp Publishers, 1989) 182.

Berio also enjoyed the work of the painter Johann Heinrich Wilhelm Tischbein, who accompanied Goethe on his trip to Naples. Francis Haskell, "Art Patronage and Collecting in Bourbon Naples During the Eighteenth Century," The Golden Age of Naples: Art and Civilization under the Bourbons, 1734-1805, vol. 1 (Detroit and Chicago: Detroit Institute of Arts and the Art Institute of Chicago, 1981) 22.

[20] See Iannotti, "Francesco Maria Berio: Mercante, Barone, Letterato," 30. It appears that these two treatises were never published and the original manuscripts are now lost. Despite my best efforts to track down the Berio family archive, it appears that it no longer exists. I am grateful to Gaetano Damiano, in the Archivio di Stato, Napoli, who gave me the family's contact information, and to Marina Lella at the American Academy in Rome for making inquiries on my behalf.

[21] *Othello* was first performed in Naples at the Teatro del Fondo on December 4, 1816, and *Ricciardo e Zoraide* was first performed in Naples at the Teatro San Carlo on December 3, 1818. See Gioacchino Rossini, Francesco Maria Berio and Philip Gossett, Otello: Dramma in Three Acts, 1816, Early Romantic Opera, A facsim. ed. (New York: Garland Pub., 1979) and Gioacchino Rossini and Francesco Maria Berio, Ricciardo e Zoraide: Dramma in Two Acts, 1818, Early Romantic Opera, A facsimile ed. (New York: Garland, 1980).

[22] There is surprisingly little correspondence between Berio and Canova in the Carteggio Canoviano at Bassano del Grappa. According to an anonymous biography of Canova from 1804-1805, Canova had begun the sculpture in 1789 and at some point while he was roughing out the marble block, Berio requested

for this social stamp, for in a letter to Giannantonio Selva, dated March 14, 1795, Canova bragged "if you want an idea from other works how I am paid, you should know the *Marchese Berio* of Naples paid me -2000- zecchini for a statue with two life-size figures, and that he always thanks me for having wanted to make the work for that price." [23]

If Berio had hoped to make a big splash by purchasing the work, he certainly succeeded. The sculpture created great excitement when it arrived and was finally exhibited to the public in March 1795. Berio had asked King Ferdinand IV to waive the import taxes on the work, to which the King agreed. This glorification to the kingdom, proof not only of Berio's distinguished taste as a patron but also of the King's generosity towards his realm and his own cultural discernment, was enthusiastically reported in

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the work. "[...] e li 12 luglio [1789] si mise a modellarne un altro rappresentate il medesimo Adone che licenziasi dalla dea per andare alla caccia. Questo poi, mentre digrossavasi in marmo, fu richiesto dal signor Francesco Berio marchese di Salsa patrizio di Genova domiciliato in Napoli, amatore ed intendente delle belle arti, ed esercitato nel disegno." See Abbozzo di Biografia (1804-1805) in Honour and Mariuz, eds., Scritti 347.

As Giuseppe Pavanello has pointed out, Canova had already been at work on a sculpture treating the theme of *Venus and Adonis* for the Polish king Stanislao Augusto Poniatowski, never completed, for which there remains a *bozzetto* in the Gypsotheca Museo Canoviano, Possagno. Pavanello also points out that the Berio commission was fairly unusual for the fact that Canova seems to have made the group completely autonomously and explicitly according to his own liking. See Pavanello, "Canova e Napoli," 281.

There were other works in Naples with the theme of *Venus and Adonis* that might have been influential in Berio's patronage. These include a play by Gaetano Pugnani, who, like Berio, was known for his Masonic connections. Pugnani's play, which emphasized the moment of departure between the two lovers, was performed in 1787 for the Neapolitan court. Likewise a fountain for la Reggia di Caserta in 1780 by Luigi Vanvitelli, his son Carlo, and Gaetano Salomone, one of the royal sculptors, made use of the mythological subject. See Fardella, Antonio Canova a Napoli: Tra Collezionismo e Mercato 55-56.

It is important to note, as well, that *Venus and Adonis* was not the first work commissioned from Canova by Berio. Berio also had two plaster casts of Canova's *Amorino* and *Psiche.* He had also commissioned a series of five bas-reliefs in clay from Canova that were exhibited in the Palazzo Berio on Via Toledo and are currently in a private collection in San Giorgio a Cremona near Naples. See Fardella, Antonio Canova a Napoli: Tra Collezionismo e Mercato 56-59.

[23] "Se volessero poi prendere idea dai altri lavori come mi vengono pagati [potrebbe?] sapere che il Marchese Berio di Napoli mi a dato =2000= zecchini per un Gruppo di due statue grandi al vero, e che sempre mi ringrazia che per tal prezzo abbia voluto fargli tal lavoro." See Canova's letter to Giannantonio Selva, dated March 14, 1795, Biblioteca del Museo Correr, Musei Civici Veneziani, Venice, PD 529C.

According to the "Berio" entry in the *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, the cost was 6,000 ducats. See Giannantonio, "Berio, Francesco Maria," 107.

Neapolitan and European newspapers and journals, including German,[24] French,[25] Dutch,[26] and English[27] publications. The Neapolitan newspapers hailed the fact that the King had chosen to waive taxes and "make an exception to the rules" because of "the excellence of [Canova's] work, which emulates the most renowned works that give the Greek sculptors such honor." Marchese Berio was himself hailed for the generosity with which he "gave this capital a new renowned ornament, and gave the students of the fine arts a perfect model…" [28] These accounts not only reflected the way both aristocratic and

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[24] "Untern den Bildhauern in Rome zeichnit sich der Venezianer *Antonio Canova* noch immer am meistein aus. Sein neuestes Gruppo: *Adonis, der sich aus den Armen der Venus losreisst um aus due Jugd zu gehen*, ist nach Neapel zu dem Marchese *Salsa Berio* gekommen, und hat seiner Vortrefflichkeit wegen die seltene Auszeichnung genoffen, dass ihm durch ein köngliches Rescript eine besondere Befreyung vom Zoll bey der Einbringung mit den schmeichelhaften Ausdrücken ertheilt wurde: "*Il Marchese Berio avendo fornito questa Capitale di un nuovo insigne ornamento, e riguardato questo egregio prodotto della Statuaria, come un eccezzione della regola.*" Man rühmt diese königliche Gnade als einen Triumph der Kunst!" "Literatische Nachrichten. I. Italiänische Literatur," Intelligenzblatt der Allgemeinen. Literatur-Zeitung vom Jahre 1796.86 (6 July 1796): 726.

[25] "Le Vénitien Ant. Conova [*sic*] se distingue parmi les sculpteurs. Son dernier groupe, représentant *Adonis qui s'arrache des bras de Venus pour aller à la chasse*, a été envoyé à Naples au marquis de *S.-Berio*, qui, par un rescript royal, rempli des éloges les plus flatteurs, en a obtenu l'entrée franche de tous droits, ce que l'on fait valoir comme un des plus beaux triomphes de l'art." "Sur l'état actuel de la littérature italienne," Magasin encyclopédique, ou journal des sciences des lettres et des arts 2nd année, tome IV (1796): 52.

[26] "Onder de Beeldhouwers te Romen munt de Venetiaanische *Ant. Conova* [*sic*] nog steeds het meeste uit. Zyn jongste Group: *Adonis, zig uit de armen van Venus losrukkende, on op de jagt te gaan,* is naar Napels aan den Marquis *S. Berio* gezonden, die, wegens de fraaiheid van het stuk, by een Koninglyk rescript, onder de vleijendste uitdrukkingen verlof kreeg, om het vry van inkomende regten te mogen invoieren: ene gunst, die te regt voor een zegenpraal der konst gehouden word." "Italiaansche Letterkunde. Eerste Beschouwing," Niewe Algemene Konst-en Letter-Bode voor meer en min Geöffenden 138 (19 Aug 1796): 61.

[27] "Among the Italian sculptors, ANT. CONOVA [*sic*], the Venetian, claims honourable mention. His last groupe, which represents *Adonis tearing himself away from the arms of Venus, to repair to the chase, has been sent to Naples,* to the Marquis *de S. Berio*, who, in a royal rescript, filled with the most flattering notices, has procured its entrance, exempt from all duties, a sanction which is considered there as one of the most glorious triumphs of the art." "Present State of Literature in Italy," The Monthly Magazine and British Register 3. XVI (April 1797): 270.

[28]"[…] il Supremo Consiglio ha opinato doversi accordare tal franchigia […] quanto per l'eccellenza dell'opera, ch'emula le più rinomate, che hanno fatto tanto onore agli Scarpelli Greci, onde può dirsi, che nel gruppo di Venere, e d'Adone scolpito dal celebre Sig. Canova, il Marchese Berio ha fornito questa Capitale di un nuovo insigne ornamento, ed ha somministrato agli alunni delle belle arti un perfetto modello, ed il Re si è uniformato all'opinione del Supremo Consiglio, ed ha riguardato questo egregio prodotto della Statuaria, come un'eccezzione alla regola […]." Serafino Petroncelli, "Napoli. Sovrana

royal patronage were announced to the burgeoning middle-classes through new forms of journalism, but they also signal the enthusiasm with which this commission was heralded in Naples. Although Francis Haskell has recently called the acquisition of *Venus and Adonis* "the last fruit of Neapolitan patronage during eighteenth century,"[29] the way the group was celebrated internationally as a "triumph of the arts" reminds us that for the Neapolitans, who were not, of course, aware of the political disturbances to come, it was in fact considered the dawn of new cultural and artistic era.

The Evening Pilgrimage to the "The Garden of Semiramis"

Visitors descended on Naples to see Canova's sculpture, a flow of tourists that lasted nearly twenty years. Travel journals abound with descriptions and advice: in 1797, for instance, a full two years after the sculpture's arrival in Naples, Mariana Starke recorded in her travel guide that access to the palace was free and open to all, advising visitors of the work's location in the "Palazzo Berio—In the Garden in a nelegant [*sic*] little Building, containing a Group in white marble of Venus and Adonis, said to be the *chef- d'œuvre* of Canova. *Here the Servants take no money.*"[30] Travelers such as the Reverend John Chetwode Eustace and Augustus von Kotzebue, both of whom commented at length on the great collections and Canova's studio in Rome, were also

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Determinazione i Favore delle Belle Arti. Al Sig. D. Vincenzo Pecorari," Giornale Letterario di Napoli per servire di continuazione all' analisi ragionata de' libri nuovi XXXIII (15 August 1795): 101.

[29] See Haskell, "Art Patronage and Collecting in Bourbon Naples During the Eighteenth Century," 22.

[30] Emphasis in the original. Mariana Starke, Travels in Italy, between the Years 1792 and 1798; Containing a View of the Late Revolutions in That Country. Likewise Pointing out the Matchless Works of Art Which Still Embellish Pisa, Florence, Siena, Rome, Naples, Bologna, Venice, &C. With Instructions for the Use of Invalids and Families Who May Not Chuse to Incur the Expence Attendant Upon Travelling with a Courier. Also a Supplement Comprising Instructions for Travelling in France, with Descriptions of All the Principal Roads and Cities in That Republic, 2 vols. (London: Phillips, 1802) vol. 2, 89-90.

sure to drop by Berio's palace to see the sculptor's latest production. [31] Even Stendhal, in the company of the composer Gioacchino Rossini, admired the work by torchlight.[32] Although the Baron Uklanski admired Berio's painting collection in 1808, he was pleased "above all" by Canova's group and the way Venus recognized the impending danger for Adonis.[33] Lady Morgan, however, was loathe to watch the "parting scene—Venus still detaining him, and Adonis so evidently impatient to be off, that one is tempted to turn the key on him."[34]

Italian visitors also admired the sculpture by the "Praxiteles of our times,"[35] while Italian guide books continued to herald the sculpture's presence "in a pavilion" in Berio's

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[31] "In the garden of one, the *Palazzo Berrio* [*sic*], is a groupe representing Venus and Adonis by *Canova* of exquisite workmanship and beauty." See Eustace, A Classical Tour through Italy, An. MDCCCII vol. 2, 361.

For Kotzebue's comments, see note 49.

[32] "C'est par *l'immobilité* que la sculpture parvient à faire concevoir ce même sentiment délicat. Rossini avait promis, un soir qu'il était sensible, de traduire par un beau duetto ce groupe sublime de Vénus et Adonis que nous admirions à la lueur d'une torche. Je me souviens que le marquis Berio le fit jurer par les mânes de Pergolèse." Stendhal, Vie de Rossini (Paris: Auguste Boulland et cie, libraire, 1824) 421, note 1.

[33] "Er gab mir auch eine Addresse an den Marchese Berio, dessen Pallast in der Straße Toledo liegt, und wo ich eine ansehnliche Gemähldegallerie vorfand. Aber vor allem gefiel mir die Gruppe des Adonis und der Venus von Canova; Venus scheint die Gefahr zu fühlen, die dem schönen Jüngling, welcher im Begriff ist, auf die Jagd zu gehen, droht, mit süßer Zärtlichkeit umfasst sie ihn, und mit aufgehobenem Köpfchen blickt sie ihm in die Augen; er theilt ihre Gefühle, und scheint, sich mit Mühe ihren Armen zu entreißen. Sie kennen die Geschichte schon; Adonis starb verwundet vom Eber. Es ist dieses nichts als ein allegorisches Bild der Fruchtbarkeit der Erde, die sich mit der Sonne vermählt, die ihren Busen durchwärmt." Carl Theodor von Uklanski, Briefe über Polen, Österreich, Sachsen, Bayern, Italien, Etrurien, den Kirchenstaat und Neapel, an die Contesse Constance De S--, 2 vols. (Friedrich Campe: Nürnberg, 1808) vol. 2, 610-11.

[34] "The Palazzo Berio, in the Toledo, with very ordinary architecture, is rendered by the taste of its master one of the most elegant residences in Italy. The sitting-roooms abound in rich hangings and English carpets. The spacious gallery contains some good original pictures; and the beautiful, cultivated garden, a paradise of flowers, though in the heart of the city, contains a Grecian temple, in which stands Canova's famous group of Venus and Adonis; it is a parting scene—Venus still detaining him, and Adonis so evidently impatient to be off, that one is tempted to turn the key on him." Lady (Sydney) Morgan, Italy, 2 vols. (New York: J. Seymour, 1821) vol. 2, 307.

[35] "Nel Palazzo Berio vedesi un monumento che Napoli deve al genio per le arti, dell'attuale Marchese Berio. Esso monumento consiste in un gruppo di marmo di Adone e Venere, opera di molto merito dell'insigne Canova, che con ragione vien riguardato, come il Prassitele dei nostri tempi." Roberto Paolini, Memorie sui Monumenti di Antichità e di Belle Arti, ch'Esistono in Miseno, in Baoli, in Baja, in Cuma, in

garden. [36] Even as late as 1826, Nathaniel Hazeltine Carter, an American tourist, reported bitterly that he had spent the day "on a Tom Fool's errand" since his 1825 guidebook contained incorrect information. He and his friends had:

> presented ourselves at the gates of the palace, when it was ascertained from the porter, that the two lovers [*Venus and Adonis*] had eloped, without leaving word whither they had gone. They had been sold, long, long ago—probably to buy macaroni, or a coach for the Corso. So we returned to our lodgings, chanting all the while, like the tattered processions encountered on our way, the chorus of the Greek elegy: […] 'Alas! alas! *Venus,* the beautiful *Adonis* is no more!'[37]

Even after the sculpture had been sold in 1820, therefore, false information in guidebooks, republished with being fact-checked, continued to entice visitors to the Palazzo Berio.

Undoubtedly, however, the greatest flood of commentary occurred immediately after the sculpture's arrival in the city, when visitors planned their trip weeks, or even months, in advance. Ranieri de'Calzabigi, an Italian poet and librettist, for instance, wanted to see the work immediately once it arrived in Naples in March, but due to his advanced age—he had turned eighty in the fall—he was forced to wait for warmer

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Pozzuoli, in Napoli, in Capua Antica, in Ercolano, in Pompei, ed in Pesto (Napoli: Dai torchi del Monitore delle Due Sicilie, 1812) 178.

[36] *"Palazzo Berio*. In questo nobile palazzo nella strada in Toledo si ammira il gusto del suo padrone marchese di Salsa, che vi ha fatto una bella raccolta di quadri, e di stampe pregiate, vi ha una copiosa biblioteca, e nel giardino sotto un padiglione il nobilissimo gruppo di Venere, e di Adone, opera stimata, ed unica, che abbiamo in Napoli, del sig. Canova sopra nomato il Prassitele italiano." Domenico Romanelli, Napoli Antica e Moderna, 3 vols. in 1 vol. (Napoli: Nella Tipografia di Angelo Trani, 1815) vol. 3, 108.

"Nel Palazzo del Marchese *Berio* a Toledo vedesi la statua di Adone e Venere del *Canova*." Giuseppe Vallardi and Pietro Vallardi, Itinerario Italiano, ossia, Descrizione dei Viaggi per le Strade più Frequentate alle Principali Città d'Italia... 6th ed. (Milano: A spese di Pietro e Giuseppe Vallardi, 1815) 263.

See also Mariano Vasi, A New Picture of Naples and Its Environs; in the Form of an Itinerary (London: Printed for Samuel Leigh, 1820) 152.

[37] Nathaniel H. Carter, Letters from Europe, Comprising the Journal of a Tour through Ireland, England, Scotland, France, Italy, and Switzerland in the Years 1825, '26, and '27, 2 vols. (New York: G. & C. Carvill, 1827) vol. 2, 242.

weather.[38] He noted with great acrimony in a letter to Canova, "I am in Athens, and I cannot see the Minerva of Phidias. Judge for yourself my bitterness."[39] Giuseppe Lucchesi Palli, the Neapolitan collector, and William Hamilton, the British ambassador to Naples, were more fortunate, being among the first admitted to Berio's garden. Hamilton himself praised the work in a letter to Canova, calling it a "masterpiece," and admitting he found it difficult to tear himself away from the temple "in which it was so well situated."[40]

People arrived in droves to see the sculpture, and their dramatic and enthusiastic reception belied Canova's own modest description that "people made great allowances for the work."[41] The work even moved viewers to emotional ecstasy, as noted by Luigia Guili, Canova's housekeeper, in a letter to Giannantonio Selva dated March 21, 1795. She informed him that "Neapolitans are processing to see the work. So many people have

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[38] For more on Calzabigi, see C. Gabanizza, "Calzabigi, Ranieri Simone Francesco Maria De'," Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani (Roma: Istituto della Enciclopedia Italiana, 1974), vol. 17, 47-50.

[39] Letter from Ranieri de'Calzabigi to Canova, March 31, 1795. "Il Vostro gruppo è venuto ed esposto, ne io posso se bene a me vicinissimo, andarlo a Vedere. I miei amici, ed il Conte Rezzonico più culto, come dell'Italia il più dotto me ne ha dati distinti ragguagli, e presto ne vedrò La Sua descrizione eruditissima. Aspetto la bella stagione per sodisfarmi ancor'Io. Sono in Atene, e veder non posso la Minerva di Fidia. Giudicate del mio rammarico. Non sapendo come sodisfarmi cogli occhi miei, conviene che me ne rapporti a quello degli altri. L'emozione è dunque in me imperfetta. Nonostante tanto dir ne sento, che mi venne volontà di far qualche lode ancor'Io a questo stupendo lavoro vostro; Gruppo simile (mi si dice) non esiste." MBAB I. 31. 1400. In another letter dated April 18, 1795, Calzabigi notes he is still waiting for warmer weather to arrive in order to go see the group. See MBAB I. 32. 1401. For Calzabigi's commissions of Canova's casts, see Fardella, Antonio Canova a Napoli: Tra Collezionismo e Mercato 19-39.

[40] Letter from William Hamilton to Canova, Naples, March 21, 1795. "Non posso far di meno Sig. Canova di ringraziarvi del sommo piacere che m'avete dato nell'ammirare il vostro bel gruppo del Venere e Adone in casa del Marchese Berio. E' veramente un capo d'opera. Non poteva staccarmi dal tempio ove sta bene situato, e con licenza del Sig. Marchese tornerò spesse volte rivederlo." MBAB I. 78. 1504. Cited in Fardella, Antonio Canova a Napoli: Tra Collezionismo e Mercato 150.

[41] Canova to D. Marco Martinelli, January 10, 1795. "Ora ho finito un gruppo di Adone e Venere, della grandezza naturale: questo, per dir il vero, è stato compatito molto. A voce poi le darò le nuove degli altri miei lavori." Per le Nozze Treves-Todros. Sei Lettere Inedite di Antonio Canova (Venezia: Coi Tipi di Tommaso Fontana, 1844) n.p., letter VI.

gathered that many people shout, 'Long live Monsieur Berio and long live the artist.' That which surprises me the most is that millions of Neapolitan tourists have been seen to cry while observing the beauty of the work, and so many eulogies have been written to me [about the sculpture] that it would be too much to recount them all."[42] The King himself also went to see the work for which he had so graciously waived taxes. Hordes of visitors finally forced Berio to limit access to his garden for a brief period in April 1795.[43]

It was not just the sculpture that drew attention, however. The entire setting enticed people to see Canova's *Venus*. The Berio's palazzo, after all, was already noteworthy prior to the arrival of Canova's sculpture. In the early 1770s, Giovan Domenico hired Luigi Vanvitelli, the royal architect who had overseen the construction of the Palazzo Reale at Caserta, to demolish the building that had been on the site and build a new one. Located on the Via Toledo (now the Via Roma), one of the most

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[42] Luigia Giuli to Giannantonio Selva, March 21, 1795. "Ora vi dico che è stato sistemato il gruppo di Addone e Venere fatto dal nostro amico, gia mi [illegible] che saprete il comitente di tal opera. deste [Antonio d'Este] e stato quello che la sistemata nel tempio[.] quel sig.e padro[ne] del gruppo fecce fare a posta, Napoli dunque [ivi] il bel gruppo, e li Napoletani vano a processioni per vederlo[.] fan si gran incontro che tanti strilono ['']e viva il Mos Berio e viva chi la fatto[.'] quello che più mi sorprende è che li milioni turisti di Napoli sono stati veduti piangere nel osservare le bellezze di quel gruppo; e mi viene scrite tanti tanti eloggi che sarebe troppo il dir tutto. Caro amico ò quanto mi dispiace che non lo vedete per ora, ma spero che in compagnia di Canòva anderete in Napoli a vederla." La Biblioteca della Fondazione Querini Stampalia, VII. 104. m. 736.

Borzelli also describes the feasts that were held by Berio to celebrate the work's arrival. See Borzelli, Le Relazioni del Canova con Napoli al Tempo di Ferdinando 1. e di Gioacchino Murat. Memoria con Documenti Inediti di Angelo Borzelli 4.

[43] Luigia Giuli also sent Selva a dispatch from the King of Naples regarding Canova's work, most likely notice of the work's importation without taxes. "ed intanto vi spedisco il dispacio del Rè di Napoli che fà grand'onore a Canòva." Letter from Luigia Giuli to Selva, May 9, 1795. La Biblioteca della Fondazione Querini Stampalia, VII. 104. m. 736.

Canova wrote to Giovanni Falier, April 3, 1795, to report that Berio had had to limit access to the tempietto. "Le dirò che il mio gruppo di Adone e Venere fa strepito grande a Napoli, di modo che in questi giorni hanno dovuto chiudere il tempietto nel quale sta perché vi andava troppa gente. Sono state fatte dissertazioni, poesie, ed altro." As cited in Mario Praz and Giuseppe Pavanello, L'Opera Completa del Canova, Classici dell'arte (Milano: Rizzoli, 1976) 98.

fashionable and bustling streets of Naples[44]—close, it must be noted, to the Palazzo Reale itself[45]—the palazzo, once completed, was immediately rented by the Duke of Arcos, the Spanish ambassador, to celebrate the baptism of Maria Teresa Carolina, the first-born child of King Ferdinand IV and Maria Carolina of Austria, in 1772 (figs. 109-110).[46] Around the same time, the garden was designed by Felice Abate, the royal gardener. In a city with remarkably few piazzas but a passion for landscape, it is no surprise the garden drew attention as well, for it transformed the building into an oasis and refuge in the chaotic city center (fig. 111).[47] By the time Berio inherited the palazzo in 1791, it was already a famous location in Naples, where building, garden, and art collection all gave a strong sense of the family's identity, as both aristocrats and art patrons.[48]

When Berio commissioned Canova's sculpture, therefore, he paid special attention to the location in which it was going to be exhibited. The *tempietto*, the garden and the sculpture created a larger intersection between spectacle, landscape and antiquity

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[44] For a wonderful description of the chaos of the Via Toledo, see Kotzebue, Travels through Italy in the Years 1804 and 1805 vol. 1, 230.

[45] In fact, the profusion of *palazzi* in the heart of the urban city reflected the highly centralized administration of the Spanish viceroys of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, during which time many nobles built residences in the center of the city in order to be closer to the seat of power. See Litchfield, "Naples under the Bourbons: An Historical Overview," 2-4.

[46] The palazzo still stands; part of it now houses a bed and breakfast.

To celebrate Maria Teresa Carolina's baptism, several days of feasts, balls and theater performances were held in the palazzo, for which Vanvitelli also erected enormous stage sets, paintings, sculptures and an enormous *salone* for dancing that could hold 1,300 people. For a description of the festivities and engravings of the spectacular backdrops, see Lettera ad un Amico nella quale si dà Ragguarglio della Funzione Seguita in Napoli il Giorno 6 Settembre del 1772. Per Solennizzare il Battesimo della Reale Infanta Maria Teresa Carolina Primogenita delle Ll. Mm. delle Due Sicilie il Re Ferdinando IV e Regina Maria Carolina Archiduchessa d'Austria; e delle Feste Date per quest'Oggetto (Napoli: Paole di Simone, 1772).

[47] Poems celebrating Maria Giuseppe Malaspina, the wife of Giovan Domenico Berio, already mention the garden in the late eighteenth century. See Fardella, Antonio Canova a Napoli: Tra Collezionismo e Mercato 60, note 116.

[48] For the way aristocratic identity was bound up with the palazzo, see Iannotti, "Francesco Maria Berio: Mercante, Barone, Letterato," viii.

in the promotion of this very modern work of art. Unlike the spectacles created by Vanvitelli for the baptism of Maria Teresa Carolina, *this* spectacle was rooted in the Neoclassical desire to recapture the classical past and in the eighteenth-century understanding of landscape and landscape theory. It centered on the viewer's communion with nature and his contemplative absorption in the scenery and the work of art itself.

Unfortunately, however, there remains very little information about how the garden itself was organized. Only a few tantalizing comments by travelers suggest what it may have looked like. Augustus von Kotzebue recounts how "[Berio's] large palace in the street Toledo is adorned in a very tasty manner, principally with bas-reliefs by the hand of Canova. […] The marquis possesses a garden, which is compared to the hanging-garden of Semiramis, for it lies in the second story. But it has one considerable advantage over its ancient prototype, in a pavilion containing a charming group of Venus and Adonis by Canova."[49] Lady Morgan was taken by the "beautiful, cultivated garden, a paradise of flowers" and its Grecian temple.[50] Despite the absence of architectural plans or visual evidence, it is likely that the overall landscape was evocative of eighteenth-century English gardens. One of Felice Abate's descendants—of the same name—published a treatise in 1840 on the "Anglo-Chinese" garden,[51] and certainly the profusion

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[49] Kotzebue continues: "It [*Venus and Adonis*] is said to be not among the best productions of this excellent artist. However, the worst performance of Canova's chisel (if the word *bad* is in any of its degrees allowable as applied to them) is always so surprisingly beautiful, that a man of any feeling imagines it impossible in the first quarter of an hour to find defects." Kotzebue, Travels through Italy in the Years 1804 and 1805 vol. 2, 242-43.

[50] Morgan, Italy vol. 2, 307.

[51] Felice Abate, Sui Giardini Anglo-Cinesi e sulla Condizione del Giardinaggio in Napoli (s.l.: s.n., [1840?]). Unfortunately there remains very little evidence regarding Abate's designs for the Palazzo Berio. The documents in Archivio di Stato in Naples related to the royal gardens that might have contained more information on the gardener were destroyed during World War II and I was not able to locate a family archive.

of flowers, terraced greenery, and the vista of a classical temple recalls some of the most famous English gardens of the eighteenth century, such as the garden at Stowe, designed between 1730-1738 (fig. 112).

We cannot speculate about the perspectives and vistas that would have been established in the relatively small space of Berio's garden. But, there is no doubt that the landscape, the tempietto and Canova's sculpture were exhibited in such a way as to encourage an embodied engagement with the work of art. The most detailed description that remains of the sculpture *in situ*, by the Marchesa Boccapaduli, makes the beholder's physical engagement to the object clear:

> I was aware that the Marchese Berio possessed a beautiful work by our celebrated sculptor Signor Antonio Canova. Wishing to see it, I found Signor d'Este, famed for his talents, who obtained me the pleasure. The work is a group that represents Venus and Adonis. This stone's beauties are worthy of its subjects, to which are wondrously joined grace, sentiment, and a truly sublime and heroic truth. If Prometheus had had Canova's chisel, he would not have had to steal fire from heaven to animate his stone. The possessor of this great work knows its value, and he did not fail to give it the place it deserved. For this purpose he has had made a round temple, the vault of which has a light turquoise tint. Encircling it, there is a bas-relief stucco frieze, and green satin in the form of a curtain. Inside this temple the group is installed in one area with a pivot that permits one to turn it if one wishes. Above, there is a small canopy of red gauze, which besides providing a nice background, also serves to cover it when one wants. To obtain the best effect, the Marchese shows the group illuminated at night. Three candles in a semicircular tin lamp serve this function such that the object is remarkably illuminated, and the light is hidden to the lovers of this beautiful work.[52]

[52] "Mi era noto che il Sig.r March.e. Berio possedeva una bella opera del nostro celebre Scultore Sig.r. Antonio Canova, io desiderosa di vederla trovai del Sig.r Deste, altro scultore noto per i suoi talenti, chi me ne procurò il piacere. L'Opera è un Gruppo che rappresenta Venere, e Adone. Le bellezze sono degne dei soggetti che quel sasso esprime cui vanno unite mirabilmente la grazia, il Sentimento, ed una verità ma sublime, ed eroica. Se Prometeo avesse avuto lo Scalpello di Canova non gli faceva di bisogno di chiamare il fuoco dal Cielo per animare il suo sasso. Il possessore di sì grande opera ne conosce il pregio, e non ha mancato di dargli quel posto che le conveniva. A questo oggetto ha fatto fare un tempio di figura rotonda, la volta del quale ha una mezza tinta turchina. All'intorno gira un fregio di bassirilievi di stucco, ed un setino verde a guisa di tendina. Dentro di questo tempio è situato da una parte il Gruppo posto con un perno che permette di girarlo ove piace. Sopra di esso c'è una specie di piccolo padiglione di velo rosso, il quale oltre un bel fondo al medesimo, serve a coprirlo quando si vuole. Per ottenere il maggior effetto, il March. fa vedere il suo Gruppo illuminato a notte. Tre candele in un Lume semicircolare di Latta servono a tale uffizio, in modo che l'oggetto resta eccellentemente illuminato, e la luce si nasconde agli amatori di così

Boccapaduli's description captures the way Canova's work was set apart and literally enshrined in the garden. The approach to the temple through a "beautiful, cultivated garden, a paradise of flowers,"[53] in balmy Mediterranean air would enliven all the senses. During the day, the riot of colors—the temple's blue cupola, the crimson and emerald silks, the green foliage and vibrant flowers—would make the creaminess of sculpture's marble stand out, while the gentle curvature of the figures would have contrasted with the geometric rigidity of the Doric temple.[54] It would have been during the evening visits, however, that *Venus and Adonis* would have been displayed to best effect. Meandering through the garden to arrive at the temple, parting the silk curtains to reveal a glimpse of the lovers' embrace, and watching gentle curves of flesh disappear into the shadows cast by the torch would have been a delight for the all senses. No doubt visitors felt that they were being transported to the distant past by stumbling upon the union of a goddess and her nubile young lover; perhaps there was no greater way to feel connected to the experience of the ancients than through stolen glimpses of the "modern Praxiteles'" masterpiece. This was the spectacle afforded by Berio's garden—even if, eventually, one had to close the curtain and leave the lovers behind.

Venus and Adonis: Eroticism and the Thematic of Touch

Given Canova's later involvement with the placement of his works of art in temples, it would be tempting to speculate on his input into the design of the garden and

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bella opera." Quoted in Colucci, "Antonio Canova, la Marchesa Margherita Boccapaduli e Alessandro Verri: Lettere e Altre Testimonianze Inedite," 67.

[53] Morgan, Italy vol. 2, 307.

[54] See note 134 for Conte Torre della Rezzonico's description of the temple's Doric columns.

the *tempietto*. We can, however, speak with certainty about the reception of the work due to the popularity of the sculpture in Naples and its role as a highly fashionable tourist destination. At the same time, Canova's sculpture and Berio's display were at the core of a polemical, public debate that was widely published in contemporary Neapolitan journals and periodicals. At issue was not only Canova's sculptural production, but also, more importantly, the sculpture's relationship to classical antiquity and the *means of expression* for that relationship.

Primarily, however, visitors were preoccupied with the erotic relationship between Venus and Adonis. Canova depicted the two lovers in their final embrace, as Adonis leaves his lover to take part in a hunting expedition. According to the story as it is told in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, Venus entreats Adonis to be wary of large prey, but Adonis does not heed her warning and is soon gored by an angry boar. As he dies in her arms, Venus sprinkles his blood on the ground, creating the beautiful but fragile flower, the anemone—a detail which makes the sculpture's presentation in a garden even more moving. In Canova's work, Venus attempts to delay Adonis' departure through her seductive touch—and indeed, it is the concept of touch which permeates the sculpture (figs. 113-116). Just as *Perseus* thematized the concept of imitation, *Venus and Adonis* thematizes an issue that is at the heart of both this work's subject, and, more broadly, the art of sculpture itself. Venus caresses Adonis' face tenderly, and rests her hand and head on his shoulder, as his own arm loops casually around her lower back. Their intertwined limbs make his imminent departure even more poignant, and there is tension between the lingering gaze and regretful departure of touch. Even Adonis' faithful dog nuzzles his rear and looks lovingly at his master. Of course touch was also critical to visitors'

experience of the work. Not only were they were forced to part the silk curtain to gaze at the group, but torchlight cast shadows that appeared to caress the lovers' skin.

The erotics of touch were a larger function of Canova's work and sculpture in general. The illusion of flesh created by masterful carving techniques and evocative display strategies belied the marble's materiality and had a visceral effect on viewers' senses. Indeed, visitors could not resist commenting on the nubile flesh of the young lovers, their clear physical attraction to one another, and the sculpture's explicit eroticism. It was as though beholders had stumbled onto a *real* physical union. The intense "softness" and "suppleness" of *Venus and Adonis'* flesh was repeatedly praised, as was the curvaceousness of Venus' "serpentine line" and Adonis' beauty.[55] The lovers' own youthfulness and exuberance could even physically invigorate the viewer; the elderly collector Giuseppe Lucchesi Palli barely had the strength in his legs to carry himself into the garden, but Canova's "angelic semblances so electrified him that he seemed to be eighteen years old again."[56] That invigoration could inspire one to bodily encroach on the lovers' intimacy. Lucchesi Palli's desire to prick Venus and Adonis' skin to see if they would bleed is replete with sexual connotations.[57] Likewise, Marchesa

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[55] Marcello Marchesini comments on the "morbidezza" of the flesh; Rezzonico on the "linea serpentina" and vulptuousness of Venus' body; Lucchesi Palli on the "sweetness" of the bodies. See, respectively, Marcello Marchesini, Sul Gruppo d'Adone e Venere del Signor Antonio Canova, Posseduto dal ... Marchese Berio. Lettera di Marcello Marchesini ... al ... Conte D. Faustino Tadini ([n.d., but 1795]) xi; Dafneio, Lettera di Dorillo Dafneio a Diodoro Delfico 10; Letter from Giuseppe Lucchesi Palli to Canova, cited in Fardella, Antonio Canova a Napoli: Tra Collezionismo e Mercato 145.

[56] Letter from Lucchesi Palli to Canova, n.d. [1795]. "Io mi sono trascinato, per esser malissimo di salute, a vedere il vostro gruppo, Divino gruppo. Son sceso al giardino che non avevo forza da reggermi sopra le mie gambe, e quelle angeliche sembianze mi ànno così elettrizzato che nell'uscirne sembravo ritornato all'età di 18 anni, ed il mio pensiero mi trasportava verso Fidia in quei tempi felici della Grecia." Cited in Fardella, Antonio Canova a Napoli: Tra Collezionismo e Mercato 145.

[57] Letter from Lucchesi Palli to Canova, n.d. [1795]. "Il marmo è trattato con tale industria, che la superficie sembra positivamente l'epiderma del corpo umano e si sarebbe tentati pungerla con una spilla

Boccapaduli was not content to merely look at the work from all possible angles. She wanted to reach out and touch the lovers' flesh, "forgetting that it was marble."[58]

The reaction of the Marchesa Boccapaduli emblematizes the way eroticism and reason are often linked in the aesthetic response. Although moved by the effect that "true beauty" could have on the senses, and the way that "heroic truthfulness could inspire a feeling of true reason," Boccapaduli nonetheless is driven by a sudden lapse in reason that tempts her to caress the sculpture. It is not simply the slippage between reason and desire here that gives one pause, but rather that the latter could propel one to unthinking action, reducing the human spectator to an automaton driven by emotional and physical desire. Admiration of the nude, indeed, was a tempting and potentially dangerous activity. In Britain, for instance, the nude figure of Venus was often construed as a catalyst for negligent civic behavior. That is, the goddess' form in painting or sculpture was almost always represented as a nude, and the sexual pleasure promised by that naked form could distract a (male) citizen from performing his public duties.[59] By the end of the eighteenth century, this sexual pleasure was folded into and mitigated by aesthetic

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per vedere se ne uscisse il sangue." Cited in Fardella, Antonio Canova a Napoli: Tra Collezionismo e Mercato 145.

[58] Letter from Marchesa Boccapaduli to Canova, Nov. 14, 1795, Bassano del Grappa I. 72. 1492. Cited in Fardella, Antonio Canova a Napoli: Tra Collezionismo e Mercato 149-50.

The trope of visitors being so enticed by the illusion of flesh created by fine carving, to the point that they must touch the sculpture, is quite common. This verism was so powerful that it sometimes transformed the viewing experience into a sensual encounter. Ugo Foscolo, for instance, felt the Venus Italica was so real that he "flirted with, and kissed, and - but not a word to anyone – […] even caressed this new Venus…", just as Gustave Flaubert could not resist kissing and caressing the armpit of Canova's Psyche. For Flaubert's passionate response, see Gustave Flaubert, "Voyage en Italie," Œuvres complètes, eds. Claudine Gothot-Mersch and Guy Sagnes, vol. 1. Œuvres de jeunesse (Paris: Gallimard, 2001) 1111. Ugo Foscolo's reaction is recorded in Carol Ockman, Ingres's Eroticized Bodies: Retracing the Serpentine Line, Yale Publications in the History of Art (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995) 57.

[59] John Barrell, "'The Dangerous Goddess': Masculinity, Prestige, and the Aesthetic in Early Eighteenth-Century Britain," Cultural Critique 12. Discursive Strategies and the Economy of Prestige (Spring 1989): 101-31.

pleasure.[60] Incorporating the figure of Venus into a larger art historical narrative comprised of *comparanda*, connoisseurship and criticism could deflect, or at least justify, a viewer's sensual interest through the guise of aesthetic discourse. In addition, any kind of narrative that paired Venus with a third-party, like Adonis, lessened the potentially disruptive voyeurism—even as, of course, it licensed and therefore heightened *legitimate* voyeurism.

In this instance, therefore, Adonis deflects our own potential intimacy with the goddess, and it is indeed he who faces the dilemma whether to pursue the hunt, or to remain entranced by Venus' voluptuousness. Despite our own foreknowledge of the story's tragic ending—for Adonis unwisely chooses the thrill of the hunt over Venus' embrace—the moment is rich with indecision and indeterminacy. Lucchesi Palli, for instance, noted Venus' own hesitancy and the "expression of two passions." Her sensual desire is fueled by the "pleasure of gazing at" Adonis' form, but this desire is rent by the "fatal presentiment of his death."[61] Likewise, Adonis too is torn between his two great desires, the surge of "conflict between his predominant passion," hunting, and the "sting of love." Perhaps no one expressed Adonis' indecision better than Marcello Marchesini, a Venetian lawyer, writer and poet. Marchesini most fully elucidates the seductive possibilities of the sculpture's narrative. He lingers on the way that Venus leans towards Adonis, with "voluptuous exhaustion," "sweetly touching his chin with one of those expressive caresses that indicates the delicacy of a prayer [...]." "Her abandoned sash

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[60] Barrell, "'The Dangerous Goddess': Masculinity, Prestige, and the Aesthetic in Early Eighteenth-Century Britain," 110.

[61] Lucchesi Palli to Canova. "Nella Venere ho ammirato espresse le due passioni: quella della voluttà nel mirare le sembianze di Adone, e quella del funesto presagio della sua morte." As cited in Fardella, Antonio Canova a Napoli: Tra Collezionismo e Mercato 145.

falls negligently from her thighs, and is held up only by the knot that remains imprisoned by the sweet contact" of their bodies (fig. 117). Adonis, in the meantime, "languidly holds" his dart, which drifts downwards as though its own weight threatens to pull it from his hand. Even his faithful dog carefully watches the actions of the hunter, "awaiting his own destiny to either fly towards the woods, or rest indolent and inert," standing guard over Venus and Adonis' lovemaking instead.[62]

The downward drifting motion of veil, dart, and limbs heighten the sensation that the two lovers could remain together and engage in a fuller embrace. Yet, despite the ripe sensual possibilities of this encounter, particularly as relayed by Marchesini, the sculpture's potentially dangerous eroticism is mitigated—perhaps, in part, because of our own foreknowledge that the lovers' desire will not be consummated, for Adonis will instead face a tragic death. Even the work's exhibition in a garden, which in other countries, such as England, could signal a dangerous interest in superfluous decoration

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[62] "Venere inclinata verso il giovanetto, con una voluttuosa spossatezza, s'appoggia col destro suo braccio sull'omero sinistro dell'amico, mentre la sua sinistra mano, tocca dolcemente il dilui mento con una di quelle espressive carezze, che indicano la delicatezza di una preghiera, condita dal mele. La fascia, ch'Ella abbandona, cade con negligenza da'suoi fianchi, ed è ritenuta soltanto dal nodo, che resta imprigionato fra il dolce contatto del fianco destro di Venere, colla sinistra coscie di Adone. Nel dilei volto, che appoggia a fior di contatto, con interessante abbandono, sulla sua mano, vengono tracciate in un istante medesimo, la voluttà, che la malizia mortifica; le tenerezza; e il dispiacere, l'affanno profondo, che un ingrato presentimento l'anima le rode, pel pericolo cui è vicino ad esporli l'amante. Egli poi è in quell'atto in cui un uomo sente al vivo gli urti della passione predominante, e le punture d'amore, destate dall'apparato di tante grazie presenti. Con uno sguardo fra il sorriso della compiacenza, e lo stimolo nascente della voluttà, guarda egli la sua Venere, col sinistro braccio dolcemente attraversandole il corpo, la stringe, e lascia cadere quasi spossato il destro sullla coscia, mentre già già più non ritiene con forza un lungo dardo, che prima ardita impugnava, e che ora colla punta al terreno inclinata, sembra, che in grazia del suo peso medesimo, separare si voglia da quella mano, che con tre dita soltanto ormai per un solo avanzo di meccanismo, languidamente il ritiene. Guarda il cane attentissimo i moti del Cacciatore, e pare che attenda da questi il suo destino o per volare nel bosco, o per restarne neghittoso e inerte." Marchesini, Sul Gruppo d'Adone e Venere del Signor Antonio Canova, Posseduto dal ... Marchese Berio. Lettera di Marcello Marchesini ... al ... Conte D. Faustino Tadini VI-VII; Republished in 1795 in Naples in the Effemeridi Enciclopediche as part of the many literary publications on the work and in 1823 in the Biblioteca Canoviana. See Marcello Marchesini, "Lettera di Marcello Marchesini. Al Nobile Signore Conte D. Faustino Tadini," Effemeridi Enciclopediche per Servire di Continuazione all'Analisi Ragionata de'Libri Nuovi (August 1795) and Pochini, Biblioteca Canoviana, Ossia Raccolta delle Migliori Prose, e de' più Scelti Componimenti Poetici sulla Vita, sulle Opere ed in Morte di Antonio Canova vol. 1, 160-79.

and excessive luxury —did not seem to provoke any anxieties among elite Neapolitan circles. Neapolitan elites and literati had other concerns, namely, the way the sculpture could provide access to Canova's working method.[63]

Invenzione and *Esecuzione*: Imagining Canova's Working Method

Venus and Adonis, therefore, did not stimulate viewers solely because of the eroticism inherent in the subject and its nude figures, but the sculpture also provided a lens through which they could examine Canova's own working methods. Highly publicized in engravings, open letters, journal essays and private and public discourse, the work also provided writers with the opportunity to explore sculptural production. Of particular interest were the twinned, yet juxtaposed elements of *invenzione*, the creative selection of the subject, and *esecuzione*, the act of chiseling and shaping the marble block. Divorced from a direct comparison with an antique work, *Venus and Adonis* therefore allowed writers to explore larger, more timeless questions regarding the nature of sculpture, including the best way to describe sculptural technique and its visual effects.

The first treatise to be circulated was a privately published open letter by Carlo Castone, Conte Torre della Rezzonico, a traveler, intellectual and aristocrat, who was

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[63] Malcolm Baker makes the excellent point that connoisseurship also became a powerful way of deflecting the lascivious nature of the nude. For instance, regarding Nolleken's *Diana* and its unusual pose, Baker notes: "Viewing the sculpture involved the spectator in an assessment of how successful the sculptor had been in executing a freestanding sculpture in marble. If one of the pleasures of the viewer in examining such a work was the viewing of a representation of a female body, another was in consciously exercising that polite accomplishment of discrimination, a judgment not only of an artist's compositional abilities but also of his executive powers." See Malcolm Baker, Figured in Marble: The Making and Viewing of Eighteenth-Century Sculpture (London: V & A Publications, 2000) 18.

Other Canova sculptures *were* plagued by scandal because of the representation of the nude, in particular Canova's 1808 *Paolina Borghese as Venus the Victor*. By 1820 Pope Pius VII found the nudity of a contemporary woman so indecent he ordered the statue boxed up. See Kristina Herrmann Fiore, "Lettere Inedite sulla Statua di Paolina = Unpublished Letters on the Statue of Pauline," Venere Vincitrice: La Sala di Paolina Bonaparte Alla Galleria Borghese (Rome: Edizioni dell'elefante, 1997) 119-40, 201-14.

related to Pope Clement XIII Rezzonico (fig. 118).[64] Addressed to Saverio Bettinelli, another prominent literati, the letter was sent to a select number of nobles and intellectuals, as well as the King and Queen of Naples. The work was also known to Berio himself, who, it appears, wanted to have it published for a larger audience.[65] The extent of Berio's intervention in its circulation is unknown, although Tommaso Gargallo

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[64] I have also seen "Castone" written as "Gastone."

Rezzonico's letter was published privately under his pseudonym with the Accademia dell'Arcadia in Rome, Dorillo Dafneio. It was sent to the Abate Saverio Bettinelli, under his pseudonym, Diodoro Delfico. See Dafneio, Lettera di Dorillo Dafneio a Diodoro Delfico. For more on Bettinelli, C. Muschetta, "Bettinelli, Saverio," Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani (Roma: Istituto della Enciclopedia Italiana, 1967) vol. 9, 738-39.

[65] The original publication can be difficult to find, but the text was also reprinted in Carlo Castone, Opere del Cavaliere Carlo Castone Conte della Torre di Rezzonico. Prose sulle Belle Arti, ed. Francesco Mocchetti, vol. 1, 10 vols. (Como: Carlantonio Ostinelli, 1815) 191-209. It was also published in *Biblioteca Canoviana* in 1823. See Pochini, Biblioteca Canoviana, Ossia Raccolta delle Migliori Prose, e de' più Scelti Componimenti Poetici sulla Vita, sulle Opere ed in Morte di Antonio Canova vol. 1, 75-87.

In a letter to his cousin, Conte Preposto Luigi Scutellari on July 24, 1795, Conte Torre della Rezzonico described the distribution of his letter to friends and other intellectuals, noting that Berio wished to publish it. He also pointed out that he had presented it to the Neapolitan court, including the King and Queen of Naples, who applauded his description of Canova's sculpture. "Dal sig. Bodoni riceverete una copia d'una mia lettera stampata sul gruppo ammirabile del veneto Canova, di cui non si può vedere opera più perfetta e più degna di gareggiar cogli antichi. La mia lettera ha qui riscosso ed a Roma infiniti applausi da'conoscitori delle bell'arti e da'buoni giudici dell'italiana eloquenza; mi lusingo, che non dispiacerà dove voi siete. Non ho potuto mandarne che sei copie, onde al vostro ottimo genitore, se se ne lagnasse, farete le mie scuse, potendo leggere la vostra, che ad'amendue consacro. Così vi prego ad iscusarmi agli altri amici comuni, se per avventura mostrassero desiderio d'averla, mentre un dato numero n'ebbi dal marchese Beriò, che la volla pubblicare. Ne ho presentate alcune copie al Re, alla Regina, al Principe ereditario, a'grandi di corte, al corpo diplomatico, da cui ricevo continui inviti e cortesie senza fine. I sovrani hanno sommamente applaudita la mia descrizione [...] In questo punto mi arrivano altre copie della mia lettera, onde ne aggiungo subito una pel conte Guido vostro padre, ed altre fino al numero di dodici per gli antichi amici e compagni; non posso fare il piego del corriere più grosso; non credo però aver obbliato i più distinti fra essi, come vedrete nella distribuzione, e sono: voi e il padre vostro, il conte Aurelio Bernieri, il conte Camuti, il sig. conte Ceruti, il sig. Mazza, il. P. Affò, D. Rufino Rossi, il P. Pagnini, Jacobacci, Ghirardelli miei amici mai sempre, oltre Bodoni." See Carlo Castone, Opere del Cavaliere Carlo Castone Conte della Torre di Rezzonico. Corrispondenza Epistolare con Illustri Letterati del Cavaliere Carlo Castone Conte della Torre di Rezzonico, ed. Francesco Mocchetti, vol. 10, 10 vols. (Como: Dai Figli di Carlantonio Ostinelli, 1830) 47-48.

On April 23, 1795, Nicola Passeri wrote to Canova and expressed his desire that Rezzonico's text be published soon, along with prints of the work. "Il Sig. Conte di Rezzonico, erudito, e dotto cavaliere, ne ha profondamente analizzato tutte le bellezze di questa vostra insigne opera, avendone formata un'erudita, e scienziata descrizione, che spero vedremo presto pubblicata colle stampe." II. 142. 1658. Bassano del Grappa, also cited in Fardella, Antonio Canova a Napoli: Tra Collezionismo e Mercato 148.

suggests that Berio did indeed finance the publication.[66] Conte Torre della Rezzonico's letter was also published in at least one public journal in August 1795, the Venetian publication *Memorie per Servire alla Storia Letteraria e Civile*.[67]

Rezzonico's letter was almost immediately followed by the lyrical text of Marcello Marchesini that I have already mentioned. Although there is no evidence that Marchesini's text was intended as a direct response to Rezzonico's,[68] the two complement each other in such a way that they are worth comparing to one another. Both Marchesini and Rezzonico praise Canova's work—that was never in doubt—but more interestingly, both also focus on different aspects of artistic production, crystallizing, in a way, the debate that flourished since the Renaissance regarding *invenzione* and *esecuzione* and the two-pronged nature of artistic production.[69]

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[66] See also [Tommaso Gargallo], Alcune Annotazioni ad una Lettera di Dorillo Dafneio ([Naples?]: [1795]) 16, for the suggestion that Berio did indeed finance Rezzonico's publication.

[67] See Dorillo Dafneio, "Del Gruppo di *Venere e Adone* Scolpito dall' Illustre Veneto Scultore Sig. *A. Canova*, Ec. Lettera di *Dorillo Dafneio* a *Diodoro Delfico*," Memorie per Servire alla Storia Letteraria e Civile 27 (August 1795). It is quite possible Rezzonico's text was published in additional journals, of which I am not aware.

[68] The anonymous author in the September *Effemeridi Enciclopediche* states Marchesini's text was published second, and that Marchesini acknowledged Rezzonico's text in the introduction. "[Review of] Alcune Annotazioni ad una Lettera di Dorillo Dafnejo. Opera Senza Data, e Senza Nome Tipografico, d'Autore Anonimo. In 8 Vo. di Pag 55, che Gira per Napoli, e che Si Vende da Varj Libraj Al Prezzo di Carlini 2. la Copia," Effemeridi Enciclopediche per Servire di Continuazione all'Analisi Ragionata de'Libri Nuovi (Sept. 1795): 89-90.

Rezzonico goes even further, suggesting that in fact his text was the very foundation for Marchesini's writing. "A questa cicalata dobbiamo l'apologia, che spontaneamente fece a Dorillo l'onorato Marchesini, il quale abbastanza convinse di apertissima menzogna quanto osò spacciare l'invidioso, e maligno gramaticuzzo intorno a Canova, ed intorno al preteso silenzio dello stesso Marchesini, che con lode grandissima aveva parlato di chi prima di lui aveva scritto sul gruppo, e ciò intender non potevasi, che di Dorillo. Egli è poi chiarissimo, che la lettera di Canova, e quella di Dorillo formano tutto il fondo della descrizione del Marchesini." Filalete Nemesiano [Pseudonym for Carlo Castone, Conte Torre di Rezzonico], Lettera di Filalete Nemesiano a Don Limone (Roma: 1796) 114.

[69] The importance placed on *invenzione*, particularly in the Renaissance, mimics and is part and parcel of the desire to elevate the status of sculpture to that of an art, rather than merely craft. Although Renaissance theory relied in large part on the tripartite ideas of *invenzione*, *disegno* e *colore*, I have focused on the concept of *esecuzione* given Canova's work in stone. For more on these ideas see David Rosand, "*Ekphrasis* and the Renaissance of Painting: Observations on Alberti's Third Book," Florilegium

Although Marchesini's text came second, his piece encapsulates the first phase of artistic production, that of *invenzione*. Marchesini, therefore, privileges Canova's concept of the work. In what is the most poetic and beautifully written of the two texts, he not only describes the narrative moment Canova selected, but projects himself into the text, imagining himself as Canova. The language he uses describes physical labor—"I sweat, suffer, anguish"— but it is not the physical labor that pushes Canova to such extremes. Rather, it is the intellectual labor and the great distance Marchesini, *as* Canova, sees between the sublimity of his ideas and the final product. The expectations of others, and of himself, cause the artist great pain, and although Marchesini's imaginary Canova would like to find comfort in the praise of others, he is "held back by a thousand difficulties, that are born in my mind. I turn inward: I think, reflect, and the image of the beautiful and the grand that I picture in my fantasy transports me to ecstasy." Marchesini then goes on to describe the immense difference between what the artist imagines and that which must emerge from the marble block; it is the difficulty of selecting the perfect moment: "I see Adonis. I see Venus. How handsome the first, how beautiful the second.

Columbianum: Essays in Honor of Paul Oskar Kristeller, eds. Karl-Ludwig Selig and Robert Somerville (New York: Italica Press, 1987) 147-63; Charles Davis, "New Frescoes by Vasari: 'Colore' e 'Invenzione' in Mid 16th-Century Florentine Painting," Pantheon XXXVIII (April-June 1980): 153-57 and Anna Lange Malmanger, "From *Scientia* to *Disegno*: New Ideals in Cinquecento Art," Innovation and Tradition: Essays on Renaissance Art and Culture, eds. Dag T. Andersson and Roy Eriksen, Collana di Studi sul Rinascimento - Studies in Renaissance Art and Culture (Roma: Edizioni Kappa, 2000) 75-85. For arguments about Michelangelo's work in relation to "high art," see Magne Malmanger, "Michelangelo - Humanist or Stonemason?," Innovation and Tradition: Essays on Renaissance Art and Culture, eds. Dag T. Andersson and Roy Eriksen, Collana di Studi sul Rinascimento - Studies in Renaissance Art and Culture (Roma: Edizioni Kappa, 2000), as well as Michelangelo's own writings in David Summers, Michelangelo and the Language of Art (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1981).

For an argument that the concept of "fine art" dates only to the eighteenth century, see Paul Oskar Kristeller, "The Modern System of the Arts: A Study in the History of Aesthetics, Part I," Journal of the History of Ideas 12.4 (Oct. 1951): 496-517 and Paul Oskar Kristeller, "The Modern System of the Arts: A Study in the History of Aesthetics, Part II," Journal of the History of Ideas 13.1 (Jan. 1952): 17-46.

Adonis goes to hunt, Venus holds him back. I see in that subject a thousand moments of action, that could all be interesting. Let us choose the most delicate. There it is." [70]

For Marchesini, Canova's selection of the perfect moment occurs in an instant, "when this part of his genius" allows him to sketch out the first *bozzetto* of the work with "more spirit than correctness." The sketch, completed with a rapidity of execution that reveals the fire of imagination and does not stifle its spirit, is the ultimate product of invention. Certainly Marchesini is concerned about the finale execution of the work, but only in so far as he believes that a sculptor must have the right tools and enough ability to achieve a perfect enough imitation of the subject so that it is not cold and inanimate; there must be no difference other than that of the material between the marble and the "real subject" that the artist wishes to express. The true challenge of the artist therefore is "to seek out the beautiful, know it, gather it, distribute it, and apply it to your subject."[71]

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[70] "Mi figuro il riflessivo Canova nell'atto d'inventare questo bel gruppo; ed io, che sono talvolta entusiasta, amo di rappresentarmi il discorso che fa con se medesimo, prima di fissare il suo piano. Tutti mi credono un grande Artefice, ei dice. Vorrei concorrere nella comune opinione, perrochè l'amor proprio mi vi strascina; ma sono ritenuto da mille difficoltà che mi nascono in mente. Mi concentro in mestesso: penso: rifletto; e l'immagine del bello e del grande, che veggo effigiata nella mi[a] fantasia, mi trasporta fino all'estasi. Mi pongo al cimento di svilupparla: sudo, peno, travaglio, e nelle mie opere non iscorgo, che l'immagine finora della mediocrità. Questa immensa distanza mi spaventa; e per avvicinare al sublime, ch'esiste nella mia fantasia, ciò ch'esce dalle mani, comprendo, che mi resta da camminar lungamente sporta un sentiero, tutto di spine orrendamente seminato. O gli altri non hanno l'idea del sublime come la mia, o s'infingono di ritrovarla nelle mie produzioni; altrimenti non potrebbero giudicare, con tanta prevenzione, de'miei lavori. Sudiamo in questo momento, e facciamo ad essi comprendere o che hanno fallato, o che m'hanno, per gentilezza, lusingato. Io veggo Adone: io veggo Venere. Quanto è bello il primo, quanto è vaga la seconda! Adone và alla caccia: Venere lo trattiene. Veggo in questo soggetto mille istanti d'azione, che tutti possono interessare. Sciegliamone il più delicato. Eccolo: Il proferire queste parole: il dar mano al lavoro del suo modello, tutto da un attivo impaziente entusiasmo irradiato, è per l'ardinto *Canova* un istante medesimo. Lo termina egli questo parte del genio. Ha in sulle prime molto più di spirito, che di correzione; ma finalmente tale ci nel marmo comparisce, dopo molti studj, e dopo molte fatiche, qual io mi espongo adesso al cimento di qui descriverlo." Marchesini, Sul Gruppo d'Adone e Venere del Signor Antonio Canova, Posseduto dal ... Marchese Berio. Lettera di Marcello Marchesini ... al ... Conte D. Faustino Tadini V-VI.

[71] "Dee inoltre lo Scultore, proponendosi questa imitazione, saperla trarre non già da'soggetti freddi, ed inanimati, che niente dicono; nel qual caso l'opera sua, benchè perfetta, e bene imitata, eccitar non potrebbe, a fronte di qualunque esattezza, che una sensazione leggiera, senza commovere l'anima d'uno spettatore; ma debb'egli trarla piutosto dalla natura vivente, animata, appassionata, e trarla in maniera, che fra il marmo, ed il vero soggetto che vuol esprimere, altra differenza non v'abbia, che quelle della materia.

Rezzonico, on the other hand, privileges Canova's handling of the marble throughout his text, foretelling the modernist, formalist interest in Canova's sculpting techniques. His treatise explores Canova's working method in great detail, even delineating the different tools used for different sections of the sculpture (fig. 119). The way Canova creates "the imitation of skin through the serrated teeth, the sharpened chisel, the biting rasp, and through their mixed fiddling, shaving, turning on a lathe, coercing an appearance of malleable flesh that only the coldness of stone can disillusion," is the subject of marvel.[72] Rezzonico even guides the viewer's eye to points of the sculpture where this mastery is best seen, steering viewers who are not connoisseurs to look at the passages in the sculpture that will best reveal Canova's handiwork. "There is no better place to see the magisterial use of the tools," he wrote, "the impasto of their point, their cut, their grooves and their channels and roughness than in the drapery around Venus."[73] Rezzonico's use of tools was, in fact, so detailed that Jean-Baptiste Seroux d'Agincourt (1730-1813), a French archaeologist, art historian and collector who was also

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Per riuscire in questa malagevole impresa, quanto mai affaticarsi egli non dee! Cercare il bello, e conoscerlo; congregarlo, e distribuirlo; applicarlo al suo soggetto, e senza affettazione, esprimerlo nelle vive attitudini, che si è proposto; questa è un impresa da pochi; ma questa appunto è l'impresa per la quale meritarono un posto singolare ne' trofei della gloria, gli eccellenti Scultori." Marchesini, Sul Gruppo d'Adone e Venere del Signor Antonio Canova, Posseduto dal ... Marchese Berio. Lettera di Marcello Marchesini ... al ... Conte D. Faustino Tadini IX-X.

[72] "Ammirabile al certo si è il modo, onde questo epiderma si è dall'artefice imitato, colla dentata gradina, coll'affilato scarpello, e colla mordente raspa in tal guisa, che dal loro misto cincischiare, radere, tornire, aspreggiare un'apparenza ne risultasse di trattabili carni, che solo colla nativa fredezza della pietra disinganno il tatto." Dafneio, Lettera di Dorillo Dafneio a Diodoro Delfico 7.

[73] "In nessun luogo poi trionfa maggiormente il magistrale uso de'ferri, e l'impasto delle loro punte, de'loro taglj, de'solchi, delle canalature, dell'asperità, che nella fascia di Venere, o in quella sindone, che raccolta in un gruppo verso l'anche e disciolta, e cadente in fluidissime pieghe verso le piante, rompe con tanta grazia il nudo, e lo circonda, e col suo candore, e colle rughe ben imitate si distingue dalle carni, alle quali si è data dall'artefice una mano d'Encausto, suo proprio, e particolare segreto per emulare più d'appresso la natura, e spegnere il soverchio albeggiar della pietra, e conservarla intatta più lungamente dall'ingiurie dell'aria. Nè debbo tacere in qual modo Egli abbia operato, affinchè più intendasi di quello, che non è scolpito. Dafneio, Lettera di Dorillo Dafneio a Diodoro Delfico 12-13.

a member of the Accademia dell'Arcadia, believed Rezzonico's description could even be used as a guide to future artists; should *Venus and Adonis*, or, the art of carving itself, be lost, the work could be recreated through Rezzonico's precise description of the tools used.[74]

Rezzonico's language underscores the physical act of carving and the materiality of marble, disrupting the illusion of flesh that Canova's sculptures create. This, indeed, is the real artistry of Canova's work, the manipulation of an unyielding, unforgiving medium. By pointing out these particular passages in the marble surface, Rezzonico draws our attention to those areas where we can best see the artist's touch and handling of the material—in an area, it most be noted, that is also one of the most suggestive, the "fluid folds" of Venus' drapery. Rezzonico even goes so far as to direct the beholder's viewing *methods*, suggesting that such "varied artifice" cannot be recognized by the "wise eye" alone, but must be examined with the candlelight to see the mastery of the touch.[75] Even as the gloom created by nightfall would heighten the sensation that the beholder was admiring something otherworldly, the light and shadows cast by candlelight

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[74] Emphasis in the original. In a biography of Rezzonico, Giambattista Giovio quotes Agincourt's comments, "Questo scritto [Rezzonico's pamphlet] fu letto e levato a cielo in Arcadia. Agincourt giudice in materia di belle arti eccellentissimo scrisse all'autore che *ben meritava le lodi già date a Filostrato per le sue immagini,* e soggiungevagli anche che, *se si perdesse il magistero dello scolpire e il bel marmo del Canova*, *l'uno rinverrebesi e l'altro nella descrizione esattissima e magistrale per l'uso de'ferri*." In a footnote to this citation, he then goes on to list all the tools Rezzonico mentions: "L'ugnetta ritonda, l'affilato scalpello, la gradina dentata, la raspa mordente." See Giambattista Giovio, "Della Vita e degli Scritti del Cavaliere Carlo Castone Conte della Torre di Rezzonico, Patrizio Comasco, Memorie del Cavaliere e Conte Giambatista Giovio," in Castone, Opere del Cavaliere Carlo Castone Conte della Torre di Rezzonico. Corrispondenza Epistolare con Illustri Letterati del Cavaliere Carlo Castone Conte della Torre di Rezzonico cviii-cix, and cix, note 2.

[75] "Ma tanto, e sì vario artificio non si può dal sagace occhio abbastanza riconoscere, che al lume di candela; allora dalle sfumate ombre, e dalla modesta luce si appalesano via via le tenere modulazioni, il fiore de'sentimenti, la maestria del tocco, onde tutte son ricercate le parti, ed indicata la notomia senza la minima durezza, e lasciando alla pelle, ed alle carni tutto il loro morbido, e l'adipe, ed il sugo, che molti valenti artefici non sepper conservare per far pompa di loro anatomica scienza pronunciando aspramente i muscoli, i tendini, e l'ossa, che informar debbono soavemente, e non pungere, e trafiggere la florida cute d'un leggiadrissimo giovinetto." Dafneio, Lettera di Dorillo Dafneio a Diodoro Delfico 7-8.

would call attention to Canova's artistic touch. Shade would deepen the undulating grooves created by the rasp, and the contrast between light and dark would render the tool marks more prominent. At the same time, Rezzonico's comment also reflects a certain awareness of the fallibility of vision. The eyes alone could not be trusted to discern details without external assistance, and the ease with which the beholders of Canova's sculptures could be deceived by the work's smooth and luminous surface reveals a new consciousness of subjectivity and the unreliability of sight.[76]

Canova's treatment of the surface with oil and encaustic was one element of the great sculptor's work upon which *both* Marchesini and Rezzonico felt compelled to comment. Rezzonico continued to focus on the uniqueness of this aspect of Canova's working practice. The varnish recipe was Canova's own "particular secret," which had the dual purpose of protecting the marble from the elements and "drowning out" the natural whiteness of the stone so that it "more closely emulated nature."[77] Marchesini likewise referred to the way the slight veil of oil on the flesh caused the unvarnished white drapery to stand out against it. He also emphasized that this was a practice which had been used by the ancients themselves.[78] Both men paid particular attention to the distinction created between cloth and flesh, once again highlighting the most sensual and evocative passage in the sculpture, Venus' cascading drapery. We are quite fortunate to

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[76] For more on the way vision was increasingly understood as a subjective sensory experience highly influenced by the viewer's own individual body, see Jonathan Crary, Techniques of the Observer: On Vision and Modernity in the Nineteenth Century (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1992).

[77] See note 73.

[78] "E me lo appalesa pienamente quella bianchezza, che industriosamente le ha lasciato, passando solamente sul corpo de'due simulacri quel leggerissimo intonaco, che coll'olio eran soliti gli antichi statuarj di comporre, il quale rendendo più oscura la loro superficie, fa risaltare viè maggiormente della fascia medesima la naturale candidezza." Marchesini, Sul Gruppo d'Adone e Venere del Signor Antonio Canova, Posseduto dal ... Marchese Berio. Lettera di Marcello Marchesini ... al ... Conte D. Faustino Tadini VIII.

have one visitor's reaction to this subtle polychromy, even though he was not at all happy with the effect. When Augustin Creuze de Lesser entered the temple that housed the group, he was:

> disagreeably struck by a large band, white as snow, that wrapped around the waist of this goddess. I believed at first that it was a cloth with which someone with a ridiculous sense of modesty had covered the sculpture, and I asked to remove it, but when I got closer I saw that Canova had profited from the range of shades that was inherent to the whiteness of the marble in order to conceal his Venus a little. I asked myself what this cloth was doing so close to Adonis. Moreover, white cloth only immediately revealed a Venus that was all gray. Finally that which should have set me straight immediately was that this cloth was positioned in such a way that unless it was held in place by pins stuck in the flesh of Venus herself, it was impossible for it to stay on; but Venus' pose was so tender that one could also imagine that in a moment the veil would fall.[79]

In his encounter with *Venus and Adonis*, Creuze de Lesser was so surprised by the subtle hues tinting the marble that he could not believe he was looking at stone. Not expecting the "white" marble to have any variations within it, he misread the sculpture, inverting its tones. That is, at first glance, Venus' drapery appeared to be heightened with white. Creuze de Lesser could not grasp that it was the off-white flesh of Venus that made the drapery stand out. What is most interesting about Creuze de Lesser's description, however, is that he suggests that Canova took advantage of the particularities of that piece of marble to achieve these effects. Not only does the stone's subtle range of shades give us a more nuanced vision of marble and belie the fact that the material is purely

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[79] "J'ai vu à Naples un autre essai de ce système de Canova, et beaucoup moins heureux encore à mon avis; c'est dans un grouppe de Vénus et Adonis. Vénus et nue; mais quand j'entrai dans la pièce où est ce grouppe, je fus désagréablement frappé d'une large bande, blanc de neige, qui entouroit la ceinture de cette déesse. Je crus que c'étoit une linge dont une pudeur assez ridicule l'avoit couverte, et je priai qu'on l'ôtât; mais en m'approchant je vis que Canova avoit profité, pour masquer un peu sa Vénus, d'une variété de teinte qui existoit dans la blancheur du marbre. Je me demandai ce que ce linge avoit là à faire auprès d'Adonis; de plus un linge blanc me montra tout de suite une Vénus toute grise. Au reste ce qui auroit dû me détromper tout de suite, c'est que ce linge est posé tellement qu'à moins de supposer qu'il teint par des épingles à la personne même de Vénus, il est impossible qu'il tienne; mais aussi Vénus est dans une disposition si tendre qu'on peut supposer que dans ce moment là le voile alloit achever de tomber." Augustin Creuze de Lesser, Voyage en Italie et en Sicile, fait en MDCCCI et MDCCCII (Paris: De l'Impremerie de P. Didot l'ainé, 1806) 313-14.

"white" throughout, but, once again, such a refined attention to material showcases Canova's mastery of the medium. Of course, it is possible that Creuze de Lesser did not understand the effect was also partially achieved by Canova's use of oils and waxes. Nonetheless, although Creuze de Lesser was intensely bothered by this seemingly unnatural juxtaposition of tones, particularly of the "grayness" of Venus' skin, the use of polychromy was an aspect of Canova's work that was unique to his production of sculpture—and one that merited attention by serious commentators reflecting on his working practice.

Taken together, therefore, Marchesini and Rezzonico's texts perfectly complement one another. Not only to do they call attention to the particularities of Canova's own artistic production and his unique manner of finishing works of art, but they also represent the full scope of artistic production itself. *Invenzione* and *esecuzione*, after all, necessarily go hand in hand in the creation of the ideal work of art. Yet, given the particular attention Canova paid to the surface of the marble, one could argue that far more important was his execution and the masterly skills that, particularly in the final finishing and polishing steps, gave each of his works such a life-like quality. In this light, Rezzonico's text might provide better access to Canova's sculpture, both for appreciators of his art, and even for other sculptors and craftsmen seeking to imitate the artist.[80]

Rezzonico's emphasis on the materiality of Canova's sculpture, in fact, suggests a fundamentally new relationship between the viewer and the visual arts. For Rezzonico, this relationship depended on personal interaction with Canova's work and is both grounded in and helps reinforce a new kind of connoisseurship. Three intersecting

[80] A point which Rezzonico himself makes. See Nemesiano, Lettera di Filalete Nemesiano a Don Limone 94.

events—the abundance of classical antiquities discovered in recent excavations, the creation of the museum, and the circulation of objects—and tourists—on an unprecedented level—ushered in this new era of physical contact with original works of art, the very contact on which Rezzonico's description depends and further encourages. His writing demands the viewer's visceral interaction with the marks that reveal the artist's physical engagement with both tools and the marble block itself. It is an engagement for which the examination of a print, however rich in texture, could never adequately substitute (fig. 120).

The exhibition of Canova's sculpture in its public venue in Berio's garden, therefore, was crucial to this new understanding of his work. The hierarchy of *invenzione* over *esecuzione* was inverted, and his mastery *as a sculptor* was underscored. This emphasis on Canova's magisterial use of tools had a long-term impact on his career. As we have seen with regards to *Perseus*, Canova was frequently critiqued for his lack of inventiveness; his choice of subject matter was often decried as mere imitation or plagiarism. Yet, beholders never doubted Canova's ability to manipulate marble, and indeed, it was in his hands that the craft of sculpture truly became an art.

Rezzonico versus Marchesini: The Most Intimate Understanding of Canova

It was precisely Rezzonico's continual referencing of artist's tools, however, that led a third party to enter the debate and placed Rezzonico and Marchesini's texts at the heart of a large polemic that raged in Naples throughout 1795 and 1796.[81] The two texts

[81] This polemic certainly did not harm the perception of Canova's work. In fact, one of his biographers, Melchiorre Missirini, notes that the feud helped spread the fame of Canova's sculpture. "La qual gara letteraria concorse a far salire l'opera del Canova in molto maggior grido." See Missirini, Della Vita di Antonio Canova: Libri Quattro103.

were pitted against one another by a third writer, Tommaso Gargallo, a young intellectual from Syracuse,[82] who published a vituperative response to Rezzonico's text entitled *Alcune Annotazioni ad una Lettera di Dorillo Dafneio* in the summer of 1795 (fig. 121).[83] One of the central issues of Gargallo's *Annotazioni* was precisely the question of which text, Rezzonico's or Marchesini's, provided the reader with the best understanding of Canova's sculpture. Gargallo's annotations, a line-by-line critique of Rezzonico's text appended to a republication of Rezzonico's original letter, then prompted additional responses by both Marchesini and Rezzonico, as well as other anonymous authors.

Naples' literary scene was dynamic and energetic. Journals published a wide variety of book reviews, poems, literary critiques and commentary in a conversation that was widespread and intellectually stimulating. Gargallo's very pointed critique transformed civil dialogue into mayhem in Neapolitan literary circles. The chain of publications these particular texts aroused was vast. Each article seemed to prompt a new response, and it is therefore worth clarifying the sequence of publications to give a sense of how far-reaching and lengthy the debate was.[84]

This point is also made by Marchese Filippo Francesco di Castel Lentini in Tommaso Gargallo, Opere Edite ed Inedite. Memorie Autobiografiche, ed. Marchese Filippo Francesco di Castel Lentini, vol. 1, 4 vols. (Firenze: Le Monnier, 1923) 77, note 1.

[82] See the nineteenth-century biography published on Gargallo in Francesco Sesti, "Biografie d'Illustri Siciliani. Tommaso Gargallo," La Favilla. Giornale di Scienze, Lettere, Arti e Pedagogia Serie seconda, anno primo (1863): 552-58. For Gargallo's own posthumously published autobiography see Gargallo, Opere Edite ed Inedite. Memorie Autobiografiche.

Although both Gargallo's and Rezzonico's texts are anonymous, their identity as authors is confirmed not only through their private letters and biographies, but also through also through several extremely useful dictionaries revealing identities of anonymous writers. See, for instance, Vincenzo Lancetti, Pseudonimia ovvero Tavole Alfabetiche de'Nomi Finti o Supposti Degli Scrittori con la Contrapposizione de'Veri (Milano: Luigi di Giacomo Pirole Tipografo-Librajo, 1836) 110, 374, and 420.

[83] [Gargallo], Alcune Annotazioni ad una Lettera di Dorillo Dafneio.

[84] Although I believe I have identified all the publications pertaining to the debate, there may well be additional works that are relevant.

Gargallo's *Annotazioni* inspired another critique of Rezzonico's work by an anonymous Roman writer in the August 1795 issue of the *Giornale Lettario di Napoli*.[85] Subsequently, a defense of Rezzonico's text (and, conversely, a critique of Gargallo's *Annotazioni*), appeared in the September issue of *Effemeridi Enciclopediche*.[86] Although this too was submitted by an anonymous writer, Rezzonico suggests it was drafted by Marchesini himself.[87] This was followed by another letter from our anonymous Roman writer, submitted to the November volume of the *Giornale Letterario*.[88] After a brief lull in the winter months, there was a new flurry of publications with the new year. The January 1796 issue of *Effemeridi Enciclopediche* was dedicated to Rezzonico and also included a critique by yet another anonymous writer (perhaps Marchesini again?) in response to the November issue of the *Giornale Letterario.*[89] To this text, our Roman

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[85] "Roma. Essendoci Pervenuta la Seguente Lettera [...]," Giornale Letterario di Napoli per Servire di Continuazione all'Analisi Ragionata de'Libri Nuovi XXXIII (August 15, 1795): 75-79.

[86] "[Review of] Alcune Annotazioni ad una Lettera di Dorillo Dafnejo. Opera Senza Data, e Senza Nome Tipografico, d'autore Anonimo. In 8 Vo. di Pag 55, che Gira per Napoli, e che Si Vende da Varj Libraj Al Prezzo di Carlini 2. la Copia," 64-90.

[87] Rezzonico never explicitly states that the article in the September issue of *Effemeridi Enciclopediche* is written by Marchesini, but he does make clear that Marchesini responded to the feud in print, in his defense. Later in his *Lettera di Filalete Nemesiano* he refers to the specific points Marchesini made in his text, which seem to correspond to the article in the *Effemeridi Enciclopediche.* Nemesiano, Lettera di Filalete Nemesiano a Don Limone 6-9 and 25.

Likewise, a letter from Luigi Tadini to Antonio d'Este, dated September 28, 1795, seems to confirm that Marchesini wrote in defense of Rezzonico. This letter is also interesting because it reveals the booksellers in Rome who sold the text, and makes clear that this literary feud will only serve to enhance Canova's reputation. Tadini wrote, "Se a lei piace di leggere la lettera, ossia descrizione del gruppo di Adone e Venere scritta dal nostro signor Marcello Marchesini, ella potrà averla o dal signor Canova, o dal librajo di Roma Domenico Raggi, al quale ne furono spedite alcune copie per darle al medesimo Canova. È uscito ora del medesimo Marchesini un opuscoletto a difesa di alcuni supposti errori di lingua creduti trovarsi da un satirico nella lettera del Conte Rezzonico, ed alla prima occasione manderò a lei quanto fu scritto su tal proposito. Bella cosa per Canova!" d'Este, Memorie di Antonio Canova 388.

[88] "Roma. Dopo di Aver Pubblicata [...]," Giornale Letterario di Napoli per Servire di Continuazione all'Analisi Ragionata de'Libri Nuovi XXXVIII (November 1, 1795): 45-47.

[89] "A' Signori Compilatori del Giornale Letterario di Napoli," Effemeridi Enciclopediche per Servire di Continuazione all'Analisi Ragionata de'Libri Nuovi (January 1796): 81-91.

writer responded for a third time, defending his theories in the April 1796 journal of the *Giornale Letterario.*[90] As these texts were circling, Rezzonico published his own anonymous response to Gargallo, *Lettera di Filalete Nemesiano a Don Limone*, in 1796.[91] Gargallo, not to be undone, then wrote some very witty and cruel epigrams about Rezzonico. Although there is no evidence that these were published in 1796, it is likely they circulated in salons and other literary circles; they were finally published by Gargallo in 1830 along with other epigrams.[92]

The entire debate seemed to die only with the death of Rezzonico himself in June 1796. Undoubtedly, the vituperative nature of Gargallo's and Rezzonico's reaction to one another marred the memory of both men. Nineteenth-century biographers of both Rezzonico and Gargallo note not only how cruel and vicious the debate between them was, but lament the fact that their friends, rather than stamp out the flames of battle, provoked them to even further malice against one another in very public forums. They "fought like two ancient champions in a closed ring, where the battle would end in

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[90] "Roma. Dopo le Due Lettere di un Anonimo [...]," Giornale Letterario di Napoli per Servire di Continuazione all'Analisi Ragionata de'Libri Nuovi XLIX (April 15, 1796): 3-7.

[91] Nemesiano, Lettera di Filalete Nemesiano a Don Limone.

About this response, a later writer noted: "Incontrò pure una severa censure per parte di un Napoletano che si disse di essere il Cavaliere Tommaso Gargallo, una lettera del Conte Rezzonico sull'Adone e la Venere del Canova; ma se il critico non risparmiò l'Autor di detta lettera, nemmen questi seppe contenersi, e sotto il nome di *Filalete Nemesiano* malmenò il suo avversario, contegno per ogni riguardo biasimevole e che pregiudica sempre ai progressi dei buoni studii." Antonio Lombardi, Storia della Letteratura Italiana nel Secolo XVIII Scritta da Antonio Lombardi, vol. 3 (Modena: Tipografia camerale, 1829) 301.

[92] These epigrams are published as "Estratti dallo Zeronico"—a play on Rezzonico's name. See Tommaso Gargallo, Degli Epigrammi. Libri Due (Firenze: Nella Tipografia Chiari 1830) 73-80. I am unsure if there are more than the fourteen that are published here.

death." And, in fact, so it was that Gargallo was even accused of being the very cause of Rezzonico's death, who "died to the detriment of Italian letters." [93]

What, precisely, caused this argument remains unclear, since the two men had been on good terms prior to 1795. [94] Sometime in 1795, however, a battle between the two erupted that was of a highly personal nature. In Gargallo's autobiography, published posthumously in 1923, he suggests that he was forced to write the *Annotazioni* because of Rezzonico's mistreatment of him. According to Gargallo, Rezzonico's *Lettera* was poorly received by Neapolitan intellectuals when it was finally published. Rezzonico, furious and embarrassed, sought a scapegoat on whom to take out his anger. When Gargallo recounted the criticisms he had overheard to a third party, this traitorous friend, for his own amusement, encouraged the feud between them. It was only after being

[93] "In Napoli per l'accessibilità, che si attribuisce ai poeti, il Gargallo s'implicò in una lizza letteraria, che ebbe un funesto sèguito. Il conte Rezzonico, di cui la dottrina non era accompagnata da quella modestia, che si crede una qualità de' dotti, e che è smentita spesso da'fatti, in mezzo ad un crocchio di amici, spinse la critica sulle rime del poeta siciliano sino alla mordacità. Il sentimento personale sotto certi rapporti è capace della più grande esaltazione. Il Gargallo, che poteva giustificare l'eccesso anche de'suoi attacchi pel diritto di rispondere ad una provocazione, ricorse ai più pungenti sarcasmi. Ma che fecero gli amici, di cui la missione dovea essere tutta conciliativa? Essi spinsero i due letterati alla lizza, che cominciata per restar chiusa tra le pareti di una sala, pigliò un carattere di pubblicità. Si vide allora (cosa indegna della civiltà!) gli amici spingere ed applaudire con la voce e coi gesti i due avversari, che si battevano non altrimenti che due antichi campioni in campo chiuso, dove la lotta finiva con la morte. Nè mancò a questo spettacolo una fine tragica. Il conte Rezzonico, di cui il carattere era sensibile quanto impetuoso, colpito da apoplesia, cessò di vivere a danno delle lettere italiane." Sesti, "Biografie d'Illustri Siciliani. Tommaso Gargallo," 553-54.

Rezzonico was not exempt from blame, however. Another version of the tale suggests that his *Lettera di Filalete Nemesiano* "exceeded the limits of literary controversies." "Rezzonico non tacque, e facendo vedere quanto valeva quel maledetto *genus irritabile vatum*, schiccherò, appena migliorato da una mortal malattia che lo condusse poco dopo al sepolcro, una amara Diatriba, piena d'ingiuriose espressioni contro Gargallo, ch'eccedè i limiti della controversie letterarie." See Carlo Antonio de Rosa Villarosa, Notizie di Alcuni Cavalieri del Sacro Ordine Gerosolimitano Illustri per Lettere e per Belle Arti (Napoli: Dalla Stamperia e Cartiere del Fibreno, 1840) 168.

[94] Gargallo had written letters of introduction for Rezzonico on the latter's tour through Syracuse, and praised his work highly, while Rezzonico—according to Gargallo—had likewise praised Gargallo's writing. See Gargallo, Opere Edite ed Inedite. Memorie Autobiografiche 71. The letter from Gargallo to Saverio Landolina, August 31, 1793, is mentioned in Gaetano Curcio Bufardeci, Su le Poesie Giovanili del Marchese Tommaso Gargallo (Modica: Tipografia Fratelli Tranchina, 1910) 194. Gargallo even wrote an ode to Rezzonico, published in Tommaso Gargallo, Opere Edite ed Inedite. Poesie Italiane e Latine, eds. Marchese Filippo Francesco di Castel Lentini and Giovambattista Piccinelli, vol. 2, 4 vols. (Firenze: L. Franceschini, 1924) 256-60.

subjected to Rezzonico's slanderous verbal attacks that Gargallo finally decided to respond in print and publish the very criticisms he was wrongly accused of disseminating to begin with.[95]

Rezzonico, on the other hand, recounts a similar story that is nearly the mirror image of Gargallo's. In *Lettera di Filalete Nemesiano*, Rezzonico suggests that it was in fact *Gargallo* who was upset over criticisms of his own literary works. It appears that Gargallo had published a volume of poems in Naples in 1794 which received mixed reviews and so already had suffered a wounded ego.[96] Rezzonico, however, suggests the true source of the conflict was the reception of Gargallo's *Sonetto di Billington*, a sonnet praising the British opera singer Elizabeth Billington purportedly written by Gargallo and vehemently criticized in Naples (fig. 122).[97]

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[95] See Gargallo, Opere Edite ed Inedite. Memorie Autobiografiche 72-79.

[96] Nemesiano, Lettera di Filalete Nemesiano a Don Limone 14. Gargallo's poetry was published in 1794 as Tommaso Gargallo, Versi del Cavaliere Tommaso Gargallo. Tomo 1 (Napoli Nella Stamperia Reale, 1794). The criticism of these poems, to which Rezzonico refers, can be found in "Poesia. *Versi del Cav*. Tommas Gargallo. *Tom. I.* Napoli, nella Stamperia Reale, 1794, in 8 Vo. Grande, di Pag. 307," Memorie per Servire alla Storia Letteraria e Civile 23 (April 1795): 22-25.

[97] "IL SONETTO DELLA BILLINGTON SI È L'UNICA ORIGINE DELLE ANNOTAZIONI." Emphasis in the original. Rezzonico then goes on to reprint Gargallo's sonnet on page 22. Nemesiano, Lettera di Filalete Nemesiano a Don Limone 15, 20 and 22 respectively.

Rezzonico makes the same point to Canova himself, in a letter regarding the literary feud: "Napoli è inondata dalla mia lettera, e tutti accorrono a lo tempio di Venere, e d'Adone, ed io stesso condussi una sera il Cavaliere Acton incognito con gran giubilo dell' ottimo Marchese Berio, ed invidia degli emoli, e maligni, che osarano criticare la sua statua, e la mia lettera, e nell'una critica, e nell'altra dimostrano supina ignoranza de'primi elementi, e nessuna sagacia, od impegno che scusasse la loro malignità. Fra questi si è distinto un Pigmeo nelle lettere, una gigante nel livore, cioè il Cav. Gargallo, che ora è il ludribio di tutti per un empio sonetto schiccherato in lode della Billington, ed in biasimo di tutta Napoli." See Rezzonico in a letter to Canova, from August 18, 1795. Bassano del Grappa. I. 40. 1415. Cited in Fardella, Antonio Canova a Napoli: Tra Collezionismo e Mercato 152.

"Billington" refers to Elizabeth Billington (1768-1818), a British opera singer. In 1794 she traveled through Italy with her husband James Billington, during which time she refused all letters of introduction in an attempt to travel through the country anonymously. In Naples, however, Sir William Hamilton identified her and persuaded her to perform for the King and Queen at Caserta. She was then requested to perform at the Teatro San Carlo and appeared as the heroine of the new opera, *Inez di Castro*, written for her by Francesco Bianchi in May 1794. Her performance in Naples was interrupted by the death of her husband prior to her second performance, as he was about to accompany her to the theater. Her stay was also disrupted by the eruption of Vesuvius, which many Neapolitans believed had erupted because she

Regardless of the spark that initiated the feud, its viciousness was certainly fueled by wounded egos. Gargallo, for his part, refused to spare any aspect of Rezzonico's *Lettera* in his *Annotazioni*. Although Gargallo's criticisms are primarily rooted in Rezzonico's use of language, to which I will return, he also viciously attacks Rezzonico's sense of self-importance. Gargallo accuses Rezzonico of having an inflated sense of self worth, for instance, and berates him for including his name on the title page of his letter underneath his Arcadian identity. Such an obvious declaration of authorship, Gargallo argued, was indicative of Rezzonico's fear that he would otherwise not receive the praise that was his due.[98] Equally galling was the fact that Rezzonico did not mention or praise Marchese Berio in the text immediately, despite Gargallo's suggestion that Berio in fact financed the publication.[99]

One of Gargallo's primary criticisms, however, revolves around Rezzonico's use of technical vocabulary, particularly the language of tools.[100] Gargallo feels these phrases

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(a heretic) had been allowed to perform at San Carlo. See Olive Baldwin and Thelma Wilson, "Billington, Elizabeth," Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online, 17 Feb. 2009 < http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/03083>.

[98] "Voi con la vostra nota modestia vi avete apposto il nome arcadico di Dorillo; voi stesso in piè di pagina avete subito dichiarato che Dorillo significava Castone: dubitavate forse sotto l'arcadica denominazione non esser noto abbastanza? Perchè servirvi del nome arcade, o perchè apporvi immediatamente la nota? Si potrebbe ciò forse chiamare pedanteria, e puerilità? Eravate sempre un Giove, anche nascosto sotto l'immagine di un toro. I poeti per altro debbono prescegliere le voci più armoniose, e la definenza il *illo*, che termina il vostro nome pastorale, è più gentile della desinenza in *one*, che termine il vostro nome proprio. Castone!" [Gargallo], Alcune Annotazioni ad una Lettera di Dorillo Dafneio 16.

[99] "Voi avete pubblicata la lettera (benchè a spese dell'ottimo Marchese Berio, cui non vi siete pur degnato di nominare)[.]" [Gargallo], Alcune Annotazioni ad una Lettera di Dorillo Dafneio 16.

[100] Even one of Rezzonico's later biographer's suggests that he exaggerated the description of the tools out of an affected desire to claim "scientific" knowledge. "Avvenne che l'immortal Canova aveva scolpita pel Marchese Berio l'incomparabil gruppo di Adone e Venere. Rezzonico non tardò a farne la descrizione in una lettera al suo amico Bettinelli, grecizzando fin il nome dell'Artefice, che chiamò *Neodomo*. Non può negarsi, che in questa lettera volle far pompa di soverchia affettazione scientifica artistica, usando una esattissima descrizione de'ferri allo Scultori necessarj, come l'*ugnetta ritonda, l'affilato scalpello, la gradina dentata, la raspa mordente*. Una tal lettera gli produsse un'aspra censura anonima, che la fama divulgò, essere stata scritta dal rinomatissimo Marchese Tommaso Gargallo per l'innanzi non ultimo lodator di Rezzonico. Sia questo disgusto, che lo punse al vivo, sia che un micidial malore da un pezzo lo

to be, at best, bastardized Italian, and at worst, pompous and incomprehensible. This is prompted, in part, by Gargallo's feeling that Rezzonico has somehow overstepped his boundaries and overstated his understanding of sculptural practice. Gargallo was particularly irked that in anticipation of the publication of Rezzonico's text the citizens of Naples were in such ecstasy that they exclaimed, the "greatest writer […] writes about the greatest sculptor!" They were so overcome by this union of that "some of them even thought to engrave a special monogram, entwining a pen and a chisel."[101]

Greatness with the pen, however, would hardly lead to competency with a chisel, and it is precisely this blurring between the boundaries of writing and art that frustrates Gargallo.[102] Gargallo even suggests that Rezzonico would hardly be in the position to recognize the tools he so carefully lists, and that any technical knowledge of Canova's sculptures was indebted not to Rezzonico and his "forty years of study," but, rather, to the practical knowledge of Antonio d'Este—the director of Canova's studio and sculptor in

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minacciava, nel dì 30 agosto 1795 venne Rezzonico sorpreso da una crudele emiplessià, che gli tolse l'uso del lato sinistro. Ma essendo pur troppo vero che, *est genus irritabile Vatum*, appena Rezzonico si vide alquanto migliorato della sua pericolosa infermità pubblicò la sua difesa di risposta alle annotazioni oppostegli col titolo di *Lettera di Filalete Nemesiano* ripiena delle più alte ingurie contro il sue avversario. Ed in una tale occasione si vide rinnovata l'antica battaglia fra Annibal Caro e Ludovico Castelvetro per la Canzone del primo, che cominciava, *Venite all'Ombra de'bei Gigli d'Oro*, nella qual contesa pugnarono entrambi con somma stizza ed acerbità verificandosi spesso quel che disse un dotto Autore che *le lettere umane rendono spesso inumani i loro cultori*. Il fiero malore di violente emiplessia nuovamente assalì Rezzonico, ed in pochi minuti finì di vivere nel dì 23 Guigno 1796 in Napoli di anni 53 e mesi 10, ed ebbe tomba nella Chiesa de'PP. Crociferi al *Chiatamone*." Villarosa, Notizie di Alcuni Cavalieri del Sacro Ordine Gerosolimitano Illustri per Lettere e per Belle Arti 273-74.

[101] "Il più grande scrittore, diceano, scrive dello scultore più grande! Pensavasi fin da taluni di far incidere una specia di cifra, intrecciando una penna ed uno scarpello." [Gargallo], Alcune Annotazioni ad una Lettera di Dorillo Dafneio 4.

[102] "Vedete come somministrate sempre materia a' vostri tenebricosi critici, di adoperare l'ugnetta ritonda, la dentata gradina, l'affilato scarpello, e la mordente raspa sulla vostra ben operata, condotta, e leccata lettera, il capolavoro, il prodigio, la quintessenza di tutte le lettere, frutto di quarant'anni di studio, di quindici anni di segretariato, di dieci anni di viaggi &c. Compiagnete, signor Conte, compagniete pure la nostra ignoranza, mentre noi ridiamo allegramente della vostra dottrina." [Gargallo], Alcune Annotazioni ad una Lettera di Dorillo Dafneio 43-44.

his own right (fig. 123). [103] It must be remembered, after all, that it was d'Este who oversaw the placement of *Venus and Adonis* in Berio's tempietto, and judging by Marchesa Boccapaduli's experience, he also led visitors to see the work. D'Este may very well have discussed Canova's technical merit with those visitors (and perhaps helped dictate the particulars regarding the sculpture's display). Nonetheless, d'Este, as an artist himself, would have a better understanding of the technical aspects of carving than Rezzonico could ever have; connoisseurship that resulted from vision alone could only go so far in the absence of practical knowledge, according to Gargallo.

Not only could Rezzonico not possibly understand these aspects of Canova's work, but Gargallo questions whether Rezzonico would have the technical aptitude to make such observations on ancient sculpture, either. In his *Lettera di Dorillo Dafneio*, Rezzonico makes a comparison to the eyes of the *Venus de'Medici*, which "spark with a languid, loving laugh" because the "natural globosity" of the pupil has been rendered "smoother and flatter, revealing the roundness of the eyelid, so the shadow that it casts on

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[103] "Tutto questo periodo, come i precedenti, ove si rilevano le bellezze dell'opera, e la difficoltà superate, ben sono d'attribuirsi al signor Antonio d'Este, che venne espressamente spedito dal Canova per situare il suo gruppo. Intelligente, e valoroso artefice egli stesso, ed amicissimo dell'autore, ne sapea conoscere e ne appalesava il magistero. Ed a me, ed a moltissimi amatori delle belle arti compiaceasi egli di additare le finezze dell'opera, il che usò poi in modo particolare con voi, mio signor Conte, poichè vi accigneste a descriverla. Voi l'avete taciuto, forse per dimenticanza, ma un uomo ricco di tante lodi proprie, non è giusto che usurpi l'altrui. Al signor d'Este dobbiamo dunque le notizie dell'ugnetta, della gradina, dello scarpello, della raspa, ed a voi i vaghi epiteti di *ritonda, dentata, affilato, mordente,* ed in oltre *il cincischiare, radere, tornire, aspreggiare*, ed indi a poco altre belle cose intorno al trapano, al violino &c. Non avreste però dovuto dire *mie osservazioni* quelle, che sono altrui, perchè altrimenti diranno di voi *Aptavitque suis incongrua tegmina membris* (Avien.)." [Gargallo], Alcune Annotazioni ad una Lettera di Dorillo Dafneio 36.

Although in 1864 his son went on to publish the biography he wrote about Canova, there is surprisingly little written about d'Este himself, despite the important role he had in Canova's studio practice, not to mention his role as director of the Vatican Museums. See d'Este, Memorie di Antonio Canova; Paolo Mariuz, "d'Este, Antonio," Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani (Roma: Istituto della Enciclopedia italiana, 1991), vol. 39, 425-29; Giuseppe Pavanello, "Antonio d'Este, Amico di Canova, Scultore," Antologia di Belle Arti 35 (1990): 13-22 and Maria Rosaria Sforza, "Antonio d'Este a Roma, 1755-1803: Il Completamento della Sua Formazione tra Compravendite, Copie, Restauri e Collezioni di Antichità," Sculture Romane del Settecento, I: La Professione dello Scultore, ed. Elisa Debenedetti (Roma: Bonsignori, 2001) 261-88.

the pupil marvelously imitated that tender smile […].”[104] Even these observations, Gargallo suggests, are those of d’Este himself. (Rezzonico, for his part, defends himself by arguing that d’Este was “indignant”[105] when he read Gargallo’s criticism and that Gargallo, by arguing that d’Este was the author of these observations while simultaneously mocking them was in fact insulting d’Este himself.[106] As for his references to tools, Rezzonico argued his knowledge was gleaned through intense observation. While “contemplating the difficulties Canova surpassed […] nothing escaped the observant and diligent eye of Dorillo”; his observations will ultimately prove “necessary, useful and valuable to craftsmen.” [107] In fact, referencing the sculptor’s tools “makes clear the erudition of the writer.”[108] Finally, Rezzonico further defended himself,

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[104] “[...] negli occhi li scintilla un riso languido, amoroso, che rabbellisce tutto il suo volto; e l’artefice usò la diligenza, che nella Venere Medicea si è da sottili investigatori dell’arte avvertita. Questa consiste nel togliere alle pupille in parte la loro globosità naturale, e farle più lisce, e piatte, rilevando il giro delle palpebre, cosicchè dall’ombra, che gittano sulle pupille pel loro agetto, imitasi a maraviglia il tenero sorriso, che sibbene su espresso da Ovidio: *limis subrisit ocellis.”* Dafneio, Lettera di Dorillo Dafneio a Diodoro Delfico 11-12.

[105] “Se una menzogna apertissima d’uno sfrontato caluniatore meritasse d’essere confutata, potrei recare contro questa nota una lettera communicatami dal valoroso Antonio d’Este, il quale con indignazione lesse le malvagità qui dal critico senza rossore alcuno affastellate. Ciò non servirebbe, che a dimostrare più pienamente il vilissimo carattere di questo aborto di natura; egli è qui abbastanza conosciuto, laonde farà meglio lasciarlo gracidare nel fango de’ suoi vizj, e dell’opprobrio, che lo circonda. Ridasi piuttosto di lui, che ben ne porge occasione ad ogni tratto. Gli onesti uomini però lo compiangeranno, e l’abborriranno al tempo stesso come maldicente, e bugiardo.” Nemesiano, Lettera di Filalete Nemesiano a Don Limone 85-86.

[106] “Necessarie, ed utili, e pregiatissime faranno agli artefici le minuzie, che non approva D.L., e contemplando cogli occhi propj le difficultà dal Canova superate maneggiando con tanta destrezza il trapano, la raspa, lo scarpello, confesseranno, che nulla sfuggì all’occhio esercitato, e diligentissimo di Dorillo. E come D.L. per essere a se stesso conseguente, e ricordarsi di quanto aveva detto, non andò a rilento nell’aggomitolare sì fatte ridicole censure, temendo di ferire al tempo stesso *Tonin da Este*, che pur fece autore di tutte le osservazioni teoriche di Dorillo? I bugiardi debbono aver buona memoria; questa almeno *domi ne relinquas*.” Nemesiano, Lettera di Filalete Nemesiano a Don Limone 104.

[107] Nemesiano, Lettera di Filalete Nemesiano a Don Limone 104.

[108] “Tutti gli stromenti d’uno scultore bene indicati, e con aggiunti proprj fanno chiara la dottrina chi scrive; e se nulla giova ad ispetrare l’ottuso intendimento di D.L., egli è manifesto segno, ch’è di ferreo basalte pel colore del volto, e nella qualità dell’animo, onde poco vi ponno le lime, gli scarpelli, le raspe.” Nemesiano, Lettera di Filalete Nemesiano a Don Limone 76.

arguing that his observations on the *Venus de'Medici* were made in 1780, long before he knew d'Este.[109])

The final straw for Gargallo, however, lies in the comparison between Rezzonico's and Marchesini's text. Gargallo argues that Marchesini's lyrical contemplation of Canova's creative imagination provides the best understanding of Canova's work. According to Gargallo, this understanding does not occur despite the absence of technical language, but precisely *because of* that absence. Not only is the text better written from a grammatical point of view, but the omission of pompous and pedantic phrases makes Marchesini's meaning clearer. Similarly, Marchesini's focus on *invenzione* and the clarity and simplicity with which he expresses these ideas taps into spirit of the great artist himself. In fact, according to Gargallo, rumors abounded that Canova himself had spoken with Marchesini, revealing the intimate details of his sculptural process precisely because he had been unhappy with Rezzonico's text. Canova, it would seem, thought that Marchesini would be best able "to describe [his sentiments] in a manner most intelligible to us mortals."[110] The question, fundamentally, was one of

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[109] "Molti udirono quelle dotte ricerche, e quelle dilicate avvertenze, che saranno fatte di pubblico diritto colle stampe, ed allora Dorillo non conosceva nepur di nome *Tonin da Este*. Merita qualche attenzione il modo, col quale mai sempre cacografizzando, è detto da D.L. *Tonin da Este*, il Sig. *Antonio Este*. I Lombardi daranno del *Tognone* a chi scrive *Tonino* invece d'Antonio in una critica, che dovrebbe tutta risplendere del più fulgid'oro, che mai volgessero l'arene d'Arno." Nemesiano, Lettera di Filalete Nemesiano a Don Limone 96.

[110] "Il signor Marchello Marchesini ci ha testè data un'altra descrizione dello stesso gruppo, dove senza la strepitoso rimbombo di tanta erudizione ci ha presentato lo scultore nell'atto d'immaginare l'opera sua, rilevando con moltissimo ingegno il momento da lui prescelto per atteggiare le sue figure, e mettendogli in bocca le profonde riflessioni, onde fu preparata, e determinata la felice sua scelta. Passa indi il Marchesini a descriverne l'esecuzione, dove senza lusso di notomia, e d'epiteti mette sotto gli occhi a'lettori le due egregie statue, e mostra di partecipare di quel fuoco divino, che animò il fervido scultore. Ha sostituita ad una mal raccozzata erudizione quella, che appellasi filosofia dell'arte. Voi lavorate di tarsia; quegli di getto: quegli sente, voi riferite le sensazioni altrui, o proccurate di pescar ne'libri ciò, che dovreste sentire. Si accigne finalmente il vivace descrittor veneto ad esaminar l'opera ne'*contorni*, nell'*espressione*, e nel *panneggiamento*, nitidissima partizione, nella quale non tace alcune accuse date all'artefice, e nel rispondere istruisce, e svela maggiormente la finezza del magistero di quello. Rileva egli quell'ottima ritrovamento del cane posto, come punto d'appoggio con singolare, e dottissima avvedutezza; e pure voi

audience. To whom was Rezzonico's text meant to be addressed? Its language, Gargallo suggests, was alienating to the lay person and too narrowly focused—not to mention overstated and pompous. But Gargallo's concern presages one of the central problem's of art history even today: "Who is your audience?"

At stake, therefore, is which of the two writers had the most intimate access to the great artist's working process. Years of study and observation, Gargallo suggests, can never equal either technical understanding on the one hand (as represented by d'Este) or the untutored revelation of the artist himself. Somewhat ironically, however, Gargallo falls back on the language of tools to compare Marchesini's, Rezzonico's and Canova's expressions of sculptural practice. According to Gargallo, Rezzonico's decision to include a letter from Canova as an appendix to his text, for instance, was a terrible error for it forced a comparison between Rezzonico's text and Canova's graceful expression. The former inevitably suffered by the comparison. Gargallo exclaimed: "[W]hat grace, what naturalness and what heat of imagination in the few lines of the immortal sculptor! Canova does not "set [words], he does not inlay [them]: he writes. he feels, and writes."[111] The artist's expression about his own work, therefore, was seen as the most

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non l'avvertiste, nè so come vi sieno sfuggite così fatte osservazioni, ch'erano certamente delle più importanti. Qualche maligno ha creduto che lo stesso Canova, si gran lodatore in publico della vostra lettera, poco in segreto essondone rimasto contento, abbia svelati i suoi sentimenti a chi potea descrivergli in maniera più intelligibile a noi mortali. Marchesini non ci si annunzia come il redivivo Boccaccio, nè ci si presenta come un testo di lingua in una lettera di vero stile didascalico, tutta naturalezza, leggiadria, e sentimento: quindi ben volentieri gli si potrebbe concedere qualche negligenza, o vogliam dir licenza in taluna frase non filtrata con tutto il rigor de'precetti; benchè per altro la sua lettera non possa nè anche dirsi scritta con istile negletto, e poco elegante.

Gran meraviglia mi fa però, come egli della vostra non abbia pur fatta menzione. Non può darsi più crudel satira del silenzio. L'avevate preceduto nello stesso arringo, e non vi nomina? e non vi cura? Perdonatelo: un pigmeo come potea levar gli occhi ad un Micromegas?" [Gargallo], Alcune Annotazioni ad una Lettera di Dorillo Dafneio 50-52.

[111] "Mal vi siete avvisato, signor Dorillo, a riportare la leggiadra lettera di Canova. Il confronto non riesce per voi vantaggioso. Vedete qual grazia, qual naturalezza, qual calore di fantasia nelle poche righe dell'immortale artefice! Egli non incastona, non fa lavori di tarsia: scrivendo. sente, e scrive. I cultori delle

honest. Rezzonico, on the other hand, was guilty of the crime of so many "scholars of the fine arts"—intricately laying in one idea after another, in "leaden pedantry," and "patching together their writing." Marchesini, on the other hand, writes "clearly," as freely as Canova, with the same "naturalness, loveliness and sentiment." The freedom with which *invenzione* inspires a sketch equally inspires graceful, natural and clear writing. Connoisseurship overly weighed down by facts and information, therefore, can never provide intimate knowledge of art—all it can do, as Gargallo notes, dripping with sarcasm, is highlight a "sublime manner of making phrases."[112]

The Polemical Debate: *Ekphrasis* and The Language of Art

Gargallo's *Annotazioni*, therefore, are laden with criticisms about Rezzonico's means of expression—including his grammar, manipulation and misuse of Italian words, rambling and pedantic sentences, and even his translations from Greek and Latin.[113] Although one anonymous writer (Marchesini himself?) laments that Gargallo's single-mindedness on style neglects the true content of Rezzonico's argument,[114] one might

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belle arti quando si danno a far lavori di tarsia, è pure un cattivo segno. La *plumbea* pedanteria (vedete come comincio ad imitarvi) non ha luogo tra le muse. Chi scrive lavorando di tarsia, o sia rattopando i suoi scritti, come il mantello del piovano Arlotto, abbandoni pure la *bifida* penna, il premente torchio, e la candida carta, o vero tutto al più s'applichi a scriver comenti, note e vocabularj. *Ad metalla*, a'lavori di schiena l'ha sciaguratamente condannato l'implacabile Genio persecutore degli Orbilj, degli Scioppj, de'Prisciani, e de'Conti Castoni." [Gargallo], Alcune Annotazioni ad una Lettera di Dorillo Dafneio 50-52.

[112] "*Eppure* vermante non va scritto così, benchè ciò non meriti attenzione, ove siegue sì tosto quel *mischiare il taglio de' ferri per impastar le tinte*, sublime maniera di fraseggiare, tolta da una profonda cognizione della statuaria, e che vi mostra maraviglioso conoscitore." [Gargallo], Alcune Annotazioni ad una Lettera di Dorillo Dafneio 39.

[113] See [Gargallo], Alcune Annotazioni ad una Lettera di Dorillo Dafneio 25-26, 34 and 41.

[114] "Che miseria! censurare una produzione letteraria, e censurarla con tanta leggierezza! Fermarsi sull'analasi de'vocaboli, sulla notomia delle frasi, sull'armonia de'periodi! senza parlare dell'argomento! senza entrare nell'esame dell'aggiustatezza delle idee, della solidità de'pensieri! e in Italia! nel secolo il più illuminato! nella stagione in cui si considerano assai più le cose, che le parole!" Later in the text he makes a similar argument: "Diremo, ch'ella è cosa ridicola il feramarsi sopra sì fatte freddure, e ripetendo ciò che

argue that Gargallo's criticism of language is in fact the very crux of the matter. That is to say, Gargallo's obsession with expression, rather than content, reveals that language and means of expression go hand in hand with both understanding and expressing ideas on the fine arts. Although Gargallo complains that one of the causes for the decline of the fine arts is a lack of connoisseurs,[115] he likewise argues that whoever understands the fine arts "doesn't waste time in soliciting and wedging in words.[116] Rezzonico, on the other hand, argues that language and study are fundamental to the appreciation of the fine arts. For him, they are part of a long symbiotic relationship between art and literature. Even Rezzonico's inclusion of Canova's letter as an appendix to his text was an attempt to align Canova with other great artists who had written about their work.[117] The reactions of both Gargallo and Rezzonico, therefore, reveal that it is simply impossible to separate criticism and connoisseurship from their expression and *ekphrastic* form. This remains a central problem in art history. Language and image are both representations in their own

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abbiamo già detto fin dal principio di questa analisi, soggiugneremo, che la vera critica guarda la sostanza, non la corteccia, e che il garrire sopra un vocabolo, sopra una lettera ec. è un *perdi-tempo* fuor di stagione." "[Review of] Alcune Annotazioni ad una Lettera di Dorillo Dafnejo. Opera Senza Data, e Senza Nome Tipografico, d'autore Anonimo. In 8 Vo. di Pag 55, che Gira per Napoli, e che Si Vende da Varj Libraj Al Prezzo di Carlini 2. la Copia," 70 and 78, respectively.

[115] "Una delle principali cagioni della decadenza delle belle arti è appunto la mancanza di buoni conoscitori. Chi vuol cooperare a farle risorgere , bisogna ben misurar le lodi degli artefici; e facendone conoscere e le bellezze, e i difetti, servir così al grande obbietto di formare il gusto degli estimatori. Voglio inserirne che l'adulazione riesce anch'essa di remora al progresso dell'arti." [Gargallo], Alcune Annotazioni ad una Lettera di Dorillo Dafneio 31.

[116] "Chi coltiva le belle arti; chi vanta ingegno più che divino, non perde il suo tempo a mendicare ed incastrar paroluzze, da risultarne un tutto simile alla vostra lettera, che Dio ne guardi i cani. Messer Fidenzio che avete studiato, viaggiato, *dogmatizzato*; messer Prosone, che avete prosato, e siete stato prosato, vi bacio umilmente le mani, e sospendo intanto di scrivere, aspettando qualche vostro novello invito." [Gargallo], Alcune Annotazioni ad una Lettera di Dorillo Dafneio 55.

[117] Rezzonico compares the letter to the one which Raphael wrote to Castiglione about his *Galatea*. See Dafneio, Lettera di Dorillo Dafneio a Diodoro Delfico 16.

right, but one of the problems perpetually plaguing art historians is the question of whether verbal description can ever truly capture the visual.

The profusion of *ekphrastic* texts in the late eighteenth century was both the product of a new interest in connoisseurship *and* the result of the extremely social manner in which art was reviewed, examined and received.[118] The salon settings discussed in chapter one, for instance, are the perfect example of the way an evening of social interaction could be organized around a work of art. In addition to treatises and longer open letters, songs, poems, epigrams, and inscriptions all circulated about works of art—Canova's in particular.[119] His *Venus and Adonis*, for instance, prompted poems by both Rezzonico and Gargallo, and even the frontispiece of Marchesini's text opened with a poem by Sig. Abate Santucci.[120] In this case, then, writing about a work of art was both a

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[118] Reading the texts, of course, were also pleasurable in and of themselves, as indicated by the responses of Rezzonico's friends, who enjoyed his works. For instance, in a letter to Conte Giovanni Battista Giovio on February 9, 1796, Rezzonico says it gives him pleasure to hear the latter enjoyed his letter on Adonis and Venus. "Godo, che siavi piaciuta la mia lettera sul gruppo d'Adone e Venere." Castone, Opere del Cavaliere Carlo Castone Conte della Torre di Rezzonico. Corrispondenza Epistolare con Illustri Letterati del Cavaliere Carlo Castone Conte della Torre di Rezzonico 114.

[119] The number of poems written about Canova's sculpture in general is simply vast. One need only to glance at the *Biblioteca Canoviana* to get a sense of just how much literature was produced at the time. See Pochini, Biblioteca Canoviana, ossia Raccolta delle Migliori Prose, e de' più Scelti Componimenti Poetici sulla Vita, sulle Opere ed in Morte di Antonio Canova.

[120] Gargallo's poem, S*onnetto VII A Fillide che osserva il gruppo di Venere e Adone del Canova*, reads "Simile è al tuo quel viso in marmo scolto, /Che incanta di piacer le tue pupille:/Fillide, al vagheggiar quel caro volto, /Non provi in tel quel che condanni in mille? /Del dolce ardor, ne'caldi membri accolto, /Par che a la Dea dagli occhi escan faville; /Parla il suo sguardo, al vago Adone rivolto…/Ah! in questo sol non le somigli, o Fille. /Ma no: simile a te no più non crede/ La muta immago chi vicino a quella/Le tue sembianze primeggiare or vede. /Deh! se a l'amica Dea farti rubella, /Fille, non vuoi, deh! volgi altrove il piede, /E le scema il rossor d'esser men bella." See Gargallo, Opere Edite ed Inedite. Poesie Italiane e Latine 374-75.

Sig. Abate Santucci's sonnet reads "Si l'omero d'Adon languidamente/ Venere s'abbandona: il roseo volto / Dolce a lui tocca; e il velo trasparento/ Dal rilievo fianco erra disciolto. / Qual chì nel core un doppio affetto sente/ Ei la guata, sorride, e in se raccolto/ Sembra obliar le selve e dolcemente/ La stringe; e in dardo pende al suol rivolto./Par che un bacio a scoccar non sia lontano: / Credo vivi quegli atti, e sol m'avveggio, /Che m'ingannai nell'appressar la mano. /Un sasso è questo? ah che ne'bei sudori /Dell'Adriaco Scultor rapirsi io veggio /Alla Grecia vetusa i primi onori." See Marchesini, Sul Gruppo d'Adone e Venere del Signor Antonio Canova, Posseduto dal ... Marchese Berio. Lettera di Marcello Marchesini ... al ... Conte D. Faustino Tadini frontispiece.

way of contributing to its public understanding and a fundamental part of the viewing experience in the late eighteenth century.[121] Transforming observation into a larger literary and performative experience—given, after all, that most of these poems and texts were then read aloud in public settings[122] —may have been seen, in part, as imitation of the very actions of the ancients themselves. At the same time, these texts became crucial to the viewer's relationship with the work, for both the writing and *reading* of them became part and parcel of connoisseurship itself.[123]

Neoclassicism was not simply a style of art, therefore, but a style of thought that depended on a neoclassical education, as Viccy Coltman has argued. Education and material culture went hand in hand, so that not only were libraries a prime site for the preservation, reception and display of antiquity, but at the same time, the books they held became crucial to the understanding of both classical and contemporary objects.[124] The

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Cesare della Valle, Duca di Ventignano, likewise wrote a poem on the work. See Cesare della Valle, Lalage Nello Studio di Canova (Napoli: Tipografia di Angelo Trani, 1814) 22-24.

[121] Likewise, these texts can complement prints of the work that circulate, and sometimes even stand in for the viewing experience itself, if the reader is not able to see the work in person.

[122] Rezzonico's text was read aloud both in the Accademia dell'Arcadia, and in front of Canova's statue at Berio's palazzo itself.

Garagallo suggests Rezzonico's text was to be read aloud at the Accademia dell'Arcadia in [Gargallo], Alcune Annotazioni ad una Lettera di Dorillo Dafneio 14. The suggestion that Rezzico's text was read aloud in front of the sculpture comes from Rezzonico himself in Nemesiano, Lettera di Filalete Nemesiano a Don Limone 75.

[123] This holds throughout the nineteenth century, as many works of art were accompanied by pamphlets or textual descriptions to assist the viewer in his examination of the work, and, in particular, to ensure they took away the proper moral meaning. One iconic example is that of Hiram Power's *White Slave* which was accompanied by a pamphlet that directed the beholder's attention and attempted to contain the erotic elements of the work. See Joy S. Kasson, "Mind in Matter in History: Viewing the Greek Slave," The Yale Journal of Criticism 11.1 (Spring 1998): 79-83.

[124] Viccy Coltman, Fabricating the Antique: Neoclassicism in Britain, 1760-1800, 1st ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006).

Text could also contribute to the *misunderstanding* of objects. The Gargallo/Rezzonico aftermath that is published in the Neapolitan journals, for instance, revolves around whether Greek temples had one or two doors, but the authors cite Greek and Roman authors indiscriminately. These citations quickly become a problem given the fact that while Greek temples do, at times, have two doors, Roman temples do

book, therefore, simply could not be separated out from a critical examination of the fine arts. Reading and writing were as crucial to the experience as looking itself. For eighteenth-century connoisseurs, contemporary authors were praised and cited—Rezzonico explicitly points out, for instance, that whoever has read and studied Winckelmann will be able to understand the heroic proportions of Canova's *Venus and Adonis* "at a glance."[125] Ancient texts were as, if not more, useful. Those writers not only had had direct contact with the ancient masterpieces upon which the doctrine of imitation was based but their descriptions could also be readily applied to modern works. Not only were the mythological subjects and sculpting techniques of ancient and modern artists similar to one another, but what better way was there to reinforce the parallels between antiquity and the eighteenth century than the use of ancient texts? In a letter to Canova, for instance, Rezzonico brags that in his "Grecian work," he used "many Greek phrases taken from poets and writers that spoke of the *Cnidian Venus*," and he even "wanted to turn your [Canova's] name into Greek, substituting that of Praxiteles in an epigram of the anthology." [126] Examining Rezzonico's text in this light, then, explains this dependence

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not. This misunderstanding points to and contributes to the lack of differentiation in the late eighteenth-century understanding of Greek versus Roman art and architecture. I am grateful to Dr. John Hopkins for discussing this issue with me.

[125] "Chi però sulle statue de'Greci abbia alquanto erudite le pupille, e siasi rese famigliari le profonde osservazioni di Winkelmanno, saprà d'un colpo d'occhio raffigurare queste forme, e queste eroiche proporzioni, che per l'esercizio dell'erranti cacce si vanno già dispiegando nell'allungate giunture delle mani, e delle gambe, e promettono d'assumere un carattere atletico per le future fatiche del Pancrazio nel fiorente, ed ampio torace, ne'fianchi ristretti, ne'popliti agilissimi, e nelle braccia nervose, ma non ancora risentite, nè segnate da gonfj muscoli, che nel molle epiderma giacciono tuttavia spenti, e sepolti." Dafneio, Lettera di Dorillo Dafneio a Diodoro Delfico 6-7.

Winckelmann's place in the neoclassical education was reaffirmed by the fact that visitors would make certain to read his texts before visiting museums—which necessarily affected their way of seeing the works in front of them. See Elisabeth Chevallier, "L'œuvre d'art dans le temps. Comment on a vu le Laocoon et l'Apollon du Belvedere à la fin du XVIIIè siècle, d'après la relation d'un voyageur allemand venu à rome en 1783. Naissance et disparition d'une mode," Aiôn: le temps chez les Romains, ed. Raymond Chevallier, Caesarodunum; 10 Bis (Paris: A. & J. Picard, 1976) 333-53.

on the ancient texts he so often cites. The verses of Theocritus encapsulate the beauty of Adonis and the sweetness of his kiss;[127] Ovid captures the spark of Venus' glance;[128] and who better to describe the translucent tunic that drapes around body of Venus than Seneca, Pliny the Elder, Marcus Valerius Martialis, Horace and Sextus Aurelius Propertius, all of whom would have witnessed those very fabrics clinging to the hips of beautiful Greek women.[129]

These ancient texts do not merely reference the art of the past, however, but also bring forth the *lived* experience of the ancients themselves. That is, the citation allows the reader/viewer to recreate the experience of the past imaginatively and create parallels between their modern experience and that of the ancients. Rezzonico, for instance, suggests that Canova himself is part of this resurrection of antiquity; *Venus and Adonis* is so splendid that one cannot but suspect the soul of Praxiteles himself transmigrated into

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[126] Rezzonico was proud to include so many Greek excerpts, and says as much in a letter to Canova. Letter from Rezzonico to Canova, March 20, 1795. "Sono da più giorni occupatissimo a descrivere il suo bellissimo gruppo d'Adone e Venere, che piu volte di giorno, e di notte al lume delle candele hò contemplato a mio bell'agio per istamparlo nella memoria. Mi lusingo, ch'Ella sarà contento delle mie osservazioni, e vedrà, che nulla hò voluto ommettere di tutto ciò, che poteva rilevarne le bellezze, il pensiero, l'intenzione, l'artificio. In un grecanico lavoro mi sono servito di molte grecaniche frasi tolte a'Poeti; ed agli Scrittori, che parlarono della Venere Cnidia, e perfino hò voluto rivolegere in Greco il suo nome, sosituendolo a quella di Prassitele in un epigramma dell'antologia." Bassano del Grappa, I. 40. 1414. Cited in Fardella, Antonio Canova a Napoli: Tra Collezionismo e Mercato 151.

[127] "Il simulacro di Adone gareggia con quei mollissimi versi del Siciliano Teocrito, che sì vivamente ne dipingono la fresca età, e la bellezza [...che] Potrebbero così suonare in Italiano: *Il vago Adon dalle rosate braccia, /Lontan d'un anno, o due dal quarto lustro, / Già di Venere Sposo. A lui d'intorno/ Le bionde labbra ancor non punge il bacio."*

[128] "Questa consiste nel togliere alle pupille in parte la loro globosità naturale, e farle più lisce, e piatte, rilevando il giro delle palpebre, cosicchè dall'ombra, che gittano sulle pupille pel loro agetto, imitasi a maraviglia il tenero sorriso, che sibbene su espresso da Ovidio: *limis subrisit ocellis.*" Dafneio, Lettera di Dorillo Dafneio a Diodoro Delfico 11-12.

[129] "Seneca, Plinio, Marziale, e prima di questi Orazio, e Properzio fecero menzione delle coe, delle bombicine, e Petronio con vivissima frase chiamolle nebbie tessute, e Suida tuniche interlucenti, e penetrabili allo sguardo." Dafneio, Lettera di Dorillo Dafneio a Diodoro Delfico 14.

the body of Canova.[130] For those mere mortals who might not be endowed with the talents of the ancient Greek masters, they can, at least, relive the viewing experience of the ancients. When summoning forth the marvel that Callicrates, one of the architects of the Parthenon, felt when confronted with Praxiteles' *Cnidian Venus,* Rezzonico suggests Callicrates would express the very same emotions and even utter the very same exclamations if he were confronted with Canova's *Venus and Adonis*. Eliminating any understanding that Callicrates would have venerated the *Cnidian Venus* as a *goddess,* Rezzonico's instead describes Callicrates' reaction as a purely aesthetic one. Callicrates' encounter with the *Cnidian Venus* is reimagined as an exhibition like that of Canova's *Venus and Adonis*. Aesthetic appreciation, wonder and marvel in the face of a work of art are therefore presented as timeless and universal, uniting the classical past and "this most illustrious century."[131]

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[130] "[...] Adone, e Venere, opera dell'Egregio Antonio Canova, che sembrami nato per acquistar fede a dommi della Pittagorica Scuola intorno alla trasmigrazione delle anime; imperrochè ognuno direbbe in lui trapassata quella di Prassitele, per fingere nuovamente i Cupidini, e le Veneri, onde salirono in tanta fama nella Beozia Thespi, e nella Doride Gionica Cnido." Dafneio, Lettera di Dorillo Dafneio a Diodoro Delfico 3.

[131] "L'Ateniese Callicratide, il quale più volentieri avrebbe contemplato il Cupidine di Prassitele, che non la Venere Cnidia, nulla disse, finchè la vide di faccia, e lasciò che Caricle a piene labbra la baciasse distendendo quanto più poteva il collo, e ricolmo d'insania, e d'amoroso furore chiamasse pur beato Marte, che per cagione della Dea fu stretto nella rete di Vulcano; ma quando si aprì la porta posteriore del Tempietto, e si manifestò le bellezza del dorso, ne stupirono tutti gli astanti, e Callicratide veggendo la membra della Dea, che piacciono ne'giovanetti, in un modo più insano di Caricle si pose ad esclamare. Per Ercole! quanta concinnità negli omeri? Ve' come mai tumidi s'alzano i fianchi ad empiere tutta la capacità delle mani, che d'intorno vi si foggiano per brancicarli! Ed oh come le carni ben condotte dell'anche in se tondeggiano, nè troppo tenui, e strette all'ossa, nè troppo diffuse in soverchia pinguedine! Ma ridir non si può quanto sia dolce il riso delle forme, che impresse quinci, e quindi si segnano dall'unione delle cluni, e quanto esatte siano le misure del femore, e dalla gamba infino al piede rettamente distesa. Così parlò Callicratide ammirando la Venere di Prassitele, e così avrebbe, se avesso potuto contemplare quella di Canova." Dafneio, Lettera di Dorillo Dafneio a Diodoro Delfico 9-10.

Although unrelated to the debate between Rezzonico and Gargallo, it seems fitting here to introduce an anecdote of *Venus and Adonis* recounted by Stendhal in his *Memoirs of Rossini*. Stendhal records an incident in which an educated man of taste celebrates Canova's work using precisely the same language as a "savage" who was awed by his first encounter with a wooden head wearing a wig. Stendhal argues that the fact that both men would use the same language reveals that the admiration of an object does not prove the value of the object itself, but rather, only the degree to which the admirers have been enraptured by it—and that enchantment was not only timeless, but could cross class boundaries as well.

Although Gargallo loathes these citations for their obfuscating nature—not to mention for what he sees as the indulgent self-promotion of Rezzonico's own erudition[132]— Rezzonico includes them precisely because they enable him—and his readers—to *see* more clearly; one learns to look through the process of reading. For Rezzonico, an education in the classical texts and the understanding of contemporary sculpture go hand in hand. In a letter to Canova, for instance, he brags how Canova "will have well recognized in my words my tireless study of every most abstruse theory. [I have studied] in order to savor each aspect of the Greek [and the] beautiful, and ascend to the source with philosophical meditation [,] since the craftsman who does not reason and imagine will not succeed in reaching the apex of imitation." Conversely, "although many [people] boast that they appreciate works of art, [and] speak plenty about them, very few have studied enough to understand well the depth of the skill of the ancients, and those rare moderns who approach them." [133]

"Canova racontait une petite anecdote qu'il tenait d'un de ses admirateurs d'Amérique. Il s'agit d'un sauvage qui, il a quelques années, se trouva vis-à-vis d'une tête à perruque, à *Cincinnati*. Canova montrait un petit écrit de huit lignes; c'était la traduction des expressions d'étonnèment et d'enthousiasme qui échappèrent au sauvage à la vue de cette tête de bois, la première imitation de la figure humaine qu'il eût jamais rencontrée. Ce que la modestie de Canova, le plus doux et le plus simple des hommes, l'empêchait d'ajouter, nous le disions pour lui. Un homme de goût, en voyant son groupe sublime de Vénus et Adonis chez M. le marquis Berio à Naples, où le grand sculpteur nous montre la déesse agitée d'un pressentiment funeste en disant le dernier adieu à son amant qui part pour la chasse où il doit périr; un homme du goût le plus délicat, en voyant ce chef-d'œuvre admirable de la grâce la plus divine et du sentiment le plus fin (1), exprime son admiration précisément dans les mêmes termes que le sauvage. C'est que dans le fait, l'admiration extrême de ces deux hommes, l'effet produit sur leur âme est absolument le même, il n'y a d'exception que dans le cas trop commun où l'admirateur de Canova se trouve être un pédant, qui veut d'abord de fair admirer. Toute la différence est dans *l'óbjet extérieur* qui excite le même degré d'admiration et de ravissement chez des êtres d'ailleurs si différents. Il est trop évident que les paroles d'admiration dans les arts ne prouvent jamais que le degrée de ravissement de l'homme qui admire, et nullement le degré de mérite de la chose admirée. " Stendhal, Vie de Rossini 420-22.

[132] Of course, by contributing to and participating in this long *ekphrastic* history through the production of his own texts, Rezzonico also reaffirms the strength of his education.

[133] In a letter to Canova dated August 18, 1795, Rezzonico writes: "Avevami di già prevenuto il Sig d'Este del favorevole incontro, che ottenne la mia lettera intorno al suo bel gruppo di Venere e d'Adone; ora mi vien confermata la sua approvazione colla lettera scrittami da lei stessa in data del primo del corrente agosto. Godo che le mie considerazioni sull'arte siano a lei piaciute, e ch'io abbia saputo toccare tutti i

Not only must viewers and connoisseurs base their observations in their classical education, but *patrons* of the fine arts are likewise required to exhibit the same degree of erudition. Responsible for the commissions of works of art that enable the arts—and therefore society itself—to prosper, patrons were also accountable for the very practical tasks of exhibiting, showcasing and explaining the works of art they purchased. Rezzonico, for instance, does not refrain from telling Canova how much he despises the *tempietto* that houses *Venus and Adonis*, which he "did not like at all, either in my capacity as an antiquarian or as a connoisseur of architecture." Not only does he disapprove of the "serious Doric" columns, preferring instead the "graceful style of the Corinthian," but he dislikes the reliefs on the frieze. These "should have represented the famous funeral processions made for the death of this famous youth [Adonis], of which Theocritus left us such a beautiful description"—thus completing the narrative suspended in Canova's sculpture. Likewise, the "light should have fallen from above, and therefore what was needed was to open a small cupola, as in the tribune in Florence and in all the famous galleries I have seen in France, Holland and England." Rezzonico certainly lays some of the blame at the feet of the architect for "having been perfectly ignorant" of all

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punti più degni di lode, e più difficili ad eseguirsi non meno dall'artefice, che a ben conoscersi dall'amatore. Molto si vantano di gustare i lavori dell'arte, e ne parlano assai; pochissimi hanno fatto gli studj necessarj per ben'intendere la profondità del magistero degli antichi, e de'rarissimi moderni che a loro s'accostano. Ella che tanto a' quei sublimi esemplari si avvicina, e supera di gran lunga quei maestri che in Roma si avevano usurpato la gloria dei romani artefici, avrà ben conosciuto nelle mie parole lo studio indefesso d'ogni più astrusa teoria da me fatto per gustare ogni parte del greco Bello, e salire alle fonti con la meditazione filosofica imperocché l'artefice, che non ragiona e combina, non giunge a toccar l'apice dell'imitazione. Quindi [poi?] sempre ho ritrovato eloquenti, ed animati ne'loro discorsi gli artefici di grido, allorché gli hò messi sul discorsi dell'arte loro, e quegli che ascoltava balbetticare, e confondersi, connobbi poi sempre di poco o di nessun valore. Egli è impossibile aver piena la testa di belle sublimi idee e d'osservazioni delicate, e non parlarne adeguatamente, benchè in termini rozzi e volgari, ma energici, e pieni di verità. Mi ricorderò sempre le parole di quel popolare in S. Pietro riguardando la Religione che stassi con tanta maestà presso la tomba del nostro Pontefice. Oh! La bella maga, egli esclamò, ed io non avrei potuto meglio lodarla. Desidero poter a suo tempo descrivere Ercole e Lica, ed Ebe farà si che ogni mia descrizione ceda alla vista del suo lavoro." MBAB, I.40.1415, cited in Fardella, Antonio Canova a Napoli: Tra Collezionismo e Mercato 151-52.

these foreign examples, "like most of our architects, who are mere practitioners and do not study the principles of art and do not consult the ancients."

It is Berio, however, that "cannot be forgiven" for these errors—"for he has traveled."[134] Even if Berio was working with an architect whose knowledge was provincial at best, he, as an erudite man of letters, should have consulted the ancient sources for the construction of his *tempietto*. More importantly, however, having been to the great museums in Europe, he should have referred to their installations as well. These museums, as noted earlier, utilized dramatic displays to exhibit objects and were quickly becoming the standard by which all other exhibitions were judged. Not only did the institutionalization of art objects in museums secure their authenticity and set the standard for the quality of "high" art, but museums also set the standard for exhibitions in private collections as well. If a collector did not keep up with the times and utilize these new exhibition techniques, he was opening himself up for criticism, as did Berio. Just as training in the classics could add to one's status as a connoisseur, conversely, ignoring the model of antiquity—or worse yet, disregarding the most modern of artistic institutions, the museum—could reflect poorly on an individual.[135]

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[134] "Il tempio per nulla mi é piaciuto né come antiquario, né come intelligente di architeturra. Il lezioso Corintio, e non il grave Dorico si conveniva a Venere, ed Adone, e nel fregio dovevasi esprimere la celebre pompa de' sagrificij per la morte di quel famoso giovanetto, di cui Teocrito ci ha lasciato una così bella descrizione. In oltre il lume doveva cader dall'alto, e percio faceva mestiere aprire un cupolino, come nella tribuna di Firenze, e in tutte le celebri gallerie da me vedute in Francia, in Olanda, in Inghilterra. Non perdono al M^{se} Berio, che hà viaggiato, un tale errore; l'architetto, che lo hà servito ignora perfettamente tutto ciò, come la maggior parte de'nostri, che sono meri prattici, e non istudiano i principj del'arte, e non consultano gli antichi." Letter from Rezzonico to Canova, dated March 20, 1795. Carteggio Canoviano, Bassano del Grappa, I.40. 1414. Reprinted in Fardella, Antonio Canova a Napoli: Tra Collezionismo e Mercato 151.

[135] At issue here, of course, is the relationship between museums and private collections. Rezzonico's comment on lighting techniques clearly suggests that Berio should have utilized techniques similar to the great museums of Europe.

Qualifying Connoisseurship: Neapolitan Character

Despite Rezzonico's displeasure with Berio's *tempietto*, it is telling that throughout his entire feud with Gargallo, the only truly critical statements he expresses over the exhibition of Canova's work are in a private letter sent to Canova himself. Rezzonico's reticence about these complaints in print, although partially explained by the fact that Berio may have financed his publication, also ties to my final point regarding this polemic. Running throughout Rezzonico's feud with Gargallo is, after all, the question of how a connoisseur can appropriately express dissatisfaction with a work of art or a literary text. Criticism that blurred into satire would not only distract from the true issue at hand, but would undoubtedly reflect badly on the critic himself. More importantly, however, criticism could even have broader nationalist implications.

I have already noted that part of the argument between Gargallo and Rezzonico stemmed from the means by which Rezzonico expressed himself, by citing classical phrases and technical vocabulary. Equally important, however was the way that Gargallo's criticism itself was expressed. His anonymous review, filled as it was with pointed critiques, was slammed by Rezzonico for being "full of villainous wedges, childishness, blunders, of obvious lies, or proven thefts, that dishonor you, and curse you, slanderer, ignoramus, imposter, and liar, among other things."[136] Undoubtedly Rezzonico's powerful counterattack was the product of a wounded ego, but the anonymous response to Gargallo's criticism in the September issue of *Effemeridi Enciclopediche* also objected to Gargallo's tone. It was not just the focus on style over

[136] "Ed ecco alcune da voi dette *annotazioni ad una lettera di Dorillo Dafnejo* piene zeppe di villanie, di puerilità, di strafalcioni, di apertissime menzogne, di provati furti, che vi disonorano, e vi dichiarano maledico, calunniatore, ignorante, impostore, e bugiardo quant'altri mai." Nemesiano, Lettera di Filalete Nemesiano a Don Limone 6.

substance that diminished Gargallo's critique, but the way Gargallo's entire text went "against the laws of moderation and decency."[137] Particularly disturbing was Gargallo's refusal to reveal his own identity; "educated criticism" can always be expressed openly between "honest men." "Only satire [is] accompanied always by malignancy, and bile and bitter sarcasm [...]."[138]

Equally problematic, however, was the way that Gargallo claimed *other* individuals reacted to Rezzonico's text. Gargallo's argument, for instance, that Canova privately expressed unhappiness with Rezzonico's text and then encouraged Marchesini to publish a treatise that better expressed his personal views on the sculpture, is vehemently criticized in the *Effemeridi.* Such a claim, the author writes, "deserves to be rebuked and staunched" for Canova's "moderation and candor" is too well known to "charge him with the double reproach of both having lied to a praiseworthy colleague,

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[137] "Tutto questo pezzo è veramente pungente; e quantunque sia scritto meravigliosamente bene, non si può a meno di non compiagnere l'abuso, che fa il N.A. della sua abilità, e delle sue cognizioni, contro le leggi della moderazione, e della decenza, ec." "[Review of] Alcune Annotazioni ad una Lettera di Dorillo Dafnejo. Opera Senza Data, e Senza Nome Tipografico, d'autore Anonimo. In 8 Vo. di Pag 55, che Gira per Napoli, e che Si Vende da Varj Libraj Al Prezzo di Carlini 2. la Copia," 69.

[138] "Noi non sappiamo veramente il motivo per cui il brillantissimo autore di queste annotazioni abbia voluta cuoprire il suo nome sotto il velo impenetrabile del mistero. La dotta critica temer non dee di comparire, a faccia scoperta, fra il consorzio degli uomini onesti. Ella fu sempre accolta con giubilo, e con estimazione da tutti gli onorati individui, che compongono la letteraria repubblica, come quella, che armata la mano d'una sferza di rose, col mezzo delle saggie sue osservazioni, seppe promuovere in tutt'i tempi, lo spirito d'emulazione fra'dotti; dal che poi tanti vantaggi ne trassero le scienze profonde non meno, che le belle Lettere. La satira soltanto, che accompagnata sempre dalla malignità, dall' atrabile, e dall'amaro sarcasmo, attacca indistintamente e lo scrittore, e gli scritti, essendo stata proscritta dalla vera sapienza, dalla urbanità, e dalla gentilezza, dal collegio degli uomini culti, e studiosi, è condannata a ravvilupparsi, e nascondersi, ed a comparir sempre da equivoci cenci ricoperta, allora che come di contrabbando, ardisce di mettere il piede entro que'confini, che le furono per sempre interdetti. Nel ricercar la cagione, che il N.A. determinò a non permettere che del suo nome onorato venisse il suo opuscolo, noi non vogliamo farla da giudici, col decidere se questo opuscolo medesimo meriti piuttosto il nome di *satira* , che quello di *critica*." "[Review of] Alcune Annotazioni ad una Lettera di Dorillo Dafnejo. Opera Senza Data, e Senza Nome Tipografico, d'autore Anonimo. In 8 Vo. di Pag 55, che Gira per Napoli, e che Si Vende da Varj Libraj Al Prezzo di Carlini 2. la Copia," 64-65.

and of having been two-faced, praising him in public, while frowning upon his letter in private."[139]

It is not only Canova, however, who is maligned by Gargallo's text, but even the Neapolitans themselves. At the core of the Gargallo-Rezzonico dispute, after all, was each writer's claim that the other had been mocked in Neapolitan literary circles. Gargallo, for instance, suggested that Neapolitans "laughed in [Rezzonico's] face" after reading the *Lettera di Dorillo Dafneio.* He implied that Rezzonico, irate, "in the middle of patient abbots, kind women and clever *waiters*, began to thunder against Neapolitan blindness, ignorance, and audaciousness." Rezzonico supposedly bellowed, "unhappy Naples! You are inhabited only by the most ignorant of men; I am mute to you; you are deaf to me."[140]

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[139] "Quel maligno però nominato dal nostro anonimo, che sospettò ingiustamente avere il Canova al detto Marchesini somministrati i suoi sentimenti, onde comporre il dilui scritto, merita d'essere censurato e convinto. È troppo nota la moderazione, ed il candore d'esso Canova, per caricarlo della doppia censura e di aver mendicato dal nostro collega un elogio, e di essere stato bilingue, lodando in pubblico, e disapprovando in privato la lettera del Sig. Conte Rezzonico." "[Review of] Alcune Annotazioni ad una Lettera di Dorillo Dafnejo. Opera Senza Data, e Senza Nome Tipografico, d'autore Anonimo. In 8 Vo. di Pag 55, che Gira per Napoli, e che Si Vende da Varj Libraj Al Prezzo di Carlini 2. la Copia," 88-89.

[140] "Partoriste finalemente [*La Lettera*], e gìa credevate aver discoperto lo scudo di Atlante di Carena, e stavate già intento ad osservare nel pubblico il bagliore di tanto lume. Qual diverso effetto! leggono, sogghignano….si crederebbe? vi ridono in faccia.

Ecco i primi scoppj della vostra terribile collera. Voi gli rivolgeste contro un vostro amico, poichè al vostro moderattisimo amor proprio tornava più comodo certamente l'attribuire ad un solo la mala voce data alla vostra diatriba, e il persuadervi poi che i divulgati clamori fossero l'eco della voce di un solo. Così vi ostinaste a credere, e a declamare, ma il mondo non criticavano; ridea. Cresce in voi la collera, nella gente il riso. Già vi mostrate informato da tutto l'estro dello sdegno; *pectus anbelum, & rabie fera corda tument.* Vi attaccano anche nella lingua? Evvi già necessario un luogo, che risuoni alle vostre furibonde declamazioni. Irti i pochi e canuti capelli, infiammati i loschi e cispicosi occhi, eravate divenuto una vera Sibilla. *Iræ nondum patiens immanis in antro bacchatur vates.* La passeggiata di Chiaja, la chiesa di S. Giacomo, il teatro di S. Carlo divennero il vostro antro cumano. Ivi in mezzo a pazienti abati, a cortesi donne, ad ingegnosi *ripostieri* contro la cecità, l'ignoranza, l'audacia napoletana cominciaste a tuonare altamente. Criticar me, è un mostrarsi inscio, e di crassa minerva, è un criticar Bembo, e Boccaccio. Napoli infelice! Tu non sei abitata che da ignarissimi uomini; io sono a te muto; a me tu sei sorda. Oh nefanda spavalderia." [Gargallo], Alcune Annotazioni ad una Lettera di Dorillo Dafneio 6-7.

Later in the text, Gargallo even plays off the very vocabulary Rezzonico utilizes. "Ma che sbalzi son questi? Volete scrivere in punta di forchetta, e favorite dirci che *le forme accusano un eroe?* Accusare in buon italiano non ha altro senso, che quello di manifestare in giudicio, o incolpare. I Napoletani, per esempio, accusano messer Dorillo di non saper la lingua. Se voi lavorate di tarsia, da qualche lettera del

Rezzonico, for his part, suggests much the same thing happened to Gargallo, noting that his Billington sonnet was hissed at by the Neapolitans. As a result, Gargallo lambasted "miserable Naples [which] did not understand anything about poetry."[141] In fact, according to Rezzonico, Gargallo was so miffed at this criticism, he promptly tried to convince Rezzonico that the Neapolitans would deride *his* writing if he tried to publish a text! In addition, far worse, they simply would not be capable of appreciating Rezzonico's "too elegant, terse and sublime style, [for] the Neapolitans love pedestrian writing, without a single good grammatical rule; they would mock whoever used certain chosen phrases and words tinted by the Arno [that is, too Florentine],[142] and they preferred to write as they speak, crudely and off-hand."[143] Finally, when Gargallo's

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vostro banchiere avete tratto certamento questo verbo nel senso qui da voi adoperato." [Gargallo], Alcune Annotazioni ad una Lettera di Dorillo Dafneio 27-28.

[141] "Quando però vi vedeste divenuto il ludibrio di Napoli, pel sonetto alla *Billington,* montaste in tanta collera, che riduceste la dozzina de'poeti italiani a tre soli; nè si vuol ridire la triade da voi dichiarata, per non umiliarvi di più nella ridicola scelta, quando non l'abbiate fatto per la vanissima speranza di poterla più agevolemente superare. Vivete però sicuro, che in vece di tre, tre mila ne avete sul capo in Italia. Proseguendo ad essere fischiato da ognuno, foste udito prorompere in audacissimi detti, e sostenere con imperterrita fronte, che voi solo di voi solo eravate giudice competente, e che la misera Napoli nulla intendeva di poesia, e ne avevate fatto esperimento, a bella posta, schiccherando un sublime, e dottissimo sonetto. Or io non cesso di maravigliare, come dopo tutto ciò, abbiate osato scrivere, che Dorilli riputavasi l'epifania d'Apollo, come voi ne siete la beffana, e come abbiate sperato di persuaderlo, che i napoletani lui deridevano, e proverbiavano, e prosavano, attribuendo liberalmente la vostra situazione a lui, che della stima, dell'amicizia, e della umanità de'principalissimi napoletani riceveva continue testimonianze, e non poteva, che professarne gratitudine eterna, ed indicibile compianceza. [...]." Nemesiano, Lettera di Filalete Nemesiano a Don Limone 15-16.

[142] Florentine dialect was heralded the most elegant dialect of Italy. It was, after all, the language of Dante. Not surpringly it was selected as the dialect taught in schools as "proper Italian" after the Unification. See David Laven, "Italy. The Idea of the Nation in the Risorgimento and Liberal Eras," What Is a Nation?: Europe 1789-1914, eds. Timothy Baycroft and Mark Hewitson (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2006) 262-65.

[143] "Assai prima, ch'escisse alla pubblica luce la lettera di Dorillo, voi sotto il manto dell'amicizia, gli andavate buccinando all'orecche in presenza d'altri, che non sarebbe stato in modo alcuno da'napoletani applaudito il suo stile, per essere troppo elegante, terso, e sublime, amare i napoletani uno scrivere pedestre, e dozzinale, e misto d'idiotismi perpetui, e senza alcuna buona regola grammatica; ridere di chi faceva uso di scelte frasi, e di parole tinte in Arno, e godere di scrivere, come parlano, rozzamente, e alla buona; voi stesso venire da'critici notato di *affettazione lombarda* nel dipartirvi dal volgo sì nella prosa, che nel verso, e disegnarvisi quella lode, che pur credevate meritare cumulatissima, per lo studio della lingua. Con queste artificiose riflessioni intendevate ad imbiancare due muri con un medesimo alberello. Volevate da un canto

Alcune Annotazioni was published, Rezzonico claimed that the Neapolitans entirely disapproved of Gargallo's "villainous behavior" and poured forth "songs, sonnets, [and] distiches in print written with the most biting annotations […]."[144]

Dragging the Neapolitans into the debate was precisely one of the things that scandalized the writer of the *Effemeridi Enciclopediche*. In his defense of Rezzonico's text, not only does he suggest Gargallo's claims that the Neapolitans laughed at Rezzonico's *Lettera* was an "invented fantasy," but he points out that it also "insults the education and the polite manners of the Neapolitan nobility." Even if Rezzonico's letter had not appealed to the Neapolitans, the writer asks, "is it even plausible that these most cultivated Neapolitan gentlemen would have the indecency to laugh with bitter sneers at him? This does little honor to the nation, and we who know it so perfectly, cannot possibly let this pass without warning him again such an implausible charge." [145]

For the Neapolitans in particular, the suggestion that they lacked refinement and

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esacerbare l'animo di Dorillo contro i napoletani, e dall'altro nascondere voi stesso fra la sognata folla de' suoi poco amorevoli, e far cadere più sicuro il colpo da traditore sotto il velo d'un anonimo." Nemesiano, Lettera di Filalete Nemesiano a Don Limone 17.

[144] "Tutta la città di Napoli disapprovò la vostra condotta infame, o versipelle D.L.; piobbero su voi canzoni, sonetti, distici in instampa, in iscritto con postille mordentissime; non vi si rise in faccia; fuste oltraggiato, e vilipeso, come ben merita, e convinto di falsità e di menzogne perpetue, e di furti letteraj[...]." Nemesiano, Lettera di Filalete Nemesiano a Don Limone 25.

[145] "S'infinge che somma fosse fra dotti l'espettazione di questa produzione; dice ch'ella fu attesa attesa per più mesi, che finalemente comparve alla luce, che si diffuse, che fu letta, e che invece di riscuotere l'ammirazione, a tutti dispiacque al grado, che nell'atto di leggerla, gli astanti, e i leggitori al Signore Conte Rezzonico ridevano in faccia.

Questo è tutto un lavoro poetico d'inventrice fantasia il quale, con pace del nostro anonimo, fa ingiuria all'educazione, ed alle gentili maniere della napoletana nobiltà. Si sa che con questa conversa il Rezzonico. Ora fra questa, ci presente, si dovea leggere la sua lettera. Se anche avesse avuta la disgrazia di non piacere, è egli mai presumibile, che i cultissimi Cavalieri napoletani dallo amaro sogghigno, all'indecenza passassero di ridergli in faccia? Questa supposizione fa poco onore alla nazione, e noi che la conosciamo perfettamente, non possiam lasciar correre senza avvertirla, un'imputazione così poco plausibile." "[Review of] Alcune Annotazioni ad una Lettera di Dorillo Dafnejo. Opera Senza Data, e Senza Nome Tipografico, d'autore Anonimo. In 8 Vo. di Pag 55, che Gira per Napoli, e che Si Vende da Varj Libraj Al Prezzo di Carlini 2. la Copia," 67-68.

education was a particularly sensitive subject, in part because this was precisely the reputation they had earned both abroad and throughout Italy. Indeed it was through comparisons with—frequently made by—grand tourists that a sense of Neapolitan national identity emerged. Foreigners on the grand tour, for instance, recounted how the city teemed with individuals whose only interest was pleasure; gaming houses and gambling abounded, even in fashionable salons,[146] and collectors and patrons had the tendency to put on airs even when they had little of note in their collections.[147] Even Antonio d'Este relayed an anecdote that reflected poorly on the Neapolitans in a letter to Giannantonio Selva on October 5, 1795. One gentleman who had come to see *Venus and Adonis* praised it intensely, but then immediately mitigated his admiration by declaring, "beautiful, beautiful—but we too have sculptors who are capable of making a similar group, and in little time—maybe two months." The beholder's desire to reaffirm the productivity of contemporary artists in Naples was mocked by d'Este, who replied "with great modesty that even Canova would have completed it in a month and a half, but my dear Sir, you see that there are two asses, and dealing with two asses takes some time."

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[146] The Polish Countess Potocka criticized society in Naples precisely for the fact that people seemed to live solely for love and enjoyment; there were almost no intellectual salons, only music and dance. Anna Potocka, Voyage d'Italie (1826-1827), ed. Casimir Stryienski (Paris: E. Plon, Nourrit et Cie, 1899) 119-20.

John Bramsen, a Prussian traveler, likewise critiqued the society at Naples, particularly the fascination with gambling. "The society at Naples is very limited and indifferent: on entering the saloon at one of their routs, a stranger would imagine that he was visiting a gambling-house rather than an assembly." John Bramsen, Letters of Prussian Traveller; Descriptive of a Tour through Sweden, Prussia, Austria, Hungary... 2 vols. (London: Henry Colburn, 1818) vol. 2, 150.

[147] Kotzebue mocked both the connoisseurs and collectors in Naples. One Duke was lambasted for hiding his inferior paintings behind curtains, as though they were true masterpieces. "Connoisseurs, as they are called, are indeed foolish people: they lay out vast sums in order to make it believed they see more than others, and yet their extravagant vanity is not able to protect them from the laugh of an unbiased foreigner who may now and then view their collections. […] I found it still worse for myself at the palace of the duke del Gesso, where I imagined at first they were mocking me. Even the few pictures which were concealed by curtains, would never have excited attention without these curtains. In this manner an antiquated beauty veils herself, in order at least to raise flattering conjectures." Kotzebue, Travels through Italy in the Years 1804 and 1805 vol. 2, 241-42.

To Selva, he then lamented, "I don't want to admit such stupidity in our country, but curious remarks like these certainly occur."[148]

Marchese Berio was, on the other hand, consistently cited as one of the few Neapolitans who truly was well-educated and refined. *He* understood and valued the fine arts. John Bramsen declared Berio's home "a happy exception to the too general predominance of gambling or insipidity in Neapolitan society […with…] no ordinary attractions to the admirers of the fine arts, in a noble gallery, and an exquisite groupe by Canova, representing Venus and Adonis."[149] Augustus von Kotzebue suggested that "[e]very foreigner should endeavour to get acquainted by some means with this nobleman: he will not only find gratification from these works of art, but every other enjoyment which the society of a well-informed amiable man who speaks many European languages, and is kind and tender in his domestic connections, must ever

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[148] Letter from Antonio d'Este to Giannantonio Selva, October 5, 1795. "Siamo si io che l'amica Luigia quasi in colera con voi perche nulla mai ci avete scritto [roporto?] all'opera del nostro comune amico Canòva; e vero che sapiamo di più vi e il felice incontro di essa, ma ciò a noi non basta, lo vogliamo saper da voi, da voi vogliamo saper qualcuna di quelle istorielle che in tali incontri accadano. A Napoli mi son trovato presente a parrechie, e in verità vi assicuro che divertano molto: per esempio per darvi un idea delle [illegible] che colà ho inteso ve ne raconterò una. Il Gruppo di Adone e Venere (che avete certamente inteso ricordare) era posto in'opera; viene nel tempio un Sig.re di primo ordine e molto brogio appunto il primo giorno che si faceva vedere il Gruppo. doppo questa bestia di esser rimasto meravigliato della maniera facile con cui girava sopra il billico il gruppo esclamò =Bello=Bello ma anche noi abbiamo de scultori qui che [sarieno?] capaci di fare un gruppo simile, e con poco tempo, —forse in due mesi. io allora non potendo più stare alle [illegible] con tutta modestia risposi = anche Canova lo avria fato in'un mese e mezzo, ma mio Sig.re lei vede che i culi sono due e trattandosi di due culi vi vuole il suo tempo. Di simili cosarelle accadano, e non però divertano. Non volgio ammettere tanto stolidezza nel nostro paese, ma riflessioni curiouse accaderanno certamente. Dunque scrivete qualune di esse che le vogliamo, tanto più che ora la amica nostra e partita in buona salute per la campagna." La Biblioteca della Fondazione Querini Stampalia, VII. 104. m. 736.

[149] Bramsen likewise notes the refinement of Berio's wife and daughters. "A happy exception to the too general predominance of gambling or insipidity in Neapolitan society will be found in the family of the Marchionesse de Berri [*sic*] in the *Strada di Toledo*, who has given her daughters an excellent education. Her palace possesses likewise no ordinary attractions to the admirers of the fine arts, in a noble gallery, and an exquisite groupe by Canova, representing Venus and Adonis." Bramsen, Letters of Prussian Traveller; Descriptive of a Tour through Sweden, Prussia, Austria, Hungary... vol. 2, 152-53.

afford."[150] Sir William Gell was convinced Berio's library was "the best private collection in Naples,"[151] and Lady Morgan applauded Berio's *conversazioni*, in which one found a "congregation of elegant and refined spirits, where every body converses, and converses well; and best, (if not most,) the master of the house." She was utterly effusive in her praise, finding him to be "a nobleman of wealth, high rank, and of very considerable literary talent and acquirement, which extends itself to the utmost verge of the philosophy and belle lettres of England, France, Germany and his native country. He has read every thing, and continues to read every thing […] Time, and a long and patiently endured malady, have had no influence over the buoyant spirit, the ardent feelings, the elegant pursuits, of this liberal and accomplished nobleman; his mind and manners are beyond the reach of infirmity; and the *ci-devant jeunes hommes* of other countries might purchase his secret at any price, were such a secret (which Nature only communicates) purchaseable."[152]

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[150] Kotzebue, Travels through Italy in the Years 1804 and 1805 vol. 2, 243.

[151] The entry is undated, but occurred sometime in the winter of 1814-1815. "The library of the Marquis de Berio the best private collection in Naples – particularly reliable in the department of Italian history _& statistics__also in the Italian, French, + Spanish Drama. Beautiful groupe of Canova, Venus and Adonis, in the garden of this nobleman – executed about 20 years ago." See the verso of page 127 of William Gell's autograph journal in Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University, New Haven, CT, Osborn Shelves MS d293.

[152] Lady Morgan's description of the *conversazioni* in Berio's home, which included Canova, is worth citing at length. "The SALONS of the Marchese Berio present another aspect of society equally favourable to the impressions previously received of Neapolitan intellect and education. In Rome a *conversazione* is an assembly where nobody converses, as in Paris a *boudoir* is a place "*où l'on ne boude pas!*" The conversazione of the Palazzo Berio, on the contrary, is a congregation of elegant and refined spirits, where every body converses, and converses well; and best, (if not most,) the master of the house.

The Marchese Berio is a nobleman of wealth, high rank, and of very considerable literary talent and acquirement, which extends itself to the utmost verge of the philosophy and belle lettres of England, France, Germany and his native country. He has read every thing, and continues to read every thing; and I have seen his sitting-room loaded with a new importation of English novels and poetry, while he was himself employed in writing, *a l'improviso*, a beautiful ode to Lord Byron, in all the first transports of enthusiasm, on reading (for the first time) *that* canto of *Childe Harold*, so read and admired by all in Italy.* [The fourth canto] Time, and a long and patiently endured malady, have had no influence over the buoyant spirit, the ardent feelings, the elegant pursuits, of this liberal and accomplished nobleman; his mind and

The purchase of *Venus and Adonis* further reaffirmed Berio's own status in the cultural hierarchy of the city. It was admired at the time as the only marble work by Canova in Naples.[153] Marchesa Boccapaduli noted that Berio "knows its value,"[154] and patron and artist became linked in the popular imagination.[155] At the same time, Berio was seen more broadly as potentially revitalizing the arts in Naples.[156] William Hamilton,

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manners are beyond the reach of infirmity; and the *ci-devant jeunes hommes* of other countries might purchase his secret at any price, were such a secret (which Nature only communicates) purchaseable.

Of the *Conversazioni of the Berio Palace*, it is enough to say, that its circle comprised, when we were at Naples—Canova*, Rosetti (the celebrated poet and improvisatore,) the Duke of Ventignano (the tragic poet of Naples,) Delfico (the philosopher, patriot, and historian,) Lampredi and Salvaggi (two very elegant writers, and accomplished gentleman,) Signor Blanc (one of the most brilliant colloquial wits of any country, which the other of this work "ever coped withal,") and the Cavaliere Micheroux, a distinguished member of all the first and best circles of Naples. While *Duchessas* and *Principessas*, with titles as romantic as that which induced Horace Walpole to write his delightful romance of "Otranto," filled up the ranks of literature and talent,— ROSSINI presided at the piano-forte, accompanying alternately himself, Rosetti in his improvisi, or the *Colbrun*, the prima donna of San Carlos, in some of her favourite airs from his own Mosé. All this was very delightful, and very rare!—but there was something in these refined circles still more delightful—the most perfect picture of domestic virtue and domestic happiness! [...] Such are the scenes of domestic virtue to be found in Naples [...] Long and often may such circles as that presented in the house of Berio congregate in the palace of the Neapolitan noble!" Morgan, Italy vol, 2, 355-59.

[153] Romanelli, Napoli Antica e Moderna vol. 3, 108.

[154] See note 52. Quoted in Colucci, "Antonio Canova, la Marchesa Margherita Boccapaduli e Alessandro Verri: Lettere e Altre Testimonianze Inedite," 67.

[155] Marchesini writes: "Da alcuni mesi, a questa parte, qui non d'altro parlare si sente dagli uomini intelligenti, e da quelli, che non lo sono, che di *Canova* il nostro illustre moderno Prassitele, che del Marchese Berio, che di un gruppo di marmo esistente nel suo giardino. Si esalta il genio del primo, che ci richiama agli antichi aurei tempi d'Atene, la generosità, ed il buon gusto del secondo, la perfezione e l'eccellenza del terzo." Later in the text, he makes the connection even more explicit: "E' una compiacenza per le persone di genio quella di leggere negli annali del mondo, il nome de'grandi Artefici sempre vicino a quello de'sommi proteggitori delle belle Arti. Quello di *Fidia* sarà sempre accanto di quello di *Pericle*, quello di *Prasitele* inseperabile da quei de'*Gnidj*, e dell'illustre *Isabelle d'Este*; e se in *Buonarota* ricorderà eternamente il gran *Giulio II*; il *Cav. Bernini* l'immortale Luigi XIV; il nome del nostro *Sig. D. Antonio Canova* indicherà in perpetuo quello del *Sig. Marchese Berio*. Se v'ha un momento nel quale i semplici privati entrar possono nella linea de'Sovrani, e delle Nazioni, egli è quello di diventare, a prezzo de'loro talenti, e della loro generosità, i proteggitori delle belle Arti." See Marchesini, Sul Gruppo d'Adone e Venere del Signor Antonio Canova, Posseduto dal ... Marchese Berio. Lettera di Marcello Marchesini ... al ... Conte D. Faustino Tadini III and XXI, respectively.

Fardella also makes this point and points out that even the funerary odes written for Marchese Berio in 1820 continue to mention his patronage of Canova. See Fardella, Antonio Canova a Napoli: Tra Collezionismo e Mercato 63.

[156] "Siam grati però a lui, che nella nostra Italia fa un arte rifiorire, che da mille fisiche, e morali cagioni fu fatalmente fino ad ora imprigionata, e siam grati egualmente a quegli uomini di gusto, che fanno apprezzare le dilui produzioni, e che impiegando in queste generosamente una parte delle loro fortune, condecorano il

for instance, wrote in a letter to Canova in which he expressed the hope that Berio's example would inspire a resurgence of commissions in Naples, "so that the poor artists in this country don't die of hunger, as they have thus far, because of a lack of patrons."[157]

Although the insults traded between Rezzonico and Gargallo implicated the Neapolitans in their personal vendetta and derided the Neapolitan's erudition and etiquette, Canova's sculpture, on the other hand, was viewed by the Neapolitans as an opportunity for the city to reassert its cultural preeminence. Canova's work not only elevated the status of the arts in the entire peninsula, but it also staged a challenge to the greatest cultural center in Italy: Rome. Rezzonico, ironically, makes this explicit in his *Lettera di Dorillo Dafneio*. Canova's sculpture, along with other "illustrious monuments conspire to turn this most delicious capital [Naples] into a New Athens, even though with regard to its antique monuments it could already enter into competition with Rome itself." [158] *Venus and Adonis* therefore had the potential to challenge Rome on two fronts.

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paese dove esistono di monumenti così preziosi, dilatano lo spirito d'emulazione, e premiano, e rinvigorifisono l'attività dell'illustre *Callimaco* de'giorni nostri." Marchesini, Sul Gruppo d'Adone e Venere del Signor Antonio Canova, Posseduto dal ... Marchese Berio. Lettera di Marcello Marchesini ... al ... Conte D. Faustino Tadini XX-XXI.

[157] William Hamilton to Canova, March 21, 1795. "Ho felicitato il Sig. Marchese Berio di essere il possessore d'un opera tanta sublime; Spero che l'esempio del Marchese Berio farà del bene, e che gli poveri artisti in questo paese non moriranno di fame come hanno fatto fin adesso, per mancanza di mecenati." Bassano del Grappa, I. 78. 1504. Cited in Fardella, Antonio Canova a Napoli: Tra Collezionismo e Mercato 150.

[158] "Ma prima di finire sì lunga diceria non vi sarà discaro, chiarissimo Diodoro, il sapere in qual pregio tengasi dall'illuminato Governo un Opera sì bella, e quali facilità si concedano, e laudi, ed incoraggimento a facoltosi personaggi, che con illustri monumenti cospirano a volgere questa deliziosissima Capitale in un'Atene novella, avvegnacchè per quelli dell'antichità possa di già entrare in contesa coll'istessa Roma." Dafneio, Lettera di Dorillo Dafneio a Diodoro Delfico 18.

In the republication of the text in the journal *Memorie per Servire alla Storia Letteraria e Civile,* the idea that Naples is in competition with Rome is made explicit by a footnote that "Capitale" stands for "Napoli." See Dafneio, "Del Gruppo di *Venere e Adone* Scolpito Dall' Illustre Veneto Scultore Sig. *A. Canova*, Ec. Lettera di *Dorillo Dafneio* a *Diodoro Delfico*," 58.

It is interesting to note that when Rezzonico's letter is reprinted in the 1823 *Biblioteca Canoviana* this paragraph is left out. See Pochini, Biblioteca Canoviana, Ossia Raccolta delle Migliori Prose, e de' più Scelti Componimenti Poetici sulla Vita, sulle Opere ed in Morte di Antonio Canova vol. 1, 86-87.

Not only was the possession of this work a victory in and of itself, but, Canova's masterpiece could inspire young artists to create works that would likewise challenge the artistic preeminence of Rome. Neapolitans were using Canova's commission not only to combat the notion that they were a cultural backwater, but also to emphasize the flowering of contemporary arts in the city and its status as a "museo all'aperto."

At heart, therefore, the exhibition of *Venus and Adonis* takes on a central role not only in the personal battle between Rezzonico and Gargallo, but also in the unspoken cultural war between the different Italian states. Although Canova's work was not explicitly commissioned, exhibited or even made for outwardly political purposes, its nationalist implications clearly emerged in the Rezzonico-Gargallo polemic. On the one hand, viewing *Venus and Adonis* became a way for contemporary Neapolitans and foreign tourists to tap into the experience of ancient Greeks and Romans as they looked at the work by candlelight in a garden setting, while reading ancient and contemporary texts. On the other hand, however, the work became an attempt to reassert the predominance of the Neapolitan cultural scene at what would become the very end of its golden age.

More importantly, the discussion prompted by the exhibition of Canova's work extended far beyond the appreciation of his own sculptural talents to pose larger questions regarding the nature of connoisseurship, the role of modern exhibitions, and even national identity.[159] Marchesini's and Rezzonico's respective explorations of *invenzione* and *esecuzione* reveal the multiple ways viewers can consider and approach

[159] Shortly after the exhibition of Canova's work, the French invaded Naples and dominated the city's cultural scene. The work remained in Naples and Berio's importance as a cultural figure did not lag during the Napoleonic occupation. In 1820, after Berio's death, the family sold the work to Colonel Gugliemo Fabre for his villa in Lagrange near Lake Geneva. Canova reworked the sculpture before sending it on to Le Fabre.

the writing of artistic practice. Gargallo's inflammatory reaction and the subsequent polemic reflect that, at this early stage in the development of the discipline, there was no generally accepted way to approach the writing of art history. Reaction to exhibitions of Canova's works once again reveal a shifting of ideas as participants work out what, precisely, it means to display, discuss, and critically examine a work of art in the modern world.

Chapter Three

Venice:
Claiming Canova (or, The Paragone)

> "If Titian were standing where his divine painting is placed, if Canova were where his *Polinia* is, they would not cease to reciprocally admire each other, without envying one another."[1]

In honor of the inauguration of the painting galleries of the Accademia di Belle Arti in Venice in 1817, Canova's *Polinnia* stood in the grand salon of the Accademia for two weeks, surrounded by some of the greatest Venetian paintings of all time, by renowned artists such as Titian, Veronese, Tintoretto and Padovanino. But it was Canova's sculpture and Titian's recently restored *Assumption of the Virgin* (1516-18) that were the centerpieces of the show (figs. 124-125). The mastermind of the exhibition,

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[1] Letter from Giannantonio Selva to Canova, August 18, 1817. "Se Tiziano fosse ove è collocata la sua divina tavola, se Canova fosse ove v'è la sua Polinia, non cesserebbero di reciprocamente ammirarsi, senza invidiarsi."

The rest of Selva's letter likewise discusses *Polinnia*. "So che il nostro Cav. Cicognara replicatamente vi scrisse sulla vostra Polinia. Io trepidavo nel farla maneggiare, e fui assai contento allorchè la vidi posata sul piedistallo libera d'ogni imbarazzo, illesa da qualunque danno, e che con un dito si gira senza fatica. Generali sono le lodi, e sommo il piacere che desta al vederla, prova ne sia il giornaliero continuo concorso, il fermarsi a contemplarla e il ritornare replicatamente a visitarla. In essa vi è per contentar tutti poiché chi non sa internarsi nelle vere bellezze, si sorprende al meccanismo del lavoro, che a dir vero anche di questa parte gli aumenta il pregio; ma la testa, la coppa, il braccio scoperto ed il coperto entusiasmano tutti; e che sa innoltrarsi aggiunge la naturale fluidità con cui vede la sua massa che tanto bene si presenta a qualunque punto; le sue estremità soltanto proprie del Canova, la bellezza delle pieghe nel vario loro carattere, e tante altre occulte prerogative che contribuiscono a renderla cotanto grata al pubblico." Museo Correr, PD 529C. This letter exists only as a copy in a later hand, in which it is dated incorrectly to 1816. It is part of a series of copies of letters from Selva to Canova; in other folders in this same Correr file, the originals and their copies can be found together, so there is no reason for me to doubt the authenticity of this particular copy. It is likewise cited by Ricciotti Bratti (who gives it the date of 1816) and in the new compilation of Canova correspondence from 1816-1817, where it is correctly dated. See Ricciotti Bratti, Antonio Canova nella sua Vita Artistica Privata (Venezia: A Spese della R. Deputazione, 1917) 418 and Canova, Epistolario (1816-1817) vol. 2, 974.

Leopoldo Cicognara, art historian, theorist, and writer, intentionally juxtaposed the two works to announce both his personal and professional ambitions as the director of the academy (figs. 126-127). In addition, he dramatized the Veneto's artistic legacy precisely at a moment when the state's political fortunes had been thoroughly trounced, first by the Napoleonic and French invasions, and then by the former republic's ignominious hand-off as a trophy to the Austrians after the defeat of Napoleon. By creating a direct link between the Old Masters, their past triumphs, and the present ascendancy of the arts under Canova,[2] the exhibition vaunted the constancy and continued excellence of the Veneto's artistic tradition in contradistinction to its changing political fortunes.

By positioning Canova's *Polinnia* in a room full of Venetian paintings, the exhibition also raised critical issues regarding the language of art by raising the specter of the *paragone*, the contest between painting and sculpture. Eliding the Venetian Old Masters with the greatest sculptor of the modern era, despite their different media, was, in part, a necessity. As the poet Pietro Giordani made clear in his 1816 review of the first edition of Cicognara's *magnum opus*, *La Storia della Scultura* (1813-16), there was no modern-day painter who could equal the great Renaissance masters. It was only through Canova and the rising preeminence of sculpture, that the Veneto—and indeed, Italy in

[2] This is a common trope in histories of sculpture, biographies of Canova, and even travel diaries from the period, all of which insist that Canova resurrected the art of sculpture after its decadence and subsequent decline under Bernini. For only a few examples, see Francesco Milizia, Opere Complete di Francesco Milizia Risguardanti le Belle Arti, 9 vols. (Bologna: Stamperia Cardinali e Frulli, 1826) vol. 2, 467; Rosini, Saggio sulla Vita e sulle Opere di Antonio Canova 12; Eaton, Rome, in the Nineteenth Century; Containing a Complete Account of the Ruins of the Ancient City, the Remains of the Middle Ages, and the Monuments of Modern Times vol. 2, 298; and Sloan and Lyman, Rambles in Italy; in the Years 1816....17 360-61.

general—could not only aspire to the glories of the past but also reveal its superiority in the arts over all the other European nations.[3]

Nonetheless, even as the two works celebrated Venetian supremacy in the art of painting and sculpture, by squaring off against one another they reiterated the long-held challenge between the two arts. Through the confrontation between media, Cicognara's personal, professional and political ambitions merged together, enabling him to bring to

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[3] "L'arte della scultura, sì pregiate da tutte le nazioni che possono vantarsi di civiltà, quanto è di onore all'umano ingegno, tanto è gloria speciale e propria all'Italia. La quale può bene gloriarsi della pittura, della musica, della eloquenza e della filosofia; poiché in esse fu eccellente, e fu maestra; ma i popoli ai quali le insegnò, tanto ne impararono, che poterno poi parere piuttosto emuli che discepoli. E sebbene Rafaello e Correggio e Tiziano, e alcuni altri sommi non trovino paragone presso niun'altra moderna gente che dipinse; ottennero però fama giustamente le scuole di Germania, e di Francia; e quelle di Fiandra e di Spagna hanno pregi che anche l'Italiano possa ammirare. Ma la scultura è singolarmente nostra. È nostra, perchè primi e soli quasi morta la risuscitammo; e per noi si mostrò fino da'suoi principii bella e stupenda. È nostra, perchè no non si trova nazione che o per copia e grandezza di opere, o per numero ed eccellenza di scultori voglia pur contendere coll'Italia. È nostra perchè dagli Italiani ricevette ogni altro paese quanto ha di buono in quell'arte; e ricevuto serbollo come potè; nè vi aggiunse, nè seppe mutarlo, se non quanto li piacesse di peggiorare: nè si può lodare una scuola francese o fiamminga o spagnola o tedesca di Scultura, come si può di pittura. È nostra, perchè gl'Italiani bastarono alquanti secoli a mostrare in essa quel più che potessero i moderni ingegni: e all'età nostra donarono i cieli un Canova, che scemasse maraviglia ai miracoli dell'antichità, e dopo due mila anni ringiovanisse il mondo delle arti." See Pietro Giordani, "[Review of] 'Storia della Scultura dal suo Risorgimento in Italia'. Articolo Primo," Biblioteca Italiana, o sia Giornale di Letteratura, Scienze ed Arti Compilato da Varj Letterati III (July-Sept. 1816): 235-36. Also reprinted in Pietro Giordani, Opere di Pietro Giordani. Scritti Editi e Postumi di Pietro Giordani Pubblicati da Antonio Gussali, ed. Antonio Gussalli, 4th ed., vol. 3 (Milano: Borroni e Scotti, 1856) 116-17.

Cicognara felt the power of Giordani's words enough to cite this very passage in a newly written introduction to the second edition of his book in 1823. See Leopoldo Cicognara, Storia della Scultura dal suo Risorgimento in Italia Fino al Secolo di Canova del Conte Leopoldo Cicognara vol. 1, 6-7.

Cicognara's own biographers discussed the way his *Storia della Scultura* filled a gap in the scholarship, since Italy already had a history of painting (written by Luigi Lanzi) and literature (written by Girolamo Tiraboschi). "Ma Leopoldo s'aveva un grande pensiero nell'animo, al quale consacrava gli studii di lunghi anni, le richerchi ne'viaggii, i consigli co'primi maestri; era la storia della scultura. Winckelman aveva scritta la storia dell'arte presso gli antichi; d'Agincourt quella dell'arte nel medio evo fino al risorgimento; Lanzi la storia della pittura; l'Italia avea la storia della letteratura di Tiraboschi, ma la patria di Nicola Pisano, di Michelangelo, di Canova, non aveva quella della scultura." Sacchi, "Biografia del Conte Leopoldo Cicognara," In Morte del Conte Leopoldo Cicognara Collezione di Prose e Poesie (Ferrara: Pomatelli, 1834) 60.

Interestingly, Francesca Fedi has argued that revisions made between Cicognara's original manuscript and the 1818 Picotti edition of *Storia della Scultura* reflect Canova's own suggestions, changes and recommendations for the text. She explores the way Cicognara's and Canova's aesthetics differed from one another and the ways that Canova tried to control his self-representation. See Francesca Fedi, "Cicognara Critico di Canova," Antonio Canova: La Cultura Figurativa e Letteraria dei Grandi Centri Italiani. 2. Milano, Firenze, Napoli eds. Fernando Mazzocca and Gianni Venturi, Settimana di Studi Canoviani (Bassano del Grappa: Istituto di ricerca per gli studi su Canova e il neoclassicismo, 2006) 129-46.

the fore questions of *how* one could best view, interpret, judge, and discuss a work of sculpture. By indirectly arguing for the supremacy of sculpture through the exhibition, he placed contemporary Italy and his own writing about sculpture on par with some of the greatest works and treatises in the history of art.

At the same time, however, it is important to remember that Cicognara rendered the competition between painting and sculpture visible through his *display* of Canova's work; it was not merely a rhetorical exercise. Indeed, Cicognara radically transformed the way the *paragone* was understood. No longer was it a question of artists highlighting the strengths of their particular medium. Instead, as Cicognara understood the *paragone*, the key was the way *beholders* perceived the comparison between painting and sculpture. Indeed, in the very structure of the exhibition itself, Cicognara created a frame which would allow viewers to best appreciate and understand Canova's and Titian's work in relation to one another. The comparison reinforced the idea that illusionism and *colorito* were two particularly Venetian artistic traits that superseded the limitations of media—even as it stressed how these were aspects of Canova's sculpture that were unique to *his* treatment of marble alone.

It is notable, of course, that emphasis placed on the beholder's role in understanding the *paragone* occurred precisely with the foundation of the Accademia as a modern museum. At the same time, the inauguration is the birth of what we might think of as the "special exhibition," where a permanent collection (the Accademia's paintings) was enhanced by the temporary display of a loaned object (Canova's *Polinnia).* Cicognara, in his organization of the exhibition, behaved much like a modern museum director. His enacted the *paragone* in the construct of the exhibition itself; he financed

the project; he considered the cultural and political significance of the display. Under his guidance the new museum became the testing ground for artistic theory. In his systematization of the display, Cicognara forged a new path for the modern appropriation of sculpture and art in general. The exhibition not only confirmed the fact that Canova, as a modern day master, was worthy of having his sculptures placed in a museum with ancient masterpieces, but it also reaffirmed the importance the museum itself, as an institution, had in defining what constituted a "masterpiece."

Canova and the Veneto

Although the details of Canova's biography are too well known to go into at great length here, his continued attachment to his birthplace bears repeating.[4] Born in the small village of Possagno in 1757, Canova moved to Venice proper when he was about twelve years old to work with the sculptor Giuseppe Bernardi Torretti.[5] While in Venice, he admired and studied the plaster cast collection in the Galleria Farsetti, which infused him with passion for the antique.[6] After gaining success with his earliest sculptures, *Orfeo* and *Euridice*, made for his patron Giovanni Falier in 1773-1776, Canova was finally given the opportunity to go on his own "grand tour" of Italy in 1779, accompanied

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[4] Numerous biographies of Canova were published throughout the nineteenth century, including Paravia, Notizie Intorno alla Vita di Antonio Canova: Giuntovi il Catalogo Chronologico di Tutte le Sue Opere; Teotochi Albrizzi, Opere di Scultura e di Plastica di Antonio Canova; Cicognara, Biografia di Antonio Canova; Missirini, Della Vita di Antonio Canova: Libri Quattro; Rosini, Saggio sulla Vita e sulle Opere di Antonio Canova; and d'Este, Memorie di Antonio Canova, to name only a few.

For an analysis of the many biographies published about Canova in the nineteenth century, see Consiglia Giugliano, Le Biografie del Canova nell'Ottocento (Napoli: Loffredo, 2003). A modern biography with beautiful illustrations has also recently been published by Aldo Scibona, Canova: La Mano di Dio: Biografia (Villorba: Treviso, 2008).

[5] d'Este, Memorie di Antonio Canova 5.

[6] For more on the Farsetti cast collection, see Androsov, ed., Alle Origini di Canova: Le Terracotte della Collezione Farsetti and Giovanna Nepi Sciré, "Filippo Farsetti e la sua Collezione," 73-94.

by his friend the architect Giannantonio Selva.[7] In Rome, he encountered the Venetian ambassador, Girolamo Zulian, who took Canova under his wing, inviting him to the inauguration of the Palazzo Senatorio,[8] and organizing, as we saw in chapter one, numerous parlor games and dinner parties that showcased Canova's early works. Canova's first studio, in the Palazzo Venezia, Zulian's residence, ensured continued contact with Venetians.[9]

As Canova's fame grew and he received commissions from further afield, the Venetians' pride in having raised and trained "the modern Phidias" under their auspices manifested itself in a wealth of private patronage.[10] Zulian and Falier both continued to commission works until their deaths in 1795 and 1808, respectively. Isabella Teotochi Albrizzi and her husband, Giuseppe Albrizzi, owned several works (most importantly, *Ebe* and *Helen*), as did Leopoldo Cicognara and Angelo Querini.[11]

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[7] d'Este, Memorie di Antonio Canova 14.

[8] Canova himself refers to this event in his journal. See, for instance, his entry on Dec. 28, 1779 in Honour and Mariuz, eds., Scritti 90-91.

For more on Zulian, see Luisa Materassi, "Girolamo Zulian: The Collection, the Man and His World," Roman Art, Religion, and Society: New Studies from the Roman Art Seminar, Oxford 2005, ed. Martin Henig (Oxford: Archaeopress, 2006) 141-93 and Honour, I Gessi di Canova per l'Ambasciatore Zulian: Una Testimonianza di Amicizia e di Mecenatismo Illuminato.

[9] Bernini, "Canova a Palazzo Venezia," 245-59.

[10] The best summary of Canova's patrons in the Veneto can be found in Bratti's account. See Bratti, Antonio Canova nella sua Vita Artistica Privata.

[11] For more on Canova's noble Venetian patrons, see the article by Piero del Negro. Del Negro suggests that by 1795, with the death of Girolamo Zulian, Canova's relationship to the Veneto had fundamentally changed. Despite Canova's many Venetian patrons, the sculptor did not necessarily privilege his relations with the Veneto— Venice became simply "a market like all the others". See Piero del Negro, "Antonio Canova e la Venezia dei Patrizi," Antonio Canova e il suo Ambiente Artistico fra Venezia, Roma e Parigi, ed. Giuseppe Pavanello, Studi di Arte Veneta (Venezia: Istituto veneto di scienze, lettere ed arti, 2000) 121-53, esp. 40.

Likewise, despite the numerous textual references from the period which identify Canova as "Venetian," Giuseppe Barbieri expresses a similar skepticism when discussing the funerary monuments to Titian, Palladio and Canova, stating that none of these great artists were truly "Venetian." Although none may have been born in Venice proper, it seems to me that their importance for Venice's sense of artistic identity is enough tie them closely to the Venetian Republic. See Giuseppe Barbieri, "In Morte delle Arti

In addition to these private commissions, there were more public celebrations of Canova's work and his link to the Veneto. First and foremost was the *Monument to Clement XIII*, commissioned by Clement XIII's nephew, Abbondio Rezzonico, which not only shot Canova to stardom when completed in 1792, but linked his fame directly to his Venetian heritage (fig. 128).[12] Also widely celebrated was Canova's *Monument to Angelo Emo*, Admiral and the last Captain of *La Serenissima's* navy (fig. 129). It was not simply the subject matter, in this case, that was thoroughly Venetian, but even the form of the work itself; in his treatise on the monument, scholar and critic Giovanni Gherardo de Rossi defined the work by suggesting "that the head of *Emo* was sculpted by the chisel of Canova as it would have been painted by the brush of Titian."[13]

In Venice proper, there were equally powerful, although more muted, reminders of Canova's presence. Selva, who received casts as personal gifts from the artist, turned his studio into "a shrine, which he [Selva] frequented with complete deference more than any other profane space." [14] Canova likewise regularly sent casts of his newest pieces to

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Sorelle: La Commedia delle Esequie Solenni di Canova, Palladio, Tiziano," Il Veneto e l'Austria: Vita e Cultura Artistica nelle Città Venete, 1814-1866, eds. Sergio Marinelli, Giuseppe Mazzariol and Fernando Mazzocca (Milano: Electa, 1989) 80.

[12] See Giovanni Gherardo de Rossi, Lettera sul Deposito di Clemente XIII nella Basilica Vaticana (Bassano: 1792) and Christopher M. S. Johns, "Ecclesiastical Politics and Papal Tombs: Antonio Canova's Monuments to Clement XIV and Clement XIII," Sculpture Journal 2 (1998): 58-71. For more on the Rezzonico family and their cultural patronage, see Enrico Noe, "Rezzonicorum Cineres: Ricerche sulla Collezione Rezzonico," Rivista dell'Istituto Nazionale d'Archeologia e Storia dell'Arte 3 (1980): 173-306 and Giuseppe Pavanello, "I Rezzonico: Committenza e Collezionismo fra Venezia e Roma," Arte veneta 52 (1998): 86-111.

[13] "[...] che la testa dell'*Emo* è stata scolpita dallo scalpello del *Canova*, come sarebbe stata dipinta dal penello di *Tiziano*." Giovanni Gherardo de Rossi, Lettera Sopra un Monumento Recentemente Scolpito dall'Illustre Scultore Sig. Antonio Canova (Bassano: 1795), published in Pochini, Biblioteca Canoviana, ossia Raccolta delle Migliori Prose, e de' più Scelti Componimenti Poetici sulla Vita, sulle Opere ed in Morte di Antonio Canova vol. 3 in 2, 152-53.

[14] Bartolomeo Gamba recorded his notes about Selva's studio: "Il nostro Selva che agli agi dei privati si era tante volte prestato con sì felice riuscita, amico [*sic*] di goderne possibilmente egli stesso, erasi contentato di rendersi deliziosa la stanza sacra alla tranquillità dei suoi studi. Questa, ricca di belle opere di Canova, di

Venice as gifts to the Accademia, so that students might learn from his example (and so that he might hear what critiques other artists and scholars leveled against his works).[15] He was also frequently lauded in the Academy's annual prize ceremony, where the director of the Academy traditionally gave a speech before the distribution of prizes to the Academicians.[16] Even the oppressive Austrian government recognized Canova's contribution to the arts and tried to lure him back to Venice by promising him a new studio, to be built by Selva himself. [17]

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originali disegni del Quarenghi, di ritratti d'illustri amici, di libri e di tavole eccellenti, era il tempietto che più di ogni altro profano luogo frequentava con intera sua compiancenza." Bartolomeo Gamba, cited in Piervaleriano Angelini, "Tommaso Temanza, Pietro Gonzaga, Giannantonio Selva e Giacomo Queringhi," Lettere Artistiche del Settecento Veneziano I, eds. Alessandro Bettagno and Marina Magrini (Vicenza: N. Pozza, 2002) 426, footnote 16.

In a letter from Selva to Canova, Selva describes the placement of a cast of the head of Medusa in his studio. "Questo [the cast of the head of Medusa] sarà un nuovo ornamento del mio studio decorato dai vostri due bassorilievi, e dalle tre teste, unendovi quella del Pugillatore, ma ohimè, che essa non è compita, ed in una facciata vuoto vi è scritto che essa attende un terzo bassorilievo, che per al sua grandezza non può ammettere che uno della estensione di Briseide tolta ad Achille. In detta stanza non vi sono che opere di Canova, ed internamente dei disegni de'miei amici, come Quarenghi, il conte Calderari, il mio maestro Temanza ed i loro ritratti, delli [disegni] de' miei vecchi di qualche merito; se la vedeste, non Vi dispiacerebbe, ed essa è destinata per Voi, quando venite a Venezia; domani il senatore viene a prendervi il caffè, e perché? perché vi sono delle opere di Canova." As cited in Angelini, "Tommaso Temanza, Pietro Gonzaga, Giannantonio Selva e Giacomo Queringhi," 425-27.

In another letter from April16, 1805, Selva writes, "Voi sapete che il mio studio è famoso per le Vostro opere che l'adornano. Tre delle sue facciate offrono ognuna un basso rilievo, la quarta è sfondata e che riceve lo scrittoio, tiene appesi dei disegni corniciati. Oh che bella situazione per questo bassorilievo [*Ercole Furioso*]! Avrebbe il lume radente di fianco e da poterlo vedere ad una convieniente distanza [...] Agguingo che mi manca la quarta testa." Lettere Familiari Inedite di Antonio Canova e di Giannantonio Selva. Per le Nozze Persico-Papdopoli 32, also cited in Angelini, "Tommaso Temanza, Pietro Gonzaga, Giannantonio Selva e Giacomo Queringhi," 426, footnote 14.

[15] There are numerous references to these casts in the letters between Canova and Selva in the Biblioteca e Museo Correr. A particularly lengthy correspondence concerns the cast of the *Creugas* and Selva's concern over its placement. See, for instance, the folder of copies of letters from Selva to Canova labeled, "35 Letters of Giannantonio Selva to Antonio Canova, copies" in Biblioteca Correr, PD 529C, especially letter 9 *ter* (1802, before March 26); letter 10 (May 22, 1802); and letter 12 (June 5, 1802).

It is clear from another of Selva's letters from this period that Canova had asked for his opinion of *Creugas.* See the letter from Selva to Canova, cited in Angelini, "Tommaso Temanza, Pietro Gonzaga, Giannantonio Selva e Giacomo Queringhi," 427.

[16] During Cicognara's tenure, for instance, Canova is mentioned in some capacity in the discourses of 1808, 1809, 1810, 1817, 1821, and 1823. See Regia Accademia di Belle Arti di Venezia, "Discorsi dalla R. Veneta Accademia," (Venezia: Tipografia Picotti, 1808-1838).

[17] For more on Selva's designs for Canova's studio, see Bratti, Antonio Canova nella sua Vita Artistica Privata 357-59 and Giandomenico Romanelli, "Giannantonio Selva: Studio di Scultura per Canova alle

The desire expressed by Canova's Venetian friends that he return to the Veneto was echoed in his own personal letters, which convey a continual desire to return to his homeland. These sentiments were mimicked in his political actions. He felt the pull of his native land during the French invasion and returned to Possagno during a self-imposed exile from Rome from May 1798 to November 1799.[18] Likewise his letters to Selva express extraordinary regret at the collapse of the thousand-year Venetian Republic (*La Serenissima*).[19] Years later, when in Paris to negotiate the repatriation of works of art on behalf of Pius VII and the Papal States, his dismay at being in Paris was outweighed by the "consolation" of seeing the return of both Venice's great paintings and the famous bronze horses of San Marco—although Canova was quick to tell Cicognara that he would "never have betrayed the interest or the honor of his country, nor approved" the exchange of Paolo Veronese's *Marriage Feast at Cana* (1562-36) for Charles LeBrun's *Feast in the House of Simon* (ca. 1653) (figs. 130-131).[20] Finally, what better testament of his

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Zattere," Le Venezie Possibili: Da Palladio a Le Corbusier, eds. Lionello Puppi and Giandomenico Romanelli (Milano: Electa, 1985) 156-57.

[18] See d'Este, Memorie di Antonio Canova 95-96.

[19] Letter from Canova to Selva, February 6, 1802. "Mi duole assai che il nostro povero Paese sia così pieno di disordini; ma per miserie ce ne sono anche qui di grandi assai." As cited in Guido Perocco, "Una Lettera Inedita di Antonio Canova da Roma ad Antonio Selva a Venezia del 6 Febbraio 1802," Studi in Onore di Elena Bassi, eds. Ateneo veneto and Elena Bassi, vol. 11, Collana di Studi/Ateneo Veneto (Venezia: Arsenale, 1998) 131. Canova's despair at the fall of Venice is also noted by Giuseppe Pavanello. Giuseppe Pavanello, "L'Immagine di Venezia da Canova a Byron," Le Metamorfosi di Venezia: Da Capitale di Stato a Città del Mondo (Firenze: L. S. Olschki, 2001) 177-78.

[20] Letter from Canova to Cicognara, October 2, 1815. "Ho la consolazione di dirvi che i nostri quadri veneti sonosi riavuti, e già s'incassano per l'Italia. La famosa Cena di Paolo rimane qui. Sentirete dire che l'Imperatore d'Austria volle sapere il mio avviso su questo punto, per giustificare le ragioni che si adducevano, onde lasciarla qui, e farno un cambio: le quali erano in sostanza che conveniva tagliare in pezzi la tela, la quale diversamente non era trasferibile, senza espressa rovina. Io non v'ebbi nè colpa, nè parte; perchè la cosa fu risoluta prima ancora che a me ne fosse fatto parola. I quattro cavalli sono levati dall'arco, e ritorneranno a Venezia. [...] P.S. 8 Ottobre 1815[.] Avvertite che quando mi fu parlato che l'Imperatore Francesco voleva intendere il mio parere sul cambio proposto per la Cena di Paolo, io risposi che non avrei tradito mai l'interesse e l'onor della patria, nè approvato un tal cambio. E buon per chi lo propose che io giunsi tardi, quando non v'era più tempo. Dicovi ciò perchè sappiate il vero, e dicatelo altrui, s'altro si dice." Cited in both Alcune Lettere di Antonio Canova ora per la Prima Volta Pubblicate. In

devotion to his homeland could there be than construction of the church at Possagno (the *Tempio Canoviano)*—a cross between greatest monuments of antiquity, the Pantheon and Parthenon—for which he himself paid (fig. 1).[21]

Canova's aesthetic development was tied directly to his Venetian origins, and despite his strong ties to Rome, scholars such as Giandomenico Romanelli argue that Canova's work must be understood in the context of the Venetian Enlightenment.[22]

Occasione delle Nozze Auspicatissime del Conte Giordano Emo-Capodilista Colla Contessa Lucia Maldura 48-49 and Vittorio Malamani, Un'Amicizia di Antonio Canova. Lettere di Lui al Conte Leopoldo Cicognara. Raccolte e Pubblicate a Cura di Vittorio Malamani (Città di Castello: S. Lapi Tipografo-Editore, 1890) 24.

Elizabeth Darrow discusses the packing and shipment to France of Veronese's *Marriage Feast*. See Elizabeth Jane Darrow, "Pietro Edwards and the Restoration of the Public Pictures of Venice, 1778-1819: Necessity Introduced These Arts," Doctor of Philosophy, University of Washington, 2000, 219-21.

Veronese's *Marriage Feast at Cana* was "restored" to its original location in the Refectory of San Giorgio Maggiore via a photomontage in 1992, and more recently, a digital reproduction. See Jean-Pierre Habert, Nathalie Volle and Marie-Alice Belcour, eds., Les Noces de Cana de Véronèse: Une Œuvre et sa restauration: Musée du Louvre, Paris, 16 Novembre 1992-29 Mars 1993 (Paris: Réunion des musées nationaux, 1992) and Giuseppe Pavanello, Il Miracolo di Cana: l'Originalità della Ri-Produzione: Storia, Creazione e Riproposizione delle Nozze di Cana di Paolo Veronese per il Refettorio Palladiano di San Giorgio Maggiore, Cataloghi di Mostre (Fondazione "Giorgio Cini." Centro di Cultura e Civiltà) (Caselle di Sommacampagna (Verona) and Venezia: Cierre; Fondazione Giorgio Cini, 2007).

[21] To say that nineteenth-century writers from Possagno were ecstatic over the construction of the Tempio would be an understatement. They were delighted that Canova's native land—"where the first impulse of his genius was expressed"—would receive such a testament of his devotion. See, for instance, the dramatic expression in "D.D.D.'s" text, who wrote: "Voi, o illustre CANOVA, non cangiando mai pensieri ed affetti, e tenendo il cuore diviso tra 'l luogo ove nasceste, e tra quello ove il vostro genio e la vostra celebrità ebber da prima impulso e ingrandimento, conservaste sempre ad entrambi la più viva riconoscenza. La madre patria Venezia fu in ogni tempo l'oggetto della vostra più tenera e grata memoria, e le sue glorie e sventure vivamente sentite furono dalla vostra anima delicata e figliale, e vi fecer spargere lagrime e fiori sulla regal tomba di chi antepose di cessar d'essere Regina al pericolo di cesser d'essere Madre. Voi poteste pur conoscere che la saggezza, dolcezza, equità di governo saranno ad ogni evento per la felicità de'popoli un esemplare ben degno sempre con ammirazione ricordate." D.D.D., Ad Antonio Canova gli Abitori di Ponte Casale in Memoria di Essere Stati di sua Visita Onorati questo piccolo Tributo. Likewise, see A Canova Antonio Marchese d'Ischia Caveliere Commendatore del R. Ordine della Corona di Ferro nell'Occasione che Novello Panteon di Pieta Filiale Perenne Monumento in Possagno sua Patria Erige Alcuni Cittadini d'Asolo questi Versi di Esultante Ammirazione Tributo D.D.D., (Padova: Per Valentino Crescin, 1819).

See also Giuseppe Cima, Il Tempio da Canova Eretto in Possagno (Feltre: Giovanni Marsura, 1828); Elena Bassi, Antonio Canova a Possagno. Catalogo delle Opere, Guida alla Visita della Gipsoteca, Casa e Tempio (Treviso: Canova, 1972); Antonio Canova: Arte e Memoria a Possagno, (Ponzano (Treviso): Vianello, 2004).

[22] See Giandomenico Romanelli, "Antonio Canova," The Glory of Venice: Art in the Eighteenth Century, eds. Jane Martineau and Andrew Robinson (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1994) 407-21.

Certainly he felt such a strong affinity to Venetian painting that he created "fake" Giorgiones early in his career. Likewise, he collected Venetian paintings himself, including those by Tiepolo, Canaletto, and Francesco Guardi.[23] Perhaps the most singular example of his ambition to be displayed with these masters, however, occurred in 1815, when the *Venus de'Medici* was returned to its rightful spot in the Galleria degli Uffizi in Florence (fig. 70). Exported to Palermo in 1800 by Ferdinand III, Grand Duke of Tuscany, in an attempt to keep it from falling into the hands of the French, the sculpture eventually made its way to the Louvre.[24] In 1802, Canova was commissioned to complete a replica of the work, which he soon modified into an original creation, the *Venus Italica* (1804-1812) (fig. 22). This work was placed on the pedestal of the missing antiquity, just as *Triumphant Perseus* had been placed on the empty pedestal of the *Apollo Belvedere.* But the *Venus Italica* only held pride of place in the Tribuna of the Uffizi for four years.[25] With the fall of Napoleon after the "100 days," Tuscany was the first Italian state to regain its works of art. Once it did so, the *Venus de'Medici* was returned to her rightful

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[23] For more on Canova's own collection of works of art, see Giuseppe Pavanello, "La Collezione di Antonio Canova: Dipinti e Disegni dal Quattrocento all'Ottocento," Antonio Canova e il suo Ambiente Artistico fra Venezia, Roma e Parigi, ed. Giuseppe Pavanello, Studi di Arte Veneta (Venezia: Istituto veneto di scienze, lettere ed arti, 2000) esp. 337 and Giuseppe Pavanello, "Novità sulla Collezione di Antonio Canova," Arte veneta 58 (2001): 163-75. Marina Magrini also transcribes an interesting letter from 1804 from Pietro Edwards to Canova that gives us an intimate look at how the sculptor's collecting habits were shaped by the vagaries of the art market. In this letter, Edwards advises Canova as the artist searches for Tiepolo drawings and Canaletto paintings. Marina Magrini, "Pietro Edwards ad Antonio Canova," Lettere Artistiche del Settecento Veneziano. I, eds. Alessandro Bettagno and Marina Magrini (Vicenza: Neri Pozzi Editore, 2002) 463-78.

[24] For more on the spoliation and subsequent return of works of art to Tuscany under Napoleon, see Gabriele Paolini, Simulacri Spiranti, Imagin Vive: Il Recupero delle Opere d'Arte Toscane nel 1815 (Firenze: Edizioni Polistampa, 2006).

[25] Celebratory odes were written upon the arrival of the *Venus Italica* to Florence in 1812. See Per la Venere Italica Scolpita da Antonio Canova. Versi d'Autori Toscani (Pisa: Co'Caratteri di F. Didot, 1812).

pedestal and Canova's *Venus Italica* was moved to a different museum, the Palazzo Pitti.[26]

Upon hearing of this dislocation Canova expressed his dismay, and we are reminded again of his attention to the placement of his works of art. In a letter to Giovanni degli Alessandri, the director of the Academy of Fine Art, Florence, on February 27, 1816, Canova expressed his desire that the two Venuses remain juxtaposed to one another. Canova dreaded the *Venus Italica's* repositioning in the Palazzo Pitti, where he lamented it would be "buried." He begged Alessandri to "imagine yourself as the father of this statue; she aspires to be your daughter. Now you will see how much labor you would put in to have things work out! Poor daughter, to want to put her in a monastery, when she has no inclination—it is cruelty!" Canova then proposed an alternative location, suggesting that his sculpture "at least be exhibited in the rooms with the Venetian School,[27] both because I belong to the nation, and also because I believe it has good light, and certainly then it would be equally in sight of all those who visit the

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[26] In Florence, an exhibition was held in February 1816 to celebrate the return of the repatriated works of art. As in the 1817 Venice exhibition, there was only one sculpture, the *Venus de'Medici*, surrounded by numerous paintings. See Paolini, Simulacri Spiranti, Imagin Vive: Il Recupero delle Opere d'Arte Toscane nel 1815 166-67. Those paintings were likewise restored before their exhibition. See Gabriella Incerpi, "I Restauri sui Quadri Fiorentini Portati a Parigi," Florence et la France; Rapports sous la Révolution et l'Empire, Publications de l'Institut Français de Florence, IVe Série: Histoire de l'Art, 1 (Firenze and Paris: Centro Di and Editart Quatre-Chemins, 1979) 215-35 and Canova, Epistolario (1816-1817) vol. 1, 37, note 2.

For more on the paintings taken from the Palazzo Pitti and sent to Paris, see Gilberte E. Male, "Le Sejour a Paris entre 1799 et 1819 de quelques tableaux de Palais Pitti," Florence et la France; Rapports sous la Révolution et l'Empire, Publications de l'Institut Français de Florence, IVe Série: Histoire de L'art, 1 (Firenze and Paris: Centro Di and Editart Quatre-Chemins, 1979) 237-71.

[27]According to the 1817 catalogue of the Uffizi's collection, the room dedicated to the "Venetian School" included paintings by Titian, Giorgione, Paris Bordone, Pordenone, Veronese, and Tintoretto, to name only the most well-known artists. See Galleria degli Uffizi, Galérie Impériale et Royale de Florence. Nouvelle édition ornée des planches de *la Venus Des Medicis,* de *Celle de Canova,* et de *l'Apollon* (Florence: Joseph Landi, 1817) 145-52.

Gallery."[28] With his entreaty, Canova revealed artistic anxiety about lighting, display, meaningful juxtapositions and association with past masters in a distinctly modern context—the museum.

Unfortunately for Canova, his pleas fell on deaf ears and the *Venus Italica* was moved from the Uffizi to the Palazzo Pitti, where it remains today.[29] But his frank letter to Alessandri anticipated the exhibition Cicognara would stage in Venice only a year and half later. Unafraid of placing his sculpture in direct competition with Old Master paintings, Canova indeed relished the comparison and vaunted his own national heritage. It was precisely this type of nationalist link and patriotic recognition of the past, in fact, that enabled Canova to be so quickly and easily co-opted by his homeland. One must remember, after all, that the fall of the Republic in 1797, after centuries of oligarchic rule, devastated the political stability, power and economy of the Veneto, not to mention the confidence and self-assurance of its inhabitants. The easy capitulation of the Venetian

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[28] Letter from Canova to Giovanni degli Alessandri, February 27, 1816. "Da Missirini imparai già, quando venne qui le notazioni che si progettavano sul collocamento della mia *Venere*. Ora sento, che la cosa voglia prender piede e che si pensi di collocarla veramente al Palazzo Pitti. Per quanto sia lusinghiera la predilezione di codesto ottimo Vostro Sovrano e signore di accogliere questo mio lavoro nel suo gabinetto, e di dare così per avventura anche a me un pegno di amorevolezza; non lascia, che in questa maniera non resti in certa guisa sepellito. Se dunque foste più in tempo io amerei che voleste interessarvi perchè piutosto rimanesse in Galleria, e se non fosse possibile in Galleria dov'è, cioè nella tribuna in altra parte; gradirei infinitamente, che almeno fosse collocata nelle camere della scuola veneziana, sì perchè io appartengo a quella Nazione, come pure perchè mi pare che avesse un buon lume, e certamente poi sarebbe sempre egualmente in vista da tutti quelli che vengono in Galleria. Ma intendete bene, vi prego, che vogliate prendervi questi pensieri nel caso che veramente siate persuaso, che il lavoro lo meriti, e che vi troviate più in tempo di farlo, perchè potreste in bel modo introdur la cosa con Sua Altezza Imperiale e pregarnelo anche a nome mio. Se poi la cosa è fatta ci vorrà pazienza.

Rammentatevi che voi foste il Padre di quella statua, e che essa ha ambizione di esservi figlia; onde vedete con quanto impegno dovreste mettervi a petto la buona riuscita della cosa. Povera figliola, volerla mettere in monastero, senza che forse ne abbia la vocazione, è una crudeltà!

È qualche tempo, che aspettava vostre lettere, e credea che Voi su di questo me ne scriveste il preciso. Fatelo dunque e datemi vostre nuove, che mi saranno carissime. ...." Cited in Auspicatissime Nozze Jonoch-Chemin-Palma, (Bassano: Stabil. Tipogr. Sante Pozzato, 1876) 14-15 and Canova, Epistolario (1816-1817) vol. 1, 113-14.

[29] A series of poems and inscriptions were written by Melchiorre Missirini and Sebastiano Ciampi celebrating the *Venus Italica*'s placement in the Palazzo Pitti. See Paolini, Simulacri Spiranti, Imagin Vive: Il Recupero delle Opere d'Arte Toscane nel 1815 184-85.

nobility, who did not even attempt to resist the French invasion, also sullied the image of Venice internationally. Among the myths that had taken hold in the foreign community, for instance, was the belief that the political blow that befell the Venetian Republic was well deserved. Visitors throughout the eighteenth century had long lamented the Republic's decadent state, in which a festive and debauched lifestyle was said to mimic corrupt politics.[30] This was perhaps best characterized by Carnival, the period before Lent in which tradition, propriety, and social order were overturned and transformed into a frenzied spectacle of debauchery, precisely the element that most attracted—and repulsed—visitors.[31]

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[30] For more on the political myths (and counter-myths) of Venice, see James Grubb, "When Myths Lose Power: Four Decades of Venetian Historiography," Journal of Modern History 58 (1986): 43-94; John Jeffries Martin and Dennis Romano, "Reconsidering Venice," Venice Reconsidered: The History and Civilization of an Italian City-State, 1297-1797, eds. John Jeffries Martin and Dennis Romano (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000) 1-35; and Claudio Povolo, "The Creation of Venetian Historiography," Venice Reconsidered: The History and Civilization of an Italian City-State, 1297-1797, eds. John Jeffries Martin and Dennis Romano (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000) 491-519. For the way Renaissance rulers of La Serenissima manipulated the visual arts to circulate the image of the Republic as an ideal state of justice, wisdom, peace, and so on, see David Rosand, Myths of Venice: The Figuration of a State (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001).

[31] Eustace, for instance, lambasts the Venetian's single-minded desire for pleasure. "But those virtues, that spirit, that wisdom, were now no more; they blazed out for the last time in the war of the *Morea**, and even the last spark died away with the gallant *Emo*. Luxury had corrupted every mind, unbraced every sinew. Pleasure had long been the only object of pursuit; the idol to which the indolent sacrificed their time, their fortunes, their talents. To attend the *Doge* on days of ceremony, and act their part in public pageantry; or, perhaps, to point out in the senate the best mode of complimenting some powerful court, or of keeping or patching up an inglorious peace with the piratical powers of Africa, was the only business of the nobility. To accompany their chosen ladies, to while-away the night at their *casinos*, and to slumber away the day in their palaces, was their usual, their favorite employment. Hence Venice, for so many ages the seat of independence, of commerce, of wisdom, and of enterprise, gradually sunk from her eminence, and at length became the foul abode of effeminacy, of wantonness, and of debauchery. Her arsenal, where so many storms once fermented, and whence so many thunderbolts had been leveled at the aspiring head of the Turk, resigning its warlike furniture, became a scene of banqueting; and instead of resounding to the stroke of the anvil, re-echoed to the dance and the concert.* In short, this once proud and potent republic, like some of the degenerate Emperors of Rome, seemed to prefer the glories of the theatre to those of the field, and willingly rested its modern claim to consideration, on the pre-eminent exhibitions of its well-known carnival." See Eustace, A Classical Tour through Italy, An. MDCCCII vol. 1, 180-81.

The French Revolution transformed the inverted social hierarchies of Carnival into a permanent state.[32] Certainly, following the dissolution of the Venetian government and its loss of independence, to describe the Veneto's political situation as "topsy turvy" would not be an exaggeration. During the twenty years that followed its fall, the changing fortunes of the state were complex. Believing they would be granted their independence, Venice surrendered peacefully to the French on May 12, 1797, but the Venetian territories were quickly ceded to the Austrians as part of the Peace of Campoformio.[33] In 1806, French troops regained the city. Austrians officially lost control of the territory through the Treaty of Pressburg, signed December 26, 1806, and Venice was subsequently absorbed into the Regno Italico. When the French were finally defeated in 1815, the Venetian territories reverted to Austrian jurisdiction until 1866, when the Veneto joined the newly formed Italian state.

Although scholars now have a more tempered view of the Hapsburg Empire and its authority over the Veneto, contemporary views vacillated between enthusiastic support for the Austrian state and wholehearted condemnation. Censorship and repression

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[32] Victor Ieronim Stoichita and Anna Maria Coderch, Goya: The Last Carnival (London: Reaktion Books, 1999).

[33] For Venetian history and culture at the end of the eighteenth century, see Marino Berengo, La Società Veneta alla Fine del Settecento; Ricerche Storiche (Firenze: G. C. Sansoni, 1956) and Piero del Negro, "Venezia e la Terraferma nel 1796-1797," Bonaparte a Verona, eds. Gian Paolo Marchi and Paola Marini (Venezia: Marsilio, 1997) 34-38.

For a very polemical account of the fall of the Republic, see Vittorio Barzoni, Rivoluzioni della Repubblica Veneta del Signor Vittorio Barzoni (Filadelfia: 1804). An English translation is available as Vittorio Barzoni, An Accurate Account of the Fall of the Republic of Venice, and of the Circumstances Attending That Event: In Which the French System of Undermining and Revolutionizing States Is Exposed, trans. John Hinckley (London: Printed for J. Hatchard by J. Hales, 1804). John Julius Norwich has a very readable account of Napoleon's personal relationship to the city. See John Julius Norwich, The Paradise of Cities: Venice in the Nineteenth Century (New York: Doubleday, 2003) 25-49.

were thought to have stifled the creative and political spirit of the Venetians.[34] Travelers such as Catherine Hyde, Marquise de Govion Broglio Solari, could not refrain from commenting on the Austrian "yoke" that had crushed the Venetian spirit.[35] Lady Morgan also decried the Austrian government, which she argued was "not only a pure and unmixed despotism, but a studied and designed aggregation of every abuse that can tend to desolate and oppress, to break the spirit of the species, to damp industry, and to quench hope."[36] Yet, despite this political authoritarianism, the cultural landscape in Venice remained quite active. The literary salons of Isabella Teotochi Albrizzi and Marina Querini Benzoni were attended by luminaries such as Lord Byron, and the popularity of the opera house *La Fenice* encouraged numerous dramatic performances.[37]

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[34] An excellent study of Austrian domination –with a much more moderate interpretation of Austrian authority—can be found in David Laven's study. His introduction also provides a very good historiography of the literature and its varying political and propagandistic points of view. See David Laven, Venice and Venetia under the Habsburgs, 1815-1835 (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2002).

[35] Catherine Hyde, Marquise de Govion Broglio Solari, wrote a dramatic travelogue about the experience of Venice under the Austrians, rife with many clichés about Venice's decadence, the decay of its works of art, its sad inaction under the invasion of Napoleon, and the censorship it suffered under the Austrians. The first volume is dedicated to her experience in Venice, while the second volume of her work is a more traditional travelogue which includes commentary on Milan, Rome, Naples, and so on. In both volumes, she makes numerous references to her hope that Italians will throw off their political oppressors, in a prescient call for unification and independence.

She does not, however, always have the most generous comments to make about Canova: "It is not at all surprising, that so few good paintings are to be met with in countries, the potentates of which are enveloped in clouds of ignorance, and surrounded by swarms of fulsome adulators. It should ever be borne in mind by them, that 'flattery is evanescent, but works remain:'—an aphorism, this, which at Venice I once heard levelled at Canova; whose performances, by the bye, bear few indications of real genius, especially such of them as are of the robust and vigorous kind. Greatly influenced and impressed by the innumerable elegant fragments of antique art, which were constantly before his eyes, […] he has pillaged from them in such an unmerciful spirit of plagiarism, such parts of his statues as are not copies are feeble, and glaringly inferior to the forms which he has borrowed from antiques, and regulated by their proportions." Catherine Hyde Govion Broglio Solari, Venice under the Yoke of France and of Austria: With Memoirs of the Courts, Governments, & People of Italy; Presenting a Faithful Picture of Her Present Condition, and Including Original Anecdotes of the Buonaparte Family by a Lady of Rank, 2 vols. (London: G. and W. B. Whittaker, 1824) vol. 1, 177.

[36] Lady (Sydney) Morgan, Italy vol. 2, 74.

[37] For more on salon culture in Venice, see Pompeo G. Molmenti, "Galanterie e Salotti Veneziani," Nuova Antologia di Lettere Scienze ed Arti. Serie 4. 109 (1904); Maria Teresa Mori, Salotti: La Sociabilità delle Élite nell'Italia dell'Ottocento; and the essays in Maria Luisa Betri and Elena Brambilla, eds., Salotti e

Even, however, as the contemporary cultural scene flourished, Venetians turned more and more to their artistic past to establish cultural supremacy in the face of their political oppression. Despite the modern successes in the theater, opera and salons, it was generally understood that fine arts in Venice had been in decline since the sixteenth century.[38] The pinnacle of the Venetian artistic legacy was the Old Master painters—unlikely models for a young sculptor like Canova, as Quatremère de Quincy pointed out in his 1834 posthumous biography of the artist. [39] As the eighteenth century waned, the

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Ruolo Femminile in Italia: Tra Fine Seicento e Primo Novecento, 1. ed. (Venezia: Marsilio, 2004). For more on Isabella Teotochi Albrizzi, see Cinzia Giorgetti, Ritratto di Isabella: Studi e Documenti su Isabella Teotochi Albrizzi, Quaderni Aldo Palazzeschi; 4 (Firenze: Le Lettere, 1992).

For more on Byron, see the biography written by the Venetian Countess Guiccioli, who was Byron's lover from 1819-1823. Teresa Guiccioli, Lord Byron's Life in Italy (Vie de Lord Byron en Italie), trans. Michael Rees, ed. Peter Cochran (Newark Delaware: University of Delaware Press, 2005); Peter Quennell, Byron in Italy, Compass Books (New York: Viking Press, 1957); and Norwich, The Paradise of Cities: Venice in the Nineteenth Century 51-87.

[38] For a wonderful description of the fine arts in Venice during Canova's life and the illustrations of innumerable objects and paintings, see Elena Bassi, Attilia Dorigato, Giovanni Mariacher, Giuseppe Pavanello and Giandomenico Romanelli, eds., Venezia nell'Età di Canova, 1780-1830: Venezia, Ala Napoleonica, Museo Correr, Ottobre-Dicembre, 1978: Catalogo (Venezia: Alfieri, 1978).

[39]"Comment, en effet, pouvoir avancer, nous dira-t-on, que, vers la fin du dix-huitième siècle, en Italie, dans les Etats Vénitiens et dans leur opulente capitale, telle qu'elle étoit encore à cette époque, un jeune sculpteur puisse être considéré comme ayant été dépourvu des exemples vivans, qui doivent, en perpétuant le goût des art, reproduire de nouveaux artistes?

Nous dirons d'abord que l'époque du milieu du dix-huitième siècle nous montre, à peu près partout, et à quelques exceptions près, surtout en France, une espèce d'entr-acte ou de repos, comme on voudra le dire, dans la reproduction et la succession de talens célèbres. Une sorte d'abaissement du goût et du génie de l'invention, en fait d'arts du dessin, se fit remarquer, plus ou moins, en chaque pays.

Mais Venise surtout, déchue de sa célébrité, de sa puissance maritime et commerciale, Venise n'étant plus le centre d'aucune activité politique, ne pouvoit plus donner de nouveaux alimens à l'ambition des artistes. Il ne lui restoit en ce genre à s'enorgueillir que des oeuvres de son antiquité. Sans doute, dès les quatorzième et quinzième siècles, elle avoit produit, soit des détails d'une élégante sculpture dans les bas-reliefs de ses églises, soit de précieuses compositions de mausolées, où l'on admire une assez grande habileté de travaux d'ornemens et d'œuvres du ciseau. Sans doute encore, au seizième siècle, lors du véritable renouvellement des arts, Venise joua un très–grand rôle, mais ce fut plus particulièrement dans l'architecture et la peinture. Toutefois il est bien reconnu que les Georgion, les Tintoret, les Titien, les Paul Véronèse, restés sans aucun doute modèles pour la couleur, n'auroient pu, comme ils ne pourroient encore, soit en dessin et en composition, soit en beauté de formes historiques ou idéales, présenter de modèles ou d'exemples propres à former, à inspirer ou à guider un sculpteur. Venise enfin, et cela est bien démontré par l'histoire de Canova, n'avoit pas un seul statuaire proprement dit et moralement entendu.

Comment, en effet, s'expliqueroit-on, autrement que par l'absence totale de tout talent plus ou moins contemporain en sculpture, cette admiration et cette vogue qu'y obtinrent les premiers essais qu'on doit appeler de l'enfance du talent de Canova, essais que lui-même auroit bientôt voulu anéantir?"

absence of great *modern* painters—and the "the total absence, more or less, of all contemporary talent in sculpture"—created a cultural void waiting to be filled. Venetians heralded the painters of the past, even as they sought the continuity of their artistic lineage in present elsewhere. Canova stepped in to fill the void, with a power and grace that was deemed predestined, and modern sculpture displaced modern painting in importance. As Pietro Giordani said with reverence in 1816, "sculpture is singularly ours," for the "heavens gave us a Canova."[40] Although all of various states in Italy declared Canova was uniquely "theirs," none laid more claim to him than Venice. The fact that the greatest Old Master painters had come from the Veneto, which could now claim to be the birthplace of the greatest sculptor, cemented Venice's artistic legacy and united painting and sculpture in the eyes of the Venetians. Having produced an artist like Canova served, in the end, only to increase Venice's attachment to the past, for Canova took on the seemingly inevitable role of the preordained regenerator of the arts. In the absence of political stability and power, the fine arts took on the role of cultural stabilizer. Out of the political tumult emerged an artist who more than any other reminded Venetians of their very "Venetianness." It seems almost inevitable then, that Canova should have been joined in the cultural imagination with the Veneto's other great master, Titian.

Artistic Legacies: Titian, Canova, and the Venetian Academy

Quatremère de Quincy, Canova et ses ouvrages; ou, mémoires historiques sur la vie et les travaux de célèbre artiste 10-11.

[40] Giordani, "[Review of] 'Storia della Scultura dal suo Risorgimento in Italia'. Articolo Primo," 235-36. As cited in note 3.

Venetians exploited their particular sense of the past—distinct from Roman antiquity—to create a palimpsest of images that reinforced the idea that Venice was "a creation *ex novo,*" "unique," and "eternal."[41] The "aesthetic of discontinuity"[42] created from improbably joining objects from different periods finds a modern parallel in the fusion of Titian and Canova. Besides Canova's early attempts at painting in the master's style,[43] the two artists were first joined concretely in Girolamo Zulian's and Angelo Querini's plans to erect a monument to Titian in 1790.[44] The absence of a monument to celebrate the Veneto's greatest painter had long been considered a travesty. Canova was selected to design a monument to be erected in Santa Maria Gloriosa dei Frari, Venice, over the supposed site of Titian's grave.[45] Canova made several *bozzetti* for the work and plans were underway for construction; however, the death of Zulian in 1795, followed shortly

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[41] Patricia Brown, Venice and Antiquity: The Venetian Sense of the Past (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1996) 286.

[42] Brown, Venice and Antiquity: The Venetian Sense of the Past 6.

[43] See, for instance, Canova's *Venus in a Landscape* (Private Collection, Florence), a variation of Titian's *Venus of Urbino* (1538). Gian Lorenzo Mellini, "Uno dei Primi Dipinti di Antonio Canova," Antichità Viva 34.4 (1995): 48-50.

[44] For more on this monument, see Praz and Pavanello, L'Opera Completa del Canova 9, nos. 72-75; Museo Correr and Museo Canoviano, Canova, English language ed. (New York, N.Y.: Marsilio: Distributed in the U.S.A. by Rizzoli, 1992) 166; An appendix of correspondence between Canova and Zulian is also included in Johannes Myssok, "Tizian und die Indianer: Antonio Canovas Entwürfe für das Monument in der Frari-Kirche und ein Vernachlässigtes Projekt Für die Neue Welt," Zwischen den Welten: Beiträge zur Kunstgeschichte für Jürg Meyer zur Capellen: Festschrift zum 60. Geburtstag, eds. Jürg Meyer zur Capellen and Damian Dombrowski (Weimar: VDG, Verlag und Datenbank für Geisteswissenschaften, 2001) 226-41.

[45] For more on the monument toTitian, see Zygmunt Ważbiński, "Tiziano Vecellio e la 'Tragedia della Sepoltura'," Tiziano e Venezia: Convegno Internazionale di Studi, Venezia, 1976 (Vicenza: N. Pozza, 1980) 255-73.

The absence of Titian's physical remains presented a stumbling block in the erection of the monument. Maria Loh spoke very eloquently on this theme in a paper entitled, "Titian and I," presented at the 2009 Renaissance Society of America Conference, on the panel "Reinventing the Old Master: Fact, Fiction and Fabrication in the Afterlives of the Early Modern Artists.

by the fall of the Republic, shelved future plans for the monument.[46] One *bozzetto* remained visible in Selva's studio until Selva's death in 1819,[47] and in 1821 in his guidebook *Otto Giorni a Venezia*, Antonio Quadri described seeing models (now lost) for the work in the Galleria dell'Accademia (figs. 132-134).[48] Quadri's attention to the monument in 1821 signals the importance it retained for the Venetian population, who came to associate the unusual pyramidal shape and iconographic details— such as the weeping lions, an allusion to Saint Mark, and the allegorical figures of the "sister arts," sculpture and architecture, who follow the veiled, pained figure of painting into the tomb—with its very Venetianness.[49] The association between these figures and Venice

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[46] Francesco Zanotto describes the "obstacles" that prevented the erection of the monument. "Al solo Canova cadde in pensiero di compiere un voto tanto desiderato dall'Italia, ma gli furono ostacolo le guerre e condizioni de'tempi, appunto allor che concepì quella magnanima idea." Francesco Zanotto, "Tiziano," Enciclopedia Italiana e Dizionario della Conversazione (Venezia: Stabilimento enciclopedico di Girolamo Tasso, 1851), vol. IX, parte II, 1900.

Antonio Quadri, in his guidebook to the city in 1821, likewise suggests that it was, in part, due to the fall of the Republic that the monument was not completed. "Il Modello di un *Gran Monumento* in onore di questo sommo Artista, si fece eseguire da una Società, di cui era il Capo il Cav. Zulian. La dissoluzione della *Repubblica* trasse pur quella *della Società*, e *del Progetto*." Antonio Quadri, Otto Giorni a Venezia. Opera di Antonio Quadri I.R. Segretario del Cesareo Regio Governo e Socio Corrispondente del Veneto Ateneo, 2 vols. (Venezia: Per Francesco Andreola, Tipografo privilegiato dell'E.I.R.G., 1821-22) vol. 1, 243.

[47] "Composto fu quindi il modello di tal Deposito, che tutt'ora può vedersi presso questo Professore Sig. Antonio Selva [...]." Leopoldo Cicognara, "Elogio di Tiziano Vecellio," Discorsi Letti nella R. Veneta Accademia di Belle Arti per la Distribuzione de' Premii Li XIII. Agosto MDCCCIX (Venezia: Tipografia Picotti, 1809) 31, note 2.

[48] According to Quadri, these were located in the "third room" of the Galleria dell'Accademia, with modern paintings. "Terza Sala[.] Racchiude molti buoni pezzi de'migliori *Autori moderni*, alcuni de'quali tuttora viventi. Oltre le opere di pennelli, trovansi varj *Busti in Marmo*, fra'quali primeggia quello di Sua Maestà il Nostro Imperatore e Re Francesco I, scolpito dal fu *Angelo Pizzi* Professore di Scultura presso quest'*Accademia.* Qui veggonsi egualmente i Progetti *del Monumento di Tiziano* immaginato dal M. *Canova*." Quadri, Otto Giorni a Venezia. Opera di Antonio Quadri I.R. Segretario del Cesareo Regio Governo e Socio Corrispondente del Veneto Ateneo vol. 1, 154.

Three terracotta models still exist in the Gipsoteca, Possagno, while yet another is located in the Museo Correr, Venice. See Praz and Pavanello, L'Opera Completa del Canova 99, nos. 72-75. Those from the Accademia have been lost. Museo Correr and Museo canoviano, Canova 166.

[49] Cicognara describes the iconographic details in depth. "Consiste esso in una gran Piramide sepolcrale con porta aperta nel mezzo, a cui si ascende per tre gradini; sull'ultimo de'quali dal lato sinistro in atto di entrare nel sepolcro stassi Pittura ricoperta da un velo che lascia immaginar l'inesprimibile dolore: le sta a fianco un Genio che porta i di lei simboli, e dietro ad essa in tristo atteggiamento vanno seguendola le altra

continued even when the overall design was reused to create the mausoleum of Maria-Cristina of Austria in the Augustinerkirche in Vienna (1798-1805),[50] and, later, Canova's own tomb, erected in the Frari (figs. 38 and 135).[51]

The easily identifiable, yet transferable and transformable nature of Canova's pyramidal structure linked the names of Canova and Titian in the public's imagination for years. Even as late as 1860, Erastus Benedict remembered the sculpture's early history, eliding Titian and Canova in a dizzying account of his visit to the Augustinerkirche in Vienna, which is worth quoting at length:

> In the church of the Augustines is Canova's masterpiece of monumental composition-the tomb of the Archduchess Christina, of Saxr Teschen, the favorite daughter of Maria Theresa. It is the same idea as the monument to Canova, in the Church of the Frati at Venice, which I mentioned in a letter from that city. The design of Canova—his great genius, is here. The original design is said to have been intended by the great sculptor for Titian. How eminently fit –what a laudable and modest monumental self-glorification it was for Canova to tax his wonderful powers in a monument for Titian—a monument of his own genius in honor of Titian's glory. But failing—I do not know why—to devote it to Titian, and having first applied it for the Archduchess, it was exceedingly appropriate that, after his own death it should be produced in the best style then possible, for his own monument, in the same church where he had designed to place it for Titian. It is now there, and none the less a monument to Titian by Canova, although in the

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due Arti Sorelle; Scoltura sul secondo gradino, Architettura sul primo, e questa a quella appoggiata: i loro simboli giacciono sparsi sui gradini: dal canto destro della porta havvi sdrajato un Leone lagrimante, che simboleggia la Scuola Veneziana." Cicognara, "Elogio di Tiziano Vecellio," 34, note 2. In the *bozzetti* that remain, the lion is not readily visible, although it does emerge as a critical feature in the readaptation of the monument as the tomb of Maria-Cristina of Austria.

[50] For more on this monument, see Giovanni Gherardo de Rossi, Descrizione del Monumento da Porsi nella Chiesa Gotica di S. Agostino di Vienna, Ordinato da S.A.R. Il Duca Alberto di Saxe Teschen alla Memoria della Defunta sua Sposa Maria Cristina, Arciduchessa d'Austria: Ideato ed Eseguito dallo Scultore Antonio Canova (Roma: 1801); E.C.J. Van de Vivere, Le Mausolée de S.A.R. Marie-Christine d'Autrice executé par Le Chev. Antoine Canova et expliqué par E.C.J. Van de Vivere (Rome: L'Imprimerie de Louis Perego Salvioni, 1805); and Angelika Gause-Reinhold, Das Christinen-Denkmal von Antonio Canova und der Wandel in der Todesauffassung um 1800, Bochumer Schriften zur Kunstgeschichte (Frankfurt am Main; New York: P. Lang, 1990).

[51]For more on the monument to Canova see Il Monumento a Canova Eretto in Venezia, (Venezia dalla Tipografia di Alvisopoli, 1827) and Roberto de Feo, "Il Monumento a Canova ai Frari," La Gloria di Canova: V Settimana di Studi Canoviani, eds. Fernando Mazzocca and Manlio Pastore Stocchi (Bassano del Grappa: Istituto di ricerca per gli studi su Canova e il Neoclassicismo, 2007) 111-19.

> same church is another monument to Titian, and this is called a monument to Canova.
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> So here, in Vienna, it is really another monument to Titian and to Canova, for the memory can never be lost that the design was for Titian by Canova, and when the Archduchess shall have passed away from memory, except as she shall be preserved by this monument—when a heap of dust alone remains of her, a blaze of glory will shine around the memory of Canova and Titian, and their names will be as fresh as to-day.[52]

The Titian monument, therefore, was the starting point for a series of monuments that linked the name of the great painter with the great sculptor—a connection that was fueled as a result of their constant pairing by Leopoldo Cicognara, director of the Venetian Academy from 1808-1826. In his annual discourses to the students of the Accademia, Canova was a continual reference, an inspiration upon whom the young artists were to model themselves. Nowhere was the vision of Canova called upon more, however, than in Cicognara's *Elogio to Titian*, read in front of the eager class of 1809 and published that same year.[53] In the footnotes to the printed text, Cicognara explicitly linked the two artists by forcefully reasserting his wish that the Titian monument be completed and issuing a call to the "Lovers of the Fine Arts" for donations. [54] Only the greatest sculptor could create a monument to Venice's greatest painter, for "their names [Titian's and Canova's] excite enthusiasm in whoever is interested in the beautiful, and Titian merits to be sculpted only by a Canova."[55] Not only was Canova worthy of the

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[52] Erastus C. Benedict, A Run through Europe (New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1860) 319-230.

[53] This was not Cicognara's only text about Titian. In the Getty Research Institute there is a manuscript in Cicognara's hand, *Vita di Tiziano* (ca. 1815; Getty Research Institute, Special Collections, 970001). I believe this was published as Leopoldo Cicognara, Vita di Tiziano Vecellio Scritta da Leopoldo Cicognara (Padoua: Tipografia Bettoni, 1815). Very few copies of this exist, however, and I was not able to confirm that the printed text is the same as the manuscript.

[54] "Agli Amatori delle Belle Arti." Cicognara, "Elogio di Tiziano Vecellio," 32, note 2.

[55] "I nomi di Tiziano e di Canova hanno diritto di eccitare entusiasmo in ognuno che non sia del tutto insensibile alla vive impressioni del Bello." Cicognara, "Elogio di Tiziano Vecellio," 32, note 2.

commission because of his privileged position as the regenerator of sculpture, but equally important was that fact that he, like Titian, was Venetian. This compatriotism, in fact, was divine providence, for "it seems that nature, zealous for the glory of the Venetian soil, wanted to reserve the advantage of erecting a monument [to Titian] to a son from the same mother, pleasing itself in this way to pass these two linked names to posterity […]."[56] Plans were even made to engrave a print of the monument, to celebrate a work that was explicitly "a double monument to the perfection of the fine arts."[57] The representation, then, of an allegorical figure of painting, in sculptural form, mourning its loss, brought together the two arts in which Venice excelled.[58] The national fervor of the text was not lost on its readers, who included Canova. The sculptor praised Cicognara on a text "written with great spirit and national love for Venice." [59]

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[56] "Tiziano non meritava di essere scolpito che da un Canova. Sembra che la natura zelante della gloria del suolo Veneto abbia voluto riservare ad un figlio della stessa madre il vanto di erigergli un monumento, compiacendosi per tal maniera di far passare alla più tarda posterità innestati due nomi, a cui diede comune la patria, e quel ch'è più nelle loro Arti comune l'eccellenza." Cicognara, "Elogio di Tiziano Vecellio," 33, note 2.

[57] "Non dubità la Società, che la pubblicazione di questo Prospetto non sia per risvegliare un impaziente ed attivo desiderio di veder sollecitamente eseguita quest'opera, che sarà un doppio monumento della perfezione delle Belle Arti." Cicognara, "Elogio di Tiziano Vecellio," 36, note 2.

[58] The idea that the "Sister Arts" were ones in which Venice excelled—Titian and Palladio were often heralded as the reigning kings of painting and architecture, respectively, with Canova rounding out sculpture—was frequently repeated in the Veneto. Vincenzo Fontana argues that Cicognara was particularly aware of the indissoluble connection between architecture and sculpture in this period. Vincenzo Fontana, "'Le Fabbriche più Cospicue di Venezia...' di Leopoldo Cicognara, Antonio Diedo e Gian Antonio Selva," Studi in Onore di Elena Bassi, ed. Elena Bassi (Venezia: Arsenale, 1998) 195.

Arguments have been made by Piero del Negro and Giuseppe Barbieri that we should consider this monument as an homage to all of the sister arts, that is, painting, sculpture and architecture. It is true that the "arte sorelle" are lauded given the overall architectural scope of the monument. However, it seems to me that Canova is linked far less with the Veneto's greatest architect, Palladio, than he is with Titian. See del Negro, "Antonio Canova e la Venezia dei Patrizi," 137 and Barbieri, "In Morte delle Arti Sorelle: La Commedia delle Esequie Solenni di Canova, Palladio, Tiziano," 80-88.

[59] Letter from Canova to Cicognara, December 23, 1809. "Per la stessa ragione colgo l'opportunità di dirle che lessi benissimo il Suo saporito discorso o Elogio di Tiziano, scritto con molto spirito e con amor nazionale veneto; gradisca la mia sincera congratulazione e applauso." Cited in Malamani, Un'Amicizia di Antonio Canova. Lettere di lui al Conte Leopoldo Cicognara. Raccolte e Pubblicate a Cura di Vittorio Malamani 4.

Cicognara's "predilection" for the art of the Veneto, particularly Venetian painting, is unusual given that he was not even a Venetian.[60] Born in Ferrara in 1767, he moved to Venice in 1807 and undertook the position of Director of the Accademia di Belle Arti in April 1808.[61] In his inaugural speech of 1808 he was well aware his rhetorical grandeur would be viewed with suspicion and directly acknowledged the unusual nature of his attachment to Venice, transforming it from a localized enthusiasm for the city itself to a broader passion for *all* of Italy. For if he himself was not the "son of the Adriatic mother," he was, at least, "a son of Italy,"[62] and Venice's particular artistic

[60] Cicognara's biographers talk about his particular passion for Venetian art. "Però Cicognara ebbe sempre predilezione per le arti veneziane, predilezione che pure sovente si scopre anche nella sua grande Storia; nè questa venne in lui meno giammai, nè si posò finchè le cinse della maggiore luce che per lui si poteva. Quindi e tesseva gli elogio di Tiziano, di Palladio e di Giorgione, e illustrava quaranta quadri, quasi tutti di scuola veneta pubblicati colla litografia, con osservazioni peregrine e notizie spesso accurate sui maestri." Sacchi, "Biografia del Conte Leopoldo Cicognara," 63.

[61]For more on Cicognara's biography, see Antonio Maria Zanetti, Leopoldo Cicognara: Cenni Puramente Biografici: Estratti dal Volume II. del Giornale di Belle Arti (Venezia: Lampato, 1834); Vittorio Malamani, Memorie del Conte Leopoldo Cicognara, Tratte dai Documenti Originali (Venezia: I. Merlo, 1888); Giandomenico Romanelli, "Leopoldo Cicognara et la Politica delle Belle Arti," Canova, Cicognara, Foscolo, eds. Giulio Carlo Argan, Giandomenico Romanelli and Giovanni Scarabello (Venezia: Arsenale, 1979) 44.

For more on Cicognara's relationship to the Academy, see Caterina Ferri, "Leopoldo Cicognara e la Formazione delle Gallerie dell'Accademia di Venezia," Venezia Arti 8 (1994): 85-88

[62] "In luoghi ove ancor suona il grido della celebrata nazional eloquenza, e a me non figlio di Adriaca Madre pare forse che non si addica di parlar oggi di questa grande instituzione, e dei sommi vantaggi pei quali si gettan le basi, come a me certamente troppo largo è l'onore di questo seggio distinto ove ogni altro de'miei Colleghi a più merito poteva collocarsi: ma se a Figlio Italiano dell'onor caldo dell'Italiana grandezza è dato di celebrarla in qual siasi luogo ov'essa abbia diffusa la sua splendida luce; se a tutti è cara la gloria di questa gran Nazione che per tanti secoli ha dettate le leggi a tutto il mondo, ha civilizzato l'Europa, e d'ogni saper maestra ha dovunque sparse e scienze, e lettere, ed arti; e nel sottile acume della politica non meno che nella palestra dell'armi per tutti fu institutrice; se egli è pur vero che questo può dirsi il secolo di NAPOLEONE, di Canova, di Alfieri, e che le altre Nazioni non ebbero fra loro figli chi in grandezza, in sapere, in ardimento pareggiar potesse questi nostri, io mi sento al grande augurio di questi nomi bastevol coraggio a sedermi tra voi, egregi Signori, Giovani valorosi, e a dirvi i miei pensieri mi accingo sulle Accademiche instituzioni." Leopoldo Cicognara, "Discorso del Sig. Cavaliere Leopoldo Cicognara Presidente della R. Accademia, sull'Origine delle Accademie," Discorsi Letti nella R. Veneta Accademia di Belle Arti in Occasione della Distribuzione de' Premii degli Anni 1808, 1809, 1810, 1811 (Venezia: Tipografia Picotti, 1808) 5-6.

successes reflected those of the entire peninsula (at that moment, of course, united under the aegis of Napoleon).[63]

Cicognara's promotion of the arts of Italy were part of his larger project to create a strong modern theory of the beautiful that had its roots in Italy proper. In his treatise *Del Bello*, from the same year (1808), he lamented the fact that Italians, despite excelling both at imitation and at the creation of the fine arts, did so haphazardly. They lacked a strong theory of the beautiful, which came, instead from foreigners.[64] Part of Cicognara's life goal was to create a set of principles relating to the beautiful, and these ideas, which were also equated with nationalism, permeate his work.[65] Needless to say, however, in his inaugural *Elogio,* it was always Venice's accomplishments that were brought to the fore above all others. Cicognara praised the long-standing tradition of Venetian patronage, tracing it to the Republic's origins in the eleventh century. He admired the

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[63] Cicognara's references to Napoleon in this 1808 speech are an interesting contrast to speeches he gave after 1815, after Napoleon had been defeated and Venice once again fell under Austrian rule.

Canova's position as a unifying national figure and his later importance for the Risorgimento has been noted by Jean Henry, "Antonio Canova, the French Imperium, and Emerging Nationalism in Italy," Proceedings: The Consortium on Revolutionary Europe, 1750-1850, eds. Donald D. Horward, John L. Connolly and Harold T. Parker (Athens, GA: Consortium on Revolutionary Europe, 1980) 82-94 and Johns, Antonio Canova and the Politics of Patronage in Revolutionary and Napoleonic Europe 195-200. It is somewhat ironic, however, that the Risorgimento *did not* reference Venice as it attempted to construct a unified, national past. The Republic's success and power meant it was not easily included in these visions of unified Italy, and therefore it was often passed over in favor of Florence. See A. Lyttelton, "Creating a National Past: History, Myth and Image in the Risorgimento," Making and Remaking Italy. The Cultivation of National Identity around the Risorgimento, eds. Albert Russell Ascoli and Krystyna von Henneberg (Oxford, New York: Berg, 2001) 59.

[64] "E certamente, per un destino contrario a questi studj, è da riflettersi che i diversi trattati che si conoscono sul Bello, dal quale pur tutti dipendono, ci sono stati trasmessi da gli stranieri, che di là da le Alpi e dal mare ci hanno fatto pervenire il frutto de'loro sudori e de la loro dottrina; mentre gl'Italiani, che, senza temere di troppo avanzare, possono pur dirsi i Maestri d'ogni arte che nasce da l'imitazione de la Bellezza, non hanno nulla, od hanno ben poco che svolga questi principj in una forma conveniente ed originale." Leopoldo Cicognara, Del Bello: Ragionamenti (Firenze: Presso Molini, Landi e co., 1808) II-III.

[65] See Michela di Macco, "Cicognara e Canova," Studi Canoviani. 1. Le Fonti, 2. Canova e Venezia, Quaderni sul Neoclassico (Roma: Bulzoni, 1973) 89-108; Alba Costamagna, "Leopoldo Cicognara a) L'Estetica," Studi Canoviani. 1. Le Fonti, 2. Canova e Venezia, Quaderni sul Neoclassico (Roma: Bulzoni, 1973) 71-88; and Francesca Fedi, L'Ideologia del Bello: Leopoldo Cicognara e il Classicismo fra Settecento e Ottocento (Milano, Italy: F. Angeli, 1990).

prowess of the Republic's Renaissance painters. And, of course, he celebrated the founding of the Academy in the eighteenth century. All of the Veneto's artists were praised, but it was Canova who was singled out as the greatest sculptor of all of *Italy*, surpassing even Michelangelo, Donatello, Cellini, and Giambologna, "all of whom would confess that Canova would defeat them, were there ever to be a contest for preeminence." Among these illustrious predecessors, it was Canova, "our most recent compatriot [who] achiev[es] first prize."[66]

The message that art and "the beautiful" were timeless and regenerative served Cicognara in good stead when Venice was once again handed over to the Austrians in 1815. Cicognara may have paid homage to a different sovereign in his speeches at the Academy after 1815, but his dedication to Venetian art remained the same.[67] Yet, despite his insistence that the strength of the Venetian artistic legacy continued in the face of

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[66] "Ma più d'ogni altro eccitamento alla grandezza Veneziana, io sento già nel petto d'ognun che m'ascolta ardere la brama di seguitare le traccie del vivente Antonio Canova, il Fidia dell'età nostra, che dal centro ove si coltivan le Arti per eccellenza stà diffondendo luminosa dottrina, e mandando grandi opere, che giammai tali non escirono da Italiano scalpello. Escano pure da questi venerandi monumenti il Sansovino, e il Vittoria; sorgano pure dal Tevere e dall'Arno e Donatello, e Bonaratti, e Cellini, e il Bologna; loro confessar sia mestieri che il Canova li vinse, e se fra loro fu mai contesa di primato, quest'ultimo nostro concittadino ottenendo la prima corona, ogni disparità di opinione, ogni nobile rivalità fa cessare e compone fra tutti gli illustri suoi predecessori." Cicognara, "Discorso del Sig. Cavaliere Leopoldo Cicognara Presidente della R. Accademia, sull'Origine delle Accademie," 23.

Canova read Cicognara's speech as well and was touched by the latter's graceful and generous praise. Letter from Canova to Cicognara, October 8, 1808. "L'altro giorno mi avvenne di leggere il fiorito ed eloquente discorso da Lei pronunciato in piena Accademia nella distribuzione de'premj. Ella si compiacque di fare in esso si affettuosa e onorifica menzione di me, che ne rimasi commosso alle lagrime." Cited in Malamani, Un'Amicizia di Antonio Canova. Lettere di lui al Conte Leopoldo Cicognara. Raccolte e Pubblicate a Cura di Vittorio Malamani 2-3.

[67] For more on the Academy's history, see Giovanna Nepi Sciré, Accademia Galleries in Venice, English ed. (Milano: Electa, 2009) and Elisa Viola and Gloria Valles, eds., L'Accademia di Venezia: I Maestri, le Collezioni, le Sedi, 1. ed. (Venezia: Marsilio, 2005). For more Italian Academies in general, see Carlo Sisi, "Teoria e Instituzioni di Neoclassicismo," L'Ottocento in Italia: Le Arti Sorelle, ed. Carlo Sisi, vol. 1; Il Neoclassicismo, 1789-1815 (Milano: Electa, 2005) 9-18. For more on Canova's relationship with the Venetian Academy and Italian academies in general, see Fabrizio Magani and Paolo Mariuz, eds., Canova e l'Accademia: Il Maestro e gli Allievi (Treviso: Canova, 2002) and Gabriella Delfini Filippi, Antonio Canova e l'Accademia, Laboratorio Aperto (Treviso: Soprintendenza per il patrimoniostorico, artistico e demoetnoantropologico del Veneto, 2002), respectively.

political turmoil, the changes in government did affect the status of the fine arts. The Academy found itself in financial straits, and its students with fewer and fewer patrons. John Sloan, an English traveler who found himself in Venice in 1816, for instance, commented that the new political rulers were stifling the arts within the city. The Austrians showed no interest in commissioning new works of art, and the city's churches and *palazzi* were already bursting with masterpieces—turning a legacy that was meant to be inspirational into one through which students of the arts were "doomed to be crushed by the rough hand of adversity."[68]

Cicognara took matters into his own hands and seized the marriage of Francis I of Austria to Princess Carolina Augusta of Baveria as on opportunity to honor the bride and groom, ingratiate himself with the current government, *and* redress the city's diminished patronage. All of the provinces were required to present a gift on their behalf, and the Lombardy-Veneto region had allotted 30,000 *zecchini* to celebrate the wedding.[69] A sum this size would have proved a great strain on the Veneto's already beleaguered finances, but Cicognara found a solution that would redirect at least some of those expenses back

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[68] "In the *academy of the arts*, I found a number of students engaged in various academical exercises. Some with crayons in their hands sat before the Apollo Belvidere [*sic*], copying that divine figure-some were drawing the features and head of the Laocoon, some modeling statues in clay and exercising the first efforts of youthful invention. But where was this race of artists to find the means of subsistence? was the question. A sculptor and painter must have churches and palaces to adorn, and those of Venice are already filled with the productions of a former age, more propitious than the present to the culture of the arts—nor does there appear to exist any disposition in the present government, to augment the city with new edifices, or in any way to beautify and enlarge it. Such a view, perhaps, may not much damp the ardour of a juvenile passion for distinction, but after experience and reflection begin to correct the illusions of early enthusiasm, and a prospect presents itself to the artist, different from what the sanguine hopes of youth had pictured, the gloom of disappointment acting upon a quick sensibility and a warm imagination, must tend to extinguish the sources of that creative fire, upon which the success of genius in all its higher efforts so much depends. I saw here many an ingenuous youth, who was destined to experience a fortune similar to this—many a tender flower doomed to be crushed by the rude hand of adversity." Sloan and Lyman, Rambles in Italy; in the Years 1816....17 175-76.

[69] Fernando Mazzocca, "La Ricomparsa di Polimnia: Creazione e Vicende di un Capolavoro di Antonio Canova," Per Giuseppe Mazzariol, eds. Manlio Brusatin and Wladimiro Dorigo, Università di Venezia, Quaderni di Venezia Arti (Roma: Viella, 1992) 171.

to the Venetians themselves.[70] He planned a large exhibition to be held in 1818, for which he convinced Count Pietro di Goëss, Governor of Venetia, to use 10,000 *zecchini* to commission "many works of painting and sculpture, all Venetian." Young Venetian artists, "capable of [good] work," would have a chance to showcase their skills.[71] These works, to be exhibited in the newly restored Gallerie dell'Accademia, would then be sent to decorate the Royal Apartment of the Emperor in Vienna.[72] As the *pièce de resistance*, Cicognara was able to convince Canova to contribute his recently completed sculpture, *Polinnia*: "object of the highest rank and most worthy of the Royal Cabinet."[73] Over and over in the history of Italian art, cities, kingdoms or communal governments sponsored works that spurred patriotic fervor or subtly reasserted native identity while under foreign domination. But, Cicognara's approach was distinctly modern, for he made these

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[70] Mazzocca, "La Ricomparsa di Polimnia: Creazione e Vicende di un Capolavoro di Antonio Canova," 171.

[71] Letter from Cicognara to Canova, January 7, 1817. "Amico carissimo. Debbo farvi una grandissima confidenza. Sappiate che tutte le provincie sono tenute a fare all'Imperatore un regallo per l'occasione del matrimonio, e che la sezione di Regno Lombardo già darà per questo oggetto 30 mila zecchini. La sezione veneta darà quello che potrà. Io non vorrei che poi desse tutto denaro, e vorrei erogare 10 mila zecchini in tanti lavori di pennello e scarpello *tutto veneziano*. Non dimenticherò Hayez certamente e Rinaldi, e tutti gli altri che qui sono capaci di lavoro." Cited in Paolo Mariuz, "'L'Omaggio delle Provincie Venete' nelle Lettere di Leopoldo Cicognara e Antonio Canova," Canova e l'Accademia: Il Maestro e gli Allievi, eds. Fabrizio Magani and Paolo Mariuz, Laboratorio Aperto (Treviso: Canova, 2002) 14 and Canova, Epistolario (1816-1817) vol. 2, 612.

[72] See the 1818 catalogue of the exhibition, *Omaggio delle Provincie Venete alla Maestà di Carolina Augusta, Imperatrice d'Austria*, complete with illustrations of the included works, reprinted in Magani and Mariuz, eds., Canova e l'Accademia: Il Maestro e gli Allievi 39-74.

For the recent rediscovery of one of the lost works from this exhibition, see Roberto de Feo, "The 'Omaggio delle Provincie Venete': A Venetian Table Made for the Empress of Austria Rediscovered," The Burlington Magazine 143.1179 (June 2001): 345-50.

[73] "Quando il voto delle Provincie Veneziane di presentare al Trono un omaggio il più devoto nella circostanza delle ultime nozze Imperiali, coi prodotti delle Arti Venete, fece nascere il pensiere di unirvi una statua di Canova, anzi di riguardare come oggetto del primo pregio e più degno de'Gabinetti Reali quest'opera di scarpello; e conosciutasi l'eccellenza dell'indicato lavoro, si vide messo ad ogni prova di cortesia il nobile proprietario, acciò si prestasse a cedere nuovamente all'autore il marmo su cui aveva aquistato diritto; talchè per la sua gentile adesione potè l'egregio Scultore accertare i rappresentanti delle Provincie Venete, che in pochi mesi avrebbe consegnata a loro disposizione la Musa Polinnia da lui perfezionata." Leopoldo Cicognara, Lettera sulla Statua Rappresentante la Musa Polinnia Scolpita dal M. Antonio Canova (Venezia: Picotti, 1817) 5.

assertions in the context of a museum exhibition. From a personal point of view, it cemented Cicognara's position as a leader on the cultural front and in the emerging discipline of art criticism and scholarship. More broadly, the exhibition provided economic stimulus while also furthering the role of the arts as cultural guarantor of national identity.

Canova's *Polinnia*, unlike the other works in the show, was not commissioned specifically for the exhibition. The development of the sculpture has a long history. Elisa Bacciochi, Napoleon's sister and Grand Duchess of Tuscany, commissioned a portrait of herself as the muse Concordia, to complement Canova's sculpture of their mother, *Letizia Ramolino Bonaparte (Madame Mère)* (figs. 137-138).[74] However, Marie Louise, the new, young wife of Napoleon, decided that she herself wanted to be depicted in the garb of Concordia and Canova completed the marble accordingly (fig. 139).[75] During Canova's two stays in Florence, in 1810 and 1812, however, Elisa commissioned yet another work from him. Duplicating the seated position of the earlier two works, this piece depicted Elisa in the guise of *Polinnia,* the muse of sacred poetry and hymn. The sculpture's subject matter became problematic after the fall of Napoleon in 1814 and Elisa's dismissal from the throne—not to mention her inability to finance the project.[76] Canova

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[74] For more on Canova's sculpture of Letizia Bonaparte, see Praz and Pavanello, L'Opera Completa del Canova 110, nos. 47-51.

[75] For the sculpture of *Maria Luisa Habsburg as Concordia,* see Praz and Pavanello, L'Opera Completa del Canova 121, nos. 226-29. For more on the transformations that occurred to *Polinnia*, see also Vittorio Malamani, Canova (Milano: Ulrico Hoepli, 1911) 228 and Mazzocca, "La Ricomparsa di Polimnia: Creazione e Vicende di un Capolavoro di Antonio Canova," 172.

For more on Canova's work for the Bonapartes, see Christopher M. S. Johns, "Antonio Canova's Portraits of the Bonapartes," Eighteenth-Century Studies Vol. 28.1 (Autumn 1994): 115-29.

[76] For more on this work, see Praz and Pavanello, L'Opera Completa del Canova 123-35, nos. 268-79 and Mazzocca, "La Ricomparsa di Polimnia: Creazione e Vicende di un Capolavoro di Antonio Canova," 172.

The iconography of *Polinnia* may have been influenced by prominent ancient sculptures of the muse, such as the one in the Vatican collection, excavated at Tivoli in 1779.

subsequently modified the facial features of the work, transformed the face into an ideal type, and promised the work to Count Cesare Bianchetti, a prominent Bolognese collector (figs. 140-142).[77]

Cicognara did not let the fact that the work had been promised to another patron stop him from imagining *Polinnia* as the highlight of the show. He coaxed Canova into speaking with Count Bianchetti, revealing not only the strength of Canova's attachment to the Venetian Academy, but also that of his friendship with Cicognara. In his letters to Canova, Cicognara played on Canova's vanity and national sentiment, arguing that the Venetian section would be nothing without his sculpture—actions which presage those of current shrewd museum directors![78] Bianchetti finally agreed to renounce the work, albeit begrudgingly. Cicognara had forced his hand by asking him, "How can you say no to [Canova]?"[79] At any rate, despite Bianchetti's irritation, the sculpture arrived in Venice on July 29, 1817, well in time for the *Omaggio* exhibition planned for the spring of 1818.[80]

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[77] For the portrait bust of Elisa, see Praz and Pavanello, L'Opera Completa del Canova 133-34, no. 267.

[78] Letter from Cicognara to Canova, January 7, 1817. "Ma tutto questo non val nulla se per prima parte di questo progetto non v'è una opera vostra. Qui ci vorebbe la sicurezza d'una vostra statua, e sarebbe la *Polinnia* che potrebbesi battezzare anche per la Musa della Storia." Cited in Mariuz, "'L'Omaggio delle Provincie Venete' nelle Lettere di Leopoldo Cicognara e Antonio Canova," 13, also cited in Canova, Epistolario (1816-1817) vol. 2, 611-12.

[79] Letter from Canova to Count Cesare Bianchetti, January 15, 1817, in which Canova states that he was asked for the sculpture: "Mi viene domandata in gran segreto e per un personaggio d'alto rango la statua della *Polinnia*, che io debbo finire per conto lei." Canova then asked Bianchetti to communicate the availability of the work to Cicognara. Bianchetti agreed, writing to Canova on January 22, 1817, "Ho scritto, come ella mi ordina a quell'intrigante di Cicognara, il quale farebbe meglio di continuare a impasticciare i suoi cerotti con patine tizianesche, e vederli agli orbi oltramontani, che desiderar la roba d'altri per altri. Ella può immaginarsi cosa abbia scritto: come si fa a dir di no a lei?" The letters are published in Mariuz, "'L'Omaggio delle Provincie Venete' nelle Lettere di Leopoldo Cicognara e Antonio Canova," 13, and published in Canova, Epistolario (1816-1817) vol. 2, 627-28 and 648-49, respectively.

[80] Canova shipped the sculpture on July 9, 1817, and Cicognara received it on the 29th of the same month. See Canova's letter to Cicognara, July 5, 1817, and Cicognara's letter to Canova, July 29, 1817, in Canova, Epistolario (1816-1817) vol. 2, 890 and 933-34, respectively.

Although much has been written about the *Omaggio* exhibition from 1818, little attention has been paid to the ten month period between the sculpture's arrival in Venice and the opening of that show.[81] In fact, *Polinnia* was exhibited with great fanfare in an early exhibition held for two weeks in August 1817, on the annual occasion of the distribution of Academic prizes. It was a unique prize ceremony because it coincided (intentionally) with the opening of the Academy's new *Pinacoteca*. Often elided with the *Omaggio* exhibition of 1818 in the literature, the 1817 exhibition celebrated the inauguration of the painting gallery by exhibiting Canova's sculpture in the company of the finest Venetian Old Master paintings. It seems fitting, then, that although the sculpture was not commissioned specifically for the show, Cicognara reinterpreted *Polinnia's* significance, declaring her to be the muse of memory and history.[82] Indeed, the entire premise of the exhibit was rooted in political, institutional and artistic memory, recalling the pinnacle of Venetian cultural and political power through repeated and multivalent references to the past.[83]

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[81] The *Omaggio* exhibition did not open until May 24, 1818. See Fabrizio Magani, "'L'Omaggio' della Scultura," Canova e l'Accademia: Il Maestro e gli Allievi, eds. Fabrizio Magani and Paolo Mariuz, Laboratorio Aperto (Treviso: Canova, 2002) 27.

[82] Cicognara's reclassification of the identity of the muse speaks to the slippery understanding of antiquity in the period around 1800. "[...] la Musa Polinnia, che viene onorata come la Musa della memoria, e che secondo Plutarco, Fulgenzio, e lo Scoliaste d'Orazio tutte ricorda le passate cose." Later Cicognara added, "Il chiarissimo nostro Archeologo Ennio Quirino Visconti opina accortamente, che Numa il più saggio dei re di Roma sotto il nomo di *Musa tacita e silenziosa* onorasse Polinnia; ed anche i Greci pare che a lei attribuissero la remembranza del passato, e la cognizione delle cose fino dall'origine de'tempo più remoti ed incerti [...]." Cicognara, Lettera sulla Statua Rappresentante la Musa Polinnia Scolpita dal M. Antonio Canova 7-8. Cicognara also alters the muse's identity in a letter to Canova dated Jan. 9, 1817. Canova, Epistolario (1816-1817) vol. 2, 612.

[83] Indeed, the exhibit becomes not only a powerful part of the Academy's history, but also a defining moment in the personal history of Cicognara himself. He mentions the exhibit not only his 1817 speeches to the Academy, but refers to it even four years later in 1821, claiming it was the inspiration for his speech that day: "Volgono brevi anni che in questo luogo sacro a Minerva, e al vostro cospetto, egregi Magistrati, Colleghi chiarissimi, ad alta voce m'udiste invocare il favor di una Musa che a piedi di Cesare portasse il voto delle Arti, e delle Provincie Venete per la prosperità di quegli studii che accrescono con istancabile solerzia lo splendore dell'altare e del trono, che insegnano co'monumenti alla tarda posterità quanto sia da

1817: Celebrating the "Restoration" of Venice

The opening of the new painting galleries of the Academy owed itself, at least somewhat, to the French and their destructive wholesale spoliation of the city. Although the Accademia had been founded in 1750 as a teaching institution for the fine arts, the idea for a museum connected to the Accademia did not emerge until 1807. It too was intended for didactic purposes and that same year, the Accademia was relocated to a series of buildings with ample space for a new museum. These included the convent of the Lateran Canons, designed by Palladio in 1561, the Chiesa della Carità, and the Scuola della Carità, all of which had been part of the numerous religious orders and public buildings that had been suppressed during the French occupation.[84] Over the course of the next decade, these buildings underwent significant renovation to suit their new purposes as exhibition spaces for the Academy. The architect Giannantonio Selva was partially responsible for the creation of new exhibition spaces, including two grand salons on the upper floor, and five rooms on the lower floor; additional modifications were made after Selva's death in 1819 by the architect Francesco Lazzari.[85]

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venerarsi la virtù, e che a noi rendono finalmente soavissimo il vivere tra i conforti dell'eleganza e degli agi, per essi modificati ogni giorno con sagacissimo accorgimento."

A note to the published text of the 1821 speech reads: "Nel 1817 fu esposta nella medesima Sala della R. Accademia la statua della Musa Polinnia destinata dalle Provincie Venete per S.M. la nostra Augusta Imperatrice Regnante, scolpita dal Marchese Canova, che diedi tema all'oratore per l'accennata invocazione." Leopoldo Cicognara, "Prolusione del Conte Leopoldo Cicognara [1821]," Discorsi Letti nella I. R. Accademia di Belle Arti in Venezia per la Distribuzione de' Premii dell'Anno 1821 (Venezia: Giuseppe Picotti, 1821) 5-6 and 5, note, respectively.

[84] Nepi Sciré, Accademia Galleries in Venice 8.

[85] Nepi Sciré, Accademia Galleries in Venice 11-12, 14.

Selva was absolutely aware of the importance of these galleries. In a wonderful letter from Selva to Cicognara, March 26, 1817, regarding the construction of the new galleries, Selva describes how so many paintings suffered the injuries of time and damp in churches, and how he will place them together in

The Academy emerged, if not stronger, then relatively unscathed from the recent political disturbances, but it did so at least in part at the expense of other institutions throughout the city. The suppression of religious orders, for instance, went hand in hand with the despoliation of churches and monasteries and the desacralization of countless objects. Some of these, including eighteen canonical paintings seized as a result of a secret clause in the Peace of Campoformio, were taken to the Louvre in 1797; others were brought to Milan once Venice was annexed to the Regno Italico in 1806.[86] Still more works remained in Venice itself, placed in storage in the Basilica dei Santi Giovanni e Paolo. In 1815, with the fall of Napoleon, some works sent to Paris and Milan were returned to Venice; a handful of these were returned to their original churches, the rest were absorbed into the state's collection or placed in deposit.

By 1816-1817, the Austrians, in need of funds, began to auction off hundreds of paintings. Leopoldo Cicognara then devised a system that triaged the works of art remaining in Venice according to a hierarchical system. Paintings were divided into three categories, works that would be put up for sale, those that would be returned to the religious institutions and orders, and "ancient" works to be kept for the Academy itself. Afraid that some of the most valuable works would be sold off, Cicognara sent waves of

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what will become one of the greatest treasures of the nation. Busta 1817, Archivio dell'Accademia di Belle Arti, Venezia.

[86]See Catalogo de' Capi d'Opera di Pittura, Scultura, Antichità, Libri, Storia Naturale, ed Altre Curiosità Trasportati dall'Italia in Francia (Venezia: 1799).

Annibale Alberti gives a rather hyperbolic report on the French invasion of Venice and the removal of works of art from the city's churches and *palazzi*. See Annibale Alberti, "Pietro Edwards e le Opere d'Arte Tolte da Napoleone a Venezia," Nuova Antologia 61.1313 (1926): 325-38. For more on the closure of the religious orders and the dispersion of those paintings, see Alvise Zorzi, Venezia Scomparsa, 2a. ed. (Milano: Electra, 1984); Anna Maria Spiazzi, "Dipinti Demaniali di Venezia e del Veneto nella Prima Metà del Secolo XIX: Vicende e Recuperi," Bollettino d'Arte del Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione 68, 6. Ser. 20 (1983): 69-122. Spiazzi also points out that the Austrians likewise appropriated hundreds of art works once they obtained power, particularly in 1816 and 1838. See Spiazzi, "Dipinti Demaniali di Venezia e del Veneto nella Prima Metà del Secolo XIX: Vicende e Recuperi," 73.

petitions to the government requesting works of art for public exhibition, to great success.[87] In 1816 the Academy formally received 250 paintings that would make up the core of the collection.[88] As a result, what was a loss for the religious orders became a boon for the gallery, as many works of art entered the Academy's collection after the suppression of those very same churches, monasteries and convents.[89] But this systematic reorganization of works of art and the categories which Cicognara devised also speak to a new hierarchy of location. No longer were sacred spaces the privileged setting for great works of art. The best objects were allied to the institution of the museum and appreciated for their aesthetic successes rather than for their religious significance.

On August 10, 1817, the *pinacoteca* was formally opened to the public. This short, two-week exhibition celebrated "the restoration" of the arts in Venice on multiple levels, manifested through Cicognara's repeated use of the words "preserve" (*preservare*),[90] "reclaimed" (*rivendicati*),[91] "resurgence" (*risorte),*[92] and "arise"

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[87] Darrow, "Pietro Edwards and the Restoration of the Public Pictures of Venice, 1778-1819: Necessity Introduced These Arts," 254.

[88] Darrow, "Pietro Edwards and the Restoration of the Public Pictures of Venice, 1778-1819: Necessity Introduced These Arts," 258.

[89] A glance through the catalogue of the Accademia reveals just how many paintings were acquired between 1812-1815 as a result of the closure of these religious buildings. Giovanni Nepi Sciré has undertaken the invaluable task of documenting all of the Gallery's acquisitions, which is extraordinarily useful for researchers. See Nepi Sciré, Accademia Galleries in Venice.

[90] "[...] di preservare dalla minacciata ruina i monumenti della vostra nativa grandezza [...]." Leopoldo Cicognara, "Prolusione del Conte Cicognara Presidente dell'Accademia [1817]," Discorsi Letti nella Grande Aula dell' I.R. Accademia di Belle Arti in Occasione della Solenne Apertura di una delle sua Nuove Gallerie, e della Pubblica Distribuzione dei Premii Fattasi da S.E. Il Signor Conte di Göess Governatore di Venezia, nel Dì 10 Agosto 1817 (Venezia: Il Picotti, 1817) 7.

[91] "[...] in breve giro di tempo si videro rivendicati dalla minacciata oscurità i presso che sepolti avanzi della Veneziana antica magnificenza." Cicognara, "Prolusione del Conte Cicognara Presidente dell'Accademia [1817]," 8.

(*sorgere*)[93] in his introductory speech. On the most fundamental level, the exhibition celebrated the restoration of celebrated works of art to the Venetian public through the opening of the gallery itself. Since many paintings had been removed from their ecclesiastical locations and had not been visible to the public for years, their display not only symbolically returned them to the public domain, but indeed their repositioning in the museum literally *constituted* and *created* a new public domain. In addition, many of the great masterpieces that had been seized by the French were returned from their twenty-year sojourn in Paris and restored to their rightful owner. Finally, at least thirty celebrated works of art that had been given to the Accademia were restored to their former glory through careful cleaning and conservation.

Pride of place was given to six works of art that had been removed by the French as part of the original eighteen paintings seized in 1797—and whose fame had increased by being re-installed in the Louvre.[94] These included Tintoretto's *Saint Mark liberates a Slave*,[95] Veronese's *Madonna with Child*,[96] Bassano's *Resurrection of Lazarus*,[97]

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[92] "E il vedere a nuova vita risorte le cose di cui le storia conservavano appena tradizione [...]." Cicognara, "Prolusione del Conte Cicognara Presidente dell'Accademia [1817]," 11.

[93] "[...] di veder sorgere da questo ginnasio delle arti anche i primi luminari viventi [...]." Cicognara, "Prolusione del Conte Cicognara Presidente dell'Accademia [1817]," 13.

[94] Alberti's appendix describes the works originally taken by the French, noting those that returned to their original location. See Alberti, "Pietro Edwards e le Opere d'Arte Tolte da Napoleone a Venezia," 336-38.

For more on the seizure of works of art from Italy by Napoleonic troops, see Charles Saunier, Les Conquêtes artistiques de la Révolution et de l'Empire reprises et abandons des Alliés en 1815. Leurs conséquences sur les musées d'Europe (Paris: Librairie Renouard, 1902); E. R. Chamberlin, Loot!: The Heritage of Plunder (London: Thames and Hudson, 1983); Cecil Hilton Monk Gould, Trophy of Conquest; the Musée Napoléon and the Creation of the Louvre (London: Faber and Faber, 1965) chp. 3, "The First Italian Campaigns, 41-66, but esp. 55-58 and chp. 7, "Restitution, 116-30; Dorothy Mackay Quynn, "The Art Confiscations of the Napoleonic Wars," The American Historical Review 50.3 (April 1945): 437-60.

[95] Catalogo de' Capi d'Opera di Pittura, Scultura, Antichità, Libri, Storia Naturale, ed Altre Curiosità Trasportati dall'Italia in Francia, xv. Listed as no. 24 "Opera di Jacopo Robusti. La miracolosa liberazione di uno schiavo soggetto ai supplizj operata da S. Marco. *Esisteva nella fu Scuola di S. Marco a Venezia*" in Elenco degli Oggetti di Belle Arti Disposti nelle Cinque Sale Apertesi nell'Agosto 1817 nella R.

Pordenone's Altarpiece of *Beato Lorenzo Giustiniani*,[98] Paris Bordone's *Presentation of the Fisherman's Ring to the Doge of Venice*,[99] and Giovanni Contarini's *Doge Marino Grimani before the Madonna* (figs. 143-148).[100] All of these works were highlighted in the first room of the exhibition, the "*Sala delle Pubbliche Funzione*," where Canova's

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Accademia in Venezia, ([Venezia]: Per Giuseppe Picotti, [1817]) 9, no. 24; see also Nepi Sciré, Accademia Galleries in Venice 88-89.

Darrow suggests that Tintoretto's *Saint Mark Liberating a Slave* was sent to Brera Gallery in Milan, not Paris. Darrow, "Pietro Edwards and the Restoration of the Public Pictures of Venice, 1778-1819: Necessity Introduced These Arts," 240.

A hand written catalogue dated August 14, 1817 contains a list of works by Academicians and students that were also included in the exhibition. This includes some of the academic reductions that were not itemized in the printed 1817 catalogue. See Archivio dell Accademia di Belle Arti, Venice, Busta 1817.

[96] Catalogo de' Capi d'Opera di Pittura, Scultura, Antichità, Libri, Storia Naturale, ed Altre Curiosità Trasportati dall'Italia in Francia, xvi. Listed as no. 27, "Opera di Paolo Caliari. La Beata Vergine seduta in maestoso trono col suo Bambino; S. Giuseppe da un lato di essa; il fanciullo S. Giovanni in piedi sopra di un piedistallo; e sul piano S. Giustina, e le SS. Francesco e Girolamo," in Elenco degli Oggetti di Belle Arti Disposti nelle Cinque Sale Apertesi nell'Agosto 1817 nella R. Accademia in Venezia, 10; see also Nepi Sciré, Accademia Galleries in Venice 86.

[97] Leandro da Ponte, *detto* Bassano. Catalogo de' Capi d'Opera di Pittura, Scultura, Antichità, Libri, Storia Naturale, ed Altre Curiosità Trasportati dall'Italia in Francia, xvi. Listed as no. 14, "Opera del Cav. Leandro Bassano. Cristo che fa risorger Lazzaro fra molti astanti. *Esisteva nella suddetta Chiesa* [della Carità in Venezia]," in Elenco degli Oggetti di Belle Arti Disposti nelle Cinque Sale Apertesi nell'Agosto 1817 nella R. Accademia in Venezia, 6; see also Nepi Sciré, Accademia Galleries in Venice 96.

[98] Catalogo de' Capi d'Opera di Pittura, Scultura, Antichità, Libri, Storia Naturale, ed Altre Curiosità Trasportati dall'Italia in Francia, xvi. Listed as no. 15, "Opera di Antonio Licinio detto il Pordenone. S. Lorenzo Giustiniani, S. Gio: Battista, S. Francesco, e S. Agostino. *Esisteva nella Chiesa detta la Madonna dell'Orto in Venezia*," in Elenco degli Oggetti di Belle Arti Disposti nelle Cinque Sale Apertesi nell'Agosto 1817 nella R. Accademia in Venezia, 6. Nepi Sciré, Accademia Galleries in Venice 104-05.

[99] This work is misidentified as a Bellini in the 1799 catalogue of works taken to Paris. See Catalogo de' Capi d'Opera di Pittura, Scultura, Antichità, Libri, Storia Naturale, ed Altre Curiosità Trasportati dall'Italia in Francia, xvi. It is included as number 34 in the 1817 exhibition, "Opera di Paris Bordone. Il Pescatore che presenta al Doge nel pien Collegio l'anello ricevuto da S. Marco. *Esisteva nella fu Scuola di S. Marco in Venezia*." See Elenco degli Oggetti di Belle Arti Disposti nelle Cinque Sale Apertesi nell'Agosto 1817 nella R. Accademia in Venezia, 11.

[100] Listed in 1799 catalogue as "Al Palazzo. *La B.V.* [*Beata Virgine*]*, un Doge, etc*." and in the 1817 catalogue as no. 18, "Opera del cav. Giovanni Contarini. Ritratto di un Doge: mezza figura. *Esisteva nelle Stanze delle Procuratie nuove, ora Palazzo Reale in Venezia*." See Catalogo de' Capi d'Opera di Pittura, Scultura, Antichità, Libri, Storia Naturale, ed Altre Curiosità Trasportati dall'Italia in Francia, xv and Elenco degli Oggetti di Belle Arti Disposti nelle Cinque Sale Apertesi nell'Agosto 1817 nella R. Accademia in Venezia, 7.

Polinnia was likewise displayed.[101] Although meant to celebrate their return to their rightful owners, bringing these works and other Venetian masterpieces together underscored the impact that the French invasion had had on the arts in both Venice and Italy proper. The inherent logic that had structured the Louvre, which had been organized around the idea that cultural heritage should be available to everyone and which brought together pieces from both the royal and religious collections, was mimicked in the very presentation that underlay the 1817 exhibition. Former altarpieces were desacralized; allegorical images and portraits that had once graced the Republic's government buildings were likewise depoliticized. The Napoleonic suppressions were inadvertently a boon to the birth of the museum across the Italian peninsula. The early history of museums and exhibition practices merged with contemporary political preoccupations and became a crucible of the modern Italian state.

As for the art objects themselves, although they had always been prized for their beauty, decontextualizing them guaranteed that they would be admired primarily for their aesthetic and technical successes. The systematic presentation of Venetian painting from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries reinforced the continuous stylistic development of what was called the Venetian school. This display was a powerful lesson for budding Academicians which also had, as Fabrizio Magani has eloquently stated, powerful "emotional resonance."[102] More importantly, the idea of stylistic progression of a school of painting is at the core of teleological interpretations of modern art.

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[101] A document in the archive of the Accademia di Belle Arti di Venezia dated April 26, 1816 records the works returned from Paris. See Archivio dell'Accademia di Belle Arti, Venice, Busta 1816. All the works not returned to their original location were to be placed in the public deposit of paintings and distributed by Pietro Edwards.

[102] Magani, ""L'Omaggio" della Scultura" 27.

The dizzying array of masterpieces, hung one after the other in overwhelming succession, is made readily apparent in the 1822 painting by Giuseppe Borsato of Canova's funeral, which was also held in the *Sala delle Pubbliche Funzione*.[103] The layout of the paintings reproduced in Borsato's work corresponds precisely to the printed catalogue of the 1817 exhibition, which clearly describes the paintings' positions on the walls. (figs. 149-163).[104] Emanuele Antonio Cicogna (1789-1868), the Venetian scholar and writer who donated his considerable library to the Museo Correr upon his death, responded to the display in his diary entry of August 12, 1817, writing "Seeing is believing [...] regarding the beautiful things exhibited in the rooms of the Accademia di Belle Arti—not so much those of the students as our [royal?] paintings."[105] Giuseppe Bombardini's poem *La Polinnia di Canova* was more ardent, situating Canova's sculpture among "patriotic walls that boast recuperated canvases./Idly repentant and widowed/of their withering sword/are the hands that ravished them, cruel hands."[106]

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[103] The story of Canova's funeral merits separate study. In short, after funeral proceedings were held at San Marco, the casket was brought by gondola to the Accademia, where it was placed in front of Titian's *Assumption*. It is of course notable how the casket takes the place of the corporeal body of the Virgin, as though Canova himself were ascending to the heavens. See Stefano Bosi and Paola Zatti, "La Morte e i Funerali di Canova a Venezia e Possagno," La Gloria di Canova: V Settimana di Studi Canoviani, eds. Fernando Mazzocca and Manlio Pastore Stocchi (Bassano del Grappa: Istituto di ricerca per gli studi su Canova e il Neoclassicismo, 2007) 87-96.

[104] I am particularly grateful to staff at the Museo d'Arte Moderna, Ca' Pesaro, Venice, for taking this painting out of storage so that I could examine it at length. The detailed photographs they graciously allowed me to take were instrumental in completing the identification of the paintings depicted.

[105] "Chi non vede non crede, dirò ancor io col volgo, le belle cose esposte nelle sale dell'accademia delle belle arti non tanto degli scolari quanto delle [reali?] nostre pitture." Diary of Emanuele Antonio Cicogna, August 12, 1817, Museo and Biblioteca Correr, Codice Cicogna 2845, page 4450.

[106] "I patrii muri ostentano/ Le ricovrate tele./Pentita giace e vedova/De la spada fulminea/La man che le rapia, mano crudele." Giuseppe Bombardini, La Polinnia di Canova Offerta dalle Provincie Venete a S.M. Imperatrice e Regina Ode di Giuseppe Bombardini. Dedicata Ai Deputati della Congregazione Centrale Colleghi dell'Autore ([Venezia]: [Tipografia di Alvisopoli], [1817]) vi.

The seizure of works of art by the French remained a subtext throughout Cicognara's oration speech. Yet, although he made frequent references to the salvation of the works of art surrounding him, only periodically does he reference Venice's recent political losses. The latter, he claimed, was the result of "difficult times," in which it was inevitable that "due to events of men, the customs and dominion of the Adriatic people had to change." Venetian monuments, therefore, were injured not only by time, but also by the "negligence of men."[107] Most direct—and dramatic— however, was Cicognara's comparison between the pillaging of the four horses from the Basilica of San Marco and the empty facades of the Propylaea, Parthenon and Stoa Poikile on the Athenian acropolis, which had been recently despoiled by the British (figs. 164-165).[108] Along with Saint Mark's lion, the horses were the most instantly recognizable symbol of the Venetian Republic. Ironically, of course, they too had been a prize of war booty, but their presence in San Marco since 1254, for well over 500 years, had been naturalized into a

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[107] "[…] difficili tempi […]." Cicognara, "Prolusione del Conte Cicognara Presidente dell'Accademia [1817]," 8.

"Ma scritto era nell'immutabile ordine delle cose, che se per le vicende umane cangiar dovevano di costume e di freno i popoli dell'Adria, ricever nuovo lustro però dovessero le vetuste sue glorie [...]." Cicognara, "Prolusione del Conte Cicognara Presidente dell'Accademia [1817]," 8;

"[...] monumenti in gran parte ingiuriati dal tempo, e dall'incuria degli uomini." Cicognara, "Prolusione del Conte Cicognara Presidente dell'Accademia [1817]," 11.

[108] "Le pareti deserte dei capi d'opera dell'arte Apellea mostravano segnate sul vuoto le triste memorie di tempi fatali, e invocavano una mano benefica e restauratrice di tanta onta sacrilega; e l'augusto pronao della Basilica vedovo per la trilustro assenza degli enei destrieri, era additato dalle straniero come ora s'additano i Propilei, il Partenone, il Pecile, deserti de'più preziosi ornamenti." Cicognara, "Prolusione del Conte Cicognara Presidente dell'Accademia [1817]," 10.

Canova had seen the Parthenon marbles in London in 1816 and remained impressed with the way they represented nature "viva e carnosa." For this frequently cited quotation, see Canova's letter to Quatremère de Quincy, August 11, 1817. Canova and Quatremère de Quincy, Il Carteggio Canova-Quatremère de Quincy, 1785-1822 196, also cited in Canova, Epistolario (1816-1817) vol. 2, 962.

For more on the way Canova's opinion was used to encourage the purchase of the marbles by British Parliament from Lord Elgin, see Antonio Canova, Ennio Quirino Visconti and Great Britain, Parliament, House of Commons, Select Committee on the Earl of Elgin's Collection of Sculptured Marbles, Elgin Marbles. Letter from the Chevalier Antonio Canova on the Sculptures in the British Museum and Two Memoirs Read to the Royal Institute of France (London: J. Murray, 1816).

relentless reaffirmation of the Venetian Republic's military and naval power and the reach of its empire; conversely, their absence from the facade of San Marco after 1797 was a daily reminder of Venetian subjugation. Their return to Venice in 1815 was greeted with gleeful festivities, and, indeed, one of the paintings commissioned for the 1818 *Omaggio* exhibit—the *Disembarkation of the Horses of St. Marks at Piazza San Marco* by Giuseppe Borsato, the Academy's own Professor of Decorative Arts—celebrated their return (fig. 166-167).[109]

Just as Venetians had hailed the return of the *Horses* two years before, so Cicognara asked visitors to cast their eyes on the exhibition walls around them and admire the glories of Venetian art, "whose traditions had only been conserved through

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[109] "[…] ricorderanno alla mente sovrana, quando nella Basilica le sacre pompe che predisposero i giuramenti di fedeltà alle virtù del soglio, quando lo sbarco solenne dei cavalli di bronzo dal braccio della vittoria riposti sulla fronte del tempio; quando le corse, e le gare festevoli per cui si videro spumanti ed animate queste lagune al suo arrivo; e pascendo la vista di dolcissime rimembranze in maggior pregio ei terrà questa nostra terra ospitale, che se per fato mutò leggi e regime, non degenere però mai dall'indole antica, d'ogni più bella virtù sempre si tenne altamente onorata." Cicognara, "Prolusione del Conte Cicognara Presidente dell'Accademia [1817]," 16.

The references to the *Horses of San Marco* are also a reference to Cicognara's own personal interests, for in 1815 he had published a short analysis and history of the horses in which he directly refers to their return from Paris, to the "applause of a celebrating populace." ("tornano a splendere irradiati dal sole fra i plausi d'un popolo festeggiante)." See Leopoldo Cicognara, Dei Quattro Cavalli Riposti sul Pronao della Basilica di S. Marco: Narrazione Storica (Venezia: Alvisopoli, 1815) 30-31.

Bombardini likewise references the *Horses* in his poem to Polinnia. "Su la marmorea faccia/ Del Tempio eretto a Marco/ Gli enei destrieri tornano/A membrar di Gallipoli/ Il superato formidabil varco." Bombardini, La Polinnia di Canova Offerta dalle Provincie Venete a S.M. Imperatrice e Regina Ode di Giuseppe Bombardini. Dedicata ai Deputati della Congregazione Centrale Colleghi dell'Autore vi.

See also Charles Freeman, The Horses of Saint Mark's: A Story of Triumph in Byzantium, Paris and Venice (London: Little, Brown, 2004) and Massimiliano Pavan, "Canova e il Problema dei Cavalli di San Marco," Scritti su Canova e il Neoclassicismo, ed. Giuseppe Pavanello (Treviso: Canova, 2004) 319-42. The removal of the *Horses* from the Arc de Triomphe took a week. Quynn, "The Art Confiscations of the Napoleonic Wars," 452-53.

Borsato also completed an interesting series of paintings picturing an imaginary museum dedicated to Canova. His theatrical sensibilities were put to good use in his stage designs for *La Fenice*. See Giuseppe Pavanello, "Due Dipinti di Giuseppe Borsato Celebrativi del 'Genio' di Canova," Arti a Confronto: Studi in Onore di Anna Maria Matteucci, eds. Anna Maria Matteucci Armandi and Deanna Lenzi (Bologna: Editrice Compositori, 2004) 419-21 and Maria Ida Biggi and Associazione Amici della Fenice, Giuseppe Borsato: Scenografo alla Fenice, 1809-1823 (Venezia: Marsilio, 1995), respectively.

stories."[110] No other objects could better "recall the valor of Italian painting and the memory of its greatest heroes and religion." [111] Unfortunately, however, those recollections of valor, heroism and accomplishments were no more than that, mere memories of past success. Indeed, Venetians must have been aware, as mentioned earlier, after seeing the prodigious development of Venetian painting in the sixteenth century, that no contemporary painters could approach the technical and expressive accomplishments of the Old Masters. To add insult to injury, even the means by which these paintings were returned to them were fraught with negative undercurrents. After all, after the fall of Napoleon, the Venetians may well have expected to resume independence, but they were dealt a sore blow when they were handed back over to the Austrians. Worse yet, even the repatriation of these objects was not accomplished through their own political or military might, but rather only achieved by the aid (and greed) of the Austrians.[112] The very path to greatness that Cicognara praised—the Arts—was in fact, the *only* path left for their success. Madame de Staël was conscious of the surrogate role the arts took on for Italians, noting that "the glories of art and science" were "the last glories permitted to nations without military force and political

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[110] "Ma volgete attorno lo sguardo, e mirate reduce dalla Senna le tele, le tavole, i cavalli, i papiri, e l'onice venerando del nume, al cui scuoter del capo crollano i mondi e fa silenzio l'olimpo." Cicognara, "Prolusione del Conte Cicognara Presidente dell'Accademia [1817]," 10-11.

"E il vedere a nuova vita risorte le cose di cui le storia conservavano appena tradizione [...]." Cicognara, "Prolusione del Conte Cicognara Presidente dell'Accademia [1817]," 11.

[111] " [...] attesteranno pendenti dalle regie pareti il valori dei pennelli Italiani, non meno che le memorie più auguste degli eroi, e della religione [...]." Cicognara, "Prolusione del Conte Cicognara Presidente dell'Accademia [1817]," 16.

[112] The Austrians did not always make the best choices in their negotiations for the return of these works of art. Gould bitingly points out that if a Venetian had been involved, rather than an (ignorant) Austrian, Paolo Veronese's *Marriage Feast at Cana* would never have been exchanged for the Le Brun. One suspects he is correct, given Canova's feelings on the matter. Gould, Trophy of Conquest; the Musée Napoléon and the Creation of the Louvre 126-27.

freedom."[113] John Broughton, traveling through Italy at the time, was more biting in his assessment, arguing that the Arts were "the only road to fame which an Italian may safely pursue." But, even if Venetians should return to their former glory in the arts, they were doomed to remain impotent in political matters. Broughton continued, "There is no danger to be apprehended, either to church or state, by fostering genius of that description—not even if Cagliari, Tintoret, Palma, Bassano, and the great Titian himself were rivaled by a new generation of artists." Even more degrading was the fact that the inclusion of these national treasures in the Accademia would always bring to mind the specter of French looting, and the Austrian intervention which recuperated the works. Broughton's disdain was clear, for "[...] the Venetians can feel but little pride in pointing to the 'St. Peter'[by Titian] and the other recovered treasures of their academy. They lost them without a struggle, and recovered them without any efforts of their own—indeed, by the valour and generosity of the Transalpine barbarians whom they affect to despise."[114] The museum, then, created different meanings for different audiences; for foreigners, reactions to the exhibition were certainly mixed. Even as the exhibition reveled in the glory of Venice's past artistic successes, it nonetheless held the potential to signal the end of Venetian independence, for yet a second time.

"Bandages and Titian-esque patinas": Cicognara's Cleaning and Conservation Program

[113] "Je ne sais si je m'abuse; mais les torts des Italiens ne font que m'inspirer un sentiment de pitié pour leur sort. Les étrangers de tout temps ont conquis, déchiré ce beau pays, l'objet de leur ambition perpétuelle; et les étrangers reprochent avec amertume à cette nation les torts des nations vaincues et déchirées! L'Europe a reçu des Italiens les arts et les sciences; et maintentant qu'elle a tourné contre eux leurs propres présents, elle leur conteste souvent encore la dernière gloire qui soit permise aux nations sans force militaire et sans liberté politique, la gloire des sciences et des arts." de Staël, Corinne, ou l'Italie 104.

[114] Broughton, Italy; Remarks Made in Several Visits, from the Year 1816 to 1854 vol. 1, 148-49.

The political undercurrents of restitution proved to be a double-edged sword for Venetian pride. Even the cleaning of the paintings themselves, which should have been the source of great civic satisfaction, was a fraught gesture. Cicognara's desire to clean and conserve many of these paintings should have provided an easy opportunity to revel both in the paintings' spotless surfaces *and* in the professional status conservation had achieved in Venice proper.[115] After all, it was understood that the Venetians were leaders in the field of art conservation—the majority of the paintings that had been taken by the French to the Louvre had been restored and their restorations had been admired in Paris.[116] Yet, Cicognara's desire to clean thirty out of the two hundred and fifty paintings that had been given to the Academy resulted in a disagreement between him and Pietro Edwards, the Academy's conservator, that focused on the centerpiece of the exhibition, Titian's *Assumption of the Virgin*.

Titian's painting, which had been completed and placed on the high altar of Santa Maria Gloriosa dei Frari in 1518, had been earmarked in 1797 for the Louvre's collection. Part of the list of the original eighteen paintings the French wished to take, the work was spared the treacherous journey to Paris largely as the result of Pietro Edwards' intervention.[117] Edwards had been elected Director of the Restoration of Public Pictures

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[115] Merrifield gives the number of works to be restored as thirty. Mary P. Merrifield, Original Treatises, Dating from the XIIth to XVIIIth Centuries, on the Arts of Painting in Oil, Miniature, Mosaic, and on Glass; of Gilding, Dyeing, and the Preparation of Colours and Artificial Gems; Preceded by a General Introd., with Translations, Prefaces, and Notes, 2 vols. (London: J. Murray, 1849) vol. 2, 876.

[116] Alberti, "Pietro Edwards e le Opere d'Arte Tolte da Napoleone a Venezia," 331-32.

[117] Alberti, "Pietro Edwards e le Opere d'Arte Tolte da Napoleone a Venezia," 330. Although Fehl suggests the *Assumption* was brought to Paris, he is mistaken. Philipp Fehl, "Canova's Tomb and the Cult of Genius," Labyrinthos.1-2 (1982): 53.

The Assumption was returned to its original position in the Frari after World War I. For the importance of the painting's relationship to its setting in the church, see David Rosand, "Titian in the Frari," The Art Bulletin 53.2 (June 1971): 196-213.

of the Republic of Venice in the eighteenth century and was largely responsible for the professionalization of art conservation under *La Serenissima*.[118] After the French invasion he retained an official post and was responsible for the removal, packing and shipping of many works of art. He was acutely aware of the delicate condition of numerous paintings in Venice, having restored them himself. Whenever possible, he objected to the transportation of large, fragile, and important pieces, stressing their damaged and decrepit state, or, ironically, any recent restorations, which he claimed made works more susceptible to damage during travel.[119] Despite Edwards' lamentations, numerous works were roughly removed from their original locations, but his intercession salvaged a few notable masterpieces including Titian's *Assumption,* Tintoretto's *Last Judgment*, and Giovanni Bellini's *San Giobbe Altarpiece* (figs. 161 and 168).

Edwards and Cicognara both cared immensely about the preservation of Venetian cultural heritage. Their opinions differed greatly, however, as to how precisely those cultural artifacts should be maintained, particularly where the Accademia's treasures were concerned. In 1807, Edwards had been elected "*Conservatore della Galleria di Belle Arti e della Galleria Farsetti*" and, like Cicognara, was personally involved in the growth of the Academy's collection.[120] In fact, he too was responsible for obtaining

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[118] On Edwards, see Darrow, "Pietro Edwards and the Restoration of the Public Pictures of Venice, 1778-1819: Necessity Introduced These Arts." For the history of restoration in Italy, see Alessandro Conti, Storia del Restauro e della Conservazione delle Opere d'Arte (Milano: Electa, 1988) esp. chapter vi, Venezia e Pietro Edwards, 154-87.

Andrew McClellan suggests that the French had the first systematic system of restoration. See Andrew McClellan, "Raphael's Foligno Madonna at the Louvre in 1800: Restoration and Reaction at the Dawn of the Museum Age," Art Journal 54.2; Conservation and Art History (Summer 1995): 80-85.

[119] Darrow, "Pietro Edwards and the Restoration of the Public Pictures of Venice, 1778-1819: Necessity Introduced These Arts," 215-16.

[120] Darrow, "Pietro Edwards and the Restoration of the Public Pictures of Venice, 1778-1819: Necessity Introduced These Arts," 250.

works of art for the permanent collection. Cristina Gambillara, for instance, has argued that Edwards' selections were highly influenced by the seminal eighteenth-century history of Venetian painting by Antonio Maria Zanetti, which reflects Edwards' deep understanding of the Venetian school.[121] Gloria Tranquilli has also suggested that Edwards chose works of art for the Gallery that represented the development of the Venetian school and brought to the fore its quality and aesthetic value in order to educate the young academicians.[122]

Although Edwards felt a personal connection to the Academy and its works, by 1817, however, he was seventy-three years old and ill, increasingly withdrawn from the hands-on tasks restoration required. Cicognara, in the meantime, was at the height of his power and brazenly occupied his position as director. His determination to have all thirty paintings cleaned for the inauguration exacerbated the rift between the two men, for Edwards' approach to conservation was much more conservative than Cicognara's. In his eyes, the work should have taken several years.[123] Edwards was particularly dismayed

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[121] Gambillara also points out how Edwards reveals the complexity of criticism in the early 1800s. He loved color and the picturesque, despite the neoclassical leanings of the period, the influence of the French, and even the authority of Canova and his relationship to Venice. He likewise felt strongly that works of art needed to be seen in person, in order to judge them accurately. Cristina Gambillara, "Pietro Edwards Teorico e Critico d'Arte," Verona Illustrata 15 (2002): 104-05, 20, and 21 respectively. For Zanetti's text see Antonio Maria Zanetti, Della Pittura Veneziana e delle Opere Pubbliche di Veneziani Maestri Libri V (Venezia: nella Stamperia di Giambatista Albrizzi, 1771).

[122] Tranquilli also provides a summary of Edwards' artistic interventions and publishes some early documents as an appendix to her article. Gloria Tranquilli, "Pietro Edwards," Restauratori e Restauri in Archivio, ed. Giuseppe Basile, vol. 1. Profili di restauratori Italiani tra XVII e XX secolo, Quaderni dell'Archivio Storico Nazionale e Banca dati dei Restauratori Italiani (Firenze and Lurano (Bergamo): Nardini; Associazione Giovanni Secco Suardo, 2003) 67.

[123] Merrifield, Original Treatises, Dating from the XIIth to XVIIIth Centuries, on the Arts of Painting in Oil, Miniature, Mosaic, and on Glass; of Gilding, Dyeing, and the Preparation of Colours and Artificial Gems; Preceded by a General Introd., with Translations, Prefaces, and Notes vol. 2, 876.

Part of Merrifield's text, although not the part I quote from here, can be found in Jane Bassett and Peggy Fogelman eds., Looking at European Sculpture: A Guide to Technical Terms (Los Angeles, CA: J. Paul Getty Museum in association with the Victoria & Albert Museum, 1997) 46-59.

over the hasty cleaning of the *Assumption*.[124] The complexity of treating the work of an artist like Titian was not one to be taken lightly. Even thirty years later, Mary Merrifield's study of conservation in the Veneto, in which she interviewed five different conservators, revealed five conflicting opinions on the materials and techniques Titian used and the proper approach to conserving his paintings.[125] Special attention, for instance, should be paid to the hands, feet, hair, drapery, and foliage of the Old Masters,

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[124] The disagreement between the two men over the restoration of the *Assumption* is briefly discussed in Merrifield, Original Treatises, Dating from the XIIth to XVIIIth Centuries, on the Arts of Painting in Oil, Miniature, Mosaic, and on Glass; of Gilding, Dyeing, and the Preparation of Colours and Artificial Gems; Preceded by a General Introd., with Translations, Prefaces, and Notes vol. 2, 874-78; Francesco Valcanover, "Il Restauro dell'Assunta," Tiziano nel Quarto Centenario della sua Morte, 1576-1976, ed. Sergio Bettini (Venezia: Edizioni dell'Ateneo Veneto, 1977) 43-44; Conti, Storia del Restauro e della Conservazione delle Opere d'Arte 187; and Darrow, "Pietro Edwards and the Restoration of the Public Pictures of Venice, 1778-1819: Necessity Introduced These Arts," 148.

There seems to be some disagreement over who actually completed this restoration. Merrifield states that she saw an original contract between Edwards and the restorer Floriani dated February 21, 1816. This is supported by Alessandro Conti. Valcanover suggests that Lattanzio Quereno cleaned the painting and was also responsible for repainting some of the garments of Saint Peter and the sky. Darrow does not contradict Merrifield's identification of Floriani, although early in her dissertation she suggests that Baldassini was the conservator. Merrifield, Original Treatises, Dating from the XIIth to XVIIIth Centuries, on the Arts of Painting in Oil, Miniature, Mosaic, and on Glass; of Gilding, Dyeing, and the Preparation of Colours and Artificial Gems; Preceded by a General Introd., with Translations, Prefaces, and Notes vol. 2, 876; Conti, Storia del Restauro e della Conservazione delle Opere d'Arte 187; Valcanover, "Il Restauro dell'Assunta," 44; Darrow, "Pietro Edwards and the Restoration of the Public Pictures of Venice, 1778-1819: Necessity Introduced These Arts," 148 and 259.

Although I have not examined Edwards' papers in the Biblioteca del Seminario Patriarcale, I have seen contracts between Baldassini and Cicognara for the conservation of the *Assumption* in the Archivio dell'Accademia di Belle Arti. I have also seen contracts with Antonio Floriani for the restoration of Giuseppe Porta's *Assumption*, the work of art that replaced Titian's *Assumption* in the Frari, and wonder if perhaps some of the confusion stems from this. Relevant documents in the Archivio dell'Accademia di Belle Arti include the contract between Baldassini and the Academy (signed by Cicognara and the Academy's President, Antonio Diedo), dated May 5, 1817. Another letter states that Baldassini will receive 140 *zecchini* for the restoration, which will begin in May and must be completed by August. This likewise instructs Baldassini to be in contact with the restorers Matteini and Corniari should he require any advice on the best procedures to undertake. Busta 1816, Archivio dell'Accademia di belle Arti, Venice.

There is also letter dated January 10, 1817, describing the removal of the *Assumption* from the Frari. This letter describes the Giuseppe Porta (*detto* Salviati) painting of the *Assumption* which will be restored by Florian to substitute the Titian in the Frari, and also describes how the Titian *Assumption* will have to be brought into the Accademia through a window, on account of its size! Another letter follows regarding the cost of the Della Porta restoration. This folder also contains yet more contracts (document no. 54, April 30, 1817) with Baldassini regarding the final payment for the restoration of the *Assumption*, the government's approval of the project (no. 14907/992) and the completion of the restoration. See Busta 1817, Archivio dell'Accademia di belle Arti, Venice.

[125] Merrifield, Original Treatises, Dating from the XIIth to XVIIIth Centuries, on the Arts of Painting in Oil, Miniature, Mosaic, and on Glass; of Gilding, Dyeing, and the Preparation of Colours and Artificial Gems; Preceded by a General Introd., with Translations, Prefaces, and Notes vol. 1, 116-46.

delicate swathes of canvas most likely to contain traces of the master's touch.[126] Likewise, Edwards believed that first-class restoration could be achieved at relatively economical prices. The 190 *zecchini* fee paid to the conservator Baldassini for the conservation of the *Assumption* was therefore outrageous—and unnecessary.[127]

The zeal with which Cicognara pushed for the completion of these restorations was due to his personal connection with the works and his desire to *publicize* that connection. He identified his role as President of the Academy as a quasi-religious one. In a letter to Canova dated August 5, 1815, Cicognara stressed his role as a savior of the arts, noting that it would comfort Canova to know that "these divine works from the sixteenth-century, so dear to me" had been removed from their churches brought to SS. Giovanni e Paolo, the painting deposit and conservation laboratory. Cicognara wrote, "I have also rescued other works by Giovanni Bellini and the Carpaccio of San Giobbe, and the *Assunta* in the Frari, substituting other works in their place, and consigning them to the Accademia in the meantime. In this way the monuments of our art are worshipped and preserved." [128] The Titian, in particular, held pride of place for Cicognara, merging a

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[126] These details were recorded in Edwards, *Progetto per una scuola di restauro delle pitture*, written after 1819, and cited by Conti. Conti, Storia del Restauro e della Conservazione delle Opere d'Arte 187.

[127] According to Edwards, working without an assistant forced Baldassini's cost up, since he had to be involved in the laborious and menial tasks of gesso and color preparation. Edwards, however, estimated that since the Titian did not require expensive relining, he could have completed the job for a mere sixty *zecchini*. Darrow, "Pietro Edwards and the Restoration of the Public Pictures of Venice, 1778-1819: Necessity Introduced These Arts," 148. Darrow suggests the restoration cost 100 *zecchini*. I saw a contract that listed the final cost as 190 *zecchini*. See Busta 1817, Archivio dell'Accademia di Belle Arti di Venezia.

[128] Letter from Cicognara to Canova, August, 5, 1815. "Vi do il conforto che ho fatto trasportare il monumento del Doge Marcello che era a Santa Marina, e quello dei Vendramin ai Servi, chiese che si demoliscono, a' Santi Giovanni e Paolo, e che queste divine opere del mio caro secolo XV si eriggono a spese del governo nobilissimamente, e dopo questi anche parecchi altri. Poi ho posti a salvamento il Giovanni Bellino e il Carpaccio di San Giobbe, e l'Assunta dei Frari, facendo sostituzioni, e pondendole all'Accademia intanto. Cosiché i monumenti delle nostre arti hanno culto e preservazione." Cited in Leopoldo Cicognara, Lettere ad Antonio Canova, ed. Gianni Venturi (Urbino: Argalia, 1973) letter xxxiv, 122-23.

myopic interest in the painting's wellbeing with a broader recognition of the piece's importance to the development of Venetian painting. He claimed proprietary status over the work, referring to it as "my Titian" in letters to Canova,[129] and could not resist publicly referring to his role as benefactor of the arts in his introductory oration. Even as he praised the government for its generosity in supporting the Academy and its new galleries, comparing its patronage to that of Julius II and Leo X—"without whom, what great things would Michelangelo and Raphael have produced?"—he likewise underscored his own involvement at the helm of the Academy.[130] Appropriating the objects as his own, Cicognara gleefully pointed out that what hangs on the gallery walls is merely "the smallest part of the treasures that have been given *to me* to preserve."[131] He "imposed […] and took it upon [himself] to dedicate [himself] to management of the study of the arts in this city," searching for an occasion to share with the public "the sweet secret that [he] fostered in [his] heart."[132]

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[129] Letter from Cicognara to Canova, May 6, 1819. "Sarete voi fra due mesi a quelle parti? Dunque vedrete la mia Assunta di Tiziano all'Accademia. La chiamo mia, e vi diranno che ho ragione." Cited in Paolo Mariuz, ed., Leopoldo Cicognara ad Antonio Canova: Lettere Inedite della Fondazione Canova di Possagno (Cittadella: Bertoncello, 2000) 117.

[130] "Questo è l'adempimento a qual debito ch'io mi imposi allorquando assunsi di consacrar le mie cure all'ingrandimento di tali studi in questa città, e a convincere ognuno non mancava che la propizia occasione con cui rendere di pubblico diritto il dolce segreto ch'io custodive nel cuore. Quanto non deve il mondo al favore delle occasioni? E senza di queste cose avrebber prodotto di grande Raffaello e Michelangelo? Senza Giulio secondo, e Leon decimo, cosa avrebbe mai visto di strepitoso d'insigne quell'aureo secolo da passare in esempio alle remote età? Dubbio è persino se più alla fama di quegli augusti Pontefici contribuisse la forze dei geni da loro sostenuti e innalzati, di quello che la loro magnanima protezione mettendo in commovimento la facoltà dell'umano intelletto, sospingesse i grandi ingegni ver quell'apice di elevatezza a cui giunsero in così nobili e generosi cimenti." Cicognara, "Prolusione del Conte Cicognara Presidente dell'Accademia [1817]," 14.

[131] "Ma questo è ancor nulla a quel molto che mostrò di voler benignamente accordarci la sovrana clemenza; poichè quella che qui vedete schierata è la più piccola parte dei tesori che mi sono dati a conservare, e le restanti copiose dovizie in pochi anni non diffido mostrarvi in altrettale, anzi in più bella ordinanza schierate." Emphasis added. Cicognara, "Prolusione del Conte Cicognara Presidente dell'Accademia [1817]," 13.

[132] See note 130.

Cicognara's self-promotion was successful, for he was widely credited with these works' conservation—although this did not always earn him the respect for which he hoped. Count Bianchetti, who had been convinced to reluctantly surrender Canova's *Polinnia,* indignantly suggested that Cicognara "would do better to mess around with bandages and Titian-esque patinas [...] than covet the stuff of others."[133] Yet, it is true that many of the works were in desperate need of restoration. After being subject to centuries of candle smoke and incense in churches, the works had been coated with a dark film that obscured the vibrant colors for which Venetian painting was noted. Time was by far a greater threat to works of art than even French greed, as William Hogarth's *Time Smoking a Picture* aptly captures (fig.169). The damage wrought by negligence was insidious and Cicognara stressed the hazard to the city's cultural patrimony repeatedly in his speech. Venetian cultural patrimony was being "threatened by obscurity."[134] In churches that were "crumbling, deserted," works "sculpted by the hands of our Venetian Polyclitus threatened to disintegrate from the inordinate destruction into reverential ashes of our fathers." They were "damaged by time,"[135] "the untireable destructor of all things, jealously marching to the end, so the smoke of devote wax grew thick, when the clouds of incense obscured" the works' original glory.[136] Cicognara was the engineer behind the

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[133]"Ho scritto, come ella mi ordina, a quell'intrigante di Cicognara, il quale farebbe meglio di continuare a impasticciare i suoi cerotti con patine tizianesche, e vederli agli orbi oltramontani, che desiderar la roba d'altri per altri." Letter from Count Cesare Bianchetti to Canova on January 22, 1817. Cited in Mariuz, "'L'Omaggio delle Provincie Venete' nelle Lettere di Leopoldo Cicognara e Antonio Canova," 13, also published in Canova, Epistolario (1816-1817) vol. 2, 627-28 and 48-49, respectively.

[134] "[...] minacciata oscurità [...]." Cicognara, "Prolusione del Conte Cicognara Presidente dell'Accademia [1817]," 8.

[135] "[...] inguirati dal tempo [...]." Cicognara, "Prolusione del Conte Cicognara Presidente dell'Accademia [1817]," 11.

[136] "Ma lo struggitor delle cose instancabile, e invidioso incalzava verso l'ultimo esizio le più stupende opere de' nostri pennelli, [...] addensava quando il fumo de'cerei devoti, quando le nubi degli incensi e

"difficult and expensive work" of restoration,[137] for it was his duty to "avenge, with cleaning kisses, such mute oblivion […] from the squalor that covered them, and feeling in the depths of my soul that sweet ferment that inflames the heart of every Italian with such memories…."[138]

The *Assumption* was particularly filthy. Even by the mid-1500s, merely thirty years after its completion, Giorgio Vasari wrote that the painting "may have been poorly taken care of [and] could not be seen well."[139] Things did not improve over the course of the next two centuries. In the eighteenth century, visitors who saw the work in the Frari commented more frequently on the dirt obscuring the painting than on the work itself. Sir Richard Colt Hoare felt it was "so dark, that is excellencies are scarcely perceptible

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de'timiami; talchè offuscate le tinte splendenti travedevasi appena un barlume di quella vaghezza che d'ogni parte ora vi abbaglia e vi bea." Cicognara, "Prolusione del Conte Cicognara Presidente dell'Accademia [1817]," 11.

"…. e questa mia voce udiste più volte col franco e coraggioso linguaggio della verità muover querela per la jattura di tanta parte del Veneto splendore, che pareva minacciato, meno dall'onta dei secoli, che da quella di avversi destini, come se i viventi gelosi attentassero di cuoprir d'oscura obblivione lo glorie dei trapassati." Cicognara, "Prolusione del Conte Cicognara Presidente dell'Accademia [1817]," 7.

"...voi fede mi siete se le mie parole di dolore ebbero altra mira fuor che l'onesto voto di preservare dalla minacciata ruina i monumenti della vostra nativa grandezza; ed io stesso ben ebbi a conoscere con amara evidenza quanto la voce sincera di questo vero, ad alcuno pur sempre ingrata, le vostre anime tutte mettesse in tumulto di patrio e caldo commovimento." Cicognara, "Prolusione del Conte Cicognara Presidente dell'Accademia [1817]," 7-8.

[137] "Crollavano I templi più augusti, deserti di sacerdote e di altare; e le grandiose moli erette ai Vendramini, ai Marcelli, ai Cappello, e a tanti altri insigni e benemeriti patrizj, scolpite per mano dei Veneti Policleti negli aurei secoli, minacciavano di frammischiarsi nella ruina inonorata alle ceneri venerande de vostri padri. Eccole a un cenno Sovrano salvate, e con difficile e dispendioso lavoro divelte dalle antiche murà cadenti, e addossate a non meno venerate e sacre pareti. Cicognara, "Prolusione del Conte Cicognara Presidente dell'Accademia [1817]," 9.

[138] "A me fu cura sovr'ogn'altra dolcissima l'obbedire al cenno di Cesare, vindice di sì muta obblivione, traendo da quella polvere secolare così auguste memorie; e co'baci deterse dallo squallore che le cuopriva, sentendo nel profondo dell'anima quel dolce fermento di cui ogni petto Italiano s'infiamma a tali rimembranze [...]." Cicognara, "Prolusione del Conte Cicognara Presidente dell'Accademia [1817]," 10.

[139] "Fece appresso nella chiesa de'frati minori, chiamata la Ca' grande, all'altar maggiore in una tavola la Nostra Donna che va in cielo et i dodici Apostoli a basso, che stanno a vederla salire; ma quest'opera, per essere stata fatta in tela e forse mal custodita, si vede poco." Giorgio Vasari, "Vita di Tiziano," Le Vite de' Piú Eccellenti Pittori, Scultori e Architettori, 1550, vol. 7 (Milano: Edizioni per Il Club del Libro, 1962-1966) 317.

[...],"[140] while Philippe Petit-Radel noted that although "connoisseurs still admired his [Titian's] *Assumption*," it had suffered from "the injuries of time, despite the curtain which always covered it."[141] J. de la Roche felt that although it "had always had a high reputation, [...] it was considerably altered."[142] Mariana Starke noted that the *Assumption* "is placed in a bad light, smoked, and dirty, but the composition appears to be extremely fine [...]."[143] Even Joshua Reynolds pronounced it "most terribly dark," albeit "nobly painted."[144] By 1815-1816 Hermann Friedländer's only comment on the work was that it was "entirely covered with vapour and filth."[145]

When the painting was finally restored, Cicognara was delighted with the outcome and with the exhibition as a whole. He wrote to Canova on May 24, 1817: "When you come to Venice, you will see a huge salon with the greatest antique works from our school, which will impress you, and I dare say I think they are the best in

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[140] Richard Colt Hoare, Recollections Abroad, During the Years 1785, 1786, 1787 (Bath: Richard Cruttwell, 1815) 357.

[141] "Les connaisseurs admirent encore son Assomption, tableau qu'on voit au maître-autel: il a souffert des injures du temps, malgré le rideau dont il est toujours couvert." Phillipe Petit-Radel, Voyage historique, chorographique et philosophique dans les principales villes de l'Italie en 1811 et 1812, 3 vols. (Paris: Chez Chanson and Firmin Didot, 1815) vol. 1, 174.

[142] "Le Tableau qui décore le maître-Autel, est du *Titien*, & il a joui long-temps de la plus haute réputation; mais ce beau morceau, s'est considérablement altéré: il représente l'Assomption de la Vierge." J. de la Roche, Voyage d'un amateur des arts, en Flandre, dans le Pays-Bas, en Hollande, en France, en Savoye, en Italie, en Suisse, Fait dans Les Années 1775-76-77-78, 4 vols. (Amsterdam: 1783) vol. 3, 296.

[143] Starke, Travels in Italy, between the Years 1792 and 1798; Containing a View of the Late Revolutions in That Country. Likewise Pointing out the Matchless Works of Art Which Still Embellish Pisa, Florence, Siena, Rome, Naples, Bologna, Venice, &C. With Instructions for the Use of Invalids and Families Who May Not Chuse to Incur the Expence Attendant Upon Travelling with a Courier. Also a Supplement Comprising Instructions for Travelling in France, with Descriptions of All the Principal Roads and Cities in That Republic vol. 2, 197.

[144] William Cotton, Sir Joshua Reynolds' Notes and Observations on Pictures, Chiefly of the Venetian School, Being Extracts from His Italian Sketch Books, Sir Joshua Reynolds and His Works. Gleanings from His Diary, Unpublished Manuscripts and from Other Sources. ed. John Burnet (London: Longman and co., 1859) 30.

[145] Friedländer, Views in Italy, During a Journey in the Years 1815-1816 26.

Europe. The *Assumption* from the Frari is first, which was covered with a crust of smoke and incense inciting horror. Now it is splendid, the only painting to rival [Raphael's] *Transfiguration*; if not that I poor devil, think it even more beautiful."[146] Publicly, he was even more effusive:

> Here in front of you unfolds that prodigious monument, as if cleared from the obscure veil that removed it from public sight; it appears as if it was completed today in Titian's studio. The grandeur of the style, the fire of the composition, the sublimity of the poetic invention, and the magic portentousness of the color attest now to the work in its most vigorous days. What divine ideality! What succulent color! What boldness of color! What composition, what form, what transparency! See the ecstatic marvel in which the Apostles, in such beautiful groups, surround the opened sarcophagus; glimpse how in these figures is united the chiaroscuro and foreshortening of Correggio, the pure drawing of Raphael, and how everything emerges magically from the mastery of Titian's brush! Raise your eyes to the majestic Queen of Heaven, who with her look of reverence and affection, filled with heavenly love, and lifted by angelic choirs to the heavenly Father, is surrounded by a divine hierarchy, so varied and so beautifully disposed, that every artist contemplates her with marvel, without the courage or hope of equaling her. And what eloquence could describe the plumpness, the youthful and charming movements, the ingenious grace of the angels in such natural and diverse groups, if you did not have here, under your eyes, such a miracle? And which among the many schools of Italian painting could boast, after three centuries, of offering diffused on canvas, the real, the golden empire of rays of divine light, as if the immortal sphere itself had handled the brush of Titian?[147]

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[146] "Quando verrete a Venezia vedrete un salone immenso di grandissime opere antiche di pennello della nostra scuola, che vi farà stordire, e ardisco di crederlo il più bello che sia in Europa. L'*Assunta* dei Frari vi primeggia ed era coperta di una crosta di fumo, e d'incenso che faceva orrore. Ora è uno splendore, e il solo quadro da contrappore alla *Trasfigurazione,* se non che io, povero diavolo, lo credo più bello." Letter from Cicognara to Canova, May 30, 1817, as cited in Canova, Epistolario (1816-1817) vol. 2, 839.

[147] "Ecco che dinanzi vi si dispiega quel prodigioso monumento come se diradato l'oscurissimo velo che lo toglieva alla pubblica vista, comparisse alla luce escito in quest'oggi dall'officina del Vecellio. La grandezza dello stile, la fierezza della composizione, la sublimità poetica dell'invenzione, e la magia portentosa del colore vi attestano già l'opera degli anni suoi più vigorosi. Quanto ideale divino! quanta succosità di colore! quanto ardimento di tocco! quale ordinanza, quai forme, quale trasparenza! Vedete l'estatica maraviglia di quegli Apostoli in sì bella distribuzione aggruppati dintorno lo scoperchiato sepolcro, scorgete come in questi si unisea al chiaroscura e agli scorci Coreggieschi il puro disegnare di Raffaello, e come il tutto si fonda magicamente dalla maestri del pennel di Tiziano! Alzate gli occhi a quella maestosa Regina del cielo, che collo sguardo di riverenza e di affetto ripieno innamora le sfere, e sospinta dai cori angelici verso il Padre celesto tutta è attorniata dalle divine gerarchie, sì variamente, e con sì bello artificio disposte, che ogni imitatore maravigliando contempla, senza coraggio o speranza di poter adeguare. E qual'eloquenza potrebbe descrivervi la carnosità, i movimenti infantili e vezzosi, la grazia ingenua di quegli angioletti in sì naturali, e diverse giaciture aggruppati, se qui non aveste sott'occhio un tanto miracolo? E quale fra le molte scuole d'Italiani pennelli può gloriarsi, dopo tre secoli, di offrir stemprata su d'una tavola la vera, aurata, empirea luce da'raggi divini vibrata e diffuse, come se dalle sfere

Besides reveling in the beauty of the newly cleaned work, in both public and private Cicognara broached the role of Venetian painting's relationship to the art of the rest of the peninsula. In his letter to Canova, he privileged Titian's *Assumption* over Raphael's *Transfiguration*—arguably Raphael's most important work, and the work that the French had placed as their highest priority to obtain for the Louvre. In part, this reflects Cicognara's personal disdain for Rome, which emerges periodically in his writing—most tellingly in a letter to Giuseppe Molini, a Florentine bookseller, in which he pitilessly dismisses Roman aesthetic pursuits, claiming the Romans are only interested in "horses and whores."[148] Likewise Cicognara gloated at having successfully obtained Canova's *Polinnia* for Venice; since the statue left Rome "immediately after receiving the last touch of his chisel, [...] Rome itself would only be able to admire the work from a cast."[149]

At the same time, the comparison between Raphael's *Transfiguration* and Titian's *Assumption* recalls the Renaissance debates regarding *disegno* and *colorito*, arguing for the supremacy of the latter, which was thought to be a uniquely Venetian trait.[150] In his

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immortali propriamente tratta l'avesse il pennel di Tiziano?" Cicognara, "Prolusione del Conte Cicognara Presidente dell'Accademia [1817]," 11-13.

[148] "Volintieri assai vorrei combinare qualche cose per i vostri quadretti fiamminghi, ma amico mio se sapeste cosa è Roma senza forestieri caprireste l'impossibilità di far affari. I Romani non comprano uno spillo in materia d'arti, e questi [illegible] educati in scuderia non amano che cavalli e puttane, e quindi i libri e cose preziose stagnano." Letter from Cicognara to Giuseppe Molini, dated March 11, [1807] in the Getty Research Institute, Getty Special Collections, 860104.

For more on the relationship between Venice and Rome see Giuseppe Pavanello, "Rapporti Tra Venezia e Roma in Età Neoclassica," Roma, "Il Tempio del Vero Gusto": La Pittura del Settecento Romano e la sua Diffusione a Venezia e a Napoli: Atti del Convegno Internazionale di Studi, Salerno-Ravello 26-27 Giugno 1997 (Firenze: Edifir, 2001).

[149] Cicognara, Lettera sulla Statua Rappresentante la Musa Polinnia Scolpita dal M. Antonio Canova 3.

[150] See David Rosand, Painting in Sixteenth-Century Venice: Titian, Veronese, Tintoretto, Rev. ed. (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

public discourse, Cicognara pushes these comparisons further. Not only did Titian's magisterial use of color surpass those of other Renaissance painters, but he was equally capable of creating dramatic line and *chiaroscuro*, uniting in his paintings the best of Raphael's and Correggio's styles. Indeed, according to Cicognara, the genius of the *Assumption* lay in the way it brought together the very best traits of all of the Italian schools in one image. It was a work that could rival the cultural heritage of Rome *and* the artistic creations of Florence—but was nonetheless distinctly Venetian.

Visitors were equally impressed by the work's luminosity. British journals announced the inauguration of the galleries and commented not only on Cicognara's speech and Canova's *Polinnia*, but also on the restoration of the Titian. The work, they wrote, that most "illuminated the hall with its splendor, was an immensely large and magnificent picture by Titian, which represents the Ascension of the Virgin; it was in a very dirty and neglected condition in the Church of de'Frati, where Count Cicognara perceived its beauty; and by the care of old Baldaccini [*sic*], [...] it is restored in the highest perfection."[151] William Cadell, a British traveler, was awed by the way the

[151] "Venice, August 10, 1817.—Yesterday the prizes of the Royal Academy of Fine Arts were distributed to those artists, whose works were adjudged to be the most worthy. [...] After Count Leopold Cicognara, President of the Institution, had made a speech, in which he pronounced a warm panegyric upon the Emperor, who had done much for the Academy, and upon the Governor-General, who interests himself so deeply with its success, and upon his own zeal, which nobody disputes, he turned his eyes on two works, which attracted general attention, and the excellence of which he duly extolled. The first was the statue of the muse Polyhymnia, by Canova, (Originally the portrait of a lady of Bonaparte's family, the head of which is changed); Count Cicognara took this opportunity not only to pay a just tribute of praise to his friend Canova, of whom his country, Venice, is proud, but also to proclaim aloud to the rest of Europe, 'that Italy was still the soil in which the greatest talents for the Arts and Sciences flourish, and that nobody but Canova was able to furnish so suitable a present for their Imperial Majesties of Austria, to whom the statue has been respectfully offered by the States of Venice.'—The second work, which, as it were, illuminated the hall with its splendor, was an immensely large and magnificent picture by Titian, which represents the Ascension of the Virgin; it was in a very dirty and neglected condition in the Church of de'Frati, where Count Cicognara perceived its beauty; and by the care of old Baldaccini [*sic*], (who was chosen at this sitting a member of the Academy), it is restored in the highest perfection. [...] After the ceremony was concluded, the company separated to view the five rooms filled with all the specimens of sculpture, painting, &c., which were opened today for the first time. That in which the prizes were distributed contained the finest productions of the old Venetian school. The natural splendor of their

Assumption "has been restored to brilliancy from almost total blackness."[152] Lady Morgan likewise celebrated the way the previously "unnoticed" *Assumption* "was restored to its pristine beauty, and to all that unrivalled lustre of colouring for which Titian was so celebrated, and which is said to be conspicuous in this great picture beyond any other of his works."[153] The British painter George Hayter made an etching after the "recently discovered" painting, which he dedicated to Canova.[154] A British reviewer

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colouring was heightened by the richly gilded ceiling." "Fine Arts. Italy. [Venice, Aug. 10, 1817]," The Literary Gazette, or Journal of Belles Lettres, Arts, Politics, &c. XXXIX (Saturday, Oct. 18, 1817): 248, also reprinted in "Fine Arts. [Venice, Aug. 10, 1817]," The Edinburgh Observer: or, Town and Country Magazine 6 (Saturday, November 22, 1817): 132.

[152] Cadell, A Journey in Carniola, Italy, and France, in the Years 1817, 1818: Containing Remarks Relating to Language, Geography, History, Antiquities, Natural History, Science, Painting, Sculpture, Architecture, Agriculture, the Mechanical Arts and Manufacturers vol. 1, 65.

[153] "The church and convent [of Santa Maria della Carità] were suppressed by the French; but the remembrances of the CONFRATERNITA *delle belle Arti* attached to it, saved it from utter neglect and ruin; and the site of one of the most ancient academies of painting in Europe was chosen by the French government for the re-union and re-establishment of a society which had fallen into total decay, and for the reception of works of art both of antiquity and modern times. Under the special jurisdiction of the Count Cicognara, as president, the school of Titian was again opened; and Venice owed to the intelligence, activity, and genius of this accomplished gentleman, and his secretary Antonio Diedo, not only the revival of the arts, but the recovery of some of the most precious treasures which the old Venetian school had produced. The *Assumption* of the Virgin, the chef-d'oeuvre of *Titian*, had lain long unnoticed, covered with filth, and devoted to neglect, in the church where it had been originally placed, when the Count Cicognara discovered and removed it to the gallery of the Academy, where, after a very curious and tedious process,* it was restored to its pristine beauty, and to all that unrivalled lustre of colouring for which Titian was so celebrated, and which is said to be conspicuous in this great picture beyond any other of his works. [...] With the exception of the revival of its ancient name, the whole of this establishment [the Accademia] is due to the munificence of the French government.

*This process was extremely simple in its means, but tedious in practice. It consisted in washing the surface with a slight alkaline solution. For this purpose small flocks of cotton were used, and the friction was the gentlest possible. Although, from fear of destroying the picture, the cleaning was not pushed to the entire removal of the smoke and incense with which it had been covered, several bales of cotton were expended in the operation. The tints of this remarkable work, even thus partially covered, are more vivid than in any picture we saw in Italy; and the colouring is carried perhaps to the highest perfection of which the art is susceptible." Morgan, Italy vol. 2, 423-24.

[154] "He [Hayter] has very properly dedicated it [the etching] to Canova, the most illustrious Venetian and most celebrated artist of Italy, as a countryman of the great painter, and a citizen of the city that owns it, in the following elegant piece of Latinity, [...] 'Mariæ sanctissimæ Virginis, in cœlum assumptæ imaginem, ad Titiani Vicellii, summi pictoris, maximum ac pulcherrimum exemplar; per ducentos annos situ tenibresque obsitum, in lucem nuper retractum, et nunc demum Venetiis in ædibus sacris ipsius nomine dictis, integrum et illæasum extans, adumbravit ære jam primum incidit, excudendamque curavit; atque Antonio Canova, sculptorum sui seculi facile principi, beneficiorum memor, d, d, d, George Hayter, Pictor Anglus,' A.S. MDCCCXX [....]." "Art. XVIII. The Assumption of the Virgin Mary, Etched by George

claimed the *Assumption* "[had] never been engraved" until Hayter did so. Most telling was the way the reviewer noted that when the *Assumption* had been in the Frari, it was half-hidden by a curtain, the altar and candlesticks—not to mention dirt. There, "its existence as a picture was forgotten."[155] Canova himself marveled at the work when he saw it during a day-long stop in Venice on July 17, 1819, for the painting "triumphs over every expectation of every most heated fantasy. I was in paradise contemplating it for a

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Hayter, Esq. Member of the Academy of Luke, Rome, &C. From a Finished Sketch in Oils, by Himself, of the Celebrated Picture Recently Discovered at Venice, Painted by Titian. London, 1820," Annals of the Fine Arts, For MDCCCXX V (1820): 430.

The Latin can be translated as: "This image of Maria the most blessed Virgin, received into heaven, a large and very fine copy after Tiziano Vicelli, the greatest painter, for two hundred years covered over and in a shadowy place, lately drawn back into the light, and now at last in the sacred Venetian sanctuary referred to by its own name, projecting out untouched and unharmed, [George Hayter] sketched, first of all cut it in bronze, and then arranged that it be printed, and in addition the English painter, mindful of favors, gave and dedicated [it] as a gift to Antonio Canova, easily first among the sculptors of his generation." I am most thankful to Dr. Marden Nichols for translating the text.

[155] "The picture [the *Assumption*], happily, was so completely enveloped by curtains on its upper part and sides, and by the high altar and its candlestick at its lower part, that it became invisible: and its existence as a picture was forgotten. We say happily; for had it been otherwise, it would have been removed and ruined by the French, who took other pictures from the same church; and also that when it was cleaned in 1815, it came from under the integuments as fresh as when it was first painted. [...] The world is indebted for its discovery and successful cleaning to the Count Cicognara, the President of the Venetian Academy [...] It has been conjectured, that the curtains were lowered at the ceremony of the interment of Titian, who was buried in this church, and that they remained lowered till its recent discovery. We cannot agree that it had been concealed or forgotten so long; for the *Ritratto di Venezia*, which was published at Venice in 1684, says 'Nella capella maggiore, v'è la famosissima, e gran tavola di Tiziano, ov'è Maria, che ascende al cielo, con il Padre eterno di sopra, e a basso gl'apostoli, che l'ammirano.' The *Forestiere Illuminato*, a work published at Venice, in 1740, says, in its description of the church, 'Ma parliamo delle pitture. Famosa è la gran tavola di Tiziano nella Capella maggiore, rappresentante la glorificazione di nostra Signora,' and the *Descrizione di tutte le Publiche Pitture della Città di Venezia*, published at Venice, in 1733, says, "Nella Capella maggiore la tavola coll'assunzione di nostra Signora è opera non meno famosa, che eccelente di Tiziano. All of which go to prove that it was well known down to 1740. These publications are, however, we believe, the latest that mention it. [...] It is universally agreed, that this picture, [...] surpasses all the known works of Titian in splendour and high expression. It is infinitely superior in conception, grandeur and colouring to his celebrated *Pietro Martyre*, and is worthy of being matched with the hitherto matchless Transfiguration. This beautiful work has only been copied twice; once very small, by a French artist, and since by Mr. Hayter, who deserves the honour of having introduced it to his admiring countrymen. It has never been engraved till now [...]." "Art. XVIII. The Assumption of the Virgin Mary, Etched by George Hayter, Esq. Member of the Academy of Luke, Rome, &C. From a Finished Sketch in Oils, by Himself, of the Celebrated Picture Recently Discovered at Venice, Painted by Titian. London, 1820," 427-29.

long time, and according to me, it is the queen of all the paintings in the world." [156] This reaction thrilled Cicognara, who was "delighted that the masterpieces brought together in

[156] "Qui si vocifera il vostro ritorno a settembre. Io lo desidero per il bene della nostra Accademia, la quale senza di voi è priva di anima e di vita. La riunione di quei capi d'opera della nostra veneta pittura in questo insigne stabilmento mi ha colpito profondamente; ma l'*Assunta* del Tiziano vince e trionfa d'ogni aspettazione di qualunque più riscaldata fantasia. Io mi sono imparadisato a contemplarla per lungo tempo, e nel sentimento mio la giudico, e tengo, e venero per il sovrano di tutti li quadri del mondo." Letter from Canova to Cigonara, July 17, 1819. Mariuz, ed., Leopoldo Cicognara ad Antonio Canova: Lettere Inedite della Fondazione Canova di Possagno 167-68.

Canova's opinions regarding the *Assumption* led to an unexpected literary crisis in 1820. Andrea Majer published a book on Titian and imitation in 1818. Giuseppe Carpani wrote a critical review of Majer's text in the Biblioteca Italiana of 1819, in which he cited Canova's admiration of Titian, specifically stating that Canova had declared the *Assumption* to be the greatest painting in the world. Canova replied, taking issue with the Carpani's "misquotation," arguing he had never claimed the *Assumption* was the greatest painting in the world and that indeed, although it was magnificent, there were others that equaled it in beauty. Carpani published a correction, including Canova's letter to him from Nov. 11, 1820, as a part of Biblioteca Italiana, 1820. This was then followed by an "apology" on Majer's behalf, critiquing Carpani's review. See Andrea Majer, Della Imitazione Pittorica della Eccellenza delle Opere di Tiziano e della Vita di Tiziano Scritta da Stefano Ticozzi Libri 3. di Andrea Maier Veneziano (Venezia: dalla tipografia di Alvisopoli: a spese del negozio di libri all'Apollo, 1818). Giuseppe Carpani, "Sul Libro della Imitazione Pittorica, dell'Eccellenza delle Opere di Tiziano e della Vita di Tiziano, Scritti da Stefano Ticozzi. Libri III di Andrea Majer, Veneziano [...] Lettere Tre di Giuseppe Carpani al Sig. Giuseppe Acerbi," Biblioteca Italiana, o sia Giornale di Letteratura, Scienze ed Arti compilato da Varj Letterati 15 (Sept. 1819): 321-48. Carpani's text, along with Canova's response, were also republished, Biblioteca Italiana, o sia Giornale di Letteratura, Scienze ed Arti compilato da Varj Letterati 20 (Ott-Dicembre 1820): 166-84 and 425-27, respectively. See also Apologia del Libro della Imitazione Pittorica e della Eccellenza delle Opere di Tiziano di Andrea Majer Veneziano, Socio della R. Accademia di Belle Arti, Contro Tre Lettere di Giuseppe Carpani a Giuseppe Acerbi Inserite nei Fascicoli di Settembre, Novembre e Dicembre 1819 della Biblioteca Italiana (Ferrara: dei Torchi di Francesco Pomatelli, 1820).

All of Carpani's arguments were then republished. See Giuseppe Carpani, Le Majeriane, Ovvero Lettere sul Bello Ideale di Giuseppe Carpani in Risposta al Libro *Della Imitazione Pittorica* del Cav. Andrea Majer, 3rd ed. (Padova: Tipografia della Minerva, 1824) 215-19.

Canova was sent two copies of Majer's life of Titian, as attested to in a letter from Giannantonio Selva, dated August 18, 1818. "Il Signor Gamba tempo fa vi ha spedito varj numeri dell'opera delle Fabbriche di Venezia; la raccolta completa delle poesie nel nostro vernacolo, e due copie sull'eccellenza delle opere di Tiziano del Sig.^{r} Andrea Mayer Veneto che e generalmente applaudito; merita che lo leggiate, e vi riuscirà assai interessante. Tengo per altro che non sarete per approvare del tutto i di lui assunto di combattere il bello ideale, e qualche altro paragrafo sullo studio delle antiche Statue.

Erano già spedite le dette due copie, quando venne da me il suddetto Sig.^{r} Mayer con un'altra incaricandomi di spedirvela, e chiedendoli se poteva scrivermi, gli risposi che il libro lo riteneva a vostra disposizione, e che la lettera ne la avrei rimessa come ora fu. Leggete la morte di Tiziano alle pag. 234, 235, e son certo consacrerete delle lagrime al grande Artista. Il Sig.^{r} Mayer è pure gran conoscitore di Musica; rileverete il di lui merito in queste bell'Arte leggendo alla pag. 95 il di lui discorso intorno alle di lei vicende. Fatelo pur leggere alla Sig.^{a} Anna Maria, e son certo ne avrà gran piacere perchè è conforme a quella massime ch'Ella sa così ben seguire colla sua bravura nel canto [...]." Copy of letter from Giannantonio Selva to Canova, August 18, 1818, Museo e Biblioteca Correr, PD 529C.

the Academy, and arranged this way by me, pleased you, and that you are of the same mind that the *Assumption* is the greatest painting in the world."[157]

Not only did Cicognara stress his agency in organizing the display of the paintings in the Accademia, but visitors' reactions signal the way that the significance of Titian's *Assumption* was fundamentally changed as a result of its restoration and its placement within the museum. It was in 1817 that the work was truly understood, heralded and *seen* as *the* masterpiece of Titian's *œuvre*. In the museum, the painting was finally visible to viewers, *as a picture*—and it could be appreciated, admired, and more importantly, copied and disseminated on a wide scale. No longer was it only a cult object meant to be worshipped because it celebrated the Virgin's ascension into heaven; it was now a testament to Titian's masterful use of color and light. The *Assumption* became the cornerstone of the "Venetian school" on an international scale only after its exhibition in the *Accademia.*

Even years later, the restoration of these works and the foundation of the Academy were heralded and credited to Cicognara's intervention. In 1840, Countess Blessington felt that the Academy was the ultimate testament to the Count, for "Cicognara, as long as this building stands, will require no other monument to prove his fine taste, and patriotism."[158] Likewise, Francesco Beltrame's 1852 book on Titian

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[157] "Godo che quei capi d'opera riuniti nella nostra Accademia, e così da me disposti vi siano piaciuto, e che siate del mio avviso essere l'Assunta il primo quadro del mondo. Quanto io sento il peso di questa verità! Sono sicuro che un gran numero d'occhi ben veggenti sente e vede la stessa cosa, poichè posso dire d'aver abbastanza veduto in materia di produzioni umane, e questo nostro giudizio acquista per ogni giorno più forza." Letter from Cicognara to Canova, August 20, 1819. Mariuz, ed., Leopoldo Cicognara ad Antonio Canova: Lettere Inedite della Fondazione Canova di Possagno 19, footnote 5.

[158] "How much does Venice owe to one of her citizens, Cicognara, for establishing this institution, to which he devoted his time, talents, and no inconsiderable portion of his fortune. Such men deserve to be honoured, and Cicognara, as long as this building stands, will require no other monument to prove his fine taste, and patriotism. Falling everyday to decay, it is satisfactory to know that Venice has this strong-hold for the treasures enshrined in the crumbling palaces and churches, which cannot longer offer them a secure

commemorated Cicognara's devotion to the artist. Beltrame dedicated several pages to the *Assumption*, its restoration, and even Cicognara's oration at the Academy inauguration; it was at the opening of the *pinacoteca* that Cicognara "returned [the painting] to the Arts and to Venice, redressed in its native beauty, that to this day we admire in enraptured, sweet ecstasy."[159] Through his appropriation and celebration of Titian, Cicognara employed connoisseurship and conservation in the service of institutions and national identity; more personally, he cemented his position as an arts "expert" through the cooption of the master.

The *Paragone*: Titian and Canova; Titian versus Canova

That Cicognara's speech was worthy of comment even thirty-five years later testifies to his rhetorical skills. Even in 1817, in a letter to Giulio Bernardo Tomitano on October 7, Cicognara recognized that his speech was meant to "move national ambition and touch the heart of everyone who heard it." It was meant as a dynamic performance

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resting place. Titian, Giorgione, Tintoretto, and a host of other Venetian painters! how would your pride and love of your Sea City be humbled, could you but arise from your long sleep to see the lofty walls for which you worked, more frail than the colours on the canvas with which you enriched them, tottering towards the ruin into which they must soon sink!" Countess Blessington, The Idler in Italy, 3 vols. (London: Henry Colburn, 1840) vol. 3, 177-78.

[159] "Quanta gratitudine non dobbiam dunque alla provvidenza governativa, che nell'anno 1817 la fece detergere dalle lordure, ond'era imbrattata, ed al conte Cicognara, che ne sollecitò e ne diresse il ristauro, ridonandola all'arte e a Venezia rivestita della nativa bellezza, quale noi tutto giorno l'ammiriamo in dolce estasi rapiti?" Francesco Beltrame, Cenni Illustrativi sul Monumento a Tiziano Vecellio, Aggiuntevi la Vita dello Stesso e Notizie Intorno al Fu Professore di Scoltura Luigi Zandomeneghi (Venezia: P. Naratovich, 1852) 29.

Beltrame notes the enthusiasm with which Cicognara delivered his 1817 speech, and then proceeds to cite part of it. "Ma nessuno ne parlò con maggior entusiasmo, nessuno ne rilevò con maggior verità ed aggiustatezza gl'inarrivabili pregi, del soprallodato conte Cicognara il giorno dieci agosto mille ottocento diecisette, in cui per la munificenza dell'Augusto Imperadore Francesco I nell'aula magna della stessa Accademia fu esposta per la prima volta all'universale ammirazione." Beltrame, Cenni Illustrativi sul Monumento a Tiziano Vecellio, Aggiuntevi la Vita dello Stesso e Notizie Intorno al Fu Professore di Scoltura Luigi Zandomeneghi 30.

that would incite passion and patriotism. This was the job of all of the speeches at the Academy prize ceremonies. The exhibitions themselves showcased past and present work, while the lectures verbally reinforced the legacies created visually between master and student, model and imitator. The role of the orator was that of actor, guide, and authority in one. Cicognara's discourse aimed to underscore the inherent drama of the moment even as it forged social ties among the audience members based on artistic and political common ground. Nonetheless, the bombast of this particular speech was so exaggerated that Cicognara himself felt quite self-conscious of it. In the same letter to Tomitano, he seemed embarrassed that, in order to appeal to a wide audience, he had been forced to generalize, like a "theatrical painter, that has to paint scenery with broad strokes, who doesn't refine, or treat his brushes his diligence." "Didactic discourses," he complained, that one might read "with pleasure at a desk, or at a small private gathering or academy circles" are not easy to concentrate on—and threaten to bore most listeners.[160] Once again, as we saw in chapter two, *audience* remains a fundamental problem for the modern scholar; successful writing about art depends on the ability of the connoisseur to distinguish between types of discourses according to his audience. Cicognara understood that although the Accademia inauguration drew numerous erudite visitors, it was simply not the forum in which to present an overly intellectualized

[160] "È stampato la solita serie de discorsi di quest'anno, fra quali v'è al solito una delle mie *tirate* ch'io chiamo teatrali: poichè il parlare a quella moltitudine, in quel giorno, in quell'ora vuol dire cose di effetto, e che muovono l'ambizion nazionale, toccando per quella via il cuore di chi ascolta. I bei discorsi didattici, e purgati che leggonsi con piacere a tavolino, o sentonsi volentieri nelle piccole società, o ne'rocchi accademici non sono intesi a vengono a noja. Le dico ciò perché avendo per avventura ella inteso parlare del mio discorso che riscosse un compatimento forse troppo distinto, non si illuda poiché fu fatto da me come un pittor Teatrale dar deve delle sue decorazioni che dipinge a gran tocchi e non lima, e non tratta con diligenza di pennelli: e troverà che molto più meritano li due discorsi del Sig. Gamba, e del Segretario, i quali in quel momenti e dinanzi a quella folla riuscirono freddi infinitamente [...]." Letter from Cicognara to Giulio Bernardo Tomitano, October 7, 1817, cited in Franca Zaca Boccazzi, "Lettere Inedite di Leopoldo Cicognara a Giulio Bernardo Tomitano," Studi in Onore di Elena Bassi, ed. Elena Bassi (Venezia: Arsenale, 1998) 212.

interpretation of either the *Assumption* or Canova's *Polinnia*—or any of the other works on view.

It was his need to share a more precise interpretation of Canova's *Polinnia*—one that *would* lend itself to quiet study at a desk—that prompted Cicognara to publish a small pamphlet on the sculpture, *Lettera sulla Statua Rappresentante la Musa Polinnia scolpita dal M. Antonio Canova* (1817). Although hardly less effusive than his public oration, the booklet was nonetheless designed with two goals in mind: to appeal to a more academic audience and to correct misunderstandings regarding the sculpture's iconography.[161] Criticism had circulated in Venice regarding the transformation of *Polinnia's* physiognomy from Elisa Bonaparte to an ideal muse. To many viewers, the face remained tainted by lingering Bonapartist features and was not "ideal" enough—a criticism Cicognara felt was leveled against the work solely because viewers arrived armed with the foreknowledge of who the sculpture was originally meant to represent. [162]

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[161] Some of the criticisms are summed up by Emanuele Antonio Cicogna's diary entry of August 12, 1817. "C'è poi la famosa Polinnia di Canova, statua al naturale sieduta colla mano destra sotto un sottilissimo vestito, e l'altra appoggiata col gomito alla sedia. Il viso è maestoso; la capigliatura elegante; il panneggiamento è sublime. Peccato che il marmo non corrispose all'opera perche è troppo venato, e si è spezzato in qualche luogo benchè non importante. Vuolsi che questa statua prima d'essere ridotta a Polinnia rappresentasse la Bacciocchi sorella di Napoleone che l'aver ordinata, me che per le vicende successe non potè essere compiuta. Comunque sia è divina. C'è però alcuno chi non piace che una musa stia seduta, che quel braccio sia coperto, che un certo cuscino sotto il sedere sia troppo soffice in modo che pare empito di farina o di semola; Vorebbe alcuno più segni che indicassero ch'essa è Polinnia e non altra musa , non bastando loro quella larva Scenica che ha scolpito sotto la sedia. Vorebbero altri più espressione nel volto, insomma concludono che quanto questa statua per la finitezza del lavoro e specialmente per l'ammirabile panneggiamento è divina, altrettanto è di assai minor pregio dell'altre di Canova per la poca invenzione che vi si trova. Io taccio perchè non sono giudice competente. Ne udiremo la Teotochi o chi altro ne parlerà più." Museo and Biblioteca Correr, Codice Cicogna 2845, page 4450. Also partially cited in Mazzocca, "La Ricomparsa di Polimnia: Creazione e Vicende di un Capolavoro di Antonio Canova," 174.

[162] Letter from Cicognara to Canova, August 23, 1817. "In generale qui gli intendenti sono pochi, e regna un'ignoranza un po'troppo sensibile. Chi vuol goder molto, bisogna che stia fermo ad ascoltare la massa dei giudizii. Posso confermarvi, che sulla giacitura, sui panneggiamenti, e sulle estremità tutti hano una voce sola: che il meccanismo dei ferri pel vario tocco delle carni, delle vesti, dei capelli si rimarca da tutti. Alcuni sanno dire però che vi si vede ritratto più che espressione di musa: ma il dicono per la prevenzione sapendosi che originariamente avevo altro destine. Quando anzi pubblicherò le poche righe di testo che vanno annesse alla stampa io non mancherò di indicare tutto ciò che mi avete mandato nel folgiolino con poche cose più, intitolando lo scritto: *intenzione dell'autore intorno la statua*." Cited in Mazzocca, "La

No doubt visitors were particularly attuned to the sculpture's previous identity because the placement of a work that once represented Elisa Bonaparte, in the middle of a room of repatriated paintings, would have inflamed nationalistic fervor. Nonetheless, Cicognara felt Canova's last minute alterations to the portrait merely reaffirmed the sculptor's link to antiquity, for, he wrote, such transformations were typical of the ancients.[163] Canova's intimate understanding of ancient practices was further reinforced through his inclusion of an overabundance of references to the muse's identity, a gesture, Cicognara argued, that had its roots in the ancients' inclusion of inscriptions that identified the subjects of their work, for fear it might otherwise be misidentified.[164] Finally, even if Canova had made the sculpture "from scratch" for the exhibition, he would have selected precisely the same subject, for what could be more noble than a muse?[165]

Ricomparsa di Polimnia: Creazione e Vicende di un Capolavoro di Antonio Canova," 174 and Canova, Epistolario (1816-1817) vol. 2, 982.

[163] "Se voi non foste un erudito celebratissimo io vi verrei qui allegando, in proposito della figura mutata da Canova in Polinnia, i molti esempj e notissimi di trasformazioni che gli antichi maestri di ogni arte e di ogni dottrina eseguirono nelle loro opere, e basterà per non eccedere in pedanteria il rammentare quello notissimo di Agoracrito, il quale, perduta la gara con Alcamene, donò la sua Venere a'Ramnusii con patto che la tenessero come il simulacro di Nemesi in cui l'aveva trasmutata." Cicognara, Lettera sulla Statua Rappresentante la Musa Polinnia Scolpita dal M. Antonio Canova 5-6.

[164] "Evitò con fina sagacità il dottissimo nostro artefice ogni simile incertezza, e ponendo la sua figura seduta, ebbe agio maggiornmente di unirvi quei simboli tutti, che se disgiunti potevano lasciare qualche indecisione negli interpreti, riuniti poi tolsero ogni minima dubbietà, e più che equivalenti a qualunque leggenda, chiaramente appalesano qual delle nove Sorelle sia quella nell'insigne marmo effigiata: poichè oltre l'essere Polinnia custode della memoria, è assieme la regolatrice delle Pantomine teatrali, e per ciò le pose egli a'piedi una maschera scenica, siccome vedesi fatto anche in diversi antichi monumenti." Cicognara, Lettera sulla Statua Rappresentante la Musa Polinnia Scolpita dal M. Antonio Canova 10-11.

[165] "In questa circostanza io penso che se Canova non avesse potuto disporre di un marmo rappresentante questo soggetto, e avesse avuto il tempo sufficiente per poter scolpire altra statua, difficilmente si sarebbe potuto dipartire da un simile argomento, poichè il più acconcio, e il più nobile che inventar si potesse. In fatti ognuno vede che le Muse tutte in genere presiedono alle Scienze, alle Arti, alle Lettere, sebbene ciascuna sia addetta a qualche ramo di studi in particolare; e in conseguenza qualunque di queste simboliche figure si presta alla più nobile allusioni, e può degnamente situarsi nei reali appartamenti d'una Principessa, come un segno onorevole del suo amore per i più eletti studi." Cicognara, Lettera sulla Statua Rappresentante la Musa Polinnia Scolpita dal M. Antonio Canova 6-7.

Intermingled with antiquarian knowledge, Greek quotations and references to Winckelmann and Visconti is Cicognara's haughty awareness of his own expertise, which pits the ignorant, the amateur, and the connoisseur against one another.[166] He challenges readers to engage him with a *true* antiquarian critique of the sculpture (even if it is negative!),[167] even as he reveals his skepticism that they could do so. Although he finds the comments he overhears from members "of the lower class" "charming," he is nonetheless gently condescending towards these visitors.[168] One cannot expect much, after all, from viewers who are so ignorant regarding sculptural practice that they cannot identify the struts keeping *Polinnia's* fragile fingers intact (figs. 170-171). Indeed, these were credited by gullible viewers with having a secret meaning, one that only Canova himself could divine![169]

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[166] The status of the connoisseur was often denigrated during this period. Even Cicognara's position as a true theorist is questioned in 1857 by Niccolò Tommaséo, who calls Cicognara a connoisseur with the most unflattering intentions. The negative implications of the term remain even in more recent writings that defend Cicognara's erudition. Writers such as Gianni Venturi, for instance, dispute Tommaséo's claim, arguing that Cicognara's ability to articulate the historical moments between great artists is proof of an understanding of art history that goes beyond "mere" connoisseurship. See Niccolò Tommaséo, "Cicognara, ou le connaisseur," Bellezza e Civiltà, o delle Arti del Bello Sensibile (Firenze: Felice Le Monnier, 1857) 328-35 and Cicognara, Lettere ad Antonio Canova xxii-xxiii, especially xxiii note 23.

[167] "Una sola cosa, che avrei pur desiderata per avvanzamento dell'arte, sarebbe stata questa, che una fina e sagace critica avesse saputo rilevare, oltre il merito dell'opera, qualche mancanza in cui essendo caduto l'autore, potesse valergli per astenersi in altro lavoro dall'incorrere negli stessi difetti; intendo di riferire alla giusta e sana critica che parte dalle profonde cognizioni dell'antiquaria, o dai veri canoni dell'arte, non mai di far conto del gracidar di coloro che ingombrano le botteghe ed i trivii, a'quali pesa sul basso animo il merito altrui, e quella lode che a prezzo d'onorate e lunghe fatiche si acquista." Cicognara, Lettera sulla Statua Rappresentante la Musa Polinnia Scolpita dal M. Antonio Canova 13.

[168] I have not found any indication whether there was a fee to enter the exhibition (although I would doubt it), nor who, precisely, were the visitors. It is possible that Cicognara's condescension reveals friction generated by the "professionalization" of taste coming into conflict with the increasing democratization of art.

[169] "[...] era graziosissimo il sentire come buonamente alcuni del basso popolo andavan parlando di quegli emblemi che tiene fra le dita, e andavansi rispondendo *Canova saprà ben egli cosa rappresentano*. Voi già capite che sono quei piccoli pezzetti di marmo lasciati a sostegno, finchè la statua giunta al suo destino possa esser sicura da urti e da scosse nel muoverla, e nel trasportarla." Cicognara, Lettera sulla Statua Rappresentante la Musa Polinnia Scolpita dal M. Antonio Canova 17.

Cicognara hoped that the statue's display throughout the winter would lead viewers to increased appreciation of the work. The work's prominence and accessibility within the museum furnished an easy opportunity for beholders to repeatedly visit the sculpture, to "see and re-see," the work—without which, Cicognara felt, "they would not be able to understand its value."[170] Indeed, Cicognara's attitude reinforces Canova's own approach towards the relationship between his works of art and their beholders. This type of lengthy engagement with the object—the seeing and re-seeing of Canova's sculptures in order to better appreciate them—was precisely the type of viewing practice that the great artist himself encouraged. Viewers were meant to be active, engaged, and thoughtful in the presence of his works. But even if visitors were immune to an intellectual analysis of the piece, they would—and did—appreciate the sculpture's more visceral charms—in particular, Canova's capacity to imitate "*vera carne*." The idea that marble lost its hardness in his hands and was transformed into living, breathing flesh was a constant trope throughout Canova's career (fig. 172-174). Average visitors and erudite viewers were amazed by Canova's workmanship, but no one had a greater appreciation than other sculptors, who felt *Polinnia* no longer bore any resemblance to the block of stone from which she came.[171] In Canova's hands, the seated muse seemed a nearly

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[170] "Dicesi che quest'opera rimarrà in Venezia tutto l'inverno. Buono per noi, poichè almeno è da sperarsi che impareremo a gustarla, giacchè senza vederla e rivederla io penso che non si possa ben rilevarne il merito. Questa è una di quelle sublimi produzioni, che senza imparare a sentirle, non giungono a produrre l'impressione che hanno diritto di fare, e non credo esageri uno che dica, ad esempio di chi aveva letto il divino poeta: Io non la vidi tante volte e tante/ Che non trovassi in lei nuove bellezze." Cicognara, Lettera sulla Statua Rappresentante la Musa Polinnia Scolpita dal M. Antonio Canova 22.

[171] "Gli scultori si aggiravano intorno al marmo, stupefatti che avesse perduto la sua durezza; spiavono ogni contorno, ogni forma, ogni tocco, e si battevano la mano sul fronte, sclamando che tutte le loro opere restan pur sempre di marmo, e che il giungere a tanta mollezza è uno de'più gran passi che l'arte abbia fatto in quest'ultima età. Il buon popolo poi giudice tanto sensato, quando si tratta di opere d'imitazione, attestava quell'ingenuo godimento che non proviene da prevenzioni o da studio, e stavasi in folla attorno lo steccato, ora lodando le angeliche sembianze, ora la grazia delle forme, ora la bellezza delle estremità, e sempre la verità delle pieghe, e tutti finivano col dire che *quel marmo non pare un marmo*.

breathing being, and the care with which he treated the marble drew the beholder's eye around the work. The folds of *Polinnia's* drapery are refined yet incredibly deep, and despite the fact that the muse is swathed in heavy drapery her body is clearly visible beneath the cloth. In views from the side, the beholder's eye cascades with the fabric to the very base of the sculpture and which stands out against the chair, cushion and Grecian mask. Even the hair and neck are sculpted with remarkable delicacy. Only the gray veins that mottled the marble ruined the illusion, a defect that greatly disturbed Canova.[172]

Voi avrete le molto volte goduto nel frammettervi a una folla di circostanti per sentire i diversi giudizj, e le lodi, e le critiche alle opere dell'arte. Vi assicuro che talvolta è un piacere singolarissimo, e duranti li 15 giorni che questa statua è stata esposta al pubblico, non ho saputo resistere al desiderio di procurarmi ripetutamente questo godimento." Cicognara, Lettera sulla Statua Rappresentante la Musa Polinnia Scolpita dal M. Antonio Canova 14-15.

Later in the text, Cicognara brings up this theme again. "Chi mai scolpì più belle estremità di Canova? ognuno sclamava, e fissavano gli occhj a'piedi che poggiano su d'un piccolo scabello, come conviensi alle Divinità; e ne ammiravano le morbide e tornite forme, che dimenticar vi fanno la durezza della materia da cui sono cavate. Ma ridete vi prego, che talvolta anche dalle popolari osservazioni deriva argomento di riso: ho io più volte inteso le donnicuole dimentiche della natura del marmo, e lodare l'artefice, poichè persino le vene sottili e cilestri apparivano sul dorso del piede tra la morbida cute. Oh le son pur troppe queste vene nel rimanente del marmo, che se non giunsero ad offuscarlo, o a produrre lo sconcio effetto che le macchie produssero sulla sua Venere scolpita per la Toscana della Medicea, null'ostante attenuano quella dolcissima trasparenza del marmo statuario che di rado si trova, o che le rende prezioso.

Come mai le guerre, le vittorie, le invasioni, le peregrinazioni non ci hanno prodotta una escavazione dalle montagne di Paros, se il marmo di Carrara da sì gran tempo ricusa a' nostri moderni scarpello quel candore sì illibato, di cui per lunga età ci fu così liberale? Questa è una sventura a cui li tutto-potenti potrebbero però riparare. Cicognara, Lettera sulla Statua Rappresentante la Musa Polinnia Scolpita dal M. Antonio Canova 19-20.

[172] Letter from Cicognara to Canova, August 8, 1817. Cicognara darkened the pedestal in order to offset the stained marble and make it appear whiter. "Il marmo è riescito un po'macchiato, il che mi ha fatto nascere la necessità di oscurire un po' più il piedistallo, e spero poter eseguirlo in questi due giorni, acciò abbia un risalto di maggior bianchezza la statua. Non mi estenderò a lodarvi le bellezze che saltano agli occhi di tutti, poichè la giaciture nobilissima, e maestossisima, l'andamento delle pieghe, il perfetto delle estremità supera una gran parte delle belle opere. Chi fosse vago di cercarvi maestria meccanica si scalpello può anche sfogarsi che invero la trova spinta all'ultimo grado. Ma non è da me che dovete sentir l'impressione che farà questa statua." Cited in Mazzocca, "La Ricomparsa di Polimnia: Creazione e Vicende di un Capolavoro di Antonio Canova," 174 and Canova, Epistolario (1816-1817) vol. 2, 943.

In another letter from Cicognara to Canova, dated August 23, 1817, Cicognara tries to ease Canova's anxiety about the stained state of the marble."Sento la vostra giustissima pena pel marmo non bello della Polinnia, ma assicuratevi che l'insistenza mia di rimediare al piedistallo quantunque in opera, e sebbene mi si dicesse impossibile, e che non vi fosse più il tempo materiale riesci perfettamente lavorandovi tutto il giorno e la notte, e mitigò l'effetto della cosa mirabilmente, essendo sporco e quieto di tinta, e brunito a dente di diaspro, che sembra molto più marmo che non la statua." Cited in Mazzocca, "La Ricomparsa di Polimnia: Creazione e Vicende di un Capolavoro di Antonio Canova," 173-74, and also in Canova, Epistolario (1816-1817) vol. 2, 982.

In the context of this exhibition, however, Canova's illusionism takes on far greater significance when confronted and challenged by the Venetian paintings surrounding it. The juxtaposition of Titian's *Assumption* and Canova's *Polinnia*, which already aroused national sentiment, was now being reconsidered in light of a broader, art historical question—that of the relationship between painting and sculpture. In his pamphlet, Cicognara described the setting and the relationships it underscored in great length:

> Canova's *Polinnia* was exhibited in an immense salon, around which were distributed masterpieces from Venetian brushes: and truthfully it [the sculpture] was exposed to the greatest challenge to which a human work has ever been submitted. The paintings' illusionistic triumph seemed like it should have been decisive and to conquer this work of reality, because it pleases men to be deceived, and a beautiful fiction has always been more applauded than a beautiful truth. Moreover, there was also the prestige of novelty, since, for the first time these famous paintings were disinterred—in a manner of speaking—from the dark. There, they were displayed and restored to their ancient splendor; so that the poor statue in the middle should have been afraid that the eye of the multitude would be distracted by the allure of color and relief of Titian's, Tintoretto's and Paolo's [Veronese] masterpieces. And yet I swear to you, that even if few others reflected on this, I would never have believed that a work of the chisel could receive such full, such universal admiration, that these triumphs of ancient Venetian brushes could not harm it in any way. It seemed that there was a polite exchange between these arts, and I assure you that if the painted images were speaking, one could say in turn this marble that stood among them was pulsating, alive, flesh and blood, without achieving this effect through size or scale, without luxuriating in pure whiteness, without deceiving by any enchantment, but with the modesty and the discretion that seemed inspired by the author himself. [173]

[173] La Polinnia di Canova fu esposta in un Salone immenso, dove attorno erano distribuiti i capi d'opera dei pennelli veneziani: e invero fu esposta al maggior dei cimenti a cui opera umana venisse mai sottomessa. Il trionfo dell'illusione che cagionano le pitture sembre dovesse esser completo e conquidere l'opera della realtà, poichè piace agli uomini l'esser illusi, e una bella finzione fu sempre più applaudita d'una bella verità. Aggiungete ch'eravi anche il prestigio della novità, poichè per la prima volta dissotterrate per così dire dal bujo queste famose pitture, venivano ivi esposte e resituite al loro antico splendore; cosichè la povera statua nel centro doveva temere gli occhj distratti della moltitudine pel fascino del colore e del rilievo che hanno i capi d'opera di Tiziano, di Tintoretto, di Paolo. Eppure io vi giuro, che sebbene da pochi siasi fatta questa riflessione, non avrei mai creduto che l'opera di scarpello riscuotesse una sì piena, e sì universale ammirazione, senza che in minima parte le abbiano portato nocumento i trionfi degli antichi pennelli Veneziani. Pare che siansi scambievolmente corteggiate queste arti; e vi assicuro che se parlanti erano le immagini dipinte, poteva dirsi palpitante, vivo, carnoso quel marmo che stavasi nel mezzo senza grandeggiare per mole, senza lussureggiare per soverchio candore, senza imporre per alcun prestigio, ma

In this passage, Cicognara argues for the preeminence Canova's sculpture ultimately held over the paintings by the Venetian Old Masters. First and foremost, he situates *Polinnia* precisely within the space of its exhibition, in the Accademia and surrounded by the Renaissance paintings which are being seen for the first time in their newly restored glory. With periodic references to the tools on which each art relies—painting's brush and sculpture's chisel—Cicognara pits painting's color and illusionism against the "reality" of sculpture. The former traits are precisely those which are said to make *these particular paintings* capable of speech. That is, in a remarkable rhetorical move, Cicognara refers to a long-standing tradition in which paintings were said to be "mute poetry" and instead asserts that they have a voice.[174] *These* paintings, these luminous, restored Venetian masterpieces seemed capable of speech. Yet, Cicognara credits them with this gift only to turn around and assert the supremacy of sculpture. The paintings might well be able to speak, but only Canova's sculpture could be said to live. Such a transformation, from hardened marble to breathing flesh, reaffirmed Canova's status as the modern Pygmalion. More extraordinarily, however, *Polinnia* obtained this effect without having any obvious advantage; neither grand in scale, nor even unmarred in its marble surface, it nonetheless triumphed over its painted rivals.

The "challenge" to which Canova's sculpture was exposed—the confrontation with Venetian painting, masterpieces of illusion and deception—has its roots in

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colla modestia e la verecondia che sembra inspirata dall'autore alle stesse sue opere." Cicognara, Lettera sulla Statua Rappresentante la Musa Polinnia Scolpita dal M. Antonio Canova 20-22.

[174] For more on the tradition of painting as "mute poetry," see the commentary by the editors in Charles-Alphonse Dufresnoy, De Arte Graphica (Paris, 1668), eds. Christopher Allen, Yasmin Haskell and Frances Muecke (Geneva: Librairie Droz, 2005) esp. 216-28 and Oskar Bätschmann, Nicolas Poussin: Dialectics of Painting (London: Reaktion Books, 1990) 111-18.

Renaissance arguments regarding the merits of sculpture versus painting. Arts of different media could be and often were compared to one another, despite the fact that each engaged a different realm of experience. Plutarch and Horace were among the first to explore the association between painting and literature, *ut pictura poesis*.[175] As Claire Farago has argued, although the relationship between painting and sculpture had not been subject to the same scrutiny in antiquity, by the sixteenth century it was a serious line of inquiry.[176] This conflict between the two media, which we now refer to as the *paragone* and understand largely as challenge for supremacy between the arts, began simply as a comparison between the two. When Vasari first used the word "paragon" in the mid-sixteenth century, he intended it with this definition, "comparison."[177] Fifty years before him, Leonardo da Vinci was among the first writers to ponder the differences between painting and sculpture. Although Leonardo's thoughts on the *paragone* have only come to us in fragments, and most of those are from the hand of his pupil and heir Francesco Melzi, his comments on the *paragone* have become something of a truism regarding the relationship between the two media. Painting was characterized as an intellectual craft,

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[175] For the historiography of the concept, see Rensselear W. Lee, "Ut Pictura Poesis: The Humanistic Theory of Painting," The Art Bulletin 22.4 (Dec. 1940): 197-269 and Frederick Hard, "Some Interrelations between the Literary and the Plastic Arts in 16th and 17th Century," College Art Journal 10.3 (Spring 1951): 233-43. For more on *ut pictura poesis* and *similarities* between literature and the arts, in terms of their emotional valence, see Gerard G. LeCoat, "Comparative Aspects of the Theory of Expression in the Baroque Age," Eighteenth-Century Studies 5.2 (Winter 1971-1972): 207-23. For the way the theory was reconsidered in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, see Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, Laocoön: An Essay on the Limits of Painting and Poetry, ed. Edward Allen McCormick, Johns Hopkins pbk. ed. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1984); Michel Sage, "Introduction: Literature and the Arts: A French Perspective on Visual Poetics, Language, and Artistic Representation," College Literature 30.2 (Spring 2003): 73-81; and Roy Park, "'Ut Pictura Poesis': The Nineteenth-Century Aftermath," The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism 28.2 (Winter 1969): 155-64.

[176] Claire J. Farago, ed., Leonardo da Vinci's Paragone: A Critical Interpretation with a New Edition of the Text in the Codex Urbinas (Leiden; New York: E.J. Brill, 1992) 383-84.

[177] Leatrice Mendelsohn-Martone, "Paragoni: Benedetto Varchi's *Due Lezzioni* and Cinquecento Art Theory," Doctor of Philosophy, New York University, 1978, 12.

while sculpture was largely mechanical.[178] Sculpting was a form of labor that generated sweat and fatigue, and the sculptor was doomed to be forever dirty, covered in marble chips and dust. Worse, his art "is not a science", for "[t]he simple measurements of members and the nature of movements and poses alone are enough for such an artist, and so, sculpture ends by demonstrating to the eye only what is what and does not lend itself to admiration by contemplation." Painting, on the other hand, was an art of illusion, for "by the power of science, demonstrates the grandest countrysides with distant horizons on one flat surface."[179]

What began as a theoretical inquiry was quickly transformed into a concrete challenge, as artists across the Italian peninsula weighed in on the merits of their media. The idea that one art necessarily had to prevail over the other emerged in a striking web of personal and professional rivalries, as Rona Goffen has shown.[180] Michelangelo, Giorgione, Titian, and Raphael all entered the competition, and particularly contentious was the relationship between Florentine sculptors and Venetian painters. Paolo Pino and Giorgio Vasari, for instance, speak of Giorgione's rivalry with Florentine artists,

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[178] "The only difference I find between painting and sculpture is that the sculptor conducts his works with greater bodily fatigue and the painter conducts his works with greater mental fatigue." As cited in Farago, ed., Leonardo da Vinci's Paragone: A Critical Interpretation with a New Edition of the Text in the Codex Urbinas 257.

[179] As cited in Farago, ed., Leonardo da Vinci's Paragone: A Critical Interpretation with a New Edition of the Text in the Codex Urbinas 257.

[180] Rona Goffen, Renaissance Rivals: Michelangelo, Leonardo, Raphael, Titian (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2002) 26.

Luigi Lanzi might argue that it was precisely these rivalries that necessitated the intervention (and the development) of the "impartial" connoisseur. "Hence it is that connoisseurs will frequently be found to approach nearer the truth, in forming their estimate, then artists; the former adopt the impartial feelings of the public, while the latter allow themselves to be influenced by the motives of envy or of prejudice." Luigi Lanzi, The History of Painting in Italy, from the Period of the Revival of the Fine Arts to the End of the Eighteenth Century, ed. Thomas Roscoe, New ed. (London: Henry G. Bohn, 1852) vol. 1, 25.

particularly the sculptor Andrea del Verrocchio.[181] This enmity prompted Giorgione to paint an image of Saint George with mirrors and multiple reflections to flaunt the fact that a painter could make an entire figure visible in one glance—a feat a sculptor could never accomplish. The painting was the epitome of perfection, "perfectly conceived in all the three parts of painting, that is design, invention and color, *disegno, invenzione e colorire.*"[182] Likewise Titian also took up the challenge, approaching the theme numerous times in his paintings.[183] Indeed, Goffen suggests that Michelangelo's greatest rival was Titian himself, although the two were only known to have met once.[184]

Various painters and sculptors in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries continued to address the *paragone* in their works of art.[185] It was the publication of a newly discovered codex by Leonardo that brought the issue to the fore in the early nineteenth century. The Codex Urbinas 1270 contained a compilation of passages selected from various Leonardo manuscripts and brought together by Melzi around

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[181] Giorgio Vasari, "Vita di Giorgione da Castel Franco," Le Vite de' Piú Eccellenti Pittori, Scultori e Architettori, 1550, vol. 3 (Milano: Edizioni per Il Club del Libro, 1962-1966) 420.

[182] Pino as cited in Goffen, Renaissance Rivals: Michelangelo, Leonardo, Raphael, Titian 61.

[183] Goffen, Renaissance Rivals: Michelangelo, Leonardo, Raphael, Titian chapter 7, esp. 385.

[184] Goffen, Renaissance Rivals: Michelangelo, Leonardo, Raphael, Titian 267. The opposition between Titian's painting and Michelangelo's sculpture peaked in Dolce's dialogue to Aretino in 1557. See Mendelsohn-Martone, "Paragoni: Benedetto Varchi's *Due Lezzioni* and Cinquecento Art Theory," 341.

David Rosand argues for Titian's awareness and engagement with the *paragone* on multiple levels— between painting and poetry, art and nature, and painting and sculpture. David Rosand, "Ut Pictor Poeta: Meaning in Titian's Poesie," New Literary History 3.3, Literary and Art History (Spring 1972): 527-46.

[185] Gian-Lorenzo Bernini, for instance, addressed the *paragone* in works such as *St. Lawrence*, *St. Sebastian*, *Aeneus*, and especially, *Apollo and Daphne*. For more on this theme in the works of Bernini, see Rudolf Preimesberger, "Themes from Art Theory in the Early Works of Bernini," Gianlorenzo Bernini: New Aspects of His Art and Thought: A Commemorative Volume, ed. Irving Lavin (University Park, PA: Published for the College Art Association of America by Pennsylvania State University Press, 1985) 1-24 and Genevieve Warwick, "Speaking Statues: Bernini's *Apollo and Daphne* at the Villa Borghese," Art History 27.3 (June 2004): 353-81.

1530.[186] Rediscovered in 1797, in the midst of the French looting of the Vatican Library, it was published in 1817 by Guglielmo Manzi with the subtitle "Paragone," giving the word its modern connotations.[187] Cicognara owned a copy of the work, as well as numerous other treatises that dealt with the issue.[188] No matter the degree to which Leonardo's own thoughts on the paragone were filtered through Melzi and then subsequent interpretations, there is no doubt that the issue was still a critical one in 1817. Indeed, we have already seen how insistently Canova tried to distance himself from any representations of himself that might indicate sculpture was a purely mechanical art. Similarly, the arguments surrounding *Venus and Adonis* in Naples were an attempt to discern how much of the sculptor's craft was the work of the mind, and how much the work of the chisel.

Although we cannot be sure that Cicognara had Leonardo's treatise in mind, it is nonetheless clear that the overall structure of the exhibition raised questions about the

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[186] Mendelsohn-Martone, "Paragoni: Benedetto Varchi's *Due Lezzioni* and Cinquecento Art Theory," 12-13.

[187] Giuseppe Bossi, based in Milan and part of Canova's and Cicognara's intellectual circle, was planning a new edition of the treatise as well. There is a manuscript by Bossi from 1810 in the Ambrosiana library in Milan that includes the newly discovered Leonardo text, but Bossi's version was never published. Farago, ed., Leonardo da Vinci's Paragone: A Critical Interpretation with a New Edition of the Text in the Codex Urbinas 8 and 10, respectively.

[188] Cicognara had several works relating to this idea in his library, such as no. 110, "Dolce, Messer Lodovico. Dialogo della Pittura, intotolato l'Arétino: ove si ragiona della dignita della Pittura, ec. (1557)"; no. 111, "Lo stesso, esemplare nitido, della medesima edizione; no. 112, "Dialogo della Pittura, intotolato L'Aretino." Then, no. 128, "Idea della perfezione della Pittura, tradotta dal Francese....scritta dal Signor Onofrio Boni (1809) Questa versione e quest'apologia vennero fatte da questi ottimi Toscani affine di vendicare il divino Michelangelo dalle ingiuriose sentenze, con cui viene attaccato nell'Opera di Fréart, il quale autore era però assai conosciuto e lodato per il suo bellissimo Paralelle de l'Architecture antique et de la moderne, e per la magnifica edizione del *Trattato di Leonardo*." No. 158, "Lessino's Laocoon"; no. 185, "Pino Messero Paolo, Dialogo di Pittura (1548)"; no. 223, "Benedetto Varchi, Due Lezioni (1549)"; no. 224; "Lezioni da lui [Varchi...] (1590)"; nos. 225 and 226, "Vasari"; no. 237, "Trattato della Pittura da un Codice della Biblioteca Vativana, e pubblicato da Guglielmo Manzi, Roma 1817"; and finally, no. 388, "Alberti, la Pittura, 1547". See Leopoldo Cicognara, Catalogo Ragionato dei Libri d'Arte e d'Antichità Posseduti dal Conte Cicognara, 2 vols. (Pisa: Presso Niccolò Capurro co'caratteri di F. Didot, 1821) vol. 1, 17-18, 20-21, 25, 30, 36, 37, 39, 69, respectively.

comparison between the two arts. First of all, the presentation of *Polinnia* challenged the idea that it was outside the province of sculpture to present multiple views of a work of art together at any one given moment. The Renaissance's idea of sculptural form was limited by the notion of the ideal view point. For Leonardo, for instance, "[to] make a figure in the round, the sculptor makes only two figures, and there need not be an infinite number for infinite views to be seen. Of these two figures, one is seen from the front and the other from behind, and this is proved to be no different from facing a figure made in medium relief."[189] This idea of the static nature of sculpture was shattered in the seventeenth century by the Baroque inventions of Bernini and others. Although Canova was thought to have abandoned Bernini's theatricality by returning sculpture its classical origins, some of Bernini's influence remained. Canova's approach to sculptural technique destabilizes his works, for his refined chiseling and lustrous surface create a dynamic sensation that invites the beholder to move around his pieces.[190] In fact, Canova's treatment of marble was so sensitive that critics used painterly vocabulary to describe it, for lack of better terminology. Quatremère de Quincy, who strongly supported distinctions between media, referred to Canova's "*instinct de peintre*,"[191]

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[189] As cited in Farago, ed., Leonardo da Vinci's Paragone: A Critical Interpretation with a New Edition of the Text in the Codex Urbinas 263.

[190] Potts, The Sculptural Imagination: Figurative, Modernist, Minimalist, 42.

[191] Quatremère de Quincy, Canova et ses ouvrages; ou, mémoires historiques sur la vie et les travaux de célèbre artiste 134.

Quatremère de Quincy was troubled by the idea of the conflation between media. He distinguished between the sculptural, pictorial, and poetic genres. For instance, he insisted that sculpture should not bring anything related to movement, action, or change into its realm, such as Laocoön's cries, fleeting expressions, or the transient passage of clouds, light, and the sun's rays. Schneider, L'Esthétique classique chez Quatremère de Quincy (1805-1823) 61. For more on Quatremère de Quincy's adoption of Canova's art to support his own artistic theories, see Pascal Griener, "Le Génie et le théoricien: Canova selon Quatremère de Quincy," Images de l'artiste: colloque du Comité International d'Histoire de l'Art: Université de Lausanne 9-12 Juin 1994 (Frankfurt am Main: P. Lang, 1998) 149-60.

while Antonio d'Este, Canova's friend and assistant, used the term "impasto" to describe Canova's workmanship.[192] Other writers commented on Canova's "manner of handling" the marble, and the way the sculptor "imagined that a sort of *empâtement*, or fleshiness¸ which was the object of his idolatry in painting, could be extended with advantage to sculpture. Hence all is flowing, round, and I might almost say blurred and muddy; all that is masculine, sharp, and clear, is wasted and rubbed away." [193]

If the treatment of the marble were not enough to defy the static interpretation of the medium, *Polinnia,* like so many other Canova sculptures, was set upon a rotating pedestal, "where it turns with a breath of air when a window is open, and with the slightest pressure of a damsel's pinky finger."[194] Despite *Polinnia's* motion, viewers of the sculpture were of course forced to see its multiple views sequentially, rather than simultaneously. This was another of Leonardo's critiques. The rotating pedestal, however, did, at the very least, prevent such views from being entirely contingent on the viewers' movement around the work. In fact, later in the nineteenth century, Charles Baudelaire would complain about precisely this very fact, comparing the multiple views of sculpture to the "exclusive and absolute" nature of painting, with only one point of view. It is in vain," he wrote, "that a sculptor forces himself to take up a unique point of

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[192] d'Este, Memorie di Antonio Canova 32. Missirini also used the term "impasto" to describe Canova's works. See Missirini, Della Vita di Antonio Canova: Libri Quattro 91 and 336.

[193] "Walks in Rome and Its Environs. No. VI. Thorwaltzen the Sculptor," 229.

[194] Letter from Cicognara to Canova, August 8, 1817. "Finalmente la Polinnia è sul bilico ove gira al soffio dell'aria che spira nell'aprire una finestra, e all'appressarsi del dito mignolo d'una donzella." As cited in Mazzocca, "La Ricomparsa di Polimnia: Creazione e Vicende di un Capolavoro di Antonio Canova," 173; also in Canova, Epistolario (1816-1817) vol. 2, 942-43.

The rotating pedestal was made in Venice proper, and Cicognara commented that it was one of the best he had ever seen. "Certamente che il bilico è una cosa stupenda, ed eseguito in una maniera che a Roma forse non si farebbe, e credo sarà il modello di tutte le perfezioni in fatto di bilichi." See Cicognara's letter to Canova, July 11, 1817, in Canova, Epistolario (1816-1817) vol. 2, 901.

view, for the spectator who moves around the figure can choose a hundred different points of view, except for the right one [...].”[195] In this sense, Canova liberated the viewer from the need to move around the work of art. At the same time, the constant movement of Canova’s works suggests there is no one ideal viewpoint from which to see his sculptures. To be fully appreciated, they must be admired from all possible angles.[196] These techniques reinforce how Canova insistently imagined his sculpture in three-dimensions, an attitude that is further reinforced by the reproduction of Canova’s sculptures in prints and even his drawings.[197] Canova often had his sculptures engraved from multiple points of view that would be printed together on the same sheet of paper. Such was the case with the prints of *Polinnia* published in the catalogue of the 1818 *Omaggio* exhibition (fig. 177). This manner of thinking “in the round” is also visible in drawings, such as this seated female figure, on which Canova pasted a small flap of paper

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[195]Charles Baudelaire, "The Salon of 1846," Art in Paris, 1845-1862: Salons and Other Exhibitions, ed. Jonathan Mayne, 2nd ed., Landmarks in Art History (Oxford Oxfordshire: Phaidon, 1981) 111.

[196] This movement, as Alex Potts has shown, dissolves the severe outline and contour of the work and challenges the associations of Canova’s sculptures with Winckelmann’s idealization of classical unity and wholeness. Potts also compares the way the sculptures of Bertel Thorvaldsen, Canova’s rival, adhere more closely to Winckelmann’s ideas of wholeness and to the neoclassical ideal of a fixed and stable viewing position. Alex Potts, The Sculptural Imagination: Figurative, Modernist, Minimalist, 34 and 54-58, respectively.

[197] Although a print necessarily reduces the three-dimensional to the two-dimensional, Canova remained faithful to his conception of sculpture in the round, often engraving up to four different points of view of a single work, as Hugh Honour points out in his excellent study. Likewise, despite Quatremère de Quincy’s suggestion that Canova engrave his entire *œuvre* in outline form, Canova preferred the use of shading to indicate the modeling and surface of his work. He excused his reluctance by claiming that he could not find an artist capable of drawing satisfactory outlines and that he had “never seen the engraving of a statue that pleased me.” As cited in Honour, "Canova and His Printmakers," 262. For more on Canova’s prints, see also Pezzini, Fiorani and Honour, eds., Canova e l'Incisione.

In a letter to Sig. Prof. Daniele Francesconi, Reggente dell’Università Padova, dated Feb. 17, 1810, in response to learning that Isabella Teotocchi Albrizzi planned to include outline engravings in her publication of his work, Canova reiterated how much outline engravings displeased him. “Mio fratello mi disse dell’idea che avrebbe la Dama Albrizzi di far incidere a contorni le altre opere mie.Tanta bontà per me mi confonde oltremodo. Sappiate però, che di quelle incise finora a contorni, io sono pochissimo contento.” Nozze Paladini-Rossi. [Lettere Pubblicate da Cesare Rossi per le Nozze di Paladini-Rossi] (Bassano: Stabil. Tipogr. Sante Pozzato, 1876) 10-11.

with an alternate profile. This allows the viewer (and the artist) to change the direction she faces, revealing the way Canova explored the composition of his sculptures and even turned his drawings into interactive works of art (figs. 178-179).

Finally, and most importantly, the exhibition raised the question of illusionism. Painting, by creating three-dimensional space on a two-dimensional surface, would seem by definition to conquer sculpture in this respect. Such illusion surprises and deceives our senses; our sense of touch reveals the flat surface, even as our sight conveys space and dimension. It is a deception, Cicognara recalls, that is ultimately pleasurable.[198] Viewers confronted with the exhibition at the Accademia were sure to be dazzled by the paintings on the walls. Newly cleaned, newly presented to the Venetian public, the vibrant red, orange and golden hues would have stood out against the dark walls of the salon. Light from the windows would have fallen onto the paintings, further highlighting the panels of gold leaf present in so many of the works. Visitors would have been moved by the sequence of great paintings with so many with religious themes—particularly those images of the Madonna, who held a place most dear in the hearts of the Venetians. Many

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[198] Such deception, however, could also be dangerous. In Luigi Lanzi's eighteenth-century treatise on painting, for instance, he remarks that Titian's capacity to deceive viewers was seen as threatening, to the point that Sir Joshua Reynolds advised students not to study the master's works! Lanzi writes, "so it is with the grandeur of Michelangelo and of Raffaello, that without seeking to occupy us with the illusions of art, goes at once to the heart; terrifies or inspires us; awakens emotions of pity, of veneration, and the love of truth, exalting us, as it were above ourselves, and leading us to indulge, even in spite of ourselves, the most delicious of feelings, in that of wonder. It is upon this account that Reynolds considered it dangerous for students to become enamoured of the Venetian style." Lanzi, The History of Painting in Italy, from the Period of the Revival of the Fine Arts to the End of the Eighteenth Century vol. 2, 131-32. Likewise, the French painter Jacques-Louis David warned his students not to be "seduced" by Canova's "false manner." As cited in Honour, "Canova's Studio Practice I: The Early Years," 157.

On the other hand, as Paul Staiti has pointed out in an excellent article on *trompe l'oeil* paintings in Gilded Age America, part of the viewers' pleasure might also come from the fact that he is actually *not* deceived by the effect, and rather is aware of the illusion. Part of the game, therefore, is the careful balance between allowing oneself to be deceived while nonetheless maintaining control and having the power to dismantle the illusion. Paul J. Staiti, "Con Artists: Harnett, Haberle, and Their American Accomplices," Deceptions and Illusions: Five Centuries of Trompe l'Œil Painting, ed. Sybille Ebert-Schifferer (Washington: National Gallery of Art, 2002) 90-103.

paintings depicted great religious and political men, so that the illustrious figures of Venetian history seemed to inhabit the same space as the beholders. Venetian political and artistic heritage was fully restored in these images and in this exhibition.

Yet, despite viewers' temptation to be drawn in by the chimerical colors of painting, Canova's *Polinnia* rose to the challenge, slowly drawing increasingly large numbers of visitors around her. Despite Leonardo's claim that sculpture did not invite contemplation, Cicognara suggests that that is precisely what occurred in the exhibition. Visitors were drawn to the relative whiteness and purity of the work, to the way marble seemed malleable and transformed into living flesh. The body of the muse seemed to breath palpably beneath her heavy robes, and the gentle manner in which she turned would allow viewers to admire all of Canova's handiwork. The delicate flowers woven together in a wreath, the soft cushion, complete with tassels, on which she sat, the buttons and delicate embroidery on her robe, even the fragile legs of the chair on which she sat were all worthy of attention. Viewers spent so much time with the work, it startled their senses with a different kind of illusion, in which marble seemed to be no longer stone. And yet, for those who would dare to touch the marble, the form remained concrete, indissoluble. It did not deceive them. It impressed them with its very solidity and substance, and it was precisely this truthfulness which swayed defenders of sculpture.[199]

Touch revealed the *Polinnia's* true nature as stone, but rather than dispelling the illusion the marble created, it simply increased the viewers' wonder at Canova's skill. Indeed, responses to the juxtaposition between Canova's *Polinnia* and Titian's

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[199] Bronzino, for instance, argued that sculpture is more universal than painting; it most resembles nature, because it can be touched. Jacqueline Lichtenstein, The Blind Spot: An Essay on the Relations between Painting and Sculpture in the Modern Age (Los Angeles: Published by the Getty Research Institute, 2008) 4.

Assumption established that *both* artists were masters of illusion in their respective media. Titian overwhelmed the beholder with color, light, and space, Canova with the sensation that marble could be soft and malleable. Both artists seemed to animate their subjects, creating the illusion of life. Sculpture and painting were equally appreciated by the beholder. In fact, this emphasis on the beholder's wonder reflects the way a shift had occurred in the understanding of the *paragone* in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. As Jacqueline Lichtenstein has argued, this crucial transition was one in which attention was displaced from the artist to the spectator. The spectator's senses, reaction and response to the work took precedence over the artist's talent in rendering material or creating a successful illusion. The beholder became the true subject of the *paragone.*[200] His point of view and the effect the object wrought on his senses were more important than the artist's.

In part, therefore, Cicognara's investigation of the *paragone* from the viewer's point of view reflects the increased importance of the viewer's role in a period which saw the rise of public museums and gallery spaces and the circulation of visitors and tourists as never before. It is understandable, then, that the importance of display and of reception would go hand in hand with a shifting understanding in theory. At the same time, however, Cicognara's reliance on the *paragone* also reflects a concern that is specific to sculpture—finding a *comprehensible* way of explaining or expressing sculptural qualities. That is, sculpture has always been a notoriously difficult medium to discuss. The technical operations and procedures are often far beyond the average viewers' realm of knowledge. At times, it is not simply ignorance, but a willful refusal on the part of the

[200] Lichtenstein, The Blind Spot: An Essay on the Relations between Painting and Sculpture in the Modern Age 5-6.

viewer to learn more about the technical aspects—because there is always the fear that sculptural process might reveal itself as little more than a craft, rather than a science. Therefore, in the very structure of the exhibition, Cicognara deliberately compared Canova and Titian in order to create a comprehensible narrative for the audience. He was conscious of the many different visitors who would attend the Accademia exhibition, many of whom were not connoisseurs. Yet, despite a lack of formal training, even the average visitor could understand and respond viscerally to the comparison Cicognara created between Canova and Titian, between sculpture and painting. The attention Cicognara paid to the selection of masterpieces and their placement in the Accademia salon and his determination to create a comprehensible narrative which viewers could understand is at the very root of modern curatorial practice, even today.

The staging of the paragone and return to it in Cicognara's text reflects the manner in which he attempted to negotiate a new language for viewers that overcame the difficulties of sculpture by privileging *their* position and *their* understanding of the work. Cicognara's references to the *paragone* emerged directly from the staging of Canova's *Polinnia* in a sea of Venetian paintings *and* a lack of technical vocabulary to describe the work. In the case of the inauguration of the Accademia, this search for a new language also coincided with Venetian national sentiment and Cicognara's own professional ambitions—and of course with the foundation of the Accademia as a modern museum. Cicognara's proprietary attitude toward the opening of the Accademia's pinacoteca and the attempt to preserve and further Venice's cultural reputation at a moment of political humiliation were fundamentally modern sentiments. He behaved like a cultural impresario in a modern sense, scheming to keep works in Venice, arranging politically

shrewd exhibitions that would further not only laudable cultural goals but also his own professional status. At the same time, Cicognara's argument with Edwards regarding the cleaning of the *Assumption* reveals his willingness to argue with colleagues whose conservative ways were inimical to his goals.

Regardless, however, of Cicognara's passion for Venetian painting and their illusionistic grandeur, it is "reality" that ultimately triumphs. In a private letter to Canova, Cicognara could not resist reiterating *Polinnia's* victory:[201]

> *Polinnia* so dominates the great room where she is placed in the center, that she produces a marvelous effect, and that which is most striking of all is the triumph of reality over objects of illusion. This room, full of masterpieces of marvelous art, among which there is the most beautiful Titian that human eyes have ever seen, which stunned everyone who entered who had eyes, now it cedes all to relief, to truth, and the poor picture must be content to act as the backdrop to a work of the chisel.[202]

In the end, Titian's *Assumption* gave way completely to Canova's *Polinnia.* The painting, despite being the most beautiful of his *œuvre*, lost the battle for the spectators' attention and became merely a backdrop to the sculptor's remarkable work. Moreover, Cicognara's reference to Titian's work as "la pittura" rather than "il quadro" renders *Polinnia's* victory even more absolute. The ambivalence of the phrase, which seems to refer not

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[201] Is it possible Cicognara's insistence on Canova's success was a response to Pietro Edwards, who made it clear he preferred painting over sculpture? Edwards wrote: "The art of painting has always influenced the productions of the chisel, and all kinds of work in which enthusiasm and the inventive faculties take part, and the pictorial discipline influences more than all the rest the general test of the people, presenting to it lasting lessons, which are understood even by idiots, which, when they are brought to the highest degree of perfection, are said to be *executed by the pencil*, and, to use the words of Buonarotti, fixing the compass of elegance and proportion in the eyes of artists." Pietro Edwards as cited in David Bomford and Mark Leonard, eds., Issues in the Conservation of Paintings (Los Angeles: Getty Conservation Institute, 2004) 52.

[202] "Essa signoreggia così quella gran sala ove è posta nel centro che produce un effetto meraviglioso, e quello che più di tutto è osservabile si è l'ascendente della realtà sugli oggetti dell'illusione. Quella sala copera dei capi d'opera dell'arte meravigliosi fra quali il più bel Tiziano che siasi visto da occhi umani la quale sbalordiva entrando chiunque aveva occhi, ora tutto cede al rilievo, alla verità, e la povera pittura si contenta di far il mestiere di fondo all'opera di scarpello." Letter from Cicognara to Canova, August 8, 1817. As cited in Mazzocca, "La Ricomparsa di Polimnia: Creazione e Vicende di un Capolavoro di Antonio Canova," 173-74; also in Canova, Epistolario (1816-1817) vol. 2, 942-43.

only to *the* painting, but to painting as a medium more broadly, extends Cicigonara's use of *paragone*. It is no longer simply the *Assumption* that has ceded to *Polinnia*, but indeed the entire medium of painting which has succumbed to that of sculpture.

Cicognara's letter to Canova is a portent of the manner in which the relationship between Titian and Canova would be forever united in the Venetian imagination. Although his museum exhibition was only a fleeting moment in which the two masters were paired together, in 1853 a monument to Titian was finally erected in Santa Maria Gloriosa dei Frari, directly across from the monument to Canova. The two monuments face each other, forever juxtaposed as the twin bastions of Venetian artistic dominance. But, here, Cicognara's belief in the ascendancy of sculpture is rendered fully visible. The monument to Titian contains a dramatic portrait of the elderly painter seated directly in front of a representation of his *Assumption*—sculpted in marble bas-relief (figs. 180-181). Sculpture, with its permanence and monumentality, ultimately triumphed over painting's illusion.

Chapter 4

Paris:
Defining Modern Sculpture (or, Expression)

"Went to see the Marquis Somariva's [*sic*] collection; the Magdalen of Canova its chief ornament; an exquisite thing, and excelling in what is generally out of the sphere of sculpture,—expression."[1]

When Canova's *Penitent Magdalene* was presented to Parisians at the Salon of 1808 along with three other works by the artist, *Hebe*, *Madame Mère*, and *Standing Cupid and Psyche*, it received decidedly mixed reviews (figs. 10, 13, 138 and 182). Some critics were taken aback by the awkwardness of the saint's pose and the apparent disjunction between the beauty of her face, the fullness of her body, and her life of ascetic penitence. Other critics argued over the appropriateness of Canova's use of "mixed media." This included the bronze accessories and wax tints Canova used on both *Hebe* and *Magdalene*, as well as painterly qualities that were more impalpable; the freedom with which Canova handled the marble, the work's sentiment and expression, and the treatment of Magdalene's hair and head all gave the sculpture "the taste and harmony of color in painting."[2] Still other journalists had more prosaic concerns, furious that the

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[1] See the journal entry for April 7, 1820 in Moore, Memoirs, Journal and Correspondence of Thomas Moore 256.

[2] "Quelques-uns encore fait à cette tête et à la manière dont elle est traitée, ainsi que les cheveux, le reproche d'affecter un peu le goût et l'harmonie de la couleur en peinture. J'accorderai qu'il y a un sentiment de peintre dans cet ouvrage [...]."Antoine-Chrysosthôme Quatremère de Quincy, "Sur M. Canova et les quatre ouvrages qu'on voit de lui à l'exposition publique de 1808: Par M. Quatremère de Quinci [*Sic*]," Gazette nationale ou le moniteur universel 565 (Dec. 28, 1808): 1429.

work of a foreign artist received intense acclaim at the expense of their neglected compatriots.

Common to nearly all of the critical responses, however, was discussion of the sculpture's "expression." Applauded by critics and the public alike, Canova's depiction of Magdalene's anguish seemed to capture sentiment in stone. In addition, the particular success of this work lay in the way Canova was thought to have successfully transcended the limitations of sculpture by capturing Mary Magdalene's intense emotional suffering and the very desperation of her atonement. Canova's achievement was particularly remarkable since expression was thought to belong uniquely to the province of painting. That is, expression was ordinarily reserved for the intense emotions represented in painting and of which sculpture was thought incapable. Indeed, as with other theoretical issues raised by the exhibition of Canova's works, expression too had its roots in sixteenth-century Italian art theory, when it had been used to describe an artist's capacity to endow a work of art—primarily painting— with strong emotional valences.[3] As with the other works I have examined, discussion of *Penitent Magdalene's* expression elicited intense responses from viewers who became increasingly attuned to their *own* expression

[3] Leon Battista Alberti and Leonardo da Vinci both use the word "expressio" to express the way inner thoughts are made visible through outward bodily movements, particularly in the "*istoria*" or the narrative meaning of a work. For Alberti, the ability to depict emotion—and therefore move the beholder—was part of its claims to be a liberal art. Leonardo, on the other hand, was particularly concerned with how difficult it was for the artist to reveal the "moti dell'animo" (the inner motions of the mind), having only gestures and movements at his disposal to do so. See Leon Battista Alberti, On Painting, trans. Cecil Grayson (London: Penguin Books, 1991), esp. 77-78 and Leonardo da Vinci, A Treatise on Painting by Leonardo da Vinci. With a Life of Leonardo and an Account of His Works by John William Brown, trans. John Francis Rigaud (London: George Bell & Sons, 1802) 63-66.

For a general discussion of expression, see Barasch, Modern Theories of Art, 1: From Winckelmann to Baudelaire 116-18 and Richard Shiff, "Expression: Natural, Personal, Pictorial," A Companion to Art Theory, eds. Paul Smith and Carolyn Wilde (Oxford: Blackwell, 2002) 159-72. For the use of "expression" in the paragone debates, see Lee, "Ut Pictura Poesis: The Humanistic Theory of Painting," esp. 217-26 and LeCoat, "Comparative Aspects of the Theory of Expression in the Baroque Age," 207-23.

of emotion as they beheld the work. With the *Magdalene*, Canova had created a work that expressed pain, regret, and sadness so powerfully that it, in turn, elicited those same sentiments from the beholders themselves. In fact, once the work was removed from the Salon and exhibited in a chapel-like space in the Parisian town-house of the collector Giambattista Sommariva, viewers' empathetic responses to the work intensified even further. In the private sphere of Sommariva's home, the work appealed to viewers' innermost emotions and sensibilities.

The repeated use of the term "expression" in Parisian circles, however, also carried a significant nationalist undercurrent. On the one hand, use of the phrase clearly signaled the work's success. On the other, however, it also highlighted the way Parisian critics were trying to negotiate the work's modernity, sculptural status, and foreignness in relation to their own artistic production. Indeed, one might argue that claims for the work's expressiveness were part and parcel of an attempt to appropriate the statue into France's cultural heritage. Bear in mind, after all, that although expression had its roots in sixteenth-century Italian theory, it was in seventeenth-century French circles, particularly that of Charles Le Brun, that the word took on the meanings for which it is best known.[4]

By the early nineteenth century, however, expression reappears repeatedly in different contexts in French circles as an example of that which distinguishes painting from sculpture and modern works from ancient ones. More importantly, however, the emphasis on expression and expressivity signals the way eighteenth-century ideas of interiority, subjectivity and the self had been absorbed into the rhetoric of art criticism in early nineteenth-century France. Throughout the eighteenth century, the self was

[4] A point made in Naginski, "Canova's 'Penitent Magdalene': On Trauma's Prehistory," 68.

increasingly identified and located *within* the body and the psyche, giving new resonance to the "inner voice" that was unique to each modern individual. This "expressivist turn," as Charles Taylor has called it, privileged emotion, expression, sentiment and the imagination, as one searched for one's "inner truth."[5] Expression, therefore, was associated with the very modern understanding of man as a unique individual. Unlike other critical terms that were associated with Canova's work, such as imitation, invention, execution and the *paragone*, expression had a significantly broader meaning that extended far beyond the bounds of art criticism. In addition, since expression was seen as a pivotal aspect of modern man, it also emerged as a fundamental quality inherent in French, Romantic, modern art. As several authors, such as Fernando Mazzocca, Franco Boggero, and Francesca Lui, have all pointed out, the expressive qualities of Canova's *Penitent Magdalene* allowed the work to be co-opted by French critics as an example of proto-Romantic sculpture.[6] Its Christian sentiment corresponded fully with the religious sentiment of many Romantic works of art,[7] as did its eroticism,

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[5] See Charles Taylor, Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1989) esp. chp. 21, 'The Expressivist Turn,' 368-90. Dror Wahrman has pointed out that while Taylor primarily traces the philosophical origins of modern selfhood, these ideas are also embedded in all practices of human life. He identifies the plurality of eighteenth-century debates about the self and argues that romanticism was simply one among many possibilities of this "new regime of identity." Dror Wahrman, The Making of the Modern Self: Identity and Culture in Eighteenth-Century England (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006).

I have deliberately avoided using the term "individualism," which emerged in political discourse in the early nineteenth century, but was fraught with negative implications. See Koenraad W. Swart, "'Individualism' in the Mid-Nineteenth Century (1826-1860)," Journal of the History of Ideas 23.1 (Jan.-Mar. 1962): 77-90.

[6] See Franco Boggero, "Una Rilettura Critica del Canova, la 'Maddalena Penitente'," Arte Lombarda 55/57 (1980): 386-92; Fernando Mazzocca, "Canova e la Svolta Romantica: Appunti sulla *Maddalena Penitente*," '800 Italiano (March 1992): 4-11; and Francesca Lui, "Il Caso della Maddalena del Canova a Parigi: Riflessi Iconografici e Letterari in Età Romantica," Rappresentazioni del Sacro nel Romanticismo Francese, ed. Annarosa Poli, Civilisation de l'Europe (Moncalieri (Italie): Centro interuniversitario di ricerche sul "Viaggio in Italia", 2002) 386-92.

[7] This Christian sentiment was perhaps best expressed by Chateaubriand's *Genie du Christianisme*, as Francesca Lui points out. See Lui, "Il Caso della Maddalena del Canova a Parigi: Riflessi Iconografici e

painterliness, and apparent "originality," given the absence of an ancient model. But, I would argue, it was not just the mere form of the sculpture that fit the tenets of Romanticism so well. It was the way the work appealed to the modern subjective sense of self that gave the sculpture such compelling resonance in the early nineteenth century. Indeed, the manner in which the work affected and shaped the beholder's emotional response—so that he too could participate in the Romantic ethos of "becoming"[8]— gave the work its powerful charge.

After its debut at the 1808 Salon, Canova's work remained on public view in Paris for almost thirty-five years, first in the collection of Giambattista Sommariva and finally in the gallery of Alexandre-Marie Aguado, the Marquis de Las Marismas. During that period, critics referenced the work repeatedly, particularly as they attempted to define the nature of modern sculpture. Indeed, gradually authors came to see the work as a fundamental part of French cultural heritage. Not only had Mary Magdalene been perceived as a "French" saint due to the tradition that she spent many years in penance in Provence, but perhaps more powerful was the fact that Canova's sculpture so well expressed the Romantic sensibilities of the era. As a result, given that Canova's sculpture was hailed by some as the greatest work he had ever completed, every time the *Penitent Magdalene* changed hands, it generated dialogue regarding cultural patrimony. In the post-Napoleonic era, with the repatriation of Italian works of art and the dissolution of

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Letterari in Età Romantica," 361 and François-René Chateaubriand, Génie du Christianisme, ou, beautés de la religion chrétienne (a Paris: Chez Migneret, 1802).

[8] Karl Wilhlelm Friedrich von Schlegel's notions on Romantic poetry as a poetic form that is not fixed, but rather is still in the process of "becoming," were published as "Fragments" in the journal *The Atheneum* between 1798-1800. An English translation is available in J. Schulte-Sasse, et al., ed. and trans., Theory as Practice: A Critical Anthology of Early German Romantic Writings (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997).

numerous important private collections still fresh in Parisian minds, Parisian audiences anxiously waited to see who would step into purchase the work. Rumors circulated over the identity of potential buyers, and the ultimately reflected the French concern over who, precisely, was responsible for the country's cultural patrimony. Reactions to *Penitent Magdalene*, therefore, are fundamental to our understanding of modern definitions of sculpture as well as France's changing attitudes towards the identification and protection of its cultural patrimony.

"Depreciating our own interests": Exhibiting Canova in France

Although Canova had achieved international fame by the end of the eighteenth century, the first public exhibition of his works in Paris did not occur until the 1804 Salon.[9] Eager to introduce the Parisian public to his more "heroic" works, Canova donated casts of two sculptures, the figure of *Genius* from the *Monument to Clement XIII* (1783-1792) and one of his pugilists, *Creugas* (1795-1801), to the Institut de France (figs. 9 and 46).[10] The pieces arrived in Paris in December 1803, and lack of space at the Institut itself led the works to be exhibited in the Musée Napoleon as part of the biannual Salon.[11] In letters to his friend, the theoretician Quatremère de Quincy, Canova

[9] The recumbent *Cupid and Psyche,* currently in the Louvre, was exhibited by Joachim Murat in 1801-02 in his château near Paris. Gerard Hubert, "Canova et la France," Antonio Canova e il suo Ambiente Artistico fra Venezia, Roma e Parigi (Venezia: Istituto Veneto di Scienze, Lettere ed Arti, 2000) 408.

[10] Letter from Canova to Quatremère de Quincy, December 12, 1802. "Ma io amerei assai volentieri di poter assoggettare al giudizio di lei, e a quello di cotesti valenti artisti e amatori intelligenti, qualche mia opera di più forte carattere, giacchè non ne viddero finora che di uno stile di dolce e delicate. E per questo sono determinato di spedire a Parigi almeno il gesso della statua di un mio *Pugilatore* in questi ultimi giorni finito." Canova and Quatremère de Quincy, Il Carteggio Canova-Quatremère de Quincy, 1785-1822 16.

[11] "L'Institut national vient de recevoir du Sculpteur *Canova*, l'un de ses membres étrangers, une Statue d'un Gladiateur, faisant partie d'un Groupe dont il s'occupe actuellement, et le Torse d'un Génie qui se voit au tombeau du Pape *Clément XIII*, à Rome. N'ayant en ce moment aucun localité convenable pour les

demonstrated his customary concern over the display of his works and beseeched Quatremère to use his "influence" to ensure that the sculptures were "placed in a situation with favorable lighting," on rotating pedestals that would allow viewers to turn the works comfortably.[12]

Exhibition in the Salon meant that the works received a much wider audience than they may have at the Institut. Quatremère, not surprisingly, was delighted to have his friend's work on display, and quickly published a panegyric to the artist in one of the city's public journals. [13] Other responses, however, were more measured, particularly

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exposer, la quatrième Classe a invité le Directeur général du Musée Napoléon, à les placer provisoirement dans le grand Salon des Tableaux." "Mélanges," Journal des arts, des sciences, de littérature et de politique 5me anné, 3ième Trim.326 (10 Pluviôse An 12 [1804]): 187.

This fact is also recorded in C. P. Landon, "Nouvelles des arts, peinture, sculpture, architecture et gravure," Annales du musée et de l'école moderne des beaux arts 3 (1803): 137.

[12] Letter from Canova to Quatremère, December 14, 1803. "Seppi da altra lettera di M.[r] Cacau[l]t, che giunse costà il gesso del mio *Pugilatore Creugante*, partito da Roma 18 mesi fa. Per quell'influenza che foste mai per avere, raccomando anche a voi di farlo collocare in situazion favorevole per il lume, e di farlo pur girare sul billico a comodo maggiore de'guardanti. Con esso d'evesservi il torso del *Genio* che ho lavorato per il mausolei del Papa Rezzonico. Ne attendo ansiosamente le vostre censure, perchè la stima che fo di voi è quella che meritate." Canova and Quatremère de Quincy, Il Carteggio Canova-Quatremère de Quincy, 1785-1822 42.

[13] Antoine-Chrysosthôme Quatremère de Quincy, "Notice sur M. Canova, sur sa réputation, ses ouvrages, et sa statue du pugilateur," Archives littéraires de l'Europe, ou mélanges de littérature, d'histoire et de philosophie 3 (1804). An English translation was published shortly after, however it does not include the lengthy preamble in which Quatremère explores the differences between painting and sculpture. An Italian translation was also included in Antonio Pochini's 1823 collection of writings about Canova. See Antoine-Chrysosthôme Quatremère de Quincy, "Account of M. Canova, the Celebrated Italian Sculptor, His Character as an Artist, and of His Works, Particularly His Statue of the Pugilist. By M. Quatremere de Quincy," The Monthly Magazine and British Register 6.123 (January 1, 1805): 511-15 and Antoine-Chrysosthôme Quatremère de Quincy, "Ragguaglio sul Canova, sulla sua Riputazione, sulle sue opere, Particolarmente sulla sua Statua del Pugillatore; Pubblicato a Parigi nel 1804 dal Sig. Quatremère de Quincy. Traduzione Italiana di Antonio Pochini," trans. Antonio Pochini, Biblioteca Canoviana, ossia Raccolta delle Migliori Prose, e de' più Scelti Componimenti Poetici sulla Vita, sulle Opere ed in Morte di Antonio Canova, eds. Arnaldo Bruni, Manlio Pastore Stocchi and Gianni Venturi, 4 vols. in 2 vols., I Testi (Bassano del Grappa: Istituto di ricerca per gli studi su Canova e il neoclassicismo, 2005) vol. 3 in vol. 2, 113-35.

In a letter from August 17, 1804, Quatremère informed Canova of the article, published in both the *Archives littéraires* and the *Moniteur*. He sent Canova a copy, lamenting not only that the French language was not as rich in superlatives as Italian but also that he had to moderate the tone of the article because it was not acceptable in France to praise living artists excessively. In his reply, dated August 29, 1804, Canova informed Quatremère he had read the article. Canova and Quatremère de Quincy, Il Carteggio Canova-Quatremère de Quincy, 1785-1822 51 and 53, respectively.

with regard to the physiognomy of *Creugas.* One writer cited the Greek source, a text by Pausanias describing the battle between the two boxers, but added that only once Canova had completed the sculpture of the second boxer, Damoxenes, "could one judge more soundly the conventions of their attitudes."[14]Another author in *Le Publiciste* was much harsher. "G" critiqued the boxer's anatomy and his overly inflated muscles[15]—a charge that irritated Canova to no end and against which he defended himself by comparing the work to the *Belvedere Torso* (then on view, it must be noted, in the Musée Napoleon) (fig. 183).[16]

An excellent resource for making sense of the numerous Parisian journals and newspapers in the early nineteenth-century is Eugène Hatin, Bibliographie historique et critique de la presse périodique française, ou catalogue systématique et raisonné de tous les écrits périodiques de quelque valeur publiés ou ayant circulé en france depuis l'origine du journal jusqu'à nos jours, avec extraits, notes historiques, critiques, et morales, indication des prix que les principaux journaux ont atteints dans les ventes publiques, etc.; précédé d'un essai historique et statistique sur le naissance et les progrès de la presse périodique dans les deux mondes (Paris: Firmin-Didot frères, fils et cie, 1866).

[14] "Quand les deux figures [Creugas and Damoxenes] seront groupées, on pourra juger plus sainement la convenance des attitudes [...]." "Mélanges," 188.

[15] "Il partoît peut-être du tortillage & de l'exagération dans le mouvement & dans les formes. Le travail des muscles des sourcils a de la maigreur & ne répond pas au reste de l'exécution. Les muscles de la poitrine sont trop gonflés à l'endroit des mamelles, ce qui fait renforcer les côtes. Le corps, vu de profil, est trop étroit à l'endroit des reins. Le galbe des bras est un peu tordu, les muscles y paroissent grouppés; de sorte que l'anatomie n'en est pas facile à suivre. Les cuisses & les jambes sont d'une bonne forme, cependant les malléoles internes sont trop grosses & trop saillantes. Les talons ont trop de hauteur; ce qui fait paroître les mollets un peu hauts. Il semble que l'athlète eût en plus de force & qu'il auroit opposé plus de résistance, si ses jambes n'étoient pas placées sur un même ligne; sans doute aussi il faut attendre pour prononcer avec plus de certitude sur le mérite de cet ouvrage de voir le grouppe entier. On peut donc ici considérer que l'exécutions qui est pleine de force & de sentiment. Les masses des chairs sont grassement exprimées, mais les parties tendineuses ne sont pas aussi bien rendues." G... "Beaux-Arts. Sur les ouvrages de Canova exposés au muséum," Le Publiciste (17 Pluvoise An XII [7 Feb. 1804]): 5.

[16] Canova certainly read the criticism in *Le Publiciste*, for he refers to it directly in a letter to Quatremère. He defends the work by comparing Creugas' anatomy to the *Belvedere Torso*, once again anxiously asking if his sculpture had been well placed. Likewise, Canova expressed frustration that critics seemed to always want to make comparisons between the grace and elegance of his works and those of Giambologna.

Letter from Canova to Quatremère, March 21, 1804. "In tal maniera non parmi che la discorra l'estensore di quel Giornale, il quale fra le altre cose ha trovato di criticare nel mio *Lottatore*, che il corpo visto di profilo comparisce troppo svelto alle reni. Eppure avrebbe potuto agevolmente farne il confronto con parecchie statue antiche, anzi col capo d'opera di studio de' più grandi maestri, col celebre Torso di Belvedere. Questo conserva nei fianchi la medesima proporzione tra la larghezza di faccia colla profondità o grossezza del ventre, che conserva il mio *Lottatore*; quantunque sia inutile farvi osservare la sostanziale differenza di azione e di mossa dell'uno e dell'altro. […] Il punto sta di esaminare (ciò che appunto più di

Despite the critiques that G. leveled against the sculpture's anatomical detail, this same author recognized that Canova "honored his century and his country"—for even if "he [Canova] lacked the fierceness, sentiment and correctness of Michelangelo, the energy of Baccio-Bandinelli, and the grace and purity of Giambologna [...] he has safeguarded himself against the bad taste of modern Italian artists."[17] Although G's article purported to be a serious examination of Canova's sculpture, however, it quickly morphed into an explicit ode to the French nation. His backhanded compliment of Canova was followed by a defense of his critique, which G. vehemently denied was born out of jealousy. At the same time, however, G. could not resist adding a vigorous tribute to the French school, suggesting French artists' confidence in their own talent was so hearty that it was they, in fact, who were among the first to spread Canova's fame throughout Europe. The nationalistic undertones of G.'s critique became overt when he claimed "the progress of the French school is incontestable"—and this, despite the lack of opportunities and commissions to showcase their talents. Then, lest any one of those "brilliant examples" be forgotten, he proceeded to list the country's best sculptors![18]

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tutto mi preme), se lo stile, le forme, l'assieme, le [parti a]venti tutte una buona forma, annunziano un'opera fatta dietro lo studio di quelle de'Greci.

Non so poi se sia ben collocato, all'occasione di parlare di questa mia statua, il paragone sulla grazia e sulla eleganza che si vuole fare di tutte le opere mie con la grazia di Gio. di Bologna ecc." Canova and Quatremère de Quincy, Il Carteggio Canova-Quatremère de Quincy, 1785-1822 43.

[17] "Canova honore son siècle & sa patrie: si l'on ne retrouve pas dans ses ouvrages le fierté, le sentiment, & la correction de Michel-Ange, l'énergie de Baccio-Bandinelli, ni la grâce & la pureté de Jean de Boulogne, on lui doit la justice de reconnoître qu'il a bien étudié ces grands maîtres, qu'il est remonté aux sources antiques du beau, & s'est ainsi préservé du mauvais goût des artistes modernes de l'Italie, de la manière, de l'exagération ou de la maigreur des successeurs du Bernein." G... "Beaux-Arts. Sur les ouvrages de Canova exposés au muséum," 5.

[18] "Quelques critiques qui se mèlent à nos observations se seront point regardées comme produites par aucun sentiment de jalousie; les artistes français se sont empressés, dans tous les tems, de rendre justice à leurs rivaux, & ce sont eux qui, pleins d'estime pour la personne & les talens de Canova, ont les premiers fait connoître son nom dans toute l'Europe. Ils se plaignent seulement, ou plutôt ils s'ailligent de n'avoir pas trouvé depuis longs-tems d'aussi belles occasions de se faire connoître; car depuis la statue élevée à Louis XV & le mausolée du maréchal de Saxe, aucun monument de quelque importance & digne de porter

Quatremère responded privately to Canova about these criticisms, easing his anxiety—somewhat. The good news, he wrote, was that *Creugas* and the *Genius* were exhibited in the Grand Salon of the Musée Napoleon, where numerous artists went to see them in the first days of their exposition. Attendance of the general public, however, was regrettably meager due to the "unhappy season." And, unfortunately, the work did not "have an effect that corresponded to Canova's reputation." His position as a foreigner contributed to the criticisms, and although the young artists admired the works, older professors critiqued them. The public, sadly, had no recorded opinion at all.[19]

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ce nom n'a été entrepris. Cependant, les progrès de l'école française, depuis cette epoque, son incontestables. Nous en pourrions citer, pour la peinture, des preuves incontestables & de brillans exemples. La sculptures fa suit d'un pas égal; mais ses moyens étant plus dispendieux, les occasions de la mettres en œuvre sont aussi plus rares. Les vrais amis des arts connoissent, parmi nos artistes, de dignes émules de Canova, ses compagnons d'étude en Italie, qui gémissent de l'inaction à laquelle ils sont condamnés. Ces hommes estimables, la vue des merveilles de la Grece & de Rome, dont la victoire vient de nous enrichir, sentent redoubler cette ardeur qu'ils éprouvèrent à leur premier aspect, aux lieux où la victoire les a attachés au char du triomphateur. Nous sommes aujourd'hui en possession d'hommes que nous opposerions avec assurance aux talens les plus distingués, sans exception d'aucun, dont se vante l'Italie, même en sculpture. Parmi nos vétérans, dont le ciseau a encore toute sa vigueur, nous comptons Jullien, Pajou, Moitte, Boichot, Boudon, Roland, Dejoux, &... Parmis de plus jeunes, Chaudel, Lemot, Cartelier, Fortin, Ramey, &... C'est ainsi que le siècle brillant de Louis XIV présente avec gloire, & comme un grouppe magnifique, les noms de Pujet, Girardon, Coizevox, Coustou &c...

La présence des chefs-d'œuvre de l'antiquité, exposés sans cesse à l'étude des artistes, nous assure après ceux-ci une longue carrière non moins glorieuse, quand le gouvernement pourra accorder à cet art, qui a plus essentiellement besoin de son concours, des soins particuliers. Les empires se détruisent & sont éclipses les un par les autres; les actions les plus éclatantes se perdent dans la nuit du tems: mais la gloire des premiers hommes d'état qui ont protégé les arts & les noms des peuples qui les ont cultivés avec le plus succès de sont impérissables." G... "Beaux-Arts. Sur les ouvrages de Canova exposés au muséum," 5.

The sculptors the writer is referring to include: Pierre Julien (1731-1804); Augustin Pajou (1730-1809); Jean-Guillaume Moitte (1746-1810); Guillaume Boichot (1735-1814); Jean-Antoine Houdon (1741-1828); Philippe-Laurent Roland (1746-1816); Claude Dejoux (1732-1816); Antoine-Denis Chaudet (1763-1810); Baron François-Frédéric Lemot (1772-1827); Pierre Cartellier (1757-1831); Auguste Fortin (1763–1832); Claude Ramey (1754-1838); Pierre Puget (1620-1694); François Girardon (1628-1715); Antoine Coyzevox (1640-1720); and either Nicolas Coustou (1658-1733) or Guillaume Coustou (1677-1746).

[19] Letter from Quatremère to Canova, April 12, 1804. "È stata dunque esposta nel gran Salone, dove si fa l'esibizione publica. Fu gran concorso nei primi giorni de l'artisti, ma del publico poco, poiche è stata stagione infelice; e poi non posso dirvi molte cose che dipendono dalle nostre circostanze. […] In generale posso dirvi, che non ha fatto qui un effetto corrispondente alla vostra riputazione; e per chi conosce le diverse passioni che vanno sempre militando contra l'impero d'una riputazione strana e forestiera, non è cosa meravigliarsi. In due parole: i vecchi professori hanno criticato molto, i giovani hanno molto ammirato. Il publico non ha preso parte, perchè questa esposizione non ha avuto il concorso solito nelle publiche; sì che resta ancora in dubbio la sentenza del giudice." Canova and Quatremère de Quincy, Il Carteggio Canova-Quatremère de Quincy, 1785-1822 46-47.

When four of Canova's marble statues were exhibited in the Salon four years later, in 1808, the works received much greater attention.[20] In a painting by Louis-Léopold Boilly, *Napoleon Honoring the Sculptor Cartellier at the Salon of 1808*, we see three of Canova's sculptures *in situ*. *Penitent Magdalene* and *Madame Mère* are given pride of place in the center of the image—indeed, the works were given more prominence in the final oil, for *Magdalene* was largely obscured and *Madame Mère* absent entirely in Boilly's preparatory watercolor (figs. 184-185; *Hebe* can be seen in the far left of the painting, but *Cupid and Psyche* is not visible.) Although we cannot take Boilly's representation as a strictly literal view of the space—particularly given the sudden appearance of *Madame Mère* at center stage, which begs the question of whether she was included primarily as an homage—or concession?—to Napoleon—the painting does give a sense of the overall shape of the sculpture court and how it may have appeared when crowded with visitors.

And, indeed, it would have been crowded, for the 1808 Salon was widely attended. The public, by all accounts, now presented with the opportunity to admire Canova's sculpture first hand, adored the works, particularly *Penitent Magdalene*.[21] The work, which had been completed in 1796, was already known to the French by reputation. Quatremère in fact had been eager to secure the sculpture for exhibition several years prior to the 1808 Salon. In 1806, for instance, he asked Canova to send a cast of the work, which he intended to exhibit in a church and encourage the entire city to

[20] The works, however, were not included in the Salon livret.

[21] One critic in the *Mercure* wrote, "Mais c'est sur-tout *la Madeleine* qui a réuni tous les suffrages, fixé long-tems tous les regards." Victorin Fabre, "Salon de peinture. Huitième article. Sculptures," Mercure de France, journal historique, politique et littéraire (24 Decembre 1808): 603.

visit.[22] Although Canova demurred, suggesting he had already far surpassed the *Magdalene* with other works,[23] Quatremère obtained his wish once the original marble, which had changed hands several times after its completion in 1796, was purchased by Giambattista Sommariva in March 1808.[24] A lawyer, businessman and politician from Milan, Sommariva was always eager to promote his outstanding collection of fine art. A

[22] Letter from Quatremère to Canova, October 10, 1806. "Per Dio, mandate qui un gesso della vostra *Maddalena*, la quale tutti s'accordano a trovar un capo d'opera. Mandate a me quel gesso, facendo seguitar le spese, e io saprò farla veder e collocar in una delle nostre chiese, e ci farò venir a vederla tutta la città. Procurate che il gesso sia riparato e ben lisciato, e passerà per marmo. Questa è una idea che mi viene in testa: pensateci." Canova and Quatremère de Quincy, Il Carteggio Canova-Quatremère de Quincy, 1785-1822 88.

[23] Letter from Canova to Quatremère, November 26, 1806. "Voi vorreste un gesso della mia *Maddalena* per farmi applaudire a Parigi; ed io rido, sicuro di aver già fatto molte cose e molte meglio di quella, e rido di chiunque ve l'ha esaltata come la migliore. Forse non capiranno più in là. Dio sa come san vedere e intendere!" Canova and Quatremère de Quincy, Il Carteggio Canova-Quatremère de Quincy, 1785-1822 90.

[24] Like other Canova works, *Penitent Magdalene* has a long and complicated provenance. Canova worked on bozzetti for the sculpture as early as 1793, and in 1795 he made the gesso currently in Padova. Between 1794-1796 he worked on the marble. The statue then changed hands several times before Sommariva finally purchased it in March 1808. It is now in Museo di Sant'Agostino, Genova. A second copy of the work was made for Eugène Beauharnais in 1809 and is currently in the Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg. The marble version of *Penitent Magdalene* that is currently in the Villa Sommariva (now the Villa Carlotta) at Tremezzo is a copy of the original. For details of the sculpture and its history, see Mario Praz and Giuseppe Pavanello, L'Opera Completa del Canova 101; Boggero, "Una Rilettura Critica del Canova, la 'Maddalena Penitente'," 386-87; and Museo Correr and Museo Canoviano, Canova 254-59.

Sommariva received the work in 1808, much to his delight. In a letter dated March 28, 1808, he wrote to the artist, "[...] jugez de mon bonheur d'avoir pu me procurer deux statues de vous! La *Madeleine* et le *Jeune Apollon* cachés depuis trop long temps sont devenu ma proprieté. J'aime à croire que cette nouvelle vous fera le plus grand plaisir et vous confirmera l'opinion que vous devez avoir déja de moi sur desir ardent de posseder de vos ouvrages."

Shortly later, he wrote that the work was received with acclaim by the artistic community, well before its inclusion in the Salon. In a letter to Canova May 16, 1808, Sommariva wrote, "L'Apolline et la Madeleine enchantent tout ceux qui les voyent et il me serait impossible de vous rendre parfaitement les eloges que l'on fait de leur justement célèbre auteur. La Madeleine frappe surtout les connaisseurs et ils s'accordent tous à dire que jamais ciseau n'a produit un ouvrage qui réunise plus de perfections. Les amateurs, les artistes, tous sont dans l'enthousiasme d'une aussi belle chose: Monsieur Chaudent qui, comme vous savez, est le meilleur sculpteur de France, Monsieur Gérard qui tient un rang distingué parmi les meilleurs peintres modernes, d'autres artistes très distingués egalement admirent vos deux ouvrages mais ils sont fous, si je puis me servir de cette expression, de la Madeleine." Both Sommariva letters are cited in Fernando Mazzocca, "G. B. Sommariva o il Borghese Mecenate: Il 'Cabinet' Neoclassico di Parigi, la Galleria Romantica di Tremezzo," Itinerari 2.145-293 (1981): 236 and 237, respectively.

frequent contributor to the Salon, he was convinced easily by Vivant Denon to add *Penitent Magdalene* to the other three Canova's sculptures on view in 1808.[25]

Of the four works exhibited at the Salon, *Madame Mère* was the most widely applauded—perhaps because no one dared criticize the representation of the Emperor's mother.[26] *Hebe* and *Cupid and Psyche* received mixed criticism, but it was *Penitent Magdalene* that undoubtedly inspired the most indignation. Despites the public's fascination with the work, artists and critics were more measured and many once again were irked at the attention a foreign artist received. One writer, at least, took the addition of these foreign works to the Salon as a mark of deference to Paris' position as "the Metropolis of Europe, the center of glory of the arts and culture." Since the city had attained that position, there "remained no famous artist who could remain a foreigner, and who did not owe the city the homage of his works and success."[27]

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[25] Letter from Sommariva to Canova, dated October12, 1808. "Vous savez combien je m'estime heureux de posséder votre Madeleine qui fait de plus l'admiration de tous ceux qui la voient et qui va bientôt la faire de tout Paris puisqu'elle sera à l'Exposition dont l'ouverture aura lieu le 14 de ce mois. Monsieur Denon Directeur Général des Musées me la demandée avec l'instance et j'ai cru faire une chose qui vous serait agréable. Ce sera me disait Monsieur Denon, un sujet d'émulation pour les sculpteurs français qui admirent ce chef d'œuvre. L'enthousiasme que produira votre Madeleine n'ajoutera rien, je ne le sais, Monsieur, à votre grande réputation, mais il n'en sera pas moins pour moi une nouvelle jouissance, car je ne doute pas que vous ne me rendiez la justice de me compter au nombre des personnes qui aiment le plus et vous et vos divin ouvrage et tout ce qui puit vous être agréable. Je vous rendrai compte, Monsieur, de l'effet qu'aura produit la Madeleine qui au reste est déjà très connue puisque tous les artistes de Paris et un grand nombre d'amateurs et de curieux sont venus la voir chez moi."

After Canova's works had been on display at the Salon, on December 8, 1808, Sommariva wrote to Canova: "Voici comment les artistes les plus distingués classent vos ouvrages: d'abord la Madeleine ensuite S.A.I et R. Madame mère de S.M. L'Empereur et Roi, après cela la groupe d'Amour et Psiche et puis l'Hébé." Mazzocca, "G. B. Sommariva o il Borghese Mecenate: Il 'Cabinet' Neoclassico di Parigi, la Galleria Romantica di Tremezzo," 238 and 239, respectively.

[26] Two positive critiques include E. Q. Visconti, "[La Statue de S.A.I. Madame, Par M. Canova]," Journal de l'Empire (Nov. 1, 1808): 2 and M.B., "Salon de 1808 -- N. XIX. sculptures (suite.)," Journal de l'Empire (Jan. 8, 1809): 1-4.

[27] "Elle [The grace of antiquity] forme le caractère essentiel de son talent, elle est le premier attrait qui frappe dans ses ouvrages, elle embellit même tous les autres avantages de cet habile sculpteur, dont la France s'honore de posseder et d'admirer les productions. Lorsque Paris est devenu la Mêtropole de l'Europe, le centre de la gloire des arts et des lumières, il n'est plus d'artiste célèbre qui piusse y paroitre

Others, however, were less inclined to see the exhibition of Canova's works as an homage to Paris. JD...Y, for instance, was irate that Canova stole the thunder from French artists. His was among the first reviews to be published after the opening of the Salon on October 14, 1808. JD...Y bitterly complained that a foreign artist should not receive so much attention when there were so many French artists who were far more important. Indeed, he suggested that by promoting Canova's work, the French were "depreciating [their] own riches."[28] JD...Y was particularly irritated by the way the public fawned over the *Magdalene*, lamenting the way the "crowd stopped in front of it, as if in front of a masterpiece." Their wonder could be attributed to the fact that they were duped by Canova's finishing techniques, for "the yellow tint of the marble even gives the statue the appearance of an antique that leads to favorable opinions from the amateurs and the curious." He continued:

> Magdalene is on her knees, sitting on her heels, the body bent with weakness and suffering, and holding in her hands a cross on which she sadly meditates. Her

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étranger, et qui ne lui doive l'hommage de ses ouvrages et de ses succès." Q.Z., "Salon de 1808. N. XIV. Sculpture," Gazette de France. 360 (27 Dec. 1808): 1458.

Please note that the original microfilm of this issue of the *Gazette de France*, which I looked at in the Bibliothèque Nationale de France, is missing the final two pages of the journal, pages 1459-1460. This error is repeated in other microfilms I have seen. According the staff at the BNF, the original of this journal is not available. The entire article, however, has been transcribed along with numerous other writings on the 1808 Salon in *Collection de pièces sur les beaux-arts (1673-1808), dite Collection Deloynes*. For the transcription of this article, including the missing pages, see Q.Z., "Exposition des ouvrages de peinture, sculpture, architecture et gravure des artistes vivants," Collection de pièces sur les beaux-arts (1673-1808), dite Collection Deloynes, ed. Bibliothèque Nationale (France). vol. 44, no.1146 (Paris: La Bibliothèque, 1980) 409-43.

[28] "Un sculpteur italien à qui l'on accorde une grande célebrité, et qui n'a point de rivaux à Rome, M. Canova, est dans l'usage, lors de l'exposition du salon, d'entrer en lice avec les sculpteurs français. Sans doute ils doivent être flattés qu'un artiste qui jouit d'une si brillante réputation, ambitionne l'honneur de placer parmi leurs ouvrages les productions de son ciseau; mais la reconnaissance qu'inspire cette marque d'estime est poussée beaucoup trop loin, lorsque pour élever un talent étranger, elle nous conduit à déprécier nos propres richesses. Que la politesse française, et si l'on veut la justice, nous fassent préconiser le mérite de M. Canova, rien de mieux! Mais en même-tems convenons qu'il est plusieurs de nos statuaires dont les productions, non seulement soutiennent avantageusement le parallèle avec les siennes, mais encore l'emportent sous beaucoup de rapports." J.D....Y, "Beaux-Arts. Salon de 1808," Journal des arts, des sciences, de littérature et de politique 10. Année. 2 Trim. (22 Octobre 1808): 426.

> posture, right down to the pained expression, resembles that of a reprimanded schoolgirl [...] If a French artist had composed a statue in this way, instead of the admiration it receives today, it would be the object of endless criticism. That head, it would be said, has a petty appearance; the pain it expresses is without nobility.— Its small size is disproportionate to the rest of the body. —But look at her right arm! Doesn't the shoulder look like it is separated from the body, or at the very least dislocated from its cavity? –And that narrow, caved-in chest, as though the author had used a young girl suffering from pulmonary tuberculosis as his model! –And those knees as big as the head! It is true that in a bent position they seem to increase in volume, but it is entirely out of proportion, counter to all plausibility that this increase would equal the size of her head. — And these hands, in which the palm is large and chubby? How short and mannered are the fingers that hold the cross! – And the general collapse of the body of this so-called Magdalene? Is it that of a women who has lived in a brilliant world, and who has obtained this grace, these elegant manners, this distinguished air that no conversion could erase? It is not religious austerity that we see here, but the ignoble weakness of a mendicant that begs alms from passersby.

The "only praise" of which the sculpture was worthy was the "grace and softness" Canova achieved—yet these, too, became a fault since they were "incompatible with the character of the subject and contrasted with the despondency in which Canova had represented Magdalene."[29]

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[29] "Cet artiste vient d'exposer une *Madeleine pénitente*, devant laquelle la foule s'arrête comme devant un chef-d'œuvre; la teinte jaunâtre du marbre donne même à cette statue une apparence d'antique qui prévient favorablement les amateurs et les curieux.

Madaleine est accroupie à genoux, assise sur ses talons, le corps courbé de faiblesse et de souffrance, et tenant en ses mains une croix sur laquelle elle médite tristement. Sa posture, à la douleur près, ressemble à celle d'une écolière que l'on a mis en pénitence, sa tête tombe sur sa poitrine, sa ceinture est une corde, et cette ceinture soutient un draperie grossière qui lui couvre les reins.

Si un élève français eût composé cette statue telle qu'elle est, au lieu de l'admiration qu'on lui prodigue aujourd'hui, elle serait un sujet d'interminables critiques.

Cette tête, dirait on, offre un caractère mesquin; la douleur qu'elle exprime est sans noblesse.—Sa petitesse est disproportionnée avec le corps. –Mais voyez son bras droit! L'epaule ne paraît elle pas séparée du corps, ou du moins déboitée de sa cavité?—Et cette poitrine étroite et rentrée en dedans, comme si l'auteur eût pris pour modèle une jeune fille poitrinaire! –Et ses genoux aussi gros que la tête! Il est vrai qu'ils sont dans une position raccourcie qui semble en augmenter le volume; mais il est contre toute proportion, contre tout vraisemblance que cette augementation aille jusqu'à égaler la grosseur de la tête. – Et ces mains dont la paulme est large et potelée? Comme les doigts en sont courts et maniérés en tenant cette croix! – Et l'affaissement général du corps de cette prétendue Madeleine? Est-il donc celui que peut éprouver une femme qui a vécu dans un monde brillant, et qui y a contracté cette grâce, cette élègance de manières, cet air distingué qu'aucune conversion ne peut fair perdre? Ce n'est pas le résultat d'une austérité religieuse que nous voyons ici, mais l'affaissement ignoble d'une mendiante qui implore la charité des passans?

Le seul éloge que l'on puisse donner en examinant cette statue, porte sur les contours qui la plupart sont d'une grâce et d'un moelleux achevé. Mais ces beautés ainsi placées deviennent un défaut: elles sont incompatibles avec le caractère du sujet, et contredisent l'état d'accablement dans lequel M.

The outright nationalistic fervor exhibited by JD...Y's critique prompted Quatremère to defend Canova's works. In a private letter to the artist on January 7, 1809, Quatremère suggested that criticism against the sculptor was incited largely by "jealous sculptors" who had stooped so far as to interfere with the press by insinuating that journalists should not praise the foreign artist or they would risk disrespecting the French sculptors themselves. Perhaps the artists were feeling insecure regarding the quality of the work they had presented at the Salon, for, Quatremère claimed, there was "nothing worth seeing" there. Despite the many paintings submitted, "few were either historic or even heroic, with the exception of the *Intervention of the Sabine Women* by David, which has been seen and re-seen for many years" (fig. 186). As for the sculptures that were submitted—those were hardly worthy of competition, for they were mediocre at best. Only the ancient objects merited comparison with Canova's works, and indeed, it was against those that Canova's sculptures were evaluated.[30]

Canova a représenté Madeleine. Il n'est pas naturel qu'une femme accablée par le jeûne et les macérations, conserve des formes aussi potélées.

Voilà tout ce que l'on dirait si l'auteur de cette statue était un français, et l'on dirait la vérité." J.D....Y, "Beaux-Arts. Salon de 1808," 427-28.

[30] Letter from Quatremère de Quincy to Canova, Jan. 7, 1809. "La verità è che, al mio parere, voi avete avuto in Parigi il più grande e segnalato incontro che si poteva pretendere. Applauso universale nel publico, e gelosia universale dagli artisti. Per il publico, ed io parlo del publico intendente, non vi potete figurar quanto siete stato gradito lodato ed applauso. È certo che in questa numerosissima Esposizione non s'è parlato, per quasi dire, d'altro che voi. Le opere di pittura, benché assai copiose, non hanno esibito un pezzo nuovo di grido: pochissimi quadri nel genere historico o sia eroico, fuor del quadro delle *Sabine* di David, già visto e rivisto da più anni a dietro. Quasi tutti gli quadri grandi sono stati di storia e di costume moderno, sì che i migliori pittori o disegnatori non hanno fatto in tal genere gran figura al parere degli intendenti; ed a dir il vero, non v'è stato un pezzo che abbia fermato il publico. Voi solo siete stato l'oggetto dell'attenzione universale. E non sarebbe gran gloria per voi d'aver superato l'opere di scultura esposte in rivalità colle vostre: fuor di due o tre pezzi, ben mediocri in sé stessi, il resto fu debolissimo. Non siete stato giudicato su questo paragone, ma bensì in confronto delli Antichi esposti nelle sale vicine; e veramente non vi convienne altro confronto." Canova and Quatremère de Quincy, Il Carteggio Canova-Quatremère de Quincy, 1785-1822 104-05.

Some critics, of course, disagreed with Quatremère, arguing instead that the Salon was one of the most brilliant that had been held. "Tout les amateurs des arts s'occupent avec empressement depuis deux mois du salon de peinture, l'un des plus brillans que l'on ait vu, et faire pour donner une haute idée du talent de nos artistes vivans." Ducray-Duminil, "Salon des tableaux," Petites affiches de Paris ou journal général d'annonces, d'indication et de correspondance, commercial et littéraire (Dec. 9, 1808): 5963.

Unfortunately, there was little either Canova or Quatremère could do to counteract the criticisms that prevailed. Quatremère advised his friend to "let it go," and try, instead, to take the criticisms as a sign of his vast superiority.[31] These consolations, however, were private, but other journalists did dare to suggest publicly that "base" jealousy had fueled the critical reaction to Canova's works.[32] Nonetheless, one critic all but negated his own defense of Canova by suggesting that subjecting foreign artists to harsh critique was nonetheless preferable to the French fashion of the previous century, where things were adored simply because they were *not* French![33] This critic exhibited a

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[31] Quatremère de Quincy consoled Canova about these criticisms, in a letter dated Jan. 7, 1809. "I vostri rivali, cioè scultori principalmente, hanno tentato tutti i modi di ribassarvi. Sul principio non parlavano delle vostre opere, e s'è passato un certo tempo prima che se divulgassi nel publico la fama del vostro nome. Poi doppo fatto il rumore che doveva succedere, se sono legati a far correre diverse critiche; nientemeno è andata crescendo sempre l'ammirazione publica. Allora si sono accordati a procurar d'impedir che se parlassi di voi nei giornali. La maggior parte dei giornalisti non ardiva parlar, per tema di dispiacer ai loro animi. La cosa è andata a tal segno, che molti pretendevano, che non si doveva lodar un forestiero per non far torto agli artisti francesi. Che volete, amico? Così è fatto il mondo. Lasciatel'andare, e rallegratevi che la cosa sia andata così perchè non v'è maggior segno della vostra gran superiorità." Canova and Quatremère de Quincy, Il Carteggio Canova-Quatremère de Quincy, 1785-1822 105.

[32] "Ce célèbre artiste italien, la gloire de la sculpture moderne, nous a montré par ses ouvrages qu'il n'est pas au dessous de sa grande réputation; une base jalousie a soulevé contre lui la critique, qui a voulu contester ses droits a l'admiration publique; mais la public l'a vengé de ses faibles rivaux, qui, malgré leurs clameurs, ne pouvaient nous faire accuser de l'ignorance qu'on doit supposer a ceux qui ne connaissent les talents de cet artiste." This author then continued, arguing that the French should be happy to have Canova's works grace the Salon. "Il serait heureux que M. Canova voulut embellir toutes nos expositions de quelques unes de ses chefs-d'œuvre; les petits déplaisirs qu'il occasionnerait a quelques uns individus seraient bien effacés par les applaudissements universels qu'il recevra toujours, parce qu'ils sont des a sou grand talent est la grand modestie." A.P., "Exposition des tableux en 1808," Collection de pièces sur les beaux-arts (1673-1808), dite Collection Deloynes, ed. Bibliothèque Nationale (France). vol. 44, no. 1144 (Paris: La Bibliothèque, 1980) 128-29 and 137-38, respectively.

Yet another critic attributed the criticisms to jealousy, and could not resist pointing out how the public had "taken their revenge on these weak rivals." "[I]l est impossible de concilier toutes les opinions; l'on est sur de trouver autant d'oppositions qu'il y a d'individus, surtout lors qu'il s'agit d'une exposition de tableaux le plus médiocre élève souvient son maitre et ses erreurs, et malheur a l'étranger qui veut mêler ses ouvrages avec les nôtres. Alors il s'établi une coalition formidable et le talent [couraisé?] d'y célèbre Canova, devra céder la palme de la victoire a quelques pesantes ou grêles compositions qu'il est de notre honneur national de soutenir...pauvres humains! Mais refaire nos têtes n'est pas aussi aisé que de refaire un tableau, et dompter nôtre amour-propre serait un victoire plus brillante que tous les travaux d'Hercule." "Journal des petites affiches de Paris. Salon d'exposition," Collection de pièces sur les beaux-arts (1673-1808), dite Collection Deloynes, ed. Bibliothèque Nationale (France). vol. 45, no. 1151 (Paris: La Bibliothèque, 1980) 5-6.

[33] "Les ouvrages exposé par le chevalier Canova, ont été jugés dans quelques journaux avec une rigueur que jusqu'à présent on n'avoit point eue, parmi nous, par les productions de l'Italie. Les auteurs de ces

self-consciously new nationalism in opposition to the trends of the previous century—and this new nationalism was at the core of many critics' reactions to Canova's work.

Part of the reaction of French artists against the inclusion of Canova in the Salon no doubt had to do with the fact that the Salon had traditionally been a space which asserted France's cultural prowess.[34] Although the French Revolution had opened the doors of the Salon to both non-Academicians and foreign artists, it nonetheless was seen by French artists and critics alike as a space in which *local* artists should be promoted. Its ability to shape the cultural landscape—mimicked and expanded, of course, by the power of the press—was meant to celebrate the nation's artistic riches. Canova, however talented, was a mere interloper. Reaction against Canova's sculptures in the Salon therefore reflected discomfort by Parisians that an outsider encroached on and threatened their cultural preeminence, particularly in the realm of sculpture, a medium in which they already felt insecure.

The Salon of 1808: *Penitent Magdalene,* Painterliness, and Medium Specificity

It was not simply Canova's status as a foreign artist that raised French critics' hackles, but his position as an *Italian* artist. Despite both countries' successes in the fine arts, tension nonetheless existed between them with respect to their artistic prowess.

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critiques sont des artistes français, que réclament pour leurs confrères ou pour eux-mêmes, une part de l'admiration qu'ils craignent de voir toute passer à l'étranger. S'il faut le dire, cette franchise de l'orgueil national me semble, malgré sa rudesse, préférable à l'enthousiasme vrai ou simulé, niais ou coupable des écrivains du siècle dernier pour tout ce qui n'étoit pas français. Cependant, comme c'est la première fois, peut-être, que l'on examine sans prévention, sans ménagement, des productions étrangères, il est juste d'en prévenir les lecteurs, afin qu'ils ne confondent point un jugement sévère, avec cette critique molle et adulatrice dont jouissent à leur tour les artistes et les auteurs nos compatriotes." M.B., "Beaux-Arts. Salon de 1808. N. XVIII. Sculpture. M. Canova," Journal de l'Empire (4 Janvier 1809): 1.

[34] For more on the Parisian Salon, see Dominique Lobstein, Les Salons au XIXe siècle: Paris, capitale des arts (Paris: Martinière, 2006).

Some of this no doubt was due to the fact that Italy had been considered the leading destination for aspiring artists for centuries. Not only did the churches and palaces contain ancient and Renaissance masterpieces, but excavations in the eighteenth century continued to add to the country's cultural riches. Italy's copious artistic treasures attracted tourists and artists alike, the latter of whom had their study of Italian art formalized through their attendance at the foreign academies. Even though by 1808 Napoleon's conquest of Italy had resulted in the translocation of countless Italian treasures to the Musée Napoleon, France's sense of insecurity lingered.[35] This was particularly palpable in the field of contemporary sculpture. Although it was commonplace in both France *and* Italy to suggest that Italian sculpture had fallen into a state of decadence, Canova nevertheless was considered the sole reinvigorator of sculpture; he lacked an obvious counterpart in France. Nonetheless, numerous critical accounts of Canova's *œuvre* in the Parisian journals insisted on asserting the quality of French sculptors, as we already have seen in G's critique in the *Gazette de France*. Yet, there was no singular French sculptor that stood out as Jacques-Louis David had done in the field of painting. Indeed, as a result of this disparity between media, French authors continually vaunted their own nation's riches in painting—a field where they could easily claim superiority over the Italians.[36]

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[35] Quatremère, for instance, was particularly critical of French sculptors. In his article on Canova's *Creugas*, he suggested that the deficiencies in French sculpture at the end of the eighteenth century were caused by a general lack of genius, as well as sculptors' tendencies to remain perpetual students, making only figural studies. Quatremère de Quincy, "Notice sur M. Canova, sur sa réputation, ses ouvrages, et sa statue du Pugilateur," 18-19.

[36] For Quatremère's critique of French sculptors, see notes 30 and 60.

Introduction of the theme of "painterliness" therefore manifested itself in criticism regarding Canova's sculptures in multiple ways.[37] Firstly, as we have seen, French authors introduced the differences between sculpture and painting in order to establish the superiority of French artists in the cultural competition between the Italy and France. Secondly, Canova's own incorporation of "mixed media" in two of the works on display in the Salon—*Penitent Magdalene* and *Hebe*—likewise led to intense discussion of the appropriateness of colored and bronzed accessories in sculpture. *Hebe*, for instance, wore a bronzed necklace and hair band, and held a golden cup and vase in her hands. Her yellowed skin and pink cheeks and lips, colored with tinted wax, reflected Canova's "artifice" and "were not worthy of sculpture's *gravitas*."[38] *Penitent Magdalene*, on the other hand, meditated upon Christ's death via the bronzed cross she held in her lap. The cross was the flashpoint for criticism of the sculpture. Victorin Fabre, writing for the *Mercure de France,* for instance, critiqued both Magdalene's yellowed skin as well as the "inappropriate" cross, which stood out unhappily from the rest of the sculpture. For Fabre, the colored flesh and bronze detracted from the illusion of *vraisemblance* that

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[37] Debates regarding the painterliness of Canova's sculpture are referenced by several authors, including Fernando Mazzocca in Museo Correr and Museo canoviano, Canova 254-56; Boggero, "Una Rilettura Critica del Canova, la 'Maddalena Penitente'," 390-91; and Naginski, "Canova's 'Penitent Magdalene': On Trauma's Prehistory," 67-68.

For an examination of the differences between painting and sculpture in Hegelian theory, see Barasch, Modern Theories of Art, 1: From Winckelmann to Baudelaire 192-99.

[38] "Le bandeau des cheveux de la Déesse [*Hebe*], l'aiguière et la coupe qu'elle teint dans ses mains, sont de couleur d'or; les parties nues de la statue sont imprégnées d'une préparation de soufre et de cire, qui leur donne une teinte jaunâtre et un reflet assez semblable à celui des corps demi-diaphanes, comme certaines partes de l'albâtre: cet encaustique a même sur quelques parties du visage une couleur légèrement rosée; et cependant les draperies conservent la blancheur naturelle du marbre.

Ce sont ces petits artifices que nous eussions pu remarquer plus tôt, en parlant de la Madeleine et du groupe de Psyché, que l'on reproche au chevalier Canova, comme peu dignes de la gravité de la statuaire. En admirant l'adresse et la discrétion avec laquelle il les emploie, on craint que l'abus n'en devienne un jour funeste. On invite les sculpteurs à repousser une prétendue innovation, qui n'est en effet que le raffinement du procédé ordinaire aux artistes des siècles de barbarie: toutes ces observations me semblent forte justes." M.B., "Beaux-Arts. Salon de 1808. N. XVIII. Sculpture. M. Canova," 3-4.

should have been created by marble alone. But the danger these mixed materials presented was not limited to *Penitent Magdalene,* for Fabre feared that other sculptors might imitate Canova's technique, and in so doing destroy "the noble simplicity, the frankness of composition, and even the very style which form the principal character of great works of sculpture."[39]

Other authors agreed that the *Magdalene* pushed the bounds of what was appropriate in sculptural practice. Charles Landon, for instance, published an illustrated account of works in the Salon which included all four of Canova's sculptures (fig. 187). Although he praised *Magdalene* for being "delicate," he lamented the overall form of the penitent. Sculpture, he wrote, "must be an austere art, composed solely of profiles. Each member and limb must be distinct, otherwise it lacks elegance. [...] Innovation is dangerous in an art with such fixed rules."[40] He too bemoaned Canova's use of colored

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[39] "M. Canova se sert avec beaucoup d'adresse d'un moyen peu usité, pour donner plus de douceur à ses chairs et les mieux distinguer des draperies. Il jaunit le marbre dans le nu, et lui laisse sa couleur naturelle dans les étoffes. Les avis peuvent être partagés sur cette espèce d'innovation, mais M. Canova est allé plus loin encore. On trouve dans ses statues d'autre accessoires représentés en couleur; telles sont la coupe d'or de son *Hébé*, la croix de roseau de sa *Madeleine*. Ces accessoires ainsi colorés, me semblent faire une disparate choquante avec le reste de la statue, ôter à la vraisemblance et à l'illusion de l'ensemble plus peut-être qu'ils n'ajoutent à la vérités des détails; et je crois qu'un tel usage, dont il serait si facile à des imitateurs maladroits d'abuser, pourrait, s'il venait un jour à s'établir, altérer enfin la noble simplicité, la franchise de compositions, et même de style qui doivent former toujours le principal caractère des grands ouvrages de sculpture." Fabre, "Salon de peinture. Huitième Article. Sculptures," 604.

[40] "C'est avec raison qu'on a loué la délicatesse du ciseau de M. Canova, la douceur de ses airs de têtes, ses formes coulantes et gracieuses. Sa Madeleine est un ouvrage charmant; et de légères incorrections n'empêchent pas de remarquer dans cette statue une grâce singulière qui n'appartient qu'à l'artiste.

La peinture admet plusieurs styles; mais la sculpture est un art austère, et n'en admet qu'un seul: le grand et le noble. Une statue se compose toute de profils: elle doit donc être développée. Si tous les membres ne sont distincts, s'ils se replient vers le tronc et semblent s'y attacher, le statuaire n'obtient qu'une masse dénuée d'élégance. Les détails pourront offrir une belle exécution; l'ensemble ne s'expliquera point a l'œil.

Voilà ce que nous nous permettrions de dire, non pas aux gens du monde, dont la plupart ne goûteraient peut-être pas cette opinion, mais à un jeune artiste, débutant dans la carrière. Voilà ce que M. Canova sait beaucoup mieux que nous; il l'a démontré par de nombreux ouvrages. Cependant il a semblé, dans quelques autre, vouloir introduire un genre moyen, fort agréable à la vérité sous les mains de cet habile artiste, mais qu'on ne peut proposer pour exemple. Toute innovation est dangereuse dans un art dont le goût et les principes sont irrévocablement fixés." C. P. Landon, Salon de 1808; Recueil de pièces

accessories and "superficial procedures" that might "seduce" young sculptors, and so strongly agreed with Fabre's critique from the *Mercure* that he even cited it in his own text.[41]

Discussion of the issue continued to rage in the press well into January 1809 and the closure of the Salon. "M. Ro" argued that despite the writings of Pliny and Pausanias, which promoted the use of colored marbles, varied tints "degraded the sublime art of line" and contrasted too strongly "with the immobility of the material."[42] M.B. was more blunt. He likewise felt Canova's artificial tactics were not "dignified" enough for the art of sculpture. Although he acknowledged that the ancients used silver and stone in their work, he also asked, "but were the ancients not also ignorant and barbaric?" For these critics, justifying Canova's work according to the practices of antiquity was somewhat

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choisies parmi les ouvrages de peinture et de sculpture exposés au Louvre le 14 Octobre 1808, et autres productions nouvelles et inédites de l'école française (Paris: C.P. Landon, 1808) vol. 2, 20.

[41] "Cependant l'extrême fini de quelques-unes des statues de M. Canova, joint à l'emploi de certains procédés superficiels qui en varient l'effet, leur prête, au premier aspect, un agrément particulier. Ce charme a du concilier à l'artiste les suffrages des gens du monde, et pourrait même séduire quelques jeunes sculpteurs impatiens d'obtenir des succès précoces. Osons les avertir du danger; osons dire que plus ces succès sont attrayants, plus ils seraient funestes à celui dont le talent n'est point encore mûri par l'étude sévère des anciens modèles. La sculpture française, à peine sortie de l'état de faiblesse où l'avait réduite la dépravation du goût, a besoin encore, pour se relever entièrement, d'une nourriture substantielle, régénératrice; et l'art moderne ne peut la puiser que dans les beaux restes de l'antiquité." Landon, Salon de 1808; recueil de pièces choisies parmi les ouvrages de peinture et de sculpture exposés au Louvre le 14 Octobre 1808, et autres productions nouvelles et inédites de l'école française vol. 1, 81-82, and 82, note 4 for the citation of Fabrin's article in the *Mercure*.

[42] "A tant de talents séducteurs, M. Canova joint le prestige du coloris; il donne une teinte aimable au marbre pour ses chairs, et ne laisse la couleur du minéral qu'aux seules draperies. Nous nous rangeons du côté de ceux qui ont blâmé ce genre de prestige, car, malgré ce qu'on disent, Pline, Pausanias et autres anciens sur la mélange des marbres de couleur et des mesures employés par quelques sculpteurs grecs, nous pensons que c'est dégrader l'art sublime du *trait*, que de distraire de l'admiration qui lui est due, en y joignant des couleurs. Le moyen, fut il employé avec la plus grande variété et la plus parfaite justesse de teintes, contraste trop avec l'immobilité de la matière pour pouvoir produire la moindre illusion. Si la peinture enchante par ses couleurs et se effets, c'est que ses mouvemens sont multipliés, et qu'enfin l'on ne cherche dans ses productions que le degré de vraisemblance qu'elle peut attendre." M. Ro, "Salon des tableaux par (M. Ro....) Journal des petites affiches de Paris. Duvet Duminil rédacteur," Collection de pièces sur les beaux-arts (1673-1808), dite Collection Deloynes, ed. Bibliothèque Nationale (France). vol. 44, no. 1149 (Paris: La Bibliothèque, 1980) 636-38.

opportunistic. Not only did Canova's techniques ruin sculpture's sense of "solidity" and "idea of the whole" by drawing undue attention to the work's individual parts, but coloring the surface of the marble spoiled both the effect of the white stone and created an unsettling illusion of reality. As M.B. wrote, "When Canova employs the palette of Titian in his work, in order to add both color and form to all the parts of the figure, the perfect imitation of those two properties only serve to render the absence of a third property [life] more vivid. The simulacra of men, in which nothing is missing but life, is a horrible object."[43]

M.B.'s anxiety about the hyper-realism of Canova's work was echoed in the writings of other critics throughout the artist's career. Charlotte Eaton, for instance, felt it was a form of "charlatanism," and objected to the practice of staining marble in a misguided attempt to achieve life. "If," she wrote, "however, this painting of statues was introduced in the vain attempt to create a nearer approach to living nature, the objects of

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[43]"Les anciens ont employé l'or, l'argent, les pierreries, la marqueterie dans quelques-unes de leurs statues de marbre. Les anciens n'ont-ils pas eu aussi leurs âges d'ignorance et leurs siècles d'un luxe barbare? Nous ne voyons pas cette bigarrure dans ceux de leurs plus beaux ouvrages que le temps a respectés; et quel elle s'y trouveroit, cette autorité ne sauroit prévaloir contre le bon sens et la raison.

À la vu d'un ouvrage de sculpture, nous nous figurons le sujet représenté sons un seul de ses rapports, celui de la solidité. Cette seule propriété, imitée plus ou moins parfaitement, suffit pour nous donner une idée distincte du sujet entier; et elle satisfait si bien notre esprit, qu'à peine nous nous apercevons de l'absence de toutes les autres.

Cependant, que par un soin imprudent l'artiste accorde à quelque partie de sa statue une de ces autres propriétés qui manquent à tout le reste, nous sommes frappés de la différence; et notre pensée, d'abord tout occupée d'un seul objet, prend un autre tour.

La blancheur du lin, si facilement imitée par la blancheur du marbre, nous fera songer à l'inimitable couleur de la chair. Le diadème, brillant d'or véritable, accusera la feinte impuissante de l'art à l'égard des cheveux. Et que le sculpteur égaré dans cette fausse voie n'espère pas s'en tirer en poursuivant: au bout est le terme fatal de l'art. Quand M. Canova lui-même emprunterait la palette du Titien, pour ajouter dans toutes les parties de ses figures la couleur à la forme, l'imitation parfaite de ses deux propriétés ne serviroit qu'à faire sentir plus vivement l'absence d'une troisième. Ces simulacres d'hommes, auxquels il ne manqueroit plus rien de la vie, seroient par cela seul un objet horrible. Sans doute M. Canova est loin, bien loin de cet excès de barbarie; cependant je ne crois pas que la teinte, assez forte, de carmin qu'il a donné à l'intérieur de la bouche de son Hébé, soit aux yeux de personne d'un effet agréable; et l'analogie est assez grande entre ce procédé et celui que nous venons de supposer, pour justifier les reproches ou du moins les craints des amis des arts." M.B., "Beaux-Arts. Salon de 1808. N. XVIII. Sculpture. M. Canova," 4.

sculpture seem to have been strangely mistaken and debased. Most certainly they do not consist in the close imitation of life; for, in that case, a common raree-show of wax-work would exceed the finest sculpture of Phidias."[44] Henry Matthews referred to it as "trickery and quackery,"[45] while Creuze de Lesser argued that "from the moment one admitted two colors into sculpture, one must admit them all." After seeing Canova's *Hebe* in his studio, he lamented that "the moment you show me a cup of gold, I find—with good reason—an all white mouth and all white eyes to be deformed."[46] Some critics felt the use of color was Canova's attempt "to impart to his statues an air of reality and of heightening their resemblance to nature by artificial means unconnected with the province of sculpture."[47] Carl Ludwig Fernow, the German critic who had railed against Canova's *Perseus*, thought the use of gilded ornaments could not even be justified by ancient practices. Ancient sculptures that were gilded were made to be encountered only in temples—never in other destinations. Certainly works meant to be viewed in museums

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[44] Eaton, Rome, in the Nineteenth Century; Containing a Complete Account of the Ruins of the Ancient City, the Remains of the Middle Ages, and the Monuments of Modern Times vol. 2, 301.

[45] "Again—there is a trickery and quackery in the finishing of Canova's statues, which is below the dignity of a sculptor. The marble is not left in its natural state—but it must be stained and polished to aid the effect. The other sculptors laugh at this, and well they may;—for these adventitious [*sic*] graces soon fade away, and are beside the purpose of sculpture, whose end was, and is, to represent *form* alone." Matthews, The Diary of an Invalid, Being the Journal of a Tour in Pursuit of Health, in Portugal, Italy, Switzerland, and France, in the Years 1817, 1818, and 1819 89.

[46] "Elle tient à la main une coupe dorée, idée que je n'approuve rien, quoique les anciens l'aient eue souvent. Du moment qu'on admet deux couleurs dans la sculpture, il faut les admettre toutes. Dès que vois me montrez une coup d'or, je trouve difforme et avec raison une bouche toute blanche, des yeux tout blancs: en un mot une seule couleur, ou toutes les couleurs." Creuze de Lesser, Voyage en Italie et en Sicile, fait en MDCCCI et MDCCCII (Paris: De l'Imprimerie de P. Didot l'ainé, 1806) 313.

[47] The anonymous writer of the New Monthly Magazine cited these criticisms, but ultimately defended Canova's work. "Canova has been blamed by some critics for endeavouring to impart to his statues an air of reality and of heightening their resemblance to nature by artificial means unconnected with the province of sculpture: namely by colouring the eye, lips &c, a practice quite unusual among modern sculptors. This, however, he manages with such delicacy, that it is scarcely perceptible, and if it do not, as many maintain, impart an additional charm to the statue, it is at least certain that Canova never suffers the colouring to obtrude so as to become offensive to the eye." "Memoir of Antonio Canova [with a Portrait]," The New Monthly Magazine and Universal Register 13. (Jan. 1, 1820): 71.

and private collections should not attempt to "dazzle by something brilliant"—such is the subtext of Fernow's criticism. Sculpture, instead, was meant to "to leave a more profound impression by fixing the attention of the spectator on what is solely the product of genius."[48] Fernow was particularly irritated by Canova's habit of tinting his sculpture as well, for such techniques seemed "expressly calculated to heighten the pleasure of the amateur, who is more susceptible of enthusiasm, and frequently measures the perfection of a work by the degree of satisfaction which it affords him."[49]

Quatremère, on the other hand, vigorously defended Canova's sculpting techniques in an article in the *Gazette Nationale, ou Le Moniteur Universel* precisely *because* they were rooted in his friend's deep understanding of antiquity.[50] Not only did

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[48] Regarding Canova's *Hebe*, Fernow wrote, "He has added gilded ornaments wherever he thought them appropriate. The zones and ribbon are gilded, and we have seen that the vases which the youthful goddess holds in her hands are also of metal. All connoisseurs will not approve of this method of Canova. The authority which he might derive from various statues of antiquity that were decorated with ornaments of a different nature from the substance of which they were made, loses much of its weight, if we consider that this practice was observed only with respect to statues placed in the temples of the gods, and that we never meet with it in those which had another destination. But, generally speaking, ought not far-fetched and trivial ornaments to be banished from an art, whose object is not so much to dazzle by something brilliant, as to leave a more profound impression by fixing the attention of the spectator on what is solely the product of genius." English citation from Carl Ludwig Fernow, "Account of the Life and Works of M. Canova, the Celebrated Italian Sculptor," The Monthly Magazine, or, British Register XXIV.161 (September 1, 1807): 153.

[49] "Canova strives, by the kind of polish which he gives to his works, to produce in the spectator an impression corresponding with that which the subject of his compositions ought to inspire. He gives to the marble the appearance of a soft and delicate substance, and when it has received the last polish, by means of the pumice-stone, he makes use of a mordant, to diminish its whiteness, and to give it somewhat of a yellowish tint. The connoisseurs who love to find in a statue the beauty of the form designed with the utmost possible purity, do not approve of this process, by which, it would seem to be impaired; but it is expressly calculated to heighten the pleasure of the amateur, who is more susceptible of enthusiasm, and frequently measures the perfection of a work by the degree of satisfaction which it affords him." English translation from Carl Ludwig Fernow, "Account of the Life and Works of M. Canova, the Celebrated Italian Sculptor," The Monthly Magazine, or, British Register XXIV.160 (August 1, 1807): 47.

[50] Quatremère de Quincy, "Sur M. Canova et les quatre ouvrages qu'on voit de lui à l'exposition publique de 1808: par M. Quatremère de Quinci [*Sic*]," 1429.

Quatremère's article was translated into Italian by Antonio Pochini and published in 1823 as part of the Biblioteca Canoviana. See Antoine-Chrysosthôme Quatremère de Quincy, "Del Signor Quatremère de'Quincy, sul Canova e sulle sue Quattro Statue che si Vedono all'Esposizione Pubblica nel Museo di Parigi (1808). Traduzione Italiana di Antonio Pochini," trans. Antonio Pochini, Biblioteca Canoviana, ossia Raccolta delle Migliori Prose, e de' Più Scelti Componimenti Poetici sulla Vita, sulle Opere ed in Morte di

Quatremère marvel at Canova's fertile imagination, "great number of inventions" and "lively and deep sentiment,"[51] but he also defended Canova's use of mixed media by arguing his artistic practice was true to the methods used by the ancients.[52] For

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Antonio Canova, eds. Arnaldo Bruni, Manlio Pastore Stocchi and Gianni Venturi, vol. 1, I Testi (Bassano del Grappa: Istituto di ricerca per gli studi su Canova e il neoclassicismo, 2005) vol. 1, 142-62.

In a letter to Canova dated Jan. 7, 1809, Quatremère mentions his article and suggests he would have been even more effusive in his praise if he had not been afraid of inciting further animosity towards Canova. By January 21, 1809, Canova had addressed a letter to Quatremère thanking him for the generosity of his remarks. See Canova and Quatremère de Quincy, Il Carteggio Canova-Quatremère de Quincy, 1785-1822 105 and 107, respectively.

There was one other public defense of Canova's use of color in the Parisian journals that I have come across. "A.P" argued that it was foolish to criticize such small details in the face of overall beautiful results. "L'on critique des tons differens que cet artiste donne a ses marbres. En Italie on n'a pas pensé a faire de si [mincieuses?] remarques que sont de si petits details a coté de si beaux resultats? D'ailleurs, le but de la sculpture ainsi que de la peinture est d'approcher le plus qu'il est possible de l'imitation exacte de la nature. L'artiste est le maître d'employer tous les moyens qui le connaissent au but qu'il se propose et s'il reussi la critique est insignificante." A.P., "Exposition Des Tableux en 1808," 136-37.

Years later, Henri de Latouche likewise defended Canova's coloring techniques. De Latouche denied that Canova used any techniques other than the chisel and a little bit of encaustic for imitating soft flesh, and justified Canova's technique by referring to the working practices of the ancient Greeks. "Ses ennemis lui ont reproché d'avoir employé des moyens artificiels et quelques ressources de charlatanisme pour faire acquérir à ses marbres une couleur plus harmonieuse, et donne plus de *morbidesse* à ses chairs. Le plus puissant charme dont il ait usé pour séduire était le secret de son ciseau; ses autres moyens, il n'en jamais fait mystère. On sait qu'afin de prêter à des ouvrages récents cette teinte favorable de la vétusté, il employait une encaustique dont il a revêtu quelques-unes de ses statues. On pense que l'Apollon, la Vénus, l'Antinoüs antiques, qui nous ravissent par le moëlleux des contours, ont reçu autrefois une préparation factice: plusieurs écrivains, entre autres Pline, nous ont laissé l'assurance que Praxitèle confiait à Nicias le soin de donner à ses ouvrages une égalité de couleur plus favorable et plus douce. Phidias a employé l'ivoire et l'or: qui a jamais pensé à faire une accusation contre lui?" de Latouche and Réveil, Œuvre de Canova, recueil de gravures d'après ses statues et ses bas-reliefs 18.

[51] "M. Canova, ainsi que je cherchais à le faire entendre, est un des artistes modernes les plus fèconds qu'il y ait eu. Chacun de ses ouvrages est le produit d'une imagination facile et d'une rare habilité qui ne se consume pas sur un seul morceau, mais qui s'étend avec des succès divers sur un grand nombre d'inventions. Dominé par un sentiment vif et profond, il joint à cette passion qui enfante d'heureuses idées, une facilité merveilleuse pour en réaliser l'imagine. Infatigabile dans le travail, il passe incessament d'un sujet à un autre, et, ce qui peut déplaire dans une de ses statues, c'est ordinairement par une autre statue qu'il le corrige. Les ouvrages qu'il a déjà mis au jour feraient le patrimoine de huit ou dix sculpteurs du siècle dernier." Quatremère de Quincy, "Sur M. Canova et les quatre ouvrages qu'on voit de lui à l'exposition publique de 1808: par M. Quatremère de Quinci [*Sic*]," 1428.

[52] "Quelques-uns se sont recriés sur l'emploi que M. Canova a fait d'un peu de dorure dans l'enjolivement de la ceinture de son Hebé, et sur l'application du métal doré à quelques-uns de ses accessoires. Cette critique ne peut être faite sérieusement que par des personnes peu versées dans la connaissance historique de la sculpture antique, ou qui ne se sont formé l'idée de toutes les variétés que par un petit nombre de marbres. L'habitude d'introduire soit des couleurs, soit des matieres diverses dans les statues, fait une des habitudes favorites de l'antiquité. S'il le fallait, on prouverait que loin de ramener l'art vers le mauvais goût des tems barbares; cet essai de M. Canova le rapproche au contraire, et de la manière et de ertemens pratiqués par les maîtres des plus beaux siècles de la Grèce. Sans doutes, et on l'avouera sans peine, ce n'est pas par-là que le statuaire doit ambitionner le don de plaire. Si beaucoup de marbres antiques portent encore des marques d'une parure étrangère à leur matière, si la Vénus de Médecis, par exemple, eut les

Quatremère, unlike Landon, M. Ro, and M.B., it was a thrill to see ancient techniques manifested in contemporary sculptural practice. No doubt this was due, in part, to Quatremère's thirty-some year interest in the use of polychromy in antiquity. Indeed, in 1804, after he had been elected a member of the Institut de France, he gave a series of lectures on the subject, and in 1815 published an illustrated treatise, *Le Jupiter Olympien,* on polychromy (fig. 188).[53] In his defense of Canova, Quatremère was, in part, simply building on ideas he had already discussed at the Institut. Not only, therefore, was he defending the way connoisseurship—*his* connoisseurship—could positively impact sculptural practice, but Quatremère also felt that employment of these techniques truly improved Canova's work. Was it not proof enough of their success that, given the omission of Canova's works from the Salon's *livret* and the presentation of them without a label, "more than one man of taste" mistook the artist's sculptures for ancient works?[54]

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cheveux dorés, on n'en concluera point qu'il faille imiter par-là l'antique. Mais si ces licenses qui peuvent être subordonnés au goût, sont autorisées par une multitude d'exemples, on en concluera, et que M. Canova a pu se les permettre dans un sujet léger, et que si on l'en blâme, ce ne doit pas étre sur-tout par les motifs qu'on a allégués." Quatremère de Quincy, "Sur M. Canova et les quatre ouvrages qu'on voit de lui à l'exposition publique de 1808: par M. Quatremère de Quinci [*Sic*]," 1429.

[53] See Antoine-Chrysosthôme Quatremère de Quincy, Le Jupiter olympien, ou, l'art de la sculpture antique considéré sous un nouveau point de vue (Paris: De Bure Frères libraires du Roi et de la Bibliothèque du Roi, 1815). For more on Quatemère's interest in polychromy, see Yvonne Luke, Quatremère de Quincy's Role in the Revival of Polychromy in Sculpture (Leeds: Centre for the Study of Sculpture, Henry Moore Institute, 1996).

[54] "Ces morceaux, ayant paru la plupart sans nom d'artiste, et le livret n'en ayant pas donné de mention, leur premier effet a été de faire croire a beaucoup de spectateurs qu'on avait mêlé des ouvrages antiques aux productions modernes. Je connais plus d'un homme de goût qui a partagé cette erreur et après qu'elle eût dissipée par la notoriété publique, son souvenir na pas laissé d'en perpétuer l'illusion." Quatremère de Quincy, "Sur M. Canova et les quatre ouvrages qu'on voit de lui à l'exposition publique de 1808: par M. Quatremère de Quinci [*Sic*]," 1428-29.

Q.Z. also agreed that the work would withstand comparison with sculptures from antiquity. "Il est douteux que la sculpture moderne ait a lui opposer un ouvrage aussi accompli, il est presque certain qu'il soutiendrait la comparaison avec les plus belles productions de l'antiquité." Q.Z., "Exposition des ouvrages de peinture, sculpture, architecture et gravure des artistes vivants," 420.

Despite the disparate views held by Landon, M.B., M.Ro and those of Quatremère, at the heart of each of their discussions, however, lay the question of medium specificity. Since sculpture revolved around the careful removal of layers of marble, adding decorative components to that excised shell seemed to counter the subtractive nature of the medium. Each of these writers, therefore, was tackling the question: what is the true province of sculpture? Strong planes? Forceful contours? Purity of material? What happened to a work of sculpture when an artist deviated from the medium's ideals by abandoning strong outlines and a singular point of view, or incorporating mixed media and colored washes? For the critics of this practice, there was undoubtedly an anxiety about the hyper-realism of Canova's work. The variety of media and the lurid sensationalism of the work reeked of low and vulgar entertainment. Polychromy threatened to put the art of sculpture on par with wax works, cheap anatomical displays, theater, fair shows, and the morgue. Canova's *Magdalene* and *Hebe* were exhibited precisely at the moment when those spectacles began to dominate the streets of Paris, and if the greatest sculptor of the era seemed willing to pander to "amateurs," in the context of the Musée Napoléon no less, what did that mean for the status of high art? How was it to maintain its dignity and status?

At the same time, how could the essence of the sculptural medium be reconciled with the era's new knowledge of antiquity and ancient sculptural practices? Erudition and knowledge of antiquity did not necessarily make an authentic or even successful work of art. These issues were extremely relevant in Paris since Quatremère was at the forefront of scholars who argued that polychromy was common in antiquity. Indeed, the tension between *authenticity* in artistic practice and the modern taste for purity and "whiteness"

raged throughout the century.[55] It seems appropriate that this argument took hold in Paris as early as 1808, for it resurrected the quarrel between the "ancients" and the "moderns" of the seventeenth century, but with a new focus.[56] Arguments over Canova's sculptural practice not only reflected the desire to understand how knowledge of antiquity could affect contemporary artistic production, but also how this knowledge could then be negotiated to accord with the taste of modern viewers.

Expression: The Painterly Aspects of Artistic Creation

Polychromy, despite its contentiousness, was a fairly clear cut issue. Modern sculptors could either embrace the trend, or—perhaps preferably to many critics—steer clear of the example set by Canova. Yet painterliness also manifested itself in Canova's work in yet another, much more subtle way. Quatremère, for instance, seized upon the artist's painterly sentiment, a rather nebulous attribute. In response to critiques over this aspect of the *Penitent Magdalene*, he confessed reluctantly, "I agree that there is the feeling of a painter in this work [...] Who is not to say that it is to this sentiment itself that Canova owes the grace which enchants all of his works, the softness of the pose, the kindness of physiology, the gracious movements, the soft forms and the flattering marble

[55] Jacques Ignace Hittorf (1792-1867) extensively researched the use of polychromy in antiquity, which he examined in his 1851 *Restitution du temple d'Empédocle à Sélinonte, ou l'architecture polychrome chez les Grecs*. See, for instance, Donald David Schneider, The Works and Doctrine of Jacques Ignace Hittorff, 1792-1867, 2 vols. (New York: Garland Pub., 1977) vol. 1, 197-229. For the debate on polychromy in England, see Ian Jenkins, Archaeologists & Aesthetes in the Sculpture Galleries of the British Museum 1800-1939 (London: Published for the Trustees of the British Museum by the British Museum Press, 1992), esp. chp 3, "Light, Color, Dirt," 41-55.

[56] Even in 1808 Quatremère argues that complaints by other writers about *Madame Mère* and other Canova works boil down to a dispute between the ancients and the moderns. Quatremère de Quincy, "Sur M. Canova et les quatre ouvrages qu'on voit de lui à l'exposition publique de 1808: par M. Quatremère de Quinci [*Sic*]," 1430.

work that distinguish him[...]?"[57] For Quatremère, although Canova's painterly qualities were imprecise, nothing more than a "feeling," they were nonetheless a positive attribute and did not negate the power of the sculptural medium. Rather, this painterliness was precisely the trait which made Canova's work so powerful; it was the very heart of his style, imbuing his sculptures with softness and grace. It was, also, interestingly, the key to his working practice. Quatremère described Canova's approach to sculpting the *Penitent Magdalene* in the same terms he may have used if the work had been a painting. For instance, he argued that there was no trace of mechanical imitation in Canova's approach to the *Penitent Magdalene*. That is, Canova did not copy or mechanically replicate himself as he moved from the model to the marble block. Rather, *Penitent Magdalene* was a work that proceeded purely from the artist's feeling. The final marble did not reveal Canova's working process and its laborious stages of production. Instead, "the marble itself seemed improvised," Quatremère wrote, "if it were possible to improvise statues in marble."[58]

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[57] "Quelques-uns ont encore fait à cette tête et à la manière dont elle est traitée, ainsi que les cheveux, le reproche d'affecter un peu le goût et l'harmonie de la couleur en peinture. J'accorderai qu'il y a un sentiment de peintre dans cet ouvrage, ce dont on ne s'étonne pas quand on sait que M. Canova est peintre aussi, et singulièrement porté aux charmes de l'harmonie, que j'ai bien de la peine à trouver de trop quelque part. Qui nous dira si ce n'est pas à ce sentiment-là même, que M. Canova doit cette grâce qui enchante dans tous ses ouvrages, cette mollesse de pose, cette amabilité de physionomie, ces mouvemens gracieux, ces formes moelleuses et ce travail flatteur du marbre qui le distingue et qu'on admire dans son groupe de l'Amour et Psyché? " Quatremère de Quincy, "Sur M. Canova et les quatre ouvrages qu'on voit de lui à l'exposition publique de 1808: par M. Quatremère de Quinci [*Sic*]," 1429.

Twenty-six years later Quatremère would be even more forceful, asserting confidently that Canova had the "instinct of a painter." "Il y avoit en effet chez lui, et dans le sentiment, soit de ses sculptures, soit de leurs compositions, une sorte d'instinct de peintre (qu'il était aussi), et dont son goût savait tirer, dans l'exécution de sa sculpture, un charme qui lui fut particulier." Quatremère de Quincy, Canova et ses ouvrages; ou, mémoires historiques sur la vie et les travaux de célèbre artiste 134.

[58] "Un rare mérite qui a frappé d'abord dans ses statues, est l'habilité avec laquelle les marbres en sont travaillés. Et par là, il ne faut point entendre ce travail mécanique qui se borne au maniement de l'outil. De simples ouvriers peuvent l'acquérir. Le travail de M. Canova, est celui qui procede du sentiment. On en admire les résultats; on n'en découvre point la trace. Ses figures semblent crées plutôt que travaillées. Ce secret tient à la manière dont il les fait, et encore à ce qu'il les fait réellement et en entier lui-même, ce qui, depuis assez long-tems, n'est pas très habituel a tous les statuaires. Souvent on se borne à faire et à rendre

The result of Quatremère's willful denial of Canova's working process—for which it was well documented that the artist made small clay models and a plaster cast as prototypes for the final marble—was to align the seemingly improvised nature of Canova's carving with that of an artistic sketch (figs. 189-192).[59] Disengaged from the rote act of copying, born in the fury of invention and a fertile imagination, the final marble was the embodiment of an original, spontaneous act of creation. In fact, there was nothing Quatremère despised more than works that seemed to lose their dynamism in the transition from model to marble. In his defense of Canova's *Creugas* four years earlier, for instance, Quatremère began his article with a panegyric to the doctrine of imitation in which he blamed the study of the model for the poor quality of modern sculpture (particularly modern *French* sculpture). Not only did a sculptor run the risk of "mathematically copying" the model in the act of chiseling the work, but, more

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un modele, et ce modele, on le fait *traduire* en marbre par un autre, au moyens des procédés pratiques et géometriques que tout le monde connaît. L'auteur de l'ouvrage peu expérimenté dans le travail de la matière, ose quelquefois à peine retoucher sa statue, et un marbre bien poli, si l'on veut, prend la place du modele, et n'en est qu'un froide copie.

M. Canova, au contraire, finit peut ses modeles. Il n'y cherche que ce qu'on appelle les masses, les proportions, le mouvement et l'intention générale: il réserve tout son savoir, tout son sentiment, toute sa verve pour le marbre. Aussi ce marbre, qui reçoit de lui son existence toute entiere, si l'on peut dire, acquiert-il sous ses mains cette originalité, cette vie, cette grâce et cette empreinte des affections de son auteur, mérite que rien ne peut remplacer, mérite qui fait pardonner jusqu'aux défauts, parce que l'on aime à pardonner jusqu'aux défauts, parce que l'on aime à pardonner les fautes, quand c'est le sentiment qui les commet.

Certes, l'on voit sans peine qu'un marbre tel que celui de la Magdelaine Pénitente, n'est pas le travail d'un ouvrier payé pour copier mathématiquement un modele. C'est un morceau tout de sentiment, et le marbre en paraîtrait improvisé, s'il était possible d'improviser des statues en marbre." Quatremère de Quincy, "Sur M. Canova et les quatre ouvrages qu'on voit de lui à l'exposition publique de 1808: par M. Quatremère de Quinci [*Sic*]," 1429.

[59] Canova often made a full-size model of his works in plaster, which he pointed and transferred precisely to the marble block. Although the full-size plaster cast of *Penitent Magdalene* in Padova lacks the transfer marks, this work has been described as a model for the marble. It is possible that there was yet another version with transfer marks that has now been lost. In addition, it appears that Sommariva also owned a plaster cast of the *Magdalene*. It is impossible to know whether this work, now lost, was a model for the work, or a cast after the final marble. For more on the lost cast, see Fernando Mazzocca, "Giovanni Battista Sommariva Collezionista di Canova," Committenti, Mecenati, e Collezionisti di Canova, I, VI Settimana di Studi Canoviani (Bassano del Grappa: Istituto di Ricerca per gli Studi su Canova e il Neoclassicismo, 2008) 294.

dangerously, the artist also risked wasting the "knowledge," inventive "verve," and "sentiment" which were due to the final piece.[60]

An artist's capacity for invention, therefore, might become stale if wasted on the model. Canova, however, maintained an improvisational approach both to the final marble and in the original conception of the work, which Quatremère argued arose when the "naive idea of a penitent virgin in the desert seized his [Canova's] imagination." Quatremère was also quick to argue that the subject had not been commissioned, but rather, that Canova had seen "an interesting motif of expression, abandon and truth: in a few days, these became his model, and then the model was converted into marble."[61]

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[60] In his critique of modern sculpture, Quatremère divided sculptors into three classes based on their manner of production— those masters who studied ancient statues the same way they studied nature (such as Donatello, Ghiberti, Cellini); those who were independent of the antique and simply geniuses in their own right (Michelangelo, Bernini, and Puget), and those that study the model—whose works are so pitiful he will not even deign to name them. Quatremère de Quincy, "Notice sur M. Canova, sur sa réputation, ses ouvrages, et sa statue du Pugilateur," 8-10. In the same article, he also critiques French sculptors for their propensity to rely on the model. See note 35.

In a private letter to Canova, dated April 1, 1807, Quatremère reinforced his disdain for sculptors that relied heavily on models and modelling, for their work seemed to be nothing more than studies of anatomy, which "extinguish all art." "In Parigi non si fa scoltura (per quasi dire), ma sempre si fanno studi di scoltura: e questa miserabile usanza di ridurre l'arte allo studio esanima ed estingue l'arte. Così penso, ed anche ho scritto, sopra questo punto; ma non ho pubblicato nè questo scritto nè molti altri, perchè viviamo in un tempo che i spiriti non attendono a niente, tenuti che sono da diverse passioni politiche. Da questa smania di statue, che sono degli *studi*, proviene una critica miserabilissima; e non v'è scultoraccio, che non creda studiar una gamba meglio di voi, che non siete scultor di gambe o di parte diverse, ma di statue ideale pensate e formate ed eseguite d'appresso un typo vostro. Non potete dunque che perdere nel porvi in giudizio qui con una sola figura, alla quale ciascuno oppone una sua studiata e stenata figura per molti anni. E quando dico: 'ma Canova fa quattro figure in marmo, mentre voi ne studiate una sola in creta o in gesso', rispondono, 'peggio per lui.'" See Canova and Quatremère de Quincy, Il Carteggio Canova-Quatremère de Quincy, 1785-1822 96-97.

Quatremère's general disdain for the model accords with his belief that the ideal was not simply the combination of beautiful parts, for nature could never obtain perfection in an individual example. See Antoine-Chrysosthôme Quatremère de Quincy, Sur l'idéal dans les arts du dessin, par M. Quatremère de Quincy (S.l.: n.d.) and Quatremère de Quincy, Essai sur la nature, le but et les moyens de l'imitation dans les beaux-arts.

[61] "On fait quelques critiques de cette figure, à laquelle on désirait, dit-on, plus de noblesse, surtout en pensant à ce que fut la célèbre pénitente appelée Magdelaine. Mais cette critique, qui porte sur le nom, me paraît mériter peu d'attention. Personne très- certainement n'avait commandé à M. Canova une statue de Magdelaine. L'idée naïve et simple d'une de ces vierges pénitentes du désert a saisi un jour son imagination: il y a vu un motif intéressant d'expression, d'abandon et de vérité: ce motif sera devenu en peu de jours un modèle, et le modèle lui ayant plu aura été converti en marbre. Qu'on appelle cette statue Magdelaine, Rosalie, Marie Egyptienne, qu'importe ?

Penitent Magdalene, therefore, was the physical manifestation of sentiment and sensibility in stone. Indebted to neither antiquity, nor life models, the work truly was an "original" creation that stemmed from three forces: Mary Magdalene's repentance, Canova's artistic imagination, and finally, his emotional sensibility and the way it was affected by the saint's despair. One might argue, in fact, that Quatremère's enthusiasm for Canova's "sentiment" and "improvisation" conflated the two parts of sculptural practice—invention and execution—rendering them a singular component. It also distanced the work from the doctrine of imitation; *Penitent Magdalene's* creation was not rooted in mimesis or the observation of nature. Instead, it was rooted in a more Romantic notion of creation, one which "brought into being" an "inchoate and only partly formed" sensation.[62] Somewhat ironically, Quatremère, one of the staunchest supporters of imitation and an avowed enemy of Romanticism, arguably became the first writer to align Canova's works with a proto-romantic sensibility.

Quatremère's insistence on *Penitent Magdalene's* originality, however, was patently false. That is, it may well be true that Canova arrived at the subject matter with no prodding on the part of a patron, and that he felt a rush of emotion that inspired the act of creation, but it is equally true that the representation of *Penitent Magdalene* was a powerful and popular one in the fine arts. Although there were obviously no predecessors

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Mais y a-t-il une expression touchante dans sa pose, une négligence habile dans la pauvreté de son ajustement, une pieuse décence dans sa nudité, un admirable verité dans les bras, les jambes, les pieds, un affection profonde, une douleur religieuse dans ce visage qui n'est plus de marbre et qui pleure? Tout le monde répondra oui. Tout le monde sera d'accord que ce morceau est l'ouvrage d'un sentiment exquis et d'une rare habilité." Quatremère de Quincy, "Sur M. Canova et les quatre ouvrages qu'on voit de lui à l'exposition publique de 1808: par M. Quatremère de Quinci [*Sic*]," 1429.

[62] Taylor, Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity 374.

Erika Naginski also touches on this aspect of the work. Examining Quatremère's description of the *Magdalene* from 1823, she points out that "the sculpture thus described is not sculpture but something akin to a miraculous revelation, which conveys to us that this little salon piece might well have been a portable cult object." Naginski, "Canova's 'Penitent Magdalene': On Trauma's Prehistory," 66.

for the subject to be found in the antiquities being excavated in Rome, in the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth centuries, Mary Magdalene was a popular subject for artists. Undoubtedly, the most famous sculptural representation was that of Donatello from 1454-55 (figs. 193-194). Composed of white poplar wood, the Magdalene stands in tattered clothing with her hands pressed together in prayer. The veins of the wood and the rich cognac polychromy dramatize her haggard and dirty state, while her limp locks merge seamlessly with her tattered clothing, rendering her desperation almost animalistic. So removed was Donatello's work from the neoclassical conception of ideal beauty and grace that when Herman Friedlander saw the sculpture in Florence in 1815 he found it "[...] shocking to the sight. A miserable skeleton, emaciated as if it had been long mouldering in the grave, wrapped up in rags and her long hair, presents a horrid idea of a disgusting heretic, without giving any idea of repentance or the operation of grace."[63]

Canova's depiction of the Magdalene could not be further from the example Donatello had provided (figs. 195-198). The change in medium alone presents a stark transformation in the image of the saint. The smoothness of marble, even tinted as it was, presents a luminous contrast to the cragged wooden sculpture. Likewise, the respective postures of the saint reflect a marked contrast in the conception of the work. While Donatello's *Magdalene* stands and beseeches the viewer with her hands held in prayer, Canova's *Magdalene* kneels and curves in on herself, burdened and isolated by the weight of her thoughts. She does not meet the beholder's eye, nor does she plead for forgiveness, meditating instead on her own existence. Although she is ostensibly near the end of her life, Canova's *Magdalene* is unblemished and youthful, in stark opposition to

[63] Friedländer, Views in Italy, During a Journey in the Years 1815-1816 42.

the hollowed skull that rests before her. Her eyes are swollen with tears, one of which tumbles down her cheek, and rests just above her half-opened lips. Her thighs compressed, she lists slightly to the left, ready to collapse on the ground. Although her hair too is long and tangled, it hangs on a back which is all smooth and naked flesh. The *Magdalene* is barely covered by the cloth that is held up by a rope knotted at her waist; it dips below her haunches in the rear, and threatens to reveal her breasts completely. Her hands rest lightly on her thighs, and in her open palms she holds the bronze cross that was the source of so much controversy. As she contemplates her innermost thoughts, Canova's *Magdalene* is a sensual and beautiful sight for the beholder, one that thematizes the very theme of expression in her melancholic form.

The sensuality exhibited by Canova's *Magdalene* may bear no resemblance to Donatello's sculpture, but it did bring to mind many of the paintings that depicted the penitent saint. In painting, the Magdalene was often represented as a forlorn beauty with a strong erotic charge. The most famous example, a work by Correggio, the *Penitent Magdalene Reading* (of which the original is now lost), was said to have set the mold for all future images of the penitent. Friedlander, for instance, who so disparaged Donatello's work, specifically notes that Donatello's version was emblematic of the way artists pictured Magdalene *prior* to Correggio's painting (fig. 199).[64] Recently, Francesco Boggero has suggested that even Canova's sculpture was modeled on this work. Indeed numerous visitors felt Canova had taken the theme from an Old Master painting[65]—

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[64] "Thus they imagined a Magdalene before the time of Correggio." Friedländer, Views in Italy, During a Journey in the Years 1815-1816 42.

[65] Boggero, "Una Rilettura Critica del Canova, la 'Maddalena Penitente'," 391.

Associations between the sculpture and paintings of *Penitent Magdalene* were so powerful that one visitor to Canova's studio wrote, "He [Canova] seemed surprised at my impassioned admiration of so early a work [*The Penitent Magdalene*]. I had it on my tongue to have asked him if the idea was not taken

although they did not necessarily specify which Old Master painting. After all, the penitent Magdalene was such a popular theme that it had been treated not only by Correggio, but also by Titian, Veronese, Caravaggio, and Annibale Carracci, as well by seventeenth-century French painters such as Charles le Brun, Philippe de Champaigne and Georges de la Tour. Sommariva himself, the collector who finally purchased Canova's marble, owned at least four paintings on the theme of Mary Magdalene, by Correggio, Guercino, Pordenone and Giulio Cesare Procaccini (figs. 200-203). It is true that in many of these paintings, Mary Magdalene is recumbent, weeping over the cross and skull, often in a semi-nude state. Yet despite superficial similarities between these paintings and Canova's sculpture, the painting the work *most* resembles is that by Canova himself, who frequently explored the composition of his sculptures in oil paintings as well as clay models (fig. 204).[66] Although the work is known to us only through a recently discovered copy by Canova's trusty housekeeper, Luigia Giuli, Canova's

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from a picture by an old master, in the same room in that gallery in Paris [in Sommariva's collection]; but I restrained myself, thinking the question indiscreet." See Medwin, "Canova. Leaves from the Autobiography of an Amateur," 372-73.

Frederica Brun also recorded an (imaginary?) conversation with the artist in his studio. "His [Canova's] Penitent Magdalen was, above all, his favourite. Another time he led me to this singular work, which I had often seen before, and appreciated according to my conviction. I stood with him before it in silence; and he, on this occasion a little piqued, said, "*Eh bene, non vi piace! – "Cher Canova, il me parait que vous avez là peint avec le Ciseau, comme Raphäel Mengs a souvent sculpté avec le Pinceau.*" He could not help laughing; and exclaimed, "*Per bacco, portrebb'essere che avreste ragione."* Frederica Brun, "Biography. Some Particulars of Antonio Canova. A Letter to Mr. F. Matthisson, from Mrs. Frederica Brun," The Literary Gazette, or Journal of Belles Lettres, Arts, Politics, &c. 334 (June 14, 1823): 380. This popular letter was reprinted and translated several times. See also Frederica Brun, "Lettera sul Canova, al Sig. F. Mattisson, di Mad. Brun," Antologia. Giornale di Scienze Lettere e Arti XII.XXXIV (Ottobre 1823): 113-18 and Frederica Brun, "Lettera della Signora Frederica Brun al Sig. F. Matthisson, Contenente alcuni Aneddoti intorno a Canova ed Alle Sue Opere," Giornale di Scienze Lettere ed Arti per la Sicilia sotto gli Auspici di S. E. Il Direttore Generale di Polizia ecc. ecc. V.II (1824): 200-06.

Later in the nineteenth century, one French critic suggested Canova's sculpture was outright plagiarism, and that he had taken his inspiration from Carle Vanloo. See "Les Artistes Plagiaires. Canova, Vanloo," Journal des artistes XII année. 1 vol. 2 (14 Jan. 1838): 17-19.

[66]For more on Canova's painting of the subject, see Antonello Cesareo, "'Un Saggio Sì Bello delle Sue Mani': Luigia Giuli, Canova e una *Maddalena*," Neoclassico; Semestral di Arte e Cultura 22 (2002), 32-40.

painting bears great similarity to one of his first clay models for the sculpture. Hands clasped together, Magdalene looks down in prayer, hair tumbling over one shoulder, with her dark drapery standing out against the whiteness of her flesh.

The wealth of possible pictorial sources for Canova's sculpture therefore added to the association between the work of art and "painterliness." This was not simply because of the subject matter of the work, however, but because representations of the penitent Magdalene—no matter what their form—were imbued with emotional intensity. Images of the repentant saint, after all, depicted her during the thirty-year period of atonement in which she wandered the wilderness in the south of France.[67] Having abandoned all her worldly possessions, she was reduced to dirty rags and unkempt hair. She fasted, self-flagellated herself, and meditated upon Christ's death—and perhaps her own—by contemplating the cross, the bible, and the unguent with which she anointed Christ's feet. Melancholy, despair, repentance (and sometimes desire) were all manifested in the figure of the saint. Often accompanied by a skull, she was a vivid call for viewers to contemplate their faith and their own mortality; her atonement was to be a model for their own.[68]

Historians who study the modern notion of selfhood often argue that the Protestant Reformation contributed to the affirmation of "ordinary life" and personal

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[67] For more on the traditional iconography associated with Mary Magdalene's atonement, see Franco Mormando, "Teaching the Faithful to Fly: Mary Magdalene and Peter in Baroque Italy," Saints & Sinners: Caravaggio & the Baroque Image, ed. Franco Mormando (Chestnut Hill, MA: McMullen Museum of Art; Distributed by the University of Chicago Press, 1999) 116-20.

[68] For the impact images of *Penitent Magdalene* had on viewers, see Pamela M. Jones, "The Power of Images: Paintings and Viewers in Caravaggio's Italy," Saints & Sinners: Caravaggio & the Baroque Image, ed. Franco Mormando (Chestnut Hill, MA: McMullen Museum of Art; Distributed by the University of Chicago Press, 1999) 38-41. For a general account of the impact works of art have on their viewers, see David Freedberg, The Power of Images: Studies in the History and Theory of Response (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989).

expression. By rejecting the notion that a mediator was required to bring an individual closer to God, the believer's personal commitment and expression were given a privileged position.[69] If we consider Canova's *Magdalene* in this light, the saint's repentance occurs through meditation on the nature of physical and spiritual life. This was a *private* penance, as opposed to a public service. Through her very inwardness, and her inner turning gaze, *Magdalene* connects directly to the divine. The subject of Magdalene therefore was provoked by, and further provokes, a belief in private emotional communication—emotional communication that occurred between *individuals*. The relationship forged between Magdalene and God was reflected in the relationship created between Magdalene and the beholder. Spectator and saint, therefore, were to experience the same remorse; the act of viewing was meant to generate behavior in the beholder that mimicked that of the penitent saint herself. The success of *Penitent Magdalene*, therefore, depended on the authenticity of the Magdalene's expression of repentance and the subsequent sympathy—and piety—it aroused in the viewer. Her representation was the pretext for the sympathetic projection of the beholder.

Like his predecessors, Canova had successfully captured Magdalene's wretched emotional state, and reviews of the work were awash with descriptions of the sculpture's expression.[70] Quatremère, for instance, applauded the "touching expression in her [*Penitent Magdalene's*] pose, a truth in her arms, legs and feet, and a religious pain in her

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[69] Taylor, Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity 211-18.

[70] The repeated use of the term "expression" has also been noted by Francesca Lui and Erika Naginski. See Lui, "Il Caso della Maddalena del Canova a Parigi: Riflessi Iconografici e Letterari in Età Romantica," 360 and Naginski, "Canova's 'Penitent Magdalene': On Trauma's Prehistory," 68.

For a brief survey of Canova works that inspire melancholy, see Mario Guderzo, "Come un Angelo Tristo: Il Sentimento del 'Nulla ad Ogni Istante' nella Rappresentazione di Antonio Canova," Il Settimo Splendore: La Modernità della Malinconia, ed. Giorgio Cortenova, 1. ed. (Venezia: Marsilio, 2007) 354-59.

face."[71] Vivant Denon likewise praised the pleasing sensation produced on viewers as a result of "the workmanship of the marble, the beautiful expression of the head, and the moving abandonment of the pose."[72] For Victorin Fabrin, "the head [was] a masterpiece of beauty, expression and grace,"[73] while A.P. thought her "a piece full of expression."[74] Q.Z. spoke of "the penetrating expression of the head,"[75] and Sommariva himself noted that "the work surpassed the antique, above all for her expression of moral pain."[76] Even M.B., who lambasted Canova for his use of the bronze cross and the *Magdalene's* lack of

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[71] See note 61 for the full citation. Quatremère de Quincy, "Sur M. Canova et les quatre ouvrages qu'on voit de lui à l'exposition publique de 1808: par M. Quatremère de Quinci [*Sic*]," 1429.

Some critics were offended by the way Magdalene's expression defined her face too sharply—rendering it too thin in comparison to the relative voluptuousness of her body, as Quatremère points out. "Je avouerai maintenant avec quelques critiques, que le sentiment de l'expression parait avoir porté l'artiste à trop atténuer le visage de sa figure, et qu'il pourrait y avoir un peu de désaccord entre les contours affilés, amenuisés si l'on peut dire de la tête, et les contours plus ressentis du reste du corps." Quatremère de Quincy, "Sur M. Canova et les quatre ouvrages qu'on voit de lui à l'exposition publique de 1808: par M. Quatremère de Quinci [*Sic*]," 1429.

[72] Letter from Vivant Denon to Canova, November 1, 1808. "Mr, Vos ouvrages sont heureusement arrivés à Paris pour l'exposition et je me félicite de pouvoir vous annoncer qu'ils ont été accueillis avec l'intérêt que votre beau talent inspire aux vrais connaisseurs. M. de Somariva a joint aux trois figures qui vous avez expédiées celle de la Madeleine qu'il possède et cette dernière a produit la sensation la plus agréable. Nos statuaires y ont admiré le précieux travail du marbre, la belle expression de la tête, e l'abandon touchant de la pose." As cited in Gérard Hubert, Les Sculpteurs Italiens en France sous la Révolution, l'Empire et la Restauration, 1790-1830 (Paris: E. de Boccard, 1964) 44.

[73] "La tête est un chef-d'œuvre de beauté, d'expression, et de grâce. Le mouvement général, celui des bras en particulier, la noblesse et la perfection des formes, la finesse, la douceur et le moëlleux du modelage, mais sur-tout cette physionomie si touchante, si vraie, si profondemente sentie, où la reverie des souvenirs semble mêler encore aux regrets pieux et passionnés, tout cela produit, à la première vue, une impression vague, indeterminée, mais forte, durable, et je ne sais quel charme de tristesse et de volupté nous y ramène toujours." Victorin Fabre, "Salon de Peinture. Huitième Article. Sculptures," Mercure de France, journal historique, politique et littéraire (Decembre 1808): 603.

[74] "Le plus apparent des ouvrages de cet excellent sculpteur, celui qui porte le plus eminemment le cachet de l'originalité, est sa Madeleine, morceau rempli d'expression, d'une execution savante et pleine de charme." A.P., "Exposition des tableux en 1808," 129.

[75]"[...] la tête est d'une expression pénétrante [...]." Q.Z., "Exposition des ouvrages de peinture, sculpture, architecture et gravure des artistes vivants," 419.

[76] Letter from Sommariva to Canova, December 12, 1809. "La di Lei Madalena forma sempre l'amirazione di tutti: non solo si dice, come M. Denon, ch'ella è il *nuovo Testamento*, ma si assicura che supera l'antico, massime per l'espressione del *dolor morale*. Sono poi soddisfatto di sentire, che l'appartamento, che gli ho consacrato a Lei sola, non le disdice, e che anzi ci dà il convenevole risalto." Mazzocca, "G. B. Sommariva o il Borghese Mecenate: Il 'Cabinet' Neoclassico di Parigi, la Galleria Romantica di Tremezzo," 246.

correct proportions, grudgingly admitted that "the exaggerated length of her palms might be used here as a mode of expression."[77]

Although in the seventeenth century Mary Magdalene's expressivity had been intended to arouse piety in the viewer, by the early nineteenth century, however, religious devotion was not on the forefront of viewers' minds. Indeed, despite all the attention that the expression of Canova's *Magdalene* received, none of the Salon critics were prompted to spiritual self-reflection. Instead, viewers contemplated *Penitent Magdalene's* expression purely from an aesthetic point of view. No doubt this was due, in part, to the very secular nature of the work's display in the Salon, and not in a church, as Quatremère had originally hoped. Indeed, the very nature of the Salon was intended to incite purely aesthetic reactions to works of art, whatever their subject matter, religious or otherwise. In addition, the Salon's position in the Musée Napoléon augmented the aestheticization of these works of art. After all, much of the project of the Musée Napoléon was the desacralization of art objects, composed as it was of masterpieces seized from various European nations.[78] Paintings such as Raphael's *Transfiguration* (1517) were torn from their altarpieces and soon lost their original devotional function. At the same time, in the 1808 Salon *Penitent Magdalene* found itself among numerous works of art that had religious themes, such as Pierre-Jèrome Lordon's painting, *The Last Communion of Atala*

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[77] "De même, la longueur exagérée des paumes des mains est peut-être employée ici comme moyen d'expression." M.B., "Beaux-Arts. Salon de 1808. N. XVIII. Sculpture. M. Canova," 2.

[78] The collection of works of art in the Musée Napoleon was also alluded to in a very nationalistic poem about the Salon of 1808, which celebrated Napoleon's conquests and his role as emperor. Certain verses, for instance, were quite explicit. "[...] Mais pour lui c'étoit peu de rasseoir une empire: /Le fruit de ses exploits enrichit nos remparts./Il dit, et dans nos murs Rome aussitôt respire, /Et Lutece à son tour est le temples des arts./ Sa voix, qui commanda toujours à la victoire, /Applaudit, encourage, enfante les talens, /Guide dans les sentiers qui menent à la gloire/Les enfans d'Apollon, les peintres, les savans [....]." "Ode. Sur l'ouverture du Salon de peinture de 1808," Petites affiches de Paris ou journal général d'annonces, d'indication et de correspondance, commercial et littéraire 3347 (11 Novembre 1808): 5515.

(bought, interestingly enough, by Sommariva and displayed eventually near a cast of Canova's *Penitent Magdalene* in the Villa Sommariva at Tremezzo) (fig. 205).[79] Lordon's painting was simply one work among many at the 1808 Salon that united beauty and spirituality in a fundamentally modern manner, one which had no devotional purpose.

Critics contemplating *Penitent Magdalene* therefore linked their interest in the sculpture's expression with larger aesthetic issues, rather than personal religious concerns. Once again, the question of medium specificity was raised. M.B. for instance, pondered the question at length. Even though he found Canova's sculpture noble and felt the "strong and well-found" expression "a merit" of the work, he could not refrain from asking: Was this type of expression really appropriate for a work of sculpture? Sculpture, he wrote:

> in general [...] rarely lends itself to the expression of extreme emotional states, in particular those that manifest themselves in a real disorder of the body. The Saint's corporal movement is admirable. But this pain, so touching and well-expressed, the pose of this figure that is collapsed upon herself with such truthfulness—are these really proper subjects for an art form especially dedicated to the imitation of beautiful forms? I think not.

For M.B., Canova's attempt to render Magdalene's desperation breached the boundaries of correctness by threatening to ruin her beauty—beauty that should have been the real subject of the sculpture. Beauty and commitment to truthfulness, or, the *vrai*, therefore had the potential to be at odds with one another if the "truth" that the artist wanted to depict was neither idealized nor beautiful. Yet, despite this tension, the pain Canova

[79] Boggero, "Una Rilettura Critica del Canova, la 'Maddalena Penitente'," 391.

captured and his ability "to render the softness of skin" gave "each part of his works a particular interest that caught the eye of the spectator."[80]

Another author too could not help noticing that Canova seemed to have proved that "expression carried to its greatest extreme can produce on the spectator a very great impression, without the help of correct forms or of anything that constitutes to our mind a beautiful work of sculpture." Canova's work, after all, lacked "corrects forms [...], happy effects of line, or in fact anything characterizing a Greek style," yet, it was still the work that "made the greatest impression—without a doubt" on viewers.[81]

Only one respondent—an Italian, Saverio Scrofani—felt that Canova had not betrayed his medium. Scrofani argued that in *both* painting and sculpture, composition and expression could not be distinguished from the action of the work.[82] Canova, he felt,

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[80] "Je vois bien la charpente de la tête un peu grêle, mais je ne trouve pas pour cela la figure sans noblesse; il me semble, au contraire, que dans l'action donnée d'une femme pleurant, il était impossible à la sculpture d'allier plus heureusement et dans un mesure plus convenable, la beauté et la vérité. En général, cet art se prête peu à l'expression des affections vives, de celles sur-tout qui se manifestent par un désordre réel dans les organes. Le mouvement du corps de la Sainte est admirable. Mais cette douleur si touchante et si bien exprimée, la pose de cette figure affaissée sur elle-même avec tant de vérité, sont-elles un sujet bien propre à l'art spécialement consacré à l'imitation des belles formes? Je ne le pense pas. Néanmoins tout cela convenait à un sculpteur extraordinairement habile à rendre la morbidesse des chairs, et qui a un intérêt particulier à rapprocher toutes les parties de ses ouvrages de l'œil du spectateur. En admettant aussi que la recherche de l'expression nuit presque toujours à l'élévation du style, il faut reconnoître que l'expression forte et bien trouvée est un mérite, un mérite très-considérable, alors qu'il est porté au degré ou nous le voyons ici." M.B., "Beaux-Arts. Salon de 1808. N. XVIII. Sculpture. M. Canova," 2-3.

[81] "Celui de tous ceux qu'il a exposés qui a produit sur les spectateurs la plus forte impression, est, sans contredit, sa *Madeleine pénitente*, par la puissance et la vérité de son expression. Il ne faut pas chercher dans cette figure la corrections de formes, des effets beaux de lignes, ni enfin rien de ce qui caractérise le style grec; on voit au contraire que dans ce bel ouvrage son auteur parait n'avoir cherché qu'a prouver que l'expression portée a son dernier période, peut produire sur le spectateur une très vive impression sans le secours de la correction des formes et de tous ce qui constitue dans nos idées un bel ouvrage en sculpture." Transcribed in "Salon de 1808. Journal de l'architecture, des arts libéraux et mécaniques, des science et de l'industrie," Collection de pièces sur les beaux-arts (1673-1808), dite Collection Deloynes, ed. Bibliothèque Nationale (France). vol. 45, no. 1157 (Paris: La Bibliothèque, 1980) 715-16.

[82] "Nella pittura e nella scultura, la composizione, e l'espressione non disguingonsi dall'azione; giacchè ben comporre od esprimere, tanto vale, quanto il dare a ciascuna figura (independentamente l'una dall'altra) un'azione opportuna ed unica all'assunto: e sono poi queste qualità medesime quelle che unite alla scelta delle proporzioni, e all'esattezza dell'esecuzione, constituiscono la sublimità dell'opera. Non v'ha per altro chi ignori che queste regole, comuni alle due citate arti belle, sono più alla scultura necessarie che alla

was a master at finding the proper action that fully captured the sculpture's expression.[83] Canova's works, far from revealing a deficiency in the sculptural medium, instead could be used to instruct *painters* whose talents were inferior to his own.[84] As for the *Penitent Magdalene*, it was precisely the power of Magdalene's expression that contributed the most to her beauty and the spectator's interest. Scrofani too was astonished by the saint's expression, particularly her "languid eyes, the extremities of her fingers and a certain movement dispersed through her body." These attributes captured the liminal moment

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pittura, non avendo d'ordinario la prima per esprimersi, che una o due solo figure, quando che molte può la seconda aggregarne, (senza parlare della magia de'colori, e della prospettiva) che fanno risaltare maggiormente l'oggetto principale. Ma siccome il perito maestro non deve abbellir meno la natura nell'azione, che non fassi nella composizione e nell'espressione; così non può egli esprimer bene ciò che da lui non ben si compone, e mal è composto od espresso, chi mal si muove, non essendovi bellezza laddove non v'ha vita, nè vita dove non abbiavi movimento." Saverio Scrofani, Al Signor Cavaliere Ennio Quirino Visconti, Membro della Legion d'Onore e dell'Istituto di Francia, Lettere di Saverio Scrofani, Siciliano, Corrispondente della Classe di Storia del Medesimo Istituto, Sopra Alcuni Quadri della Galleria Giustiniani ed una Statua del Cavaliere Antonio Canova Esposta nel Museo Napoleone l'Anno 1808 (Paris: Torchi di Dondey-Dupre, 1809) 43-44. Also published in Pochini's 1823 *Biblioteca Canoviania*, now available as Saverio Scrofani, "Di Saverio Scrofani Siciliano ad Ennio Quirino Visconti sopra la Maddalena, Statue del Cav. Antonio Canova (Parigi 1809)," Biblioteca Canoviana, ossia Raccolta delle Migliori Prose, e de' più Scelti Componimenti Poetici sulla Vita, sulle Opere ed in Morte di Antonio Canova, eds. Arnaldo Bruni, Manlio Pastore Stocchi and Gianni Venturi, 4 vols. in 2, I Testi (Bassano del Grappa: Istituto di ricerca per gli studi su Canova e il neoclassicismo, 2005) vol. 4 in vol. 2, 129-44.

In a letter to Canova, dated October 16, 1809, Sommariva records his meeting with Scrofani, who presented him with a copy of his text on the *Magdalene*. He points out that the text is to be translated into French, as few people can read the Italian, and likewise hopes that Scrofani has spoken to Canova in detail about the *Magdalene* and its display in his home. See Mazzocca, "G. B. Sommariva o il Borghese Mecenate: Il 'Cabinet' Neoclassico di Parigi, la Galleria Romantica di Tremezzo," 246.

[83] Despite long consideration, Scrofani argued, there simply could be no other pose in which to depict the saint. "La positura della Maddalena è si semplice e adeguata, che anche dopo la più lunga e grave meditazione, è mestieri convenire non aver essa potuto posarsi altrimente." Scrofani, Al Signor Cavaliere Ennio Quirino Visconti, Membro della Legion d'Onore e dell'Istituto di Francia, Lettere di Saverio Scrofani, Siciliano, Corrispondente della Classe di Storia del Medesimo Istituto, Sopra Alcuni Quadri della Galleria Giustiniani ed una Statue del Cavaliere Antonio Canova Esposta nel Museo Napolione l'Anno 1808 46.

[84] For instance, Scrofani argued that Canova should sculpt the infamous character from Dante's *Inferno*, Count Ugolino, in order to point out that the painters who had thus far treated the subject had failed to capture the Count's proper expression. "L'Italia intera dovrebbe scongiurare il Canova a scolpire il Conte Ugolino, e insegnare così a tutti i pittori che han trattato sin ora questo soggetto l'espressione che han creduto mostrare e non han saputo concepire." Scrofani, Al Signor Cavaliere Ennio Quirino Visconti, Membro della Legion d'Onore e dell'Istituto di Francia, Lettere di Saverio Scrofani, Siciliano, Corrispondente della Classe di Storia del Medesimo Istituto, Sopra Alcuni Quadri della Galleria Giustiniani ed una Statue del Cavaliere Antonio Canova Esposta nel Museo Napolione l'Anno 1808 44, footnote 1.

"between life and death" which "increased the anxiety and consequently the pious delight of the spectator." Indeed, these very qualities, in combination with the fundamentally Christian nature of the work, allowed Canova's work to *surpass* the sculpture of the ancients, "correct lines" be damned. Magdalene's repentance for her sins and the hope of her salvation were the qualities that most distinguished her from Niobe and Laocoön, against whom, on the other hand, the spectator was sure the anger of the gods would never cease.[85]

Canova's *Penitent Magdalene*, therefore, incited an international debate on the role of expression in the sculptural medium. Although by the nineteenth century *Penitent*

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[85] "Per sì fatte ragioni immaginò lo scultore la sua Maddalena in quel passaggio ch'è tra la vita e la morte: e sì bene, che se gli occhi languidi, l'estremità delle dita, e un certo movimento sparso per tutto il corpo, non indicassero albergare tuttavia in essa un leggero alito di vita, la credereste estinta. Da ciò, cresce l'ansia e conseguentemente la pietosa dilettanza in chi l'osserva: anzi questo affetto medesimo diviene a poco a poco maggiore, quanto più l'idea della vicina morte allontanati, in veggendo com'ella sorregga la croce e fortemente le s'affida. Quale ingegno proporzionato a sì grande artifizio non fu dunque quello di questo artefice, nello scegliere per la sua statua quel momento d'azione che sì maravigliosamente contrasta tra il corpo e lo spirito, tra il morale ed il fisico, tra la bellezza, e il dolore! azione che tenendo il mezzo tra le due enunciate, anzi che disgustevole a mirarsi come in freddo cadavere, eccita un grato commovimento, nè passaggiero, ma continuo; avvegnachè sebbene osservisi la Maddalena gemente pe' rimorso delle sue colpe, non però vedesi disperata del perdono. Nè questi sentimenti medesimi di piacere e di pena risentir si possono all'aspetto della Niobe, e del Laocoonte, essendo per essi ben certo lo spettatore che d'irreparabil male colpiti, non mai si rallenterà contro essi l'ira degli dei: all'apposto della Maddalena che ognun prevede doversi ella accogliere, come da amante, amante si suole, non essendo infine pentirsi nell'uomo, e in Dio il perdonare, altro che amore. In oltre: ciò che in questa statua aggiunge merito a merito si è che quest'azione medesima la quale scorgesi nell'unione di tutte le sue parti prese insieme, conserva in ciascheduna separatamente il primo distintivo carattere dell'unità e della verità: e vieppiù grande, quanto più l'unità e la verità dell'espressione e dell'azione, unisconsi alla positura, ch'è l'altra parte principale della composizione: in fatti che saria di quelle se la positura contrastasse con esse loro?" Scrofani, Al Signor Cavaliere Ennio Quirino Visconti, Membro della Legion d'Onore e dell'Istituto di Francia, Lettere di Saverio Scrofani, Siciliano, Corrispondente della Classe di Storia del Medesimo Istituto, Sopra Alcuni Quadri della Galleria Giustiniani ed una Statue del Cavaliere Antonio Canova Esposta nel Museo Napolione l'Anno 1808 44-46.

The comparison with *Laocoön* is intruiguing. The sculpture was compared with Canova's *Magdalene* on a few other occasions, for *Magdalene* was seen as the only worthy successor of ancient sculpture in the modern era. Richard Chenevix, for instance, wrote, "Modern ages have produced hardly any specimens of it [excellent sculpture], and a long chasm interrupted its march; yet more passion, more of the philosophy of the soul is displayed in a single production of the nineteenth century than is generally to be met with in the statues of the ancients. [...] but the group of Laocoon alone can be compared with the Magdalene of Canova, for fable, life, and passion—yet the Magdalen is but a single figure." See Richard Chenevix, An Essay Upon National Character: Being an Inquiry into Some of the Principal Causes Which Contribute to Form and Modify the Characters of Nations in the State of Civilisation, 2 vols. (London: J. Duncan, 1832) vol. 1, 492.

Magdalene could no longer command the devotional engagement of its spectators, the sculpture's powerful expression did garner viewers' interest in broader aesthetic issues. Yet, even though critics were divided as to the proper role expression should have in sculpture, they all agreed it had a vivid impact on viewers. Indeed, expression was one of the few elements of art that was truly universal. That is, appreciating and understanding a work's expression did not depend on the beholder's connoisseurship skills—or lack therefore. As Q.Z. wrote, although "the distribution of groups, the combination of lines, the art of effects [...] demand the knowledge of art in order to be appreciated [...] expression is available to everyone; everyone may judge the truth, grace and ease of a pose with a little attention."[86]

Expression therefore transcended connoisseurship. Indeed, the interest in expression consistently reflected by writers and theoreticians of art in France signaled the development of a very different path of art history and art appreciation than that which was developing concurrently in Italy. Italian theoreticians relied on terminology culled from Renaissance sources in their consideration of modern art in order to better reinforce the link to their artistic heritage and develop a model for connoisseurship that was rooted in erudition and in the past. Whether inadvertently or unintentionally, these thinkers created a model for understanding art that was elitist in nature. The French, on the other

[86] "Nous sommes loin de penser que le public doive en croire sur parole les artistes, les amateurs et les critiques de profession; s'il est quelques parties de l'art dont le défait de pratique ou d'observation lui ôte absolument la connaissance, il en est plusieurs, et ce sont les principales, qu'il petit réellement sentir, analyser et juger, en ne suivant point de système, et en ne cherchant point à rendre des décisions brillantes, mais entièrement étrangère à l'art.[...]c'est à l'artiste ensuite à en tirer le parti le plus pittoresque, et c'est en cela qui consistent les véritables règles de la composition qui sont la distribution des grouppes, la combinaison des lignes, l'art des effets. Ces différens points, dont la réunion peut sans doute frapper vaguement tous les spectateurs, demandent, pour être appréciés, la connaissance de l'art. Il en est de même du dessin plus ou moins correct. Mais l'expression est à la portée de tout le monde; chacun peut juger aussi avec un peu d'attention, la vérité, la grâce, et la facilité de la pose." Q.Z., "Beaux-Arts. Expositions des ouvrages de peinture, sculpture, architecture et gravure des artistes vivans. No. 1er. Apperçu général," Gazette de France 287 (15 Oct. 1808): 1146.

hand, likewise turned to the well-established concept of expression, but with a very different end. In their consideration of the way expression affected spectators, they established a universal model for the appreciation of works of art. This, indeed, became one of the critical traits of modern art—and cemented the legacy that French art would have in the twentieth century. The 1808 Salon was therefore a seminal moment when expression took hold in the critical vocabulary. It was, however, only a beginning. The impact of *Magdalene's* expression was so powerful that even after the close of the Salon commentary on the work did not cease. Indeed, the work's placement in the home of Giambattista Sommariva only heightened spectators' reactions to the saint's expression, strengthening the role she played in the defining modern sculpture in France.

Giambattista Sommariva: Collecting as Expression

If Canova's *Penitent Magdalene* had not been owned by one of the most acquisitive and self promoting collectors of the period perhaps the work would have been forgotten quickly by the Parisians. As it happened, however, once the Salon closed, the work's owner, Giambattista Sommariva, reclaimed the sculpture and placed it on display in his townhouse. The voraciousness with which Sommariva amassed his art collection was rivaled only by the fierceness with which he used the fine arts to promote himself. Legions of visitors and tourists therefore continued to admire Canova's work in his home, which was open to the public every Friday afternoon.[87]

[87] Sommariva and his collection were the subject of intense interest in the 1970s and 1980s by Francis Haskell and Fernando Mazzocca, the latter of whom transcribed his correspondence with Canova. See the excellent articles, Francis Haskell, "An Italian Patron of French Neo-Classic Art," Past and Present in Art and Taste (Yale University Press: New Haven and London, 1987); Francis Haskell, "More About Sommariva," The Burlington Magazine 114.835 (Oct. 1972): 691-95 and Mazzocca, "G. B. Sommariva o il Borghese Mecenate: Il 'Cabinet' Neoclassico di Parigi, la Galleria Romantica di Tremezzo," 145-293.

Born in Lodi in 1760, Sommariva's political and economic accomplishments were tied largely to the French invasions in Italy. He became a barrister and moved to Milan in 1796, prior to the French invasion. With the success of the French, he too advanced, becoming Secretary General of the First Directory of the Repubblica Italiana in 1797, then, after a brief exile, President in Milan of the Second Cisalpine Republic (1800-1802).[88] Although the proclamation of the Italian Republic in 1802 dashed his hopes for further political success, he nonetheless had accumulated a heady fortune along the way and subsequently devoted himself to his art collection. In addition to purchasing Old Master paintings (some of dubious quality), he commissioned a broad range of work from contemporary French and Italian artists, including, among others, Canova, Pierre-Paul Prud'hon, Jacques-Louis David, Bertel Thorvaldsen, Anne-Louis Girodet, François Gerard, and Pierre-Narcisse Guerin (figs. 206-209).[89] Spread among five different residences in Italy and France, the bulk of his collection was located in his townhouse in Paris, where he resided from 1805 until 1819, and the Villa Sommariva on Lake Como, where he spent most of his time after 1819 (fig. 210).[90]

Mazzocca touched again on Sommariva's collecting practices in Mazzocca, "Giovanni Battista Sommariva Collezionista di Canova," 293-308.

[88] For biographical details on Sommariva, see Haskell, "An Italian Patron of French Neo-Classic Art," esp. 48-53, as well as Stefano Levati, "Giovanni Battista Sommariva: Avvocato, Politico e Affarista (1757-1826)," Committenti, Mecenati, e Collezionisti di Canova, I, VI Settimana di Studi Canoviani (Bassano del Grappa: Istituto di ricerca per gli studi su Canova e il neoclassicismo, 2008) 267-91.

[89] Francis Haskell has also argued Sommariva was among the first men in Paris to start collecting art on a pre-revolutionary scale and that he alone supported the great tradition of French art during a period of war, economic crisis, and the national humiliation. The breadth of his commissions has led Haskell to argue that Sommariva's collecting practices are a window onto the past, suggestive of what patronage may have looked like in France had the French Revolution not intervened. Haskell notes, however, that without the Revolution, Sommariva would not have had a fortune to spend on art. See Haskell, "An Italian Patron of French Neo-Classic Art," 13, 15, and 20, respectively.

[90] Davide Bertolotti described the Villa Sommariva and its contents in 1831, giving a room by room inventory of the collection. See Davide Bertolotti, Descrizione della Villa Sommariva sul Lago di Como, di Davide Bertolotti (Milano: per Antonio Fontana, 1831). For more on the Villa at Tremezzo, see also

For Sommariva, the process of collecting was a performance in and of itself. He used the fine arts to establish his cultural "capital" and "honor"[91] and was absolutely unapologetic about advancing himself through his collection.[92] He was delighted to promote the artists he admired, as well as his own role as their patron, whenever possible—frequently submitting their works to the Parisian Salon, as he had with the *Penitent Magdalene*.[93] At the same time, he made sure his personal connection to these objects was advertised widely, not simply in the salon *livret*, but also in the prints, cameos and miniature enamels that reproduced his art collection.[94] He was particularly

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Angela Ottino della Chiesa, Villa Carlotta (Milano: Silvana editoriale d'arte, 1963) and Fernando Mazzocca and Anna della Valle, Villa Carlotta (Milano: Electa, 1983).

[91] In a letter to his son, on January 12, 1818, Sommariva wrote, "Egli è vero che si spende molto in genere di belle arti; ma il capitale resta ed aumentasi in qualche oggetto; eppoi ci fa molto onore. Vedo anzi che da lontano se ne parla con vantaggio piu che da vicino." Sommariva's letters to his son are reprinted in a rare book, Giovanni Battista Sommariva, Lettere del Conte Gio. Battista Sommariva a suo Figlio Luigi dall' Anno 1809, Fino all' Anno 1825 (Paris: Didot, 1842). Sections related to the fine arts are reprinted in "Lettres du Comte Sommariva (1814-1825). Extraits annotés par M. Anatole de Montaignlon," Nouvelle archives de l'art français recueil de documents inédits publiés par la Société de l'Histoire de l'Art Français. Deuxième Série, Réimpression 1973 ed., vol. 1 (7 volume de la collection) (F. de Nobele. Libraire de la Société, 1973): 297-320. For this letter, see the latter volume, 300.

[92] Haskell, "An Italian Patron of French Neo-Classic Art," 17.

[93] Haskell, "An Italian Patron of French Neo-Classic Art," 17.

[94] Mazzocca notes the zeal with which Sommariva included his works of art in the Salon *livret*. Likewise, Mazzocca argues that the prints, miniatures, cameos represent three spheres of Sommariva's contact with the public, ranging from the broadest to the most intimate, respectively. See Mazzocca, "G. B. Sommariva o il Borghese Mecenate: Il 'Cabinet' Neoclassico di Parigi, la Galleria Romantica di Tremezzo," 166 and 68.

Sommariva's success can be measured by the response of one French visitor to his home in Épinay, who was impressed by his miniatures and cameos as well as the protection and encouragement Sommariva gave to artists. "M. de Sommariva nous fit voir quelques peintures qu'il avait fait faire sur émail, entre autres *Venus enlevant le jeune Ascagne qu'elle dépose au pied du mont Ida.* Ce sujet est tiré de sa galerie et reproduit avec une perfection étonnante sur un morceau de verre de six à sept pouces de longueur, et de trois à quatre de largeur: par le moyen de la vitrification et du procédé que l'on emploie, les couleurs devièrent inaltérables.

Nous vîmes aussi plusieurs camées que M. de Sommariva avait fait faire sur agates, cornalines et autres pierres précieuses, qui représentaient dans la forme d'une médaille, et avec la plus grande perfection, divers tableaux qui lui appartièrent.

C'est ainsi que le goût et l'opulence protègent et encouragent les artistes, dont un grand nombre doivent leur existence à M. de Sommariva." M. F. L, Lettres à Jennie, sur Montmorency, l'Hermitage, Andilly, Saint Leu, Chantilly, Ermenonville, et les Environs (Paris: Nicole, 1818) 118-19.

proud to own five marble works by Canova, as well as several full-scale copies after the sculptor's work, and he did his utmost to draw attention to his role as the sculptor's patron (figs. 211-212).[95] Lady Morgan, who saw Sommariva in Rome in Canova's studio, suspected Sommariva was more preoccupied with being noticed than in the works of art he was purchasing![96] His calculating nature even caused him to try to capitalize on a near tragedy in Canova's studio. When Canova's sculpture *Palamedes*, commissioned by Sommariva in 1803, nearly collapsed onto the sculptor after a flood weakened the statue's base in 1805, Sommariva immediately understood the dramatic potential of this event (fig. 23).[97] He commissioned a painting of the subject by the artist Vincenzo

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[95] Sommariva owned Canova's *Palamedes, Penitent Magdalene*, *Terpsichore,* an *Apollino* and a copy of the ideal head of *Helen*—the final two of which are currently untraced—as well as a marble copy of the *Penitent Magdalene*, a marble copy of *Cupid and Psyche* by Adamo Tadolino, a marble copy of the head of the *Venus Italica* by Pietro Fontana, and casts of *Terpsichore,* Canova's *Self-Portrait*, and the *Bust of Giuseppe Bossi.* Mazzocca also suggests that Sommariva owned the original model for *Penitent Magdalene*, also lost.

For a list of the works Sommariva owned, both in Paris and in Tremezzo, see Mazzocca and della Valle, Villa Carlotta 77. For the lost model of *Magdalene*, and further details of the copies of works by Canova owned by Sommariva, see Mazzocca, "Giovanni Battista Sommariva Collezionista di Canova," 294.

[96] Regarding her visit to Canova's studio, Lady Morgan wrote, "But there was one studio which we frequently visited, to which curiosity alone did not lead us; where we often sought the man more than the artist, and where the sublimest of all the arts, illustrated by its noblest productions, were not the sole inducements of our visits—the studio of Canova.*" A footnote in the text then reads, "*The collection of Mons. Sommariva at Paris has already been mentioned in the Author's work on France. We found this gentleman in Rome and Naples, as busy in purchasing statues, pictures, and busts, as if he were about to be found, not to complete a collection. We sometimes accompanied him to the studio of his friend Canova, and witnessed his anxiety to rival potentates in the good graces of the genius of sculpture. I believe he has succeeded in carrying off Canova's favourite "*nymph*," who had more competitors, when we were at Rome, for her possession, than any living beauty in Europe." Morgan, Italy vol. 2, 168 and footnote.

[97] The event was described by Canova in letters to Gianantonio Selva. On April 28, 1805, in a postscript to Selva, Canova wrote, "P.S. L'altro jeri cadde a terra la mia statua Palamede, e s'infranse a segno di non essere più servibile, altro che ristaurata. Il tavolato, su cui posava, erasi infracidito per l'acqua del Tevere, che inondò. Io ho corso qualche pericolo, e a me unito il pittor Camuccini; ma, lode a Dio, non abbiamo sofferto nulla. La disgrazia è grande certo: cinque mila scudi perduti, anzi pagati e mangiati. La statua era venduta da un anno e più. Pazienza. Basta la salute. Ho voluto dirvelo bene, perchè non abbiate a sentirlo da altri diversamenti."

Selva replied from Venice on May 4, 1805, "Giovedi sera vidi Valentino che dal corriere appena arrivato avea raccolto lo sfortunato accidente a voi successo. Ne fui inquieto per mancanza di dettaglio di circostanze, e jeri mattina mandai ad attendere che si aprisse la posta per far ricerca di vostre lettere, e non fu deluso il mio desiderio col riceverne. La scorsi con l'occhio e lessi prima di tutto il P.S. che mi conferma

Camuccini—who happened to be an eye-witness to the statue's dramatic fall.[98] Although Camuccini's painting was never realized, Sommariva's commission signals not only his

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la trista nuova, ma che mi assicura di esser voi restato illeso, ed essere sfuggito dall'imminente pericolo. Mi figuro il vostro dolore e son certo che al primo momento vi sarà più rincresciuto la perdita di una vostra bella produzione, qual era, da ciò narra la fama, il Palamede, che quella dei cinquemila scudi, che pur in questi tempo, ed a voi che non siete ricco, contano molto. Rassegniamoci alla sventura e ringraziamo la divina Provvidenza e l'angelo vostro tutelare di avervi preservato. Il cielo vi compenserà col mantenervi il dono di una fiorente salute a fine di accrescere a questa più colle vostre opere, la gloria dell'Italia e della Patria." See Lettere Familiari Inedite di Antonio Canova e di Giannantonio Selva. Per le Nozze Persico-Papdopoli 37 and 39.

Canova likewise informed Sommariva of the event, describing the blow he received to his temple and how the statue brushed passed his ear on its descent. See the draft of the letter from Canova to Sommariva, April 28, 1805, transcribed in Mazzocca, "G. B. Sommariva o il Borghese Mecenate: Il 'Cabinet' Neoclassico di Parigi, la Galleria Romantica di Tremezzo," 227. Canova also wrote Sommariva a second time, fearing the first letter was lost. See Nuptialia Mochi Onori-Crescentini. Due Lettere Inedite di Antonio Canova con Illustrazioni del Marchese Filippo Raffaelli, Bibliotecario della Comunale di Fermo (Recanati: Tipografia di Rinaldo Simboli, 1889) 2-3.

[98] Ironically, however, even though Sommariva was willing to commission a painting depicting the collapse of the work, he seemed reluctant to pay for the restoration of the statue itself. In a letter to Canova from June 1805, he requested a new work from the sculptor. Canova may have misunderstood Sommariva's letter, or perhaps Sommariva himself was back-tracking, but in another letter from July 27, 1805, Sommariva apologized if Canova interpreted his desire for a new work as the rejection of *Palamedes*. He then flattered the sculptor by saying that even the fragments of *Palamedes* would be dear to him, if it could not be restored in its entirety.

In the end, however, Sommariva benefited from his decision to pay for the work's conservation, as the collapse and subsequent restoration seems only to have added to *Palamedes* value. Not only did the fractures in the marble remind visitors of the dramatic event, but the signs of wear also enhanced the illusion that *Palamedes* was an ancient—rather than modern—work of art. Memes also attributes greater generosity to Canova than the correspondence might suggest, describing how Canova magnanimously began a new work, from a new block of marble, for Sommariva. He writes, "Of this accident, the owner was immediately advertised,— the artist, with his accustomed disinterestedness, insisting on retaining the fragments, and commencing on a fresh block. This from similar feelings of liberality, was opposed; and the statue, skillfully reunited, by the visible effects of its misfortune, only the more resembles an antique." A footnote in the text notes that Memes was recounted the story by Sommariva himself, while admiring the sculpture at the Villa Sommariva.

Indeed, when Canova passed away, seventeen years later, Sommariva was conscious of the effect it would have on the value of his precious sculpture, and in a letter to his son on October 31, 1822, he wrote, "Now the works we have bought will have twice their original value." "Già saprai la morte del nostro bravo *Canova*. Ora le sue opere acquistano il doppio del loro valore primitivo. Abbiamo qui il "Palamede", che piace tanto, ma piacerebbe ben davantaggio se si potesse facilmente veder di dietro, giacchè resta troppo vicino al muro senza poterne più allontanare. Non vi è dunque altro dimedio che di mettervici uno specchio contro il muro, come abbiamo fatto con la "Terpsichore". Basterebbe però che tale specchio fosse di sei piedi in altezza e piedi tre e un quarto di larghezza incirca, senza che fosse della prima bellezza e qualità, per spendere il meno possibile [...]."

For Sommariva's reluctance to pay for *Palamedes* restoration, see Haskell, "An Italian Patron of French Neo-Classic Art," 51. The letters between Sommariva and Canova are cited in Mazzocca, "G. B. Sommariva o il Borghese Mecenate: Il 'Cabinet' Neoclassico di Parigi, la Galleria Romantica di Tremezzo," 28-29. For the way restoration of *Palamedes* contributed to the belief it was an ancient work, see Memes, Memoirs of Antonio Canova, with a Critical Analysis of His Works, and an Historical View of Modern Sculpture 403. For the letter from Sommariva to his son, see "Lettres du Comte Sommariva (1814-1825). Extraits annotés par M. Anatole de Montaignlon," 308.

desire to commemorate the monumental events in Canova's life, but also his own participation in those events, as the patron of many of the artist's works. One suspects Sommariva must have been delighted with the way the tale of this near tragedy circulated throughout Europe, drawing visitors to the artist's studio to see the offending sculpture before it was shipped to him in Milan.[99]

Sommariva's self-image was so bound up with his status as a collector of Canova's works that he publicly broadcast his connection to the sculptor in several portraits he commissioned, in which he is displayed proudly surrounded by Canova's statues or by stand-ins of Canova himself. In Pierre-Paul Prud'hon's portrait from 1815, Sommariva's ownership of his collection is made overt by the way in which he is seated, at ease, in the park surrounded by two of his esteemed sculptures by Canova, *Palamedes* and *Terpsichore* (fig. 213).[100] Depicted as a wealthy man at leisure, Sommariva holds a

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[99] The story was widely circulated by many of Canova's biographers. See, for instance, d'Este, Memorie di Antonio Canova 133-34.

Giuseppe Bossi even joked that the only visitor missing from Canova's studio had been the Tiber—and now it too had finally arrived. See the letter from Bossi to Canova, Feb. 9. 1805. "Amico Carissimo. Mancava al tuo studio una visita personale del Tevere, e l'hai avuta. Spero, che a quest'ora ti avrà levato l'incomodo della sua presenza, e che tu sarai tornato al lavoro più ardentemente che mai. Io temo sugli effetti di quella funesta cagione, se la tua intemperanza di travagio ti ha reso segno imprudente da non prendere le dovute precauzioni. Spiacemi poi infinitamente del danno, che avrai avuto dalla strana intemperie della stagione […]." Lettere Scelte dell'Inedito Epistolario di Antonio Canova. Per le Auspicatissime Nozze Lampertico-Colleoni (Vicenza: G. Longo, 1854) 38.

Melchior Missirini even commemorated the event in a sonnet. "Muover veggio e spirar l'aura primiera/Chi di Cadmo emulò le illustri imprese, /E ordir falangi in bellicosa schiera /Sagacemente dagli Augelli apprese: /Ecco la fronte nobilmente altera/Che dal treicio Iddio le forme prese; /Ecco la forza della man guerriera, /Indomita agli assalti, alle difese:/ Ma ahimè, che sia? Già cade il Campion forte:/ Forse Ulisse rinnova un altro inganno?/Tanto ancor Gelosia l'ange, e divora/ Ah nò; Tu sei crudele invida Morte,/ Che al suol lo traggi dall'eburneo scanno, /Che redivivo lo credesti ancora!" See Melchior Missirini, Monumenti di Scultura e di Architettura: Sonetti (Rome: Nella Stamperia de Romanis, 1818) 98-99.

[100] *Terpsichore* was lauded frequently as one of Canova's most beautiful works. Lady Morgan sang her praises in 1817. "The *Terpsichore* is so highly estimated, even by its unrivalled artist, that it is the only one of his works to which he has put his name. The charm of this beautiful statue, is, its life! –the mysterious art, by which the Praxiteles of modern days has communicated the appearance of motion to what is motionless, and lent vitality to marble! *Terpsichore*, with the form of a Grace and the head of a Hebe, seems almost to illustrate the art over which she presides; and I should have felt much less surprise to have seen her spring from the pedestal, which her delicate foot scarcely touches, than I have occasionally experienced from the unexpected agility of some *human elephant*, moving its ponderous weight by an

book in his hand, as if he has just stopped reading. The park in which he is may be the garden of the Villa Sommariva—certainly, however, it follows the pattern of portraits of Grand Tourists quite closely, in which learned gentlemen are often shown surrounded by works of art with the glimpse of a landscape in the background. Although *Penitent Magdalene* is not present in the portrait— due, perhaps, to the fact that she was not a mythological subject—Prud'hon has brought together two works that Sommariva was delighted to call his own.[101] While Palamedes has been cut off in part by the painting's framing edge, *Terpsichore* takes center stage, and Sommariva rests his hand easily, yet proprietarily, along her toes.

On another occasion, Sommariva publicized his connection to Canova obliquely, by commissioning a painting from Girodet intended as an homage to the sculptor and

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organized impulsion, in which *life* and *will* seemed to have no part.*" A note on the same page continues, "*The head of *Terpsichore* is said to be that of the beautiful sister of the ex Emperor, Pauline, Princess of Borghese, whose charms have afforded a study to most of the celebrated painters and statuaries of the day. As well as I remember, Mons. Sommariva told me this was not the case, the whole being a *beau-idéal* of a genius destined to immortality." Lady (Sydney) Morgan, France, 3rd American ed. (Philadelphia: M. Thomas, 1817) 230.

Likewise Thomas Dibdin admired the sculpture and believed it looked like an antique. "It was therefore pleasing to me, my dear friend, to turn my attention from the studied display of naked goddesses, in the collection of the worthy Marquis of Sommariva, towards objects a little more qualified to gratify the higher feelings connected with art:—and the first thing which soothed me, when I *had* so turned my attention, was, the *Terpsichore* of *Canova*. You know it from the print by Morghen. The countenance, to my eye, is the perfection of female beauty:—yet it is a countenance which seems to be the abstract—the result of study, and of combination—rather than of beauty, as seen "in mortal race which walks the earth." The drapery appears to be studiously neglected—giving it the appearance of the antique, which had been battered and bruised by the casualties of some two thousand years. By this, I mean that the folds are not only numerous, but the intermediate parts are not marked by that degree of precision and finish, which, in my opinion, they ought to have received. Yet the whole has an enchantingly simple air: at once classical, pure, and impressive. The Marquis has indeed great reason to be proud of it." Dibdin, A Bibliographical Antiquarian and Picturesque Tour in France and Germany vol. 2, 312.

Helen Borowitz has traced the development of *Terpsichore* and her relationship to contemporary literature, particularly Madame de Staël's *Corinne*. See Helen O. Borowitz, "Two Nineteenth-Century Muse Portraits," The Bulletin of the Cleveland Museum of Art 66 (1979): 246-67.

[101] In 1818, *Palamedes* was moved to the Villa Sommariva at Tremezzo. Sommariva also added casts of *Magdalene* and *Terpsichore* to the villa's collection, while the originals stayed in Paris in Rue Basse des Remparts. See Isabella Marelli, "La Collezione Sommariva," Capolavori in Smalto e Avorio: Pietro Bagatti Valsecchi e la Miniatura d'Aprés, eds. Fernando Mazzocca and Sergio Rebora (Cinisello Balsamo, Milano: Silvana, 2004) 88.

widely understood as such by the Parisian press.[102] The painter selected the subject of *Pygmalion and Galatea* (1813-1819) (fig. 214).[103] The story, based on Ovid's *The Metamorphoses*, had been more recently popularized in a 1762 melodrama by Jean-Jacques Rousseau.[104] In Girodet's painting, Pygmalion stands astonished before the beautiful Galatea, whose alabaster surface transforms into real flesh. Set in the distant past, a temple to the Gods looms in the background, while a statue of Venus, with incense and offerings burning at her feet, presides in an alcove nearby. Soft pink hues diffuse over the painting's surface and the mystical light behind Galatea alerts us to her magical transformation. Pygmalion, a handsome youth wearing a flowered garland on his crown, strives to touch his creation-turned-flesh. Impatient, he reaches out, fingers prepared to pinch her flesh, foot already firmly planted on her pedestal. Galatea, on the other hand, revels in her newly corporeal state. She touches her breast, as if in awe of the beating of her heart. Eyes downcast, she has not yet set eyes on her creator, but a small cupid that floats between them speaks to the imminent union between artist and art work, lover and beloved.

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[102] "M. de Sommariva, riche amateur et protecteur des artistes, voulant offrir un tableau au célèbre Canova, chargea M. Girodet de sa composition, et laissa le sujet à son choix. Le peintre se décida pour Pygmalion. Il y avait dans ce choix une louange d'une délicatesse exquise pour le sculpteur qui donna si souvent lui-même la vie au marbre; mais il y avait aussi dans ce sujet un attrait bien puissant pour le peintre qui pouvait y développer toutes les grandes parties de son art, et lutter en même temps avec le statuaire antique par la pureté du dessin, par la hauteur et la sévérite du style." R., "Beaux-Arts. Salon de 1819. Exposition des ouvrages de peinture et de sculpture au Musée-Royale des beaux-arts," Annuaire historique universel, pour 1819 (1820): 741-42.

[103] For more on this painting and the relationship between Canova and Girodet, see Chiara Savettieri, "'Il avait retrouvé le secret de Pygmalion': Girodet, Canova e l'Illusione della Vita," Studiolo 2 (Dec. 2003): 14-42.

[104] The text and score of the play have been printed together in Horace Coignet and Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Pygmalion: Scène Lyrique, ed. Jacqueline Waeber (Genève: Editions Université-Conservatoire de musique, 1997).

Exhibited at the 1819 Salon, the work created an enormous stir and resulted in a "deluge of compliments in verse and prose, epigrams, uncrownings, defenses, attacks, sycophancy and sarcasms."[105] In part, this was due to the way that, in the Salon, Girodet's "Classical" painting was compared to Théodore Géricault's "Romantic" *Raft of the Medusa*, also exhibited that same year (fig. 215). As James Rubin has argued, the juxtaposition established a set of dichotomous terms that characterized the two movements–"line versus color, idealism versus naturalism, finish versus sketch" as well as "authority versus freedom," "historical versus contemporary and monarchist versus liberal."[106] It is true, that in the face of a comparison with Géricault's *Raft*, Girodet's painting seems remarkably conservative and florid. Yet, if we consider the work with both Sommariva's patronage and with Canova's sculptural practice in mind, particularly in light of the comments raised by *Penitent Magdalene*, the painting adroitly captures the "becoming" referred to by Quatremère de Quincy in his description of Canova's creation of the *Magdalene*. That is, not only is Girodet's painting a nod to Canova's talent for capturing the semblance of flesh in stone, but the painting encapsulates the idea of sculptural creation as a Romantic one. In Romantic theory, creation was the direct result of the artist's expression of interior emotions—through, above all, his imagination and the force of love. Indeed, in much of criticism of Girodet's work, writers focused on the

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[105] Letter from A.B., Dec. 30, 1819. "Enfin, Girodet s'est vu tout-à-coup exposé à un déluge de complimens en vers et en prose, d'épigrammes, decouronnes, de défenses, d'attaques, de flagorneries et de sarcasmes." Lettres à David, sur le Salon de 1819 par quelques élèves de son école (Paris: Chez Pillet Ainge, 1819) 226.

Interestingly, Helen Borowitz has suggested that all of the letters in Lettres à David were written by the Romantic theorist and writer, Henri de Latouche, in support of Romantic artists and as a "campaign against conservative artists." See Helen O. Borowitz, "The Man Who Wrote to David," The Bulletin of the Cleveland Museum of Art 67 (1980): 256-74.

[106] James Rubin, "Delacroix and Romanticism," The Cambridge Companion to Delacroix, ed. Beth Segal Wright (Cambridge, U.K.; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001) 31-2.

fact that Girodet had not depicted Pygmalion in the sculptor's studio, in sharp contradistinction to the way Rousseau had portrayed the scene. For some writers, the nebulous space of the painting—in front of a temple, in a portico—was profoundly disquieting. Landon was irritated that nothing signified Pygmalion's status as the "author" of the statue, for there was nothing to indicate the artist's studio, nothing which signified a space of creation.[107] His sentiment was echoed by "R" in the *Annuaire Historique Universel*,[108] and "P.V." who hesitated in his description of the work—was the scene in Pygmalion's studio, or a temple to Venus?[109] "E.J.D." writing in the *Lycée Française* compared Girodet's depiction directly to Rousseau's approach to the narrative, which not only stressed, but *established* the identity of Pygmalion as an *artist*. Girodet, on the contrary, by dispensing with sculptural tools, "spiritualized" his subject; the "miracle" of life was attributed "to the power of love."[110] For Le Comte O'Mahony, this

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[107] Girodet "ne s'est pas conformé au trait mythologique aussi scrupuleusement que les peintres ont coutume de le faire. Rien ne fait connaître ici Pygmalion pour l'auteur de la statue: le lieu de la scène n'indique pas l'atelier d'un sculpteur, mais un espèce de galerie ou de sanctuaire consacré á Vénus [...]." Charles-Paul Landon, Salon de 1819, Annales du musée et de l'école moderne des beaux-arts, 2 vols. (Paris: Imprimerie Royale, 1819) vol. 2, 10.

[108] "Le lieu de la scène n'est un palais, ni un atelier, mais un portique superbe, éclairé sur une vaste campagne par les premiers rayons du jour." R., "Beaux-Arts. Salon de 1819. Exposition des ouvrages de peinture et de sculpture au musée-royale des beaux-arts," 742.

[109] P.V., letter to David, November 22, 1819. "Mais la scène est-elle dans l'atelier de Pygmalion ou dans le temple de Vénus? Rien n'annonce un atelier de sculpteur; cependant on y a dressé un autel. On cherche le statuaire et l'amant dans ce jeune homme paré comme en un jour de fête et dans tout l'éclat du bonheur. L'expression de son enthousiasme pour son ouvrage et de sa profonde passion n'a-t-il pas échappé au pinceau de celui qui pouvait si bien reproduire ces beaux effets?" Lettres à David, sur le Salon de 1819 par quelques élèves de son école 179.

[110] "Le poëte [Ovid] insiste peu sur la qualité de sculpteur, à laquelle, depuis l'ouvrage de J.-J. Rousseau sur le même fond, on donne une plus grande importance. [...] c'est donc d'après l'autorité de J.-J. Rousseau que Pygmalion est devenu *un artiste* amoureux de son ouvrage: car c'est surtout sous ce jour que ce grand écrivain a présenté ce sujet. […] Il est aisé de voir que M. Girodet, en suivant à quelques égards les traditions anciennes, a spiritualisé son sujet tout autant que J.-J. Rousseau a pu le faire. Le peintre a éloigné avec intention tout ce que pouvait rappeler le travail manuel d'un sculpteur. La statue et terminée depuis long-temps, et depuis long-temps, dans l'excès de sa passion, Pygmalion la traite en amante. [....] J.-J. Rousseau me semble avoir voulu faire sentir toute la puissance du génie créateur d'un artiste, en donnant le talent de Pygmalion comme cause principale du prodige allégorique qu'offre une statue qui s'anime. M.

was precisely the beauty of Girodet's painting—Girodet's "banishment" of any signs of the workshop also banished "all material thought from a heavenly scene."[111]

Girodet's *Pygmalion* therefore speaks to the Romantic impulse of artistic creation via two different paths, and, in so doing, aligns itself precisely with the qualities that were most potent in Canova's *Magdalene*. By eliminating the space of the artist's studio and his tools, Girodet removes any signs that might identify the creation of sculpture as a prosaic and manual craft. The painting spoke strongly of the generative power of the artistic imagination, which did not need to rely on an imitative model of creation. At the same time, Girodet's imagining of the act of animation, of the act of a soul coming into being, triggered an equally creative response in viewers. Many beholders, in fact, were attuned to their *own* potential as creators after seeing the painting. E.F.A.M. Miel, for instance, who had not even *seen* the work in 1817, contemplated what Girodet's canvas might look like. "If," Miel wrote, "my imaginary painting approached his [Girodet's] canvas even a bit, would I seem reckless to cry out with Correggio, in the thrill of my satisfaction, *I too am a painter*?"[112] Auguste Hilarion de Kératry was so moved by Girodet's work that he felt acutely conscious of the "impotence of his pen"; he felt he

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Girodet, généralisant encore l'idée mère de cette fable, attribue précisément le miracle au pouvoir de l'amour: on pourrait presque dire que son tableau est *tout un système*." E.J.D., "Beaux Arts. Huitième lettre au rédacteur du lycée français, sur l'exposition des ouvrages de peinture, sculpture, etc. des artistes vivans," Lycée français, ou mélanges de littérature et de critique 2 (1819): 241-42.

[111] "Mais, admirons surtout ce tact des convenances, qui, éloignant tous les instruments du sculpteur, a banni toute pensée matérielle d'une scène toute céleste; des peintres nombreux qui ont traité ce sujet, M. Girodet est le seul qui sait senti qu'il fallait nous montrer un temple où ses devanciers ont fait voir un atelier." Le Comte O'Mahony, "Exposition des tableaux. (Iv^{e} Article.) Pygmalion et Galatée, par M. Girodet," Le Conservateur 5 (1819): 275.

[112] "M. Girodet a réalisé ma rêverie. L'idée seule de cette composition caractérise l'élévation de son génie; l'exécution exigeait et la chaleur de son âme et la pureté de son style vraiment antique. Si ma peinture imaginaire se rapproche un peu du tableau, paraîtrai-je téméraire en m'écriant avec le Corrége, dans le transport de ma satisfaction, *anch'io son pittore?*" E. F. A. M. Miel, Essai sur le Salon de 1817, ou examen critique des principaux ouvrages dont l'exposition se compose (Paris: Delaunay, 1817) 241.

must try to create "a painting with words" in which the "mind is destined to give life to beautiful forms."[113] Girodet's work therefore appealed to the viewers' understanding of themselves as expressive beings, in a dual sense. They recognized the impact the work wrought on their own emotional states, which in turn held the potential to transform them into creative beings—into artists, like Girodet himself.

Pygmalion also speaks to the romantic impulse of the artist through the theme of love. To be sure, some of the writing the painting elicited was less about love than about overt desire. Such was the case with a poem by Henri-Zozime de Valori, which was redolent with double meanings. (For instance, de Valori celebrated the way that Pygmalion "wounded the delicate stone" with his chisel, after which "blood circulated in the embodied flesh."[114]) Other writers were more preoccupied with Girodet's symbolic depiction of love as an impish cupid, who was the object of much criticism.[115] Yet,

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[113] "J'ai parlé de l'œuvre de M. Girodet, et en admirant la science de son pinceau, j'ai été réduit à gémir sur l'impuissance de la plume; j'ai reconnu qu'il avait une riche palette à sa disposition, et je me suis trouvé pauvre au milieu de la pompe d'une langue illustrée par le grands génies de deux dernier siècles. M'accuserai-je seul de cette pénurie? non; ici la séduction s'opérant par les sens, on ne saurait la faire passer dans l'âme que par les sens eux-mêmes. Il me faudrait donc faire un tableau avec paroles, comme l'artiste français en a fait avec des couleurs. Il faudrait suivre, sous sa touche, ce premier travail d'une nature qui cherche à s'organiser au sein de la matière soustraite à l'inertie; il faudrait simuler cette demi-transparence des fluides qui, courant dans des routes nouvelles, y font poindre l'esprit destiné à vivifier de belles formes; il faudrait saisir sur une tête ravissante, la pensée prête à l'éclore, car le sentiment y est déjà…Je m'arrête. *Girodet* a transporté le marbre sur la toile; d'un même coup, il a dompté deux éléments rebelles, et je ne suis pas *Rousseau* pour reproduire de tels prestiges! " Auguste Hilarion de Kératry, Annuaire de l'école française de peinture au lettres, sur le Salon de 1819 (Paris: Maradan, 1820) 239-40, published again in Auguste Hilarion de Kératry, Du Beau dans les arts d'imitation avec un examen raisonné des productions des diverses écoles de peinture et de sculpture, et en particulier de celle de France, 2 vols. (Paris: Audot, 1822) vol. 2, 323-24.

[114] The significant passage in the poem reads: "Son ciseau tremble…Enfin d'un coup plus sûr/Il a blessé la pierre délicate! /Le sang circule en la chair incarnate;/ Oui, voilà que la nymphe, encor marbre à demi,/ Soupire, et hegayant à peine,/ Offre à l'éspoir de son ami/L'effet mystérieux de la vie incertaine./Quoi! C'est moi ?...c'est toi ?/Oui, je me réveille;/ O douce merveille,/J'entends et je voi!.../Encore, encore un trait de flamme!/ Ta fille veut un don nouveu:/ Pour bien aimer il faut une ame…/ Que je la doive à ton ciseau!/Au destin de ta Galatée/ Unis le tien, père immortel! /Que le socle où je fus sculptée/ Pour l'hymen se change en autel./Encore, encore un trait de flamme!/ Ta fille veut un don nouveau:/ Pour bien aimer il faut une ame…/ Que le doive a ton ciseau!" Henri-Zozime de Valori, Odes choisies, précédées d'un discours sur la poésie et les poètes lyriques anciens et modernes (Paris: Pillet, 1819) 138-39.

numerous critics also commented on love as the force that animated Galatea. These writers were particularly concerned with the way intense affection and passion could create a bond between individuals. The relationship between Pygmalion and Galatea, therefore, was the most intimate that could exist. De Kératry, for instance, noted that this was a fundamentally *modern* union. In his discussion of the painting, he even compared ancient marriages meant to guarantee genealogical succession to modern ones, which were based on mutual affection, the "intimacy between two beings."[116] Yet another writer, the Catholic apologist Auguste Nicolas, used Girodet's painting to elucidate the concept of the Trinity. Leaving aside the religious component of his analogy, Nicolas' description could be a manifesto of modern individuality. Not only did Girodet capture the "psychological thought" that underlies the story, but the painting also depicts a trinity—the soul of the artist, his conception, realized in the statue, and, finally, love. Yet even within this trinity, there unity is to be found, for "what is the statue, if not his [the artist's] soul expressed, and an emanation of his intellectual substance? What is the love that unites them, if it is not still this soul folding its thought upon itself, and having it, in

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[115] See, for instance, critiques in M...n, Pigmalion et Galatée, Annales françaises des arts, des sciences et des lettres, vol. V (Paris: Au Bureau des Annales, 1819) 137; Landon, Salon de 1819 vol. 2, 13-14.

[116] "Ici, nous trouvons l'occasion de remarquer à quoi se réduisaient, chez les anciens, leurs actes tant vantés de continence. La vie conjugale se présentait à leurs yeux sous un autre aspect qu'aux nôtres; elle était moins un intimité de deux êtres qu'une garantie de la succession des familles […] L'idéal de l'amour, qui s'attache aux charmes d'une pensée vierge, qui se complaît dans les qualités d'un cœur généraux et tendre, étant inconnue à tous, on ignorait ces déchiremens qui enlèvent un être nécessaire à un autre être, qui creusent un abîme dans l'existence et qui font maudire jusqu'au pouvoir à celui qui n'en a pas assez pour se faire aimer. [...] Chez nous, au contraire, l'amour ne devient si souvent indomptable que parce que nous en avons fait un affaire de réflexion. Quand on a prêté à un objet des beautés morales, des beautés de sentiment, quand on les a appliquées à la présence des formes que l'on se plaît à ceindre d'un regard caressant, comment les transporter ailleurs? De force, c'est là qu'il faut que la vie s'attache, ou c'est là qu'il faut qu'elle s'éteigne. Sans doute le sculpteur Pygmalion était réduit à cet état cruel et doux à la fois […]." De Kératry, Annuaire de l'école française de peinture au lettres, sur le Salon de 1819 233-35. Republished in de Kératry, Du beau dans les arts d'imitation avec un examen raisonné des productions des diverses écoles de peinture et de sculpture, et en particulier de celle de France vol. 2, 319.

some way, re-enter in the substance of his genius?"[117] In this remarkable passage, Nicolas touches on the core ideas that lie behind the early nineteenth-century understanding of modern subjectivity, and, thus, the ethos of Romanticism. The trinity reflects both the uniqueness of the individual and his inner life. He strives for independence, even as he yearns for unity and collectivity with nature and his fellow man. Creation is also the spontaneous production of a powerful imagination that emanates from the inner depths of the individual, and which in turn then acts upon him.[118] Indeed, read in light of Nicolas' text, the relationship between Pygmalion and Galatea is not just one of sculptor and creation, lover and beloved, but a constant "becoming," emanating and doubling back in a closed circuit where subject and object ceaselessly impact each other and become one. Was this not precisely the impact that Canova's *Penitent Magdalene* had on viewers?

Pygmalion and Galatea, despite its "classical" form, therefore embodied very modern notions of the individual, his sense of self, and his role in artistic creation. At the same time, however, perhaps no other painting better captured *Sommariva's* own relationship to the act of *collecting*. What is the act of collecting, if not the desire for an

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[117] "Figurez-vous encore que le chef-d'œuvre d'un grand artiste, une magnifique statue, fille de ses songes, de ses veilles, de ses longs et mystérieux travaux, dernière expression de la beauté et de la vie, idole de ses complaisances et de son orgueil, puisse s'animer soudaine, recevoir et donner l'amour: comme ce sentiment va jaillir de son âme virginale, et s'élancer au-devant de celui de son père et de son auteur! Quel amour que celui qui va se rencontrer lui-même en procédant de ces deux êtres! Quelle union! Quelle intimité de rapports il va établir entre eux! L'artiste avait fait passer dans son œuvre toute son âme, tout son génie; et c'est ce génie et cette âme qui font faire retour à leur principe, et y retourner par l'amour. La mythologie a personnifié cette supposition sous la figure de Pygmalion, et un artiste moderne [Girodet] a rendu, de son magique pinceau, la pensée psychologique de cette fable en représentant entre la statue et l'artiste, les tenant tous deux par la main, un enfant ailé, symbole de l'amour, et qui semble éclos de deux êtres qu'il réunit. Quelque imparfaite que soit cette image, on peut cependant y saisir quelque chose du mystère que nous étudions. Là, en effet, il y a *trinité*: 1° l'âme de l'artiste; 2° sa conception réalisée dans la statue; 3° et l'amour. Là pareillement il y a *unité;* car qu'est la statue, si ce n'est son âme exprimée et une émanation de sa substance intellectuelle? Qu'est l'amour qui les unit, si ce n'est encore cette âme repliant sa pensée sur elle-même, et la faisant en quelque sorte rentrer sans la substance de son génie?" Auguste Nicolas, Études philosophiques sur le Christianisme, 3rd ed., 4 vols. (Bruxelles: Imprimerie de M. Vanderborght, 1849) vol. 2, 72.

[118] Girodet's own production of the painting was certainly not spontaneous—it reportedly took him seven years. Landon, Salon de 1819 vol. 2, 12.

object, a need to possess it? Is a collection not also a continual process of becoming, since a collection, by definition, can never be complete? Is not the collector, in this sense, an artist who oversees the making of the collection? In so doing, does a collector not also create his own sense of self? Indeed, Sommariva's desire to be an agent of creation was palpable. In a stunning moment of self-identification as patron and collector, Sommariva commissioned *Girodet painting 'Pygmalion and Galatea'* from François-Louis Dejuinne (1784-1844). Shown at the Salon of 1822, it was classified as "genre" painting, rather than a "history" painting as *Pygmalion* had been, signifying, in part, the more personal nature of the image (fig. 216).[119] Certainly its exhibition at the Salon further publicized Sommariva's connection to Girodet and Canova. Dejuinne's painting, which had been lost for many years and which was recently discovered and purchased by the Musée Girodet at Montargis,[120] like *Pygmalion* itself, also manifests the concept of "making." Sommariva is seated, with Dejuinne standing by his side, watching Girodet in the act of painting *Pygmalion*. Standing on a small step stool, the artist has paused between strokes, brush suspended in mid-air. A strong artificial light illuminates the canvas, contrasting not only with the moonlit sky visible through the studio window but also with Girodet's

[119] "Me voici arrivé aux tableaux de genre, c'est-à-dire, aux compositions qui représentent des scènes familières, et la vie ordinaire. Le plus important de ces tableaux est, sans contredit, celui dans lequel on voit M.Girodet peignant sa Galatée à la lueur de la lampe. L'heureux possesseur de ce chef-d'œuvre, M. de Sommariva, est placé près de lui. L'auteur du tableau dont je parle, M. DEJUINNE, élève très distinguè de M. Girodet, s'est mis à la gauche du spectateur, sur un plan plus éloigné que M. Sommariva; il écoute la conversation qui s'est engagée entre les deux autres personnages. De l'autre côté, une femme, placée dans une partie plus reculée de l'atelier, et éclairée par la pâle lumière d'une petite lampe, rajuste ses vêtemens: on voit qu'elle vient de servir de modèle. Les détails de l'ameublement de cet atelier sont pleins d'intérêt. Il est facile de reconnaître, à la manière dont les figures sont peintes, que cet ouvrage est dû à un artiste très-habile. M. Dejuinne a rendu, en outre, avec beaucoup de fidélité, le caractère et la vivacité d'expression de la physionomie de son maître." P.A., "Notice sur l'exposition des tableaux en 1822. Quatrième et dernier article," Revue encyclopédique, ou analyse raisonnëe des production les plus remarquables dans la littérature, les sciences et les arts... XVI (Oct. 1822): 14-15.

[120] Richard Dagorne, "Le *Portrait de Girodet peignant 'Pygmalion et Galatée'* de François-Louis Dejuinne trouve sa place à Montargis," La Revue du Louvre et des Musées de France 57.2 (April 2007): 17-19.

own famous representation of moonlight in a small répétition of *The Sleep of Endymion* (1791) which hangs on the studio wall (fig. 217). Most remarkable, however, is the doubling that occurs in the painting—between moonlit sky and moonlit painting, between the cast of the *Venus de'Medici* and the female model crouched and dressing herself in the far corner, between the gaze of Pygmalion and Galatea, and that of Sommariva and Girodet himself. It is this last pairing which is the most powerful, for Sommariva and Girodet *parallel* Pygmalion and Galatea in their postures. Sommariva clutches his hat, as Pygmalion grasps his cloak; Girodet stands atop his stool, as Galatea rests on her pedestal. The two look at one another, patron and artist reciprocating a mutual gaze, but it is Sommariva here who takes on the role of ultimate creator, having birthed not only Girodet's painting, but also Dejuinne's. Indeed, since Pygmalion himself was understood as an homage to Canova, Sommariva symbolically asserts his connection to the sculptor as well. Dejuinne's painting therefore inscribed Sommariva's role as collector and patron on multiple levels and asserted that his role was not only as important as the artists he commissioned, but perhaps even more so.

Even more remarkably, Sommariva's impulse towards creative agency did not stop with the large-scale paintings he commissioned. He further performed the ownership of his collection through a relentless project of replication and dissemination. In addition, for instance, to the original marble sculptures he owned made by Canova himself, Sommariva also commissioned a marble copy and a plaster cast of the *Magdalene* and *Terpsichore* respectively for the Villa Sommariva, essentially duplicating the two most well-known pieces in his collection (figs. 40-41). At the same time, he had much of his collection—sculptures and paintings alike—replicated in miniature. From 1810-1826,

for instance, Sommariva commissioned more than one hundred miniature enamel copies of paintings in his collection. The miniaturists included some of the most famous artists of the day, such as Abraham Constantin (1785-1855); Adèle Chavassieu d'Audebert (1788-1831), who made at least seventy-nine works;[121] Edouard Gautier Dagoty (1775-1871); Giambattista Gigola (1767-1841), a close friend of Sommariva's who also worked extensively for Eugène de Beauharnais, Viceroy of the Kingdom of Italy and Josephine Bonaparte's son; and Henri l'Evêque (1769-1832), who completed sixteen enamels between 1822-1823 (fig. 218). Miniatures included copies after Old Masters as well as works by modern artists. Gigola, for instance, replicated Lordon's *The Last Communion of Atala*, while L'Evêque reproduced Girodet's *Pygmalion and Galatea* (figs. 219-221). Chavassieu, who had been charged with reproducing so many of Sommariva's works, completed miniatures of Dejuinne's *Girodet Painting 'Pygmalion and Galatea'* as well as Prud'hon's *Portrait of Sommariva* (figs. 224-225). This last work she reproduced twice, once in its entirety, and once as a detail, honed in on Sommariva's portrait (fig. 226). Her works, which were displayed at the Parisian Salons, were particularly applauded in France for their beauty, and she was even awarded a gold medal in 1824 for her "brilliant career."[122]

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[121] In Dictionnaire des artistes, Chavassieu is listed as having completed ninety enamels for Sommariva, some of which were exhibited in 1810, 1812 and 1814. See the entry under "Chavassieu d'Audebert" in Ch. Gabet, Dictionnaire des artistes de l'école française, au XIXe Siècle (Paris: Chez Madame Vergne, 1831) 139.

[122] Notice of her gold medal was made in Gabet, Dictionnaire des artistes de l'école française, au XIXe siècle 139. Chavassieu's "brilliant career" is noted in Louis Étienne Dussieux, Recherches sur l'histoire de la peinture sur émail dans les temps anciens et modernes, et spécialement en France (Paris: Leleux, Libraire-Éditeur, 1841) 143.

The feminizing nature of the *production* of these enamels is also worthy of comment. Many of the most applauded miniaturists were women, as noted by Alexandre Lenoir. See Alexandre Lenoir, "Beaux Arts. De la peinture en émail en France," Annales des batiments et des arts, de le littérature et de l'industrie 3.xix (1818-1819): 212-13.

Both paintings and sculptures in Sommariva's collection also were transformed on occasion into miniature cameos and intaglios.[123] Although many of these are now lost, one example that does remain, a cameo in cornelian by Giovanni Beltrami of the painting *The Death of Abel* (1817) by Michel Martin Drölling *fils* (1786-1851), is a luminous piece of craftsmanship that announces its status as the reproduction of a painting by the inclusion of the framing edge (fig. 227).[124] (Chavassieu's enamel miniature after this painting was also hailed as a "perfect" imitation of the painting, both "in the purity of the drawing and the beauty of its color" (fig. 228).[125] Other cameos are known to us only because they were further reproduced as miniature plaster casts—creating an interesting mise-en-abîme of reproduction. Examples include not only casts after Beltrami's cameo

[123] These have been the object of much study by Lucia Pirzio Biroli Stefanelli. See her articles, Lucia Pirzio Biroli Stefanelli, "Roman Gem Engravers of the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries; the Present State of Research," Jewellery Studies 4 (1990): 53-58; Lucia Pirzio Biroli Stefanelli, "'Avea Il Marchese Sommariva ... una Sua Favorita Idea,' I: Opere di Incisori Romani Documentate nella Collezione Paoletti," Bollettino dei Musei Comunali di Roma 9 (1995): 104-16; Lucia Pirzio Biroli Stefanelli, "'Avea Il Marchese Sommariva una Sua Favorita Idea ... ', II: Le Incisioni di Giovanni Beltrami," Bollettino dei Musei Comunali di Roma 11 (1997): 111-31; Lucia Pirzio Biroli Stefanelli, "Collezionisti e Incisori in Pietre Dure a Roma nel XVIII e XIX Secolo: Alcune Considerazioni," Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte 59 (1996): 183-97; Lucia Pirzio Biroli Stefanelli, "Incisori in Pietre Dure e Commercio di Cammei e Intagli nel 'Giornale di Vincenzo Pacetti'," Sculture Romane del Settecento: La Professione dello Scultore, ed. Elisa Debenedetti (Roma: Bonsignori Editore, 2003) 465-75.

For still more on Sommariva as a collector of cameos, see Gabriella Tassinari, "Incisori in Pietre Dure e Collezionisti a Milano nel Primo Ottocento: Il Caso di Antonio Berini e Giovanni Battista Sommariva," Le Gemme Incise nel Settecento e Ottocento: Continuità della Tradizione Classica: Atti del Convegno di Studio, Udine, 26 Settembre 1998, ed. Maurizio Buora, Cataloghi e Monografie Archeologiche dei Civici Musei di Udine (Roma and Udine: L'Erma di Bretschneider; Civici Musei di Udine, 2006) 27-49.

[124] For some gorgeous visual examples of cameos and intaglio, both ancient and modern, see the catalogue of a recent exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. James David Draper, Cameo Appearances (New York and New Haven: Metropolitan Museum of Art; Yale University Press, 2008).

[125] "Parmi les Dames que je viens de nommer, mademoiselle Chavassieux a consacré son talent à la peinture en émail [...]. M. le chevalier Sommariva, si connu par son excessif amour pour les arts, a chargé mademoiselle Chavassieux de peindre sur émail les plus beaux morceaux de sa riche galerie, dont il ouvre les portes aux artistes et amateurs tous les vendredis, rue Basse du Rempart, n. 4. [...] Parmi les nombreuses réduction en émail de mademoiselle Chavassieux, il en est d'une grande dimensions; et l'on cite avec plaisir, de cette main délicate, les copies du *Belisaire* de Gérard, du *portait en pied de M. Sommariva*, par Prudon; *Cupidon et Psyché*, d'après le même peintre; une *tête de Jésus-Christ,* d'après Titien; *le Répos de la Vierge en Egytpe,* d'après Pezaro; *Vénus et Ascagne,* par Boisfremont, et la *Mort d'Abel*, par Drolling: l'imitation de ce tableau est parfaite, tant pour la pureté du dessin que pour la beauté du coloris [...]." Lenoir, "Beaux Arts. De la peinture en émail en France," 212-13.

of Drölling*'s The Death of Abel*, but also casts after cameos, now lost, that reproduced Prudhon's *Portrait of Sommariva,* Girodet's *Pygmalion and Galatea*, Lordon's *The Last Communion of Atala*, and Jacques-Louis David's *Cupid and Psyche,* to name only a few (figs. 229-234). Needless to say, Canova's works were also among those reproduced in the form of cameos and intaglios, since they were the pride of Sommariva's collection (figs. 235-243). Most of these too, are known to us only through casts or glass molds, but at the time they were celebrated for their beauty. Viewers recognized the difficulty of transforming three-dimensional works of art into two-dimensional reliefs—not to mention the fact that gem-makers had to replicate works by the man who was considered the greatest sculptor of the time. The art required "fineness of execution, mastery, rarity of material," yet Giuseppe Girometti, who was responsible for many of the cameos, did such a marvelous job that the reproductions reportedly gave Sommariva as much pleasure as the originals.[126]

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[126] For Visconti's account of the difficulty of transforming Canova's works into two dimensional engravings, and Sommariva's delight with these reproductions, see Pietro Ercole Visconti, Notizia delle Opere dell'Incisore in Pietre Dure ed in Coni, Cav. Giuseppe Girometti, Scritta dal Cav. P.E. Visconti (Roma: Tipografia Boulzaler, 1833) 7-8 and 13-14, respectively.

These cameos and intagli were praised at the time for their quality, which was considered on par with those of the ancients. Cameos, however, presented an interesting problem in terms of connoisseurship, as they were notoriously easy to fake and pass off as ancient. Giovanni Pichler, a well-known gem-cutter, revealed that he had made cameos that had been taken for antiques. Likewise, Richard Payne Knight, a well-known connoisseur, was tricked by a fake cameo, and made to look quite foolish. Giovanni Gherardo de Rossi, Vita del Cavalier Giovanni Pikler, Intagliatore in Gemme ed in Pietre Dure (Rome: Palgliarini, 1792) 12-13; and Nicholas Penny, "Collecting, Interpreting, and Imitating Ancient Art," The Arrogant Connoisseur: Richard Payne Knight, 1751-1824. Essays on Richard Payne Knight Together with a Catalogue of Works Exhibited at the Whitworth Art Gallery, 1982, eds. Michael Clarke and Nicholas Penny (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1982) 74-75.

For contemporary instructions on how to determine the authenticity of cameos, see Giuseppe Antonio Aldini and Gregorio Biasini, Instituzioni Glittografiche, o Sia, della Maniera di Conoscere la Qualità, e Natura delle Gemme Incise, e di Giudicare del Contenuto, e del Pregio delle Medesime (In Cesena: Per Gregorio Biasini, 1785) esp. 314-30. Another contemporary text on cameos includes de Rossi's examination, in which he also mentions that modern engravers made cameos based on antique works in museum collections. Giovanni Gherardo de Rossi, Lettera di Gioanni Gherardo de Rossi Al Sig. Conte Franchi di Pont Intorno ad una Serie di Gemme Intagliate Antiche e Moderne (Torino: Stamperia reale, 1793).

It was fairly common for aristocrats to exchange portrait miniatures as tokens of affection.[127] It was also not unheard of to replicate important works of art in miniature. Since antiquity artists had replicated famous sculptures as cameos,[128] while miniature enamels reproducing paintings and prints were en vogue in the Renaissance.[129] What is highly unusual about Sommariva's miniatures, however, is how relentless he was in the reproduction and miniaturization of *so many* of the works in his collection, and how he chose to have those works replicated in more than one media. The cameos alone would have been a great expense, since the art was widely understood as a laborious and time-consuming one, which required a master's touch. But the reproduction of the entire collection as both cameos and miniatures must have been exorbitant. Certainly, visitors understood the investment Sommariva had made in these small works of art, and the "immense sums" he had dispensed in their creation.[130]

Why, then, did Sommariva replicate his already quite valuable collection with such feverish enthusiasm? The most prosaic reason was simply to ensure the preservation of his collection. Enamel and cameos were durable and long-lasting.[131] Jean Jacques de

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[127] See the lovely examples in Sarah Coffin and Bodo Hofstetter, Portrait Miniatures in Enamel (London: Philip Wilson Publishers, in Association with the Gilbert Collection, 2000).

[128] Carlo-Antonio Pullini described how gems preserved the contours of many ancient works of art that had since been heavily damaged. Carlo-Antonio Pullini, "Saggio di Antiche Gemme Incise co'Relativi Articoli d'Esposizione," Mémoires de l'académie impériale des sciences, littérature et beaux-arts de Turin, pour les années 1809-1810 (Turin: Chez Félix Galletti, 1811) v-vi.

[129] Isa Belli Barsali, European Enamels (London, New York: Hamlyn, 1969) 124.

[130] On a visit to the Villa Sommariva, William Wilson wrote, "In addition to all which [Sommariva's sculptures and paintings], there is a most valuable collection of gems, miniatures, enamels, and other works of that class, in forming which, the noble proprietor must have expended immense sums." William Rae Wilson, Notes Abroad and Rhapsodies at Home, 2 vols. (London: Longman, Rees, Orme, Brown, Green & Longman, 1837) vol. 1, 169.

[131] On durability of enamels see Dussieux, Recherches sur l'histoire de la peinture sur émail dans les temps anciens et modernes, et spécialement en France 144. Miel also commented on this aspect of the art, as well as Sommariva's miniature collection. "Nous devons beaucoup encourager cette peinture; sa durée est à

Sellon, for instance, admired these "copies" by Sommariva, "the modern patron of the Arts" because they were a "service rendered to the art of the history of art."[132] Likewise, although the miniatures could be framed[133] and displayed in his homes to complement the original paintings, they were also small enough to accompany Sommariva on his travels, as were, of course, the cameos. Indeed, it was precisely this desire to keep "an image of the things dearest" to him close by that led to this "favorite idea" of miniaturization.[134] In short, miniaturization gave Sommariva's ownership of these objects a new level of authority. The small size of these works meant they could always accompany him on his

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l'epreuve du temps. Si les anciens l'eussent connue, elle aurait fait passer jusqu'à nous, à travers les siècles, les ouvrages de Zeuxis, de Parrhasius, de Timanthe et d'Apelle. M. de Sommariva fait copier en émail tous les tableaux de sa galerie, afin d'en conserver les véritables nuances. Le vernis, qui est l'ouvrage de feu, est inaltérable comme lui." Miel, Essai sur le Salon de 1817, ou examen critique des principaux ouvrages dont l'exposition se compose 456.

[132] De Sellon also points out how Sommariva, after visiting his collection, gave him a gift of engravings after works Sommariva owned by Canova. "C'est un service à rendre à l'art et à l'*Histoire de l'art*, que d'en faire connaître les plus beaux chefs-d'œuvre *autant qu'il est en soi*, par *des copies,* qui sont à la peinture ce que les *plâtres* sont aux œuvres de *la Statuaire*. M. de Sommariva, le *Mécène* des temps modernes, faisait graver sur cuivre, sur pierre dure, et copier en émail et à l'huile, les chefs-d'œuvre dont il faisait l'acquisition [...]. Après avoir visité ma galerie de tableaux, il m'offrit quelques gravures (par Lunghi) de ses statues de Canova, que je conserve comme un précieux souvenir de cet amateur aussi éclairé que généreux des beaux-arts." Jean Jacques de Sellon, Variétés, Nouveaux mélanges politiques, moraux et littéraires, Du Comte de Sellon, vol. 2 (Genève: De l'Imprimerie Ch. Gruaz, Juin 1837) 149.

[133] According to Isabella Marelli, Sommariva also paid great attention to the frames and the tiniest detail of every work of art. Marelli, "La Collezione Sommariva," 89.

[134] See, for instance, Pietro Ercole Visconti's text on the engraver Giuseppe Girometti, in which he admires both Sommariva's idea to have his collection replicated *and* Girometti's artistry. Visconti wrote, "Aveva il marchese Sommariva, che fu quel magnifico protettore delle arti belle che tutti ricordiamo, una sua favorita idea. Voleva egli che le opere de'sommi artefici, delle quali cresceva splendore alla sua raccolta, fossero d'incisione, di cammèo, e di smalto riprodotte. Per tal modo ne' suoi viaggi, recar poteva con seco, come una immagine delle cose più care. Fra le quali avendo carissime la Maddalena, e la Tersicore, che sono due, come miracoli, dello scalpello di Canova, volle che in due grandi cammei gli fossero intagliate dal Girometti." See Visconti, Notizia delle Opere dell'Incisore in Pietre Dure ed in Coni, Cav. Giuseppe Girometti, Scritta dal Cav. P.E. Visconti 12-13.

In a later biography of Girometti, Visconti once again credited Sommariva's patronage for the resurgence of the art of gem-making. "Il marchese Sommariva faceva egli ripetere le più rare sculture che possedesse in cammeo, onde averle per sempre appresso ne'suoi viaggi. Il nostro Girometti eseguì a tale oggetto per lui la Maddalena di Canova e la Tersicore. La quale cosa sebbene presentasse, anche per il modo delle sculture, grande difficoltà, gli riusci tanto felicemente, che volle il Sommariva aver di sua mano inciso il proprio ritratto." Pietro Ercole Visconti, Gemme Incise dal Cav. Giuseppe Girometti, Pubblicate con le Illustrazioni del Cavaliere P. E. Visconti ... (Roma: Tipografia delle Belle Arti, 1836) 114, note 1.

travels, they could be shown at will to admirers, and, most importantly, they could be physically handled and "possessed" in a way the larger works could not. The ability to physically manipulate the works, it could be said, *heightened* their sense of "aura," since they more closely resembled votives, rosaries and other portable religious relics than purely aesthetic objects. In fact, one might argue that Sommariva worshipped his own image via these miniatures, both symbolically, as collector and patron, and quite literally, since of course, portraits of himself were among those works reproduced. Even in miniatures that did not reproduce his image, however, his identity was still inscribed via inscriptions that identified his commission of the object and his possession of the original work of art. The enamel miniatures of his paintings, for instance, often bear the inscription "Commissioned by Count Sommariva. [The painting] is part of his collection," or, "made for the collection of Monsieur de Sommariva,"[135] on the verso. The cameos of the sculptures often read "Sommariva *possiede*" (fig. 223).

Sommariva's insistence on naming or representing himself in these miniatures was yet another way he strategically recalled and publicized his ownership of these works of art. Certainly, it was a successful strategy, for many Grand Tourists not only visited his collection, but also commented on his collection of miniatures. More importantly these same tourists were able to participate in Sommariva's ownership of these objects by purchasing casts of the cameos. These casts, unlike the precious unique cameos and enamels, were made available for sale to the public through ateliers such as that of Bartolomeo and Paolo Paoletti in Rome.[136] The Paoletti studio, for instance, contained

[135] For examples of the inscriptions on the versos of the miniatures, see Fernando Mazzocca, ed., Neoclassico e Troubadour nelle Miniature di Giambattista Gigola: Milano, Museo Poldi Pezzoli, 25 Ottobre 1978-14 Gennaio 1979 (Firenze: Centro Di, 1978).

more than 7,000 glass impressions after ancient and modern cameos in public museums, such as the Vatican, and significant private collections, such as those of the Medici, Orsini, Este and Farnese families—not to mention that of Sommariva himself. Plaster casts were then made from these impressions, advertised in public journals,[137] and sold to Grand Tour travelers who perhaps could not afford to commission original cameos themselves. They frequently were sold as sets, often held in book-like cases, symbolizing their status both as souvenirs and as a form of knowledge gleaned from the participant's travels (figs. 244-245). Luisella Bernardini has pointed out that this was a way for the bourgeoisie to become closer to the works of great artists,[138] but equally important was

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[136] The Paoletti Collection is the largest collection of glass molds and plaster casts after ancient and Renaissance works. There is currently a project underway to document and reproduce the entire collection in a multi-volume set, of which so far one volume has been issued. See Lucia Pirzio Biroli Stefanelli, La Collezione Paoletti: Stampi in Vetro Per Impronte di Intagli e Cammei (Roma: Gangemi, 2007). Other publications on the collection include Lucia Pirzio Biroli Stefanelli, "Pietro Paoletti e la sua Collezione di Impronte," Bolletino dei Musei Comunali di Roma 25/27 (1978/80): 1-15; Luisella Bernardini, Annarita Caputo and Mila Mastrorocco, eds., Calchi di Intagli e Cammei dalla Collezione Paoletti all'Istituto d'Arte di Firenze (Firenze: Edizioni Polistampa, 1998); Giuliano dal Mas, Pietro Paoletti (1801-1847) ([Italy: s.n., 1999).

Paoletti casts can be found in various museum and library collections, such as those of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, The J. Paul Getty Museum, and the Beazley Archive at the University of Oxford, to name only a few. The latter of these has their collection conveniently accessible online, at https://www.beazley.ox.ac.uk/gems/paoletti/default.htm. Another popular retailer of casts after cameo impressions was Giovanni Liberotti. See Douglas Lewis, "The Last Gems: Italian Neoclassical Gem Engravings and Their Impressions," Engraved Gems : Survivals and Revivals, ed. Clifford M. Brown (Washington and Hannover: National Gallery of Art; Distributed by the University Press of New England, 1997) 297.

Plaster casts after gems engraved by other contemporary artists were also sold as sets by other dealers. See, for instance, the one hundred impressions from gems engraved by Nathaniel Marchant. See Sutton, ed., Souvenirs of the Grand Tour: A Loan Exhibition from National Trust Collections in Aid of the Trust's Conservation Fund, 20 October - 1 December 1982, Wildenstein & Co., London 34.

[137] One such advertisement read: "*Paoletti* begs to inform the Public that he has arranged a collection of impressions (Impronte in Scajola) of many of the works in sculpture executed by distinguished artists, whose works are described by the *Count Hawks le Grice* in the above interesting and instructive "Walks" [Walks through the Studii of the Sculptors of at Rome]. [...] The impressions are bound up in 3 vol. 4^{o}., and form an appropriate companion, to the Count's work. Although the Impronte are but miniature copies; yet they exhibit all the fidelity and beauty of the originals, and convey to the eye a better idea of sculptured works of art than the most finished engravings. The studio of Paoletti is Piazza di Spagna Num. 49, where collections in Impronte may be had of all the works existing in the different Museums in Europe." Count Hawks Le Grice, Walks through the Studii of the Sculptors at Rome, 2 vols. (Rome: Crispino Puccinelli, 1841) vol. 1, 269.

the way this enabled them to participate—if second hand—in Sommariva's project of collecting.

It was *quite* a project. Sommariva was repeatedly described as "the" patron of the arts for the modern era.[139] There is no doubt about the power he held in this realm. Indeed his miniatures signaled not only his role as a consumer of the arts, but also as a producer. Like the modern artists from whom he commissioned works, Sommariva was a *creator* of images. With respect to Canova, therefore, Sommariva aligned himself with the great artist through the process of reproduction itself, by duplicating in microcosm what had already been done by Canova in the prodigious print and cast production of his work. He capitalized on Canova's—and other artists'— fame for both his own private enjoyment and aggrandizement. Likewise, he mimicked the great ancient and Renaissance patrons of art by imitating their rites and rituals—indeed, the very transformation of Canova's works of art into gems and cameos precisely mimicked the way the ancients themselves had miniaturized works of art, to carry as mementos, wear as jewelry, and use as seals. It even was believed that the transformation of works of art into cameos—i.e. the miniaturization of famous "original" paintings and sculptures—promoted the development of the arts by encouraging imitation among artists.[140] Sommariva therefore positioned himself in a nearly god-like relationship to the arts of the early nineteenth century. He was patron, creator, supporter, disseminator, consumer, and admirer in one.

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[138] Luisella Bernardini, "Nel Mondo Ideale e Appartato delle Gemme e dei Cammei," Calchi di Intagli e Cammei dalla Collezione Paoletti all'Istituto d'Arte di Firenze, eds. Luisella Bernardini, Annarita Caputo and Mila Mastrorocco (Firenze: Edizioni Polistampa, 1998) 16.

[139] de Sellon, Variétés 149.

[140] For the many practical uses of incised gems in antiquity, and for their use in encouraging the art of imitation, see Visconti, Gemme Incise dal Cav. Giuseppe Girometti, Pubblicate con le Illustrazioni del Cavaliere P. E. Visconti ... especially 9, 12-13, 23-24, and 114-15.

Sommariva's self-image was bound up so thoroughly with his status as a collector, particularly as a collector of Canova's works, that it transformed both his personal adornment and the way he identified himself. He transformed a cameo of Canova's portrait into a ring, which he "always" wore, establishing an intimate rapport between the two men (figs. 246-247).[141] Transforming the image of a loved one into an article of jewelry was fairly common in the early-nineteenth century, and certainly Canova's portrait—and his sculptures—were often made into ornaments and charms. These were worn by men and women alike. An exchange of letters between Giannantonio Selva and Antonio d'Este from 1804-1805, for instance, discusses the commission of a cameo of Canova's *Perseus*, to be transformed into a ring for a patron.[142] In Luigi Zandomeneghi's bust of Marianna Pascoli Angeli, she wears a cameo of Canova over her heart,[143] and although it is difficult to make out with certainty, it is tempting to read the ring that Luigia Giuli, Canova's housekeeper, wears in the portrait he himself made of her, as a cameo of a portrait bust—perhaps *his* portrait bust (figs. 248-249). Although Sommariva's own ring has been lost, other intimate articles attesting to this tradition include a bracelet with Canova's portrait as a cameo, pins that bear his effigy, and even a snuff box with an inlaid enamel miniature of his countenance (figs. 250-252). Yet despite the fact this was common practice, Sommariva's ring, bearing Canova's likeness, takes

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[141] See the undated draft of a letter from Sommariva to Canova (likely addressed to Canova's half-brother, Giovanni Battista Sartori)."Ditez a notre excellent Canova, que je porte toujours son portrait a mon doigt: ditez vous qu'il m'est plus cher chaque jour: vous même l'avez porté, vous me l'avez donné. Combien d'emotions vives doncs sont attachés au sentiment céleste que vous meritez si bien d'inspirer et de conserver." Cited in Mazzocca, "G. B. Sommariva o il Borghese Mecenate: Il 'Cabinet' Neoclassico di Parigi, la Galleria Romantica di Tremezzo," 145.

[142] The letters between Selva and d'Este can be found in the Biblioteca Correr, PD 529C.

[143] For Zandomeneghi's sculpture, see Museo Canoviano and Fondazione Canova, La Mano e Il Volto di Antonio Canova: Nobile Semplicità, Serena 187 and 236.

on a remarkably more suggestive connotation in light of Sommariva's personification of Canova's *Terpsichore* (fig. 253). He repeatedly referred to this work as "his bride," which made Canova his "father-in-law."[144] Indeed, Sommariva kept the statue in his bedroom at Paris, at the foot of his bed—where he claimed it was better situated than in the Louvre itself.[145] These sexual metaphors speak to the intimacy and private connection Sommariva felt to the artist and his works of art. Sommariva perceived himself to be, quite literally, wedded to his collection. In this light, Girodet's selection of the theme of *Pygmalion* takes on quite a new meaning!

Sommariva's placement of *Terpsichore* in the most intimate position in his home also signals his participation in the larger culture of performance and neoclassical exhibition techniques. In his homes, he displayed Canova's works against velvet curtains and surrounded by mirrors, stressing the particularities of their display. *Terpsichore, Palamedes*, and *Penitent Magdalene*, for instance, each were displayed with mirrors behind them, to afford viewers a complete view of each work.[146] Yet each work also was displayed carefully according to the subject of the sculpture and the personal resonance the piece had for Sommariva. If *Terpsichore* was his "bride," for instance, *Penitent Magdalene* might be considered a self-portrait.[147] That is, in addition to the religious self-

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[144] For references to Canova as his father-in-law and *Terpsichore* as his bride, see, for instance, the letters from Sommariva to Canova on January 30, 1812; July 24, 1812; August 19, 1812; January 23, 1813; February 25, 1813; March 31, 1813; and September 15, 1813, as cited in Mazzocca, "G. B. Sommariva o il Borghese Mecenate: Il 'Cabinet' Neoclassico di Parigi, la Galleria Romantica di Tremezzo," 253, 255, 256, 261-65, respectively.

[145] See the letter from Sommariva to Canova on February 25, 1813 in Mazzocca, "G. B. Sommariva o il Borghese Mecenate: Il 'Cabinet' Neoclassico di Parigi, La Galleria Romantica di Tremezzo," 262-63.

[146] See, for instance, note 98 regarding the placement of *Palamedes* in front of a mirror.

[147] Anne Higonnet explores the way collectors often position works that are literal or metaphoric self-portraits in their collections. See Anne Higonnet, A Museum of One's Own: Private Collecting, Public Gift (Pittsburgh: Periscope Publishing, 2009) 127.

reflection *Penitent Magdalene* was supposed to inspire, it was also the piece which best reflected Sommariva himself. It was, after all, the work with which Sommariva established himself as a collector of Canova's works in Paris and with which, one might argue, he erased his past and created a new identity for himself. Visitors who met the Count, for instance, described him as a man who had moved to France to create himself anew[148] —not unlike the way Mary Magdalene moved to France and renounced her own past. But if Magdalene reinvented herself through faith and religion, Sommariva did so through the strength of his collection. His was a *modern* reinvention, achieved through the personalization of his collection and the individualization of aesthetic experience. The chapel-like space which Sommariva created for *Magdalene,* therefore, attracted visitors who could not help but reflect on Sommariva's character and his collection as much as their own piety. Once again, it was *Magdalene's* expression that drew their attention, as they contemplated their emotional response to the sculpture as well as her place in the history of art.

"Partly a chapel, partly a boudoir": Sentiment and Interiority

When the Salon closed in January 1809, Sommariva returned *Penitent Magdalene* to his townhouse on the Rue Basse des Remparts, where the particulars of its display enhanced viewers' attention to the work's expression. Acknowledging the sculpture's religious subject, Sommariva created a chapel-like space that isolated the *Magdalene* and

[148] "It was on that ground [in the soirées of Mme d'Houdetot] that, a long time afterwards, we saw the Marquis de Sommariva spring up there. I may say "spring up" because he really did seem to arise out of the earth. He was a little advocate of Milan whom the Italian Revolution had provided with an immense fortune; a title, and everything that follows; and who, as a man of wit, was looking for a country where he would find neither relatives nor companions, nor recollections." Auguste François Fauveau Frénilly, Recollections of Baron de Frénilly, trans. Frederic Lees, ed. Arthur Chuquet (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1909) 199.

enhanced her religious and aesthetic aura.[149] The quasi-religious aspect of the display created a new theater of reception for the work, which, in turn, prompted deep empathy for the figure of Magdalene on behalf of viewers. Yet despite the religious aura created by the chapel, viewers were fully aware of the secular space of Sommariva's collection as a whole. Comments vacillated between their appreciation of the saint's religious piety and intense awareness of her eroticism, as well as Canova's attention to her expression, the sculptural medium, and Sommariva's role as a collector. In the context of Sommariva's display, the statue was firmly established as a work of art that could appeal universally to viewers by tapping into their innermost sentiments.

Sommariva himself was delighted with the "tone and rich simplicity of the space" that he created for the *Magdalene*, and for which he "consulted people of the highest taste to make sure nothing was lacking."[150] He gloated to Canova that "despite the fact that she [*Magdalene*] was publicly exhibited for more than two months, [...] every day someone comes to see [the work] and everyone finds that the way I have lodged her accords perfectly with the subject and as much as possible with the merit of the work. It will suffice to tell you that everyone agrees that they have never seen her look more beautiful."[151] Sommariva's unusual choice of words—his claim that he has "lodged" the

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[149] The religious nature of collecting is evident not only in the setting Sommariva created for the *Penitent Magdalene*, but, once again, in the miniaturization of *Magdalene*'s image into cameos, transforming her into a votive object.

[150] Letter from Sommariva to Canova, December 28, 1808. "[L'Apollino est] placé avantageusement dans un salon en forme de galerie que j'ai à mon hotel à Paris et où j'ai mis aussi mes plus beaux tableaux; mais j'ai fait faire une pièce exprés pour y mettre la Madeleine quand elle sortira du Salon et ce sera avant la fin de ce mois. Le ton et la riche simplicité du lieu, lui conviendront à merveille car j'ai consulté les personnes du meilleur gout pour rien n'y manque. Le jeune peintre qui doit partir pour Rome dans les mois de Janvier, la verra en place et vous rendra compte verbalement." As cited in Mazzocca, "G. B. Sommariva o il Borghese Mecenate: Il 'Cabinet' Neoclassico di Parigi, la Galleria Romantica di Tremezzo," 240.

[151] Letter from Sommariva to Canova, January 14, 1809. "[Magdalene est] logée dans la pièce que j'ai fait faire exprès pour elle. Malgré qu'elle ait été exposée pendant plus de deux mois publiquement, j'ai tous les

statue— personifies *Penitent Magdalene* just as he personified *Terpsichore*. Rather than "installing" or "displaying" the sculpture, he has provided accommodation for the saint herself, another telling invocation of the Pygmalion myth that drives home the idea that the statue is a living being; in addition, and perhaps more importantly, Sommariva is not merely her owner, but rather her host.

Sommariva's townhouse in Paris therefore became a central attraction for a wide variety of European and American visitors, many of whom recorded their visit in journals that provide us with a glimpse into Sommariva's display strategies. Although many loathed the French paintings Sommariva had purchased, almost all visitors agreed that Canova's sculptures were the highlight of the collection.[152] Lady Morgan, who saw the collection in 1816, for instance, wrote that "it is the *Terpsichore* and *Magdeleine* of Canova, that lend the hotel de Sommariva its principal interest, if the taste, politeness, and hospitality of Mons. de Sommariva is himself to be excepted."[153] Thomas Dibdin agreed, for "[i]t is here that Canova reigns without a rival,"[154] and Henri de Latouche

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jours quelq'un qui vient la voir et chacun trouve que la manière dont je l'ai logée convient parfaitement et au sujet et autant que possible au mérite de l'ouvrage. Enfin il me suffrira de vous dire que tout le monde s'accorde à dire qu'on ne l'a jamais vue plus belle. M. le Chev.s Gérard et Prud'hon qu'ont diné chez moi ces jours derniers partagent cette opinion […]." Mazzocca, "G. B. Sommariva o il Borghese Mecenate: Il 'Cabinet' Neoclassico di Parigi, la Galleria Romantica di Tremezzo," 241.

[152] According to his wife, Charles Eastlake (1793-1865), member of the Royal Academy in London, could not stand the paintings. "He [Eastlake] also made acquaintance with some of the private collections in Paris, and speaks of one belonging "to M. Sommariva, an Italian gentleman, who seems determined to encourage the Arts *à tort et à travers*, for he has hung the most detestable French things by the side of Titian and Vandyck—employs French artists to copy his whole gallery in enamel, and Italian ones to transform his pictures into cameos and bas-reliefs. [...] A crying defect in all French painters, though perhaps not so much their fault as their country's, is that 'gout libre' which is such a terrible abuse of the art, and which our countrymen are happily free from, with one or two exceptions." Charles Lock Eastlake and Elizabeth Rigby Eastlake, Contributions to the Literature of the Fine Arts 2d Series with a Memoir Compiled by Lady Eastlake (London: John Murray, 1870) 58.

[153] Lady Morgan had a more favorable view of the paintings than Eastlake, for she wrote, "The hotel de Sommariva is enriched by some of the finest pictures of the old Italian masters, and some of the most splendid specimens of the genius of modern artists." Morgan, France 230.

claimed that Canova's *Magdalene* attracted more devotees than the relics of saints in Rome.[155]

The *Magdalene*, therefore, was given pride of place in the collection, and shown to her best advantage in a room that she occupied by herself.[156] The sanctuary that Sommariva created, described by Baron de Freilly as "partly a chapel, partly a boudoir"[157] greatly impressed numerous visitors.[158] Needless to say, *Magdalene's*

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[154] "As I happen to be just now in the humour for gossiping about the fine arts, suppose I take you with me to the collection of paintings of the MARQUIS DE SOMMARIVA, in the _Rue du Bas Rempart_. It is among the most distinguished, and the most celebrated, in Paris; but I should say it is rather eminent for sculpture than for painting. It is here that Canova reigns without a rival. The early acquaintance and long tried friend of the Marquis, that unrivalled sculptor has deposited here what he considers to be the _chef-d'œuvre_ of his art, as a single figure. Of course, I speak of his _Magdalen_. But let me be methodical. [...]" Dibdin, A Bibliographical Antiquarian and Picturesque Tour in France and Germany vol. 2, 309.

In 1830, Canova's works, particularly *the Penitent Magdalene,* were still considered the best pieces in Sommariva's collection. "Canova's inimitable Magdalen conceals herself in a small chamber, in the Hôtel de Someriva [*sic*]. There are still many interesting pictures, here, though some of the best have been removed to Italy; but were there nothing but this exquisite piece of sculpture, it were possessed of a treasure scarcely paralleled." L.S.C., "Canova, David, &C," Belle Assemblée; or Court and Fashionable Magazine 11.63 (March 1830): 111.

[155] "Elle est sous les yeux de tous les amateurs; toute la France peut l'aller admirer, grace à l'hospitalité que lui donne au milieu de Paris son heureux possesseur, et à l'obligeante facilité avec laquelle il laisse approcher de son trésor.

Qui ne connaît la galerie de M. Sommariva, amateur éclairé de tous les arts, et qui conserve au moins un ouvrage de chacun de nos premiers peintres vivants? Qui n'a été voir la Madeleine dans ce petit temple isolé, où elle se détache sur un fond de draperies couleur carmelite, comme si on avait voulu rattacher par quelque allusion le souvenir de la Pécheresse de l'Évangile à celui de cette Soeur de la Miséricorde, qui expia dans les larmes son amour pour un illustre ingrat. [...] Nous avons vu à Rome moins de dévots empressés autour des saintes reliques de la bienheureuse, recueillies dans l'église de Saint-Jean-de-Latran, qu'on n'en rencontre au sein du sanctuaire que lui a élevé M. de Sommariva." de Latouche and Réveil, Œuvre de Canova, recueil de gravures d'après ses statues et ses bas-reliefs np.

[156] On Joseph Woods' visit to the Sommariva collection in 1816, he noted that, "Besides the paintings, M. Sommariva possesses two works by Canova. A Terpsichore and a most exquisite Magdalene, who occupies a room to herself, and has every possible advantage of light, and of the colour of the ground; and deserves every advantage which can be given." Joseph Woods, Letters of an Architect, from France, Italy and Greece, 2 vols. (London: John and Arthur Arch, 1826) vol. 1, 107.

[157] "At his beautiful house in the Rue Basse-du-Rempart there was a small collection of masterpieces of the Italian School, including *La Madeleine*, the most admirable of the works of Canova, who worked for him a good deal. M. de Sommariva has had a little *sacellum* expressly made for it at the end of his apartment; it was partly a chapel, partly a boudoir, furnished in violet, and lit solely by an alabaster lamp hanging from the dome, beneath which crouched the dying Magdalen." Frénilly, Recollections of Baron de Frénilly 199-200.

placement in the private home of Sommariva created a radically different encounter with the object than the larger space of the 1808 Salon. Indeed, throughout the eighteenth century, the townhouse interior had gradually been modified and theorized as a space which could engender emotional responses from both owners and visitors.[159] New rooms and new spaces were created—including the highly feminized space of the "boudoir,"

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[158] There are numerous other descriptions of the apartment. One of the most notable includes the description by the journalist, named only as "H.," who advised travelers on interesting sites to visit in Paris. He wrote, "This Boulevard is not one of the most amusing, but it can boast an attraction of another kind. In the hotel opposite is the celebrated Magdalene of Canova. We cannot go to see it now, because, if we should, the walk must be given up for the day—hours are moments before it. It has a room appropriated to itself; a solemn drapery of deep grey falls from the centre of the roof, and hangs down the walls in classic folds,—the vulgar glare of day is excluded, —the Magdalene is sitting upon a pedestal of white marble, her head a little inclined to one side,—her eyes dejectedly and fixedly looking upon the cross of Christ, which lies upon her knees. Look at her from what side you will, it is the representation of deep grief. It is not in the face alone; go behind; go to any side; look at the neck; see the relaxation of the muscle; cover it all but one arm, still it is grief—some say that the thumb alone expresses its character. In short, it is perfect. But let us pass on, we shall go see it tomorrow. To-morrow is Friday, and it is only to be seen on Fridays." H., "A Walk Round Paris," The Edinburgh Magazine and Literary Miscellany XIII (Nov. 1823): 526; republished as H., "A Walk Round Paris," The Museum of Foreign Literature and Science IV (Jan-June 1824).20 (Feb. 1824): 172-78.

Another writer noted in a footnote that "This *chef d'œuvre* [*The Penitent Magdalene*] merits a journey to Paris on purpose to see it, though thousands go there and return, without being aware of its existence. Strangers generally content themselves with following the instructions of *Galignani's* guide; and perhaps a few, more ambitious, appropriate several mornings to the *Louvre*, that upon their return they may be able to give some account of its treasures. But *Galignani's* guide makes no mention of the Magdalene of Canova; and he who contents himself with an examination of the *Louvre* will see nothing in statuary possessing half the interest of this work of art, and but few paintings comparable to those in the private collection of the Marechal Soult, where the "Prodigal Son," "Conception," and "Christ healing the Sick" of Murillo, may rank with the proudest triumphs of the Italian schools. But to return to the "Magdalene." It is in the house of an Italian nobleman, who appropriates to it, alone, a room in his hotel on the *Boulevard Italien.* The room is hung round with a curtain of grey drapery; and there being but one window, and that partly shaded by the curtain, the light that enters is of the most subdued and sober kind, according well with the sadness of the subject it is intended to show. The Magdalene is seated upon a pedestal, with the feet crossed; the head is a little inclined to one side, and she is stedfastly looking upon the cross of Christ, which she bears upon her extended arms, and supports upon her knees." Derwent Conway, "The Misfortune of Alice, a Domestic Tale, or Another Judgment of the World [with a] Note Upon the Magdalene of Canova," Tales of Ardennes (London: G.B. Whittaker, 1825) 189-90, note a.

[159] Charles Rice has described the emergence of the domestic interior as both a concept and a material space in relation to subjective interiority. Charles Rice, The Emergence of the Interior: Architecture, Modernity, Domesticity (London; New York: Routledge, 2007). Recently Meredith Martin has discussed the way space, identity, and emotion were linked in eighteenth-century French architectural theories, paying particular attention to Nicolas Le Camus de Mézières' writing. See Meredith Martin, "The Ascendancy of the Interior in Eighteenth-Century French Architectural Theory," Architectural Space in Eighteenth-Century Europe: Constructing Identities and Interiors, eds. Denise Amy Baxter and Meredith Martin (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010) 15-34.

first described as a room where a woman could go "pout."[160] Jill Casid has recently explored the way this space, so closely aligned with erotic femininity and private life, was used to contrast with—and so by virtue establish—the Salon as a more masculine, "public" space.[161] In addition, the space in which the *Magdalene* was exhibited also functioned synonymously as a domestic chapel, a private corner set aside for prayer. Although chapels were not necessarily feminine spaces per se, they often held devotional objects and representations, among which votives devoted to female saints, particularly the Magdalene, were among the most important in France.[162] Both boudoir and chapel were intimate spaces for individual contemplation and retreat. The interior of the townhouse—of the *home*—therefore aligned Sommariva's private collection and his identity as an individual.[163] At the same time, it also encouraged personal reflection by not only heightening but *creating* awareness of individual subjectivity.[164]

The particularities of the display Sommariva selected for *Magdalene* further reinforced these ideas. Lady Morgan, for instance, wrote of the "small apartment, hung

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[160] Annik Pardailhé-Galabrun, The Birth of Intimacy: Privacy and Domestic Life in Early Modern Paris, trans. Jocelyn Phelps (Cambridge [Cambridgeshire]: Polity Press, 1991) 63-64.

[161] Jill H. Casid, "Commerce in The 'Boudoir'," Women, Art and the Politics of Identity in Eighteenth-Century Europe, eds. Melissa Hyde and Jennifer Milam, Women and Gender in the Early Modern World (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003) 91-114.

[162] Pardailhé-Galabrun, The Birth of Intimacy: Privacy and Domestic Life in Early Modern Paris 199.

[163] For the importance of the home in relation to personal collection museums, particularly the way the home "stood for individual identity, daily life and organic unity," see Higonnet, A Museum of One's Own: Private Collecting, Public Gift esp. chp. 3, "Homes for History," 81-121.

[164] In her study of nineteenth-century paintings of interiors, Susan Sidlauskas comments on the the relationship between subjectivity and the domestic interior. She writes, "Subjectivity became *interiority* when it was staged in the space that was identified with its most intense, authentic expression: the domestic interior." Later she adds, "Subjectivity was not simply pictured within the domestic interior; it was here that it *came into being*." Emphasis in original. Susan Sidlauskas, Body, Place, and Self in Nineteenth-Century Painting (Cambridge, U.K.; New York Cambridge University Press, 2000) 19-20.

with dark silk, [that] enshrines this marble wonder," while Thomas Dibdin was so moved by his encounter with the sculpture that he wrote about it at length:

> We approach the far-famed MAGDALEN. Immediately opposite the boudoir, were the last mentioned treasures are deposited, you observe a door, or aperture, half covered with silken drapery of a greyish brown tint. There was something mysterious in the appearance, and equally so in the approach. I had no intimation of what it led to; for, as I told you, not a creature besides myself was in the rooms. With a gently raised hand I drew the drapery aside, entered ... and looked before me. There stood the MAGDALEN. [...] For the first five minutes I was lost in surprise and admiration. The windows are hid by white curtains; and the interior is hung all over with the same grey silk drapery, before noticed. A glass, placed behind the figure, affords you a view of the back while you are contemplating the front. This is very ingenious; but it is probably too artificial. The effect of the room, however—from the silken drapery with which it is entirely covered—is, although studied, upon the whole excellent. Of course the minutes flew away quickly in such a place, and before such an object; and I think I viewed the figure, in every possible direction, for full three quarters of an hour.[165]

For Dibdin, a large part of *Magdalene's* allure lay in his solitary interaction with the sculpture, and his enigmatic approach to the sanctuary. His description merges the solemnity of religious awe with the eroticism of a sexual encounter. The shadows of the room, the dimmed lighting, and the hushed setting create the sense of a death vigil, waiting for the penitent to pass. The cool grey silk and shadows would undoubtedly have muted the saint's flesh, giving her a grayish pallor that would have enhanced the sensation that the viewer was admiring Magdalene mere moments before her death. Likewise, the alabaster lamp would have cast Magdalene's face and the curves of her body in shadow, emphasizing the contrast between the voluptuousness of the body and the remorseful expression on her face. At the same time, however, by using a mirror to display the rear of the sculpture, Magdalene's presence as a physical body and as a woman was placed fully on display for viewers, transforming her into a sensual object.

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[165] Dibdin, A Bibliographical Antiquarian and Picturesque Tour in France and Germany vol. 2, 312-14.

Yet, the mirror held the potential to reflect the visitor as well, and in so doing, to create a moment of self-regard and self-reflection. In the shadows of the room, the beholder could therefore find "the liberty" of privacy, in which he could both examine his own conscience and take pleasure in the *Magdalene*.[166]

The tension between religious austerity and sensuality led to a variety of responses on the part of viewers. Many comments were fueled by aesthetic concerns, as were those of the critics of the 1808 Salon. Dibdin, for instance, felt there was too pronounced a disjunction between the beautiful fullness of the *Magdalene's* body and her emaciated face.[167] Dibdin also noted that the whole atmosphere in which the *Penitent Magdalene* was exhibited seemed too "studied" and likewise critiqued what he felt was the inappropriate inclusion of the bronze cross. Medium specificity remained very much an issue, and indeed, the pseudo-sacred setting heightened the disjunction between the

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[166] For more on mirrors in home decoration, see Pardailhé-Galabrun, The Birth of Intimacy: Privacy and Domestic Life in Early Modern Paris 164-67.

[167] "My next objection relates to a somewhat more important point. I think the _face_ and _figure_ do not seem to belong to the _same_ human being: the former is shrunken, ghastly, and indicative of extreme constitutional debility: the latter is plump, well formed, and bespeaks a subject in the enjoyment of full health. Can such an union, therefore, be quite correct? In the different views of this figure, especially in profile, or behind, you cannot fail to be struck with the general beauty of the form; but this beauty arises from its fulness and just proportion. In gazing upon it, in front, you are pained by the view of a countenance shrunk almost to emaciation! Can this be in nature? And do not mental affliction and bodily debility generally go together? The old painters, even as far back as the time of illuminators of books, used to represent the Magdalen as plump, even to fatness,—and stout in all respects; but her _countenance_ usually partook of this vigour of stamina. It was full, rosy, and healthful. The older artists sometimes placed the Magdalen in a very awkward, and perhaps impossible, situation; and she was even made to be buried up to the bosom in earth—still exercising her devotions. Canova has doubtless displayed great pathos in the wretched aspect, and humiliated attitude, of his Magdalen; but he has, at the same time, not been inattentive to beauty of form. I only wish she appeared to be in as good condition as the _torso_ indicates. A fastidious observer might say the figure was not _quite balanced_, and that she must fall backward—if she retained such an attitude for a quarter of an hour. But this is hyper-criticism. The date of the execution of this figure is 1796: and parts of it clearly indicate that, if the sculptor were now to re-execute it, he would have paid even yet more attention to the finishing of the hair. Upon the whole, however, it is a masterly effort of modern art." Dibdin, A Bibliographical Antiquarian and Picturesque Tour in France and Germany vol. 2, 314-16.

Magdalene's spartan existence, the beggarliness of her posture, and the luxuriousness of the bronze.[168]

The attention to medium specificity elicited by Sommariva's display tactics likewise reinforced the earlier interest in the sculpture's expression. At stake, once again, was the question of whether sculpture was even capable of capturing expression. Thomas Moore thought this was the case, and wrote that the *Magdalene* "excell[ed] in what is generally out of the sphere of sculpture, —expression."[169] He could not help but compare the sculpture to Correggio's painting of the Penitent Magdalene and was inspired to write a poem about the saint, in which, once again, he marveled at the way the Magdalene's "true expression's breathing light" was captured by Canova's chisel. As a result of

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[168] After his initial awe at viewing the sculpture, Dibdin wrote, "The result of that view—after the first feelings of admiration had subsided—I proceeded forthwith to impart: and shall be most happy to be set right if I have erred, in the conclusion which I draw. In truth, there can be only one or two little supposed impeachments of the artist's judgment, in the contemplation of this extraordinary figure. The Magdalen has probably too much of the abject expression of _mendicity_ in her attitude; and, for a creature thus poor and prostrate, one is surprised to find her gazing upon a _golden_ cross. It is a piece of finery ill placed in the midst of such wretchedness. But Canova is fond of gilt; yet what is appropriate in _Hebe_ may be discordant in the _Magdalen_. This penitent creature, here so touchingly expressed, is deeply wrapped in meditation upon her crucified Master. She has forsaken the world ... to follow the cross!—but surely this idea would have been more powerfully expressed, if the cross had _not_ been _visible_? Was this object necessary to tell the tale?—or, rather, did not the sculptor deem it necessary to _balance_ (as is called) the figure? Nor am I over well satisfied with the scull [*sic*]. It is common-place. At any rate, if scull and cross must be there, I wish the cross had been simply of stone—as is the scull." Dibdin, A Bibliographical Antiquarian and Picturesque Tour in France and Germany vol. 2, 314.

[169] See the diary entry dated April 7, 1820 for Moore's visit to Sommariva's collection. "Went to see the Marquis Somariva's collection; the Magdalen of Canova its chief ornament; an exquisite thing, and excelling in what is generally out of the sphere of sculpture,—expression." Moore, Memoirs, Journal and Correspondence of Thomas Moore 256. Moore had seen a cast of *Magdalene* a year earlier in October 1819, in Canova's studio in Rome. He found her "a most touching thing; beauty emaciated, and an attitude full of humility and sorrow: the best of all the Magdalens I have seen." Moore, Memoirs, Journal and Correspondence of Thomas Moore 236.

Moore repeats his assertion that the *Penitent Magdalene,* despite its sculptural status, captures expression fully. "The other, [*Penitent Magdalene*] which seems to prove, in contradiction to very high authority, that expression, of the intensest kind, is fully within the sphere of sculpture, was executed many years ago, and is in the possession of the Count Sommariva, at Paris." Thomas Moore, The Poetical Works of Thomas Moore, Including Melodies, Ballads, Etc. Completed in One Volume (Paris: A. and W. Galignani, 1829) 177, footnote 1.

Canova's imaginative prowess, he made her "feel, and live and die" as no other artist had.[170]

Expression manifested itself in every aspect of the figure, and indeed, one might argue that it was precisely the work's sculptural status that allowed Magdalene's expression to be best fulfilled. That is, unlike a two-dimensional painted surface, Canova's *Magdalene* revealed her penitence in three-dimensions—in the contours of the marble, in the features of her body, and in every view of her profile. Every aspect of the sculpture revealed Magdalene's grief, in a way that simply could not have been accomplished by a painting. One reviewer, for instance, noted that, "[s]ettled grief dwells in every line of the countenance, and diffuses itself over every part of the figure, so that we plainly discover the expression of it even on a side view and when the face is not visible."[171] Another critic expressed the same sentiment, musing that the work invited

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[170] Moore informed Canova he would write a poem about the sculpture when visiting the artist in his studio in Rome in 1819. See Moore, Memoirs, Journal and Correspondence of Thomas Moore 241.

"A vision, worthy of the sphere/Thy faith has given thee in the skies,/And in the hearts of all men here—/Not one hath equall'd, hath come night/CANOVA'S fancy; oh, not one/Hath made thee feel, and live, and die/In tears away, as *he* hath done,/In those bright images, more bright/With true expression's breathing light/Than ever yet beneath the stroke/Of chisel into life awoke!/"

After describing the *Reclining Magdalene*, Moore continues, "The other [*Penitent Magdalane*], as though look'dst when years/Of fasting, penitence and tears/Had worn thee down—and ne'er did Art/ With half such mental power express/The ruin which a breaking heart/ Spreads, by degrees, o'er loveliness!/Those wasted arms, that keep the trace,/Even now, of all their youthful grace—/Those tresses, of thy charms the last,/Whose pride forsook thee, wildly cast—/Those features, even in fading worth/The freshest smiles to others given,/And those sunk eyes, that see not earth,/But whose last looks are full of Heaven!/Wonderful artist! Praise like mine—/Though springing from a soul that feels/Deep worship of those works divine,/Where Genius all his light reveals—/Is little to the words that came/From him, thy peer in art and fame,/ Whom I have known, by day, by night,/Hang o'er thy marble with delight,/And, while his lingering hand would steal,/O'er every grace the taper's rays,/Give thee, with all the generous zeal/Such master-spirits only feel,/That best of fame—a rival's praise!" Moore, The Poetical Works of Thomas Moore, Including Melodies, Ballads, Etc. Completed in One Volume 177.

[171] "Art. VIII. The Works of Antonio Canova in Sculpture and Modelling, Engraved in Outline by Henry Moses, with Descriptions from the Italian of the Countess Albrizzi, and a Biographical Memoir by Count Cicognara. 2 Vols. Folio. London. 1824," North American Review XXIX.New Series. vol. XX. no LXV (Oct. 1829): 455-56. Reprinted in "Life and Works of Canova [Abridged from the North American Review]," The Polar Star of Entertainment and Popular Science, and Universal Repertorium of General Literature... IV (1830): 25-39 and Alexander H. Everett, "Life and Works of Canova," Critical and

spectators to spend hours before it, so they could contemplate the way grief suffused not only the saint's face, but the muscles in her neck, her arms—even her thumbs.[172] Even Lady Morgan meditated on "[t]he rough sole of the small foot" that told the tale of Magdalene's many "dreary step[s], trod in penitence and hardship" (fig. 254).[173]

The expression Canova had captured so eloquently in each curve of the saint's body was activated by the display at Sommariva's, which enabled every aspect of the sculpture to be viewed. The mirror enabled viewers to take in the saint's "rough soles" and her desolate countenance in one glance, while the flickering light from the alabaster lamp would have cast her downcast eyes even further into shadow. This chapel-like alcove reinforced the sense of the saint's grief and the viewer's empathy for her. The setting, therefore, redirected viewers' attention away from their aesthetic considerations towards their emotional reaction to the work of art. That is, visitors' admiration did not end with their appreciation of Canova's prowess as a sculptor. Rather, they then were led to consider the way Canova's work—in the context of Sommariva's display—elicited their own intense emotions. The Magdalene's suffering was empathetically drawn out in the viewers themselves.

Miscellaneous Essays to Which Are Added a Few Poems (Boston: James Munroe & Company, 1845) 234-82.

[172] "Look at her from what side you will, it is the representation of deep grief. It is not in the face alone; go behind; go to any side; look at the neck; see the relaxation of the muscle; cover it all but one arm, still it is grief—some say that the thumb alone expresses its character. In short, it is perfect." H., "A Walk Round Paris," 526.

[173] "Still however, with all her beauty, all her *life,* all her grace, the lovely *Terpsichore* is more than rivalled by the grief-worn form of the penitent *Magdeleine*. A small apartment, hung with dark silk, enshrines this marble wonder, which expresses in every form, every curve, every fibre, the wasting touch of time and wo; on whose cheek the tear seems lucid, or, at most, but half congealed: whose eye swims upon the gaze, and whose limbs, symmetrical even in decay, exhibit a beautiful skeleton, to which the delicate muscle seems scarcely to adhere. The rough sole of the small foot tells of many a dreary step, trod in penitence and hardship, while the still rounded shoulder survives the wreck of other beauties, and the sensibility of the drooping countenance is the expression of one, who deserved to "*be forgiven,—for she loved much*." Morgan, France 230.

Lady Morgan, for instance, reflected on the penitent and noted that only a viewer with the hardest heart would not feel emotion in her midst.[174] Dibdin agreed, for there was no escaping the fact that "you could not look at her without feeling pity and compassion,"[175] while Auguste Hilarion de Kératry felt a "frisson in the face of such agony."[176] Alexandre Lenoir even used the *Penitent Magdalene* as the example for "la tristesse et la pleurer," in his treatise on emotional states, for the *Magdalene's* expression "placed the soul of the spectator between admiration and sadness."[177] The *Magdalene* therefore inspired emotional responses in viewers which were enhanced by the combination of the setting and the expression she herself revealed. Indeed, despite the potential eroticism of the partly nude sculpture, the combination of her expression, Sommariva's evocative setting, and the empathy felt by the viewer transformed the sculpture into a solemn message. One reviewer noted that although "[a]t the view of so many beauties, voluptuous emotions begin to steal upon the mind," *Magdalene's*

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[174] "Whoever can look upon this splendid specimen of the noblest of the arts without emotion, must have more of marble in their composition, than the statues of Canova!" Morgan, France 230.

[175] Dibdin, A Bibliographical Antiquarian and Picturesque Tour in France and Germany vol. 2, 313.

[176] "Canova, en sculptant sa Magdeleine mourante, a été vrai dans les formes et surtout dans l'expression. On a frissonne à l'aspect d'une tell agonie. Qui n'a jamais vu mourir peut regarder ce chef-d'œuvre d'imitation et il saura comment la vie échappe à une nature défaillante, chez laquelle il n'y a plus rien qui puisse lui servir d'aliment. L'art n'a jamais poussé plus loin l'illusion." de Kératry, Du Beau dans les arts d'imitation avec un examen raisonné des productions des diverses écoles de peinture et de sculpture, et en particulier de celle de France vol. 2, 154.

[177] "L'expression du *pleurer* est beaucoup mieux rendue encore par une tête de Corrège, peinte sur bois, représentant la *Madeleine repentante*; elle appartient à M. le chevalier Sommariva. [...] Le même amateur des arts possède une statue du chevalier Canova, représentant le même sujet. Le marbre est animé, c'est un chef-d'œuvre d'expression dans un autre genre. La tête, la pose, l'affaissement général, l'affliction complette de Madeleine placent l'âme du spectateur entre l'admiration et la tristesse." Alexandre Lenoir, Observations scientifique et critiques sur le génie et les principales productions des peintre et autres artistes le plus célèbre de l'antiquité, du moyen age, et des temps modernes (Paris: Chez B. Mondor, 1821) 129.

This section was also published more broadly in Alexandre Lenoir, "Beaux Arts. Suite des observations sur le génie et les principales productions des peintres et autres artistes le plus célèbre de l'antiquité, du moyen age, et des temps modernes," Annales françaises des arts, des sciences et des lettres 4 année. vol. 8.2 (1821): 62-70.

penitence, the cord, the cross, the "drooping head, [and] the dishevelled hair"—the very attributes seen to such dramatic effect in Sommariva's chapel—"[...] chasten every idle thought, and inspire, even without the aid of the countenance, the deepest sentiments of melancholy and pity."[178] Indeed one British correspondent, David Carey, argued that the work became a dramatic "moral lesson" in which "the eye is made the medium of instruction to the understanding."[179] So profound was the work's unusual combination of beauty and pain that it could move a viewer to tears.[180]

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[178] "Nothing indeed can be finer in its way than one of these side views. It presents the flowing outline of a beautiful female form with proportions rather full than slender, but nicely symmetrical. The upturned sole of the delicate foot, the recumbent thigh swelling under the resistance of the legs and feet on which it reposes, the gracefully reclining body, the smooth and gently rounded shoulders, and the finely turned arms and hands, are all finished and disposed of with exquisite taste and skill. At the view of so many beauties, voluptuous emotions begin to steal upon the mind; but the cord that surrounds the waist of the lovely sufferer, the mysterious symbol of torture and penitence that is seen in her hands, the drooping head, the dishevelled hair, the general attitude of utter desolation and abandonment, chasten every idle thought, and inspire, even without the aid of the countenance, the deepest sentiments of melancholy and pity." "Art. VIII. The Works of Antonio Canova in Sculpture and Modelling, Engraved in Outline by Henry Moses, with Descriptions from the Italian of the Countess Albrizzi, and a Biographical Memoir by Count Cicognara. 2 Vols. Folio. London. 1824," 456.

Everett continues, augmenting his argument regarding expression and medium specificity, but suggesting that neither painters nor sculptors truly can capture "repentance," since their respective arts can only represent a single moment in time. Only the poet can truly capture the "secret agony" of real repentance. For this reason he considers Canova's two Magdalenes (Sommariva's *Penitent Magdalene* and the *Reclining Magdalene* from 1819-1822) better representations of grief than repentance, "but by the aid of accessories, which direct the imagination of the spectator, they produce the effect intended." "Art. VIII. The Works of Antonio Canova in Sculpture and Modelling, Engraved in Outline by Henry Moses, with Descriptions from the Italian of the Countess Albrizzi, and a Biographical Memoir by Count Cicognara. 2 Vols. Folio. London. 1824," 457-58.

[179] Carey critiques public sculpture in France in general, particularly the lasciviousness of some of the garden sculpture he encountered. His quote about the *Magdalene* reads, in full: "I may add that the finest production of modern skill in the art of carving in marble, which I witnessed in France, or have seen elsewhere, was a small statue of dying Magdalene of Canova, which I was permitted to view in the house of the Marquis de Somerieve [*sic*], a nobleman, whose taste and collection of fine works are well known and acknowledged in Paris. The Marquis has an apartment fitted up for the display of this exquisite production alone. The effects of shame and distress on the shrinking victim of misfortune, the shrivelling of the once pure and beautiful skin at the approach of the destroyer of all charms, the look of grief and remorse, and the posture of the body which the limbs can no longer sustain, and therefore falls down and rests on the hams, are all imagined and executed with a delicacy and truth that excite astonishment and pleasure. Here the labours of the artist afford a fine moral lesson which is not lost upon the heart, and the eye is made the medium of instruction to the understanding, instead of the channel of corruption to the mind, and a cause of excitement to the most dangerous passions." David Carey, "For the Monthly Magazine. On the Actual State of the Fine Arts, Painting, Sculpture and Statuary, in France; Written in Paris, by David Carey Esq.," The Monthly Magazine; or, British Register L. Part II (Nov. 1, 1820): 322.

The combination of Sommariva's display and Canova's attention to Magdalene's expression therefore roused visitors to concerns that were not simply aesthetic in scope. Absorbed as they were by Magdalene's desperation, visitors were more forgiving of what they had originally perceived of as the sculpture's flaws. Wooed by the atmosphere Sommariva created they were then further moved by the sculpture's sentiment. Even if their reactions were not strictly religious in scope, their senses were nonetheless moved. Indeed, in a world where looking at art had become an increasingly important skill, as viewers negotiated the treacherous terrain of fakes, copies, replicas and restorations, and as connoisseurship became an increasingly professionalized skill, the reaction to *Penitent Magdalene* in Sommariva's home reveals a parallel approach to art, one which appealed to viewers' emotional sensibilities and in which aesthetic knowledge and connoisseurship took second place. Unlike the other works of art I have presented in this dissertation, Magdalene's strength lay in the work's supposedly "universal" appeal, and it was precisely this appeal which was celebrated by writers. No accompanying didactic texts were required to instruct visitors how to assess the work's strengths, as had been the case with *Perseus, Venus and Adonis*, and *Polinnia*. Viewers could simply look, feel, and be moved.

The trappings of Sommariva's display further reinforced the democratic appeal of the *Magdalene.* One did not need to be a connoisseur to appreciate her, a point that had

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[180] Recalling a conversation with Canova, Thomas Medwin wrote, "He turned the conversation, by asking me which of his statues I preferred. I replied, that if I had my choice I should take Somariva's "Magdalen;" that when I saw it at Paris, it affected me to tears. That beauty and sorrow generally destroy each other, but that he had contrived to heighten both by the union. I spoke of the air of abandonment with which she eyes the cross—her loose and dishevelled hair—the simple rope that confines her robe of penitence—the inertness of the arms from which the cross is about to fall, an emblem of her hopelessness of pardon." Medwin, "Canova. Leaves from the Autobiography of an Amateur," 372.

been made repeatedly— if, at times, to their annoyance—by critics at the 1808 Salon.[181] Indeed, according to Derwent Conway, [....]It is not to the *connoisseur* in statuary, alone, that this work is interesting; [...for] he who possesses a deep sensibility may be ignorant of all the mysteries of sculpture, and yet gaze with rapture upon the Magdalene."[182] One did not need an education in the arts to admire Canova's *Magdalene*; as long as the beholder had a profound sense of sentiment and a soul that could be moved, he too, could share in *Magdalene*'s pain. Expression, therefore, could transcend connoisseurial concerns by inspiring pity, melancholy, sensitivity and empathy in viewers. Sommariva's display therefore increased the collective fascination with the sculpture by bringing out the emotional depths which were already intrinsic to the subject matter and which had already been emphasized by Canova's workmanship. The ideal work of art, indeed, became one that could draw in a universal audience as a result of its emotional resonances. In fact, by 1822 an obituary of Canova argued that a work *without* natural expression and grace would never capture the public's "vote."[183] This appeal to a broad

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[181] See notes 29, 82 and 87, for instance.

[182] He also continued: "But to return to the "Magdalene." [....] It is not to the *connoisseur* in statuary, alone, that this work is interesting; his knowledge of the art no doubt gives to him an additional enjoyment; for no true worshipper of the fine arts can possibly be deficient in sensibility. It is to this quality of the mind that the Magdalene addresses itself; and he who possesses a deep sensibility may be ignorant of all the mysteries of sculpture, and yet gaze with rapture upon the Magdalene. The mere workman would examine the surface of the marble, and remark, with astonishment, the texture of the human skin; but the true artist, and he who has a heart to be subdued, are filled with the deepest sorrow, and the truest admiration; sorrow the more gentle, that it is mingled with religion; and admiration the more lofty, that it is mixed with astonishment, that so feeble a creature as man should be able to perpetuate his memory for ever. Let conquerors erect trophies to the god of war, and let their earthly worshippers raise monuments to *them*, but let the gifted and the wise turn from these to the bloodless trophies of the mind; and while they read the instructions of the sage, and the lofty contemplations of the poet,—while they gaze upon the living canvas, and the breathing marble,—while they listen to the strains which have been poured out from the souls of inspiration, as an inheritance of peace, to calm the angry spirits of men, let them exclaim, "These are they whose deeds deserve our homage." Conway, "The Misfortune of Alice, a Domestic Tale, or Another Judgment of the World [with a] Note Upon the Magdalene of Canova," 190-91.

[183] "Celle des ses compositions où il nous semble avoir surmonté le plus de difficultés, où sa verve, son génie et son talent nous paroissent l'avoir le plus heureusement servi, est *la Madeleine pénitente.* Toutes les

audience was one critical factor in the understanding of Canova's *Magdalene* as his most profoundly "modern" work of art.

The "Modern" Magdalene: Defining French Cultural Patrimony

Despite the fact that visitors to Sommariva's collection had relatively consistent reactions to the *Penitent Magdalene*, admiring Canova's skill in carving, her expression, and their own emotional reaction to the work of art, the sculpture remained an active object for debate in France in the 1820s, 30s, and 40s. Critics continued to use the work as a focal point for discussions regarding medium specificity and the role expression played in sculpture. Indeed, due to its lengthy stay in Paris and continued public display, *Penitent Magdalene* became the centerpiece for discussion not only about the nature of modern art, but also of French cultural patrimony.

Although discussions about the *Magdalene* in the 1820s and 30s lacked the rigor of seventeenth-century arguments which pitted the "ancients" against the "moderns" in the Académie Française, traces of that argument were revived in discussions of the sculpture, as they had been in the 1808 Salon.[184] One school of thought, led by Victor Cousin, was rooted firmly in the belief that sculpture remained a singularly "ancient" art. Above all else, it had been meant to reveal the beauty of pagan forms. Painting, on the other hand was rooted in expression, and therefore was a fundamentally modern—and Christian—art form. Cousin's critique about the nature of artistic media, however,

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conditions du succès sont remplies puisque cet ouvrage a eu une vogue populaire, et qu'il a été admiré par les artistes. Le choix même du sujet est heureux en ce qu'il est puisé dans une croyance religieuse, et que cependant il exigeoit l'expression de ce *naturel*, de cette *grâce*, sans lesquels un ouvrage captive difficilement aujourd'hui les suffrages du public." D., "Beaux Arts. Antoine Canova," Journal de débats politiques et littéraires (Nov. 25, 1822): 4.

[184] See note 56.

developed out of his analysis of the decline of the fine arts in the eighteenth century, in which he argued that each media had gradually lost the qualities that most clearly defined one from the other. With the arrival of the nineteenth century, even Canova and David, the most "skilled" artists of the period, were successful at creating moving works of art, "but in a century where there could be neither painting, nor sculpture."[185]

For Cousin, therefore, each art had lost track of its most central character, and sculpture could not exist as a truly modern art form. Although some writers, such as Gustave Planche, agreed with Cousin,[186] other authors, however, directly refuted

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[185] "Le XVIII[e] siècle n'est pas celui des arts. D'abord, pour la sculpture, il n'en a pas. Au reste, le XVI[e] et le XVII[e] n'en ont guère davantage. Michel-Ange n'a fait que prouver, à force de génie, l'impossibilité d'une sculpture moderne. La sculpture est exclusivement antique, car elle est avant toutes choses la représentation de la beauté de la forme appartiennent au paganisme. Au contraire, la peinture est tout entière dans l'expression, c'est-à-dire dans la représentation, non de la forme extérieure, mais des sentiments et de l'âme, non de la beauté physique, mais de la beauté morale. La peinture est donc éminemment moderne et chrétienne; mais elle appartient au moyen âge; elle ne pouvait fleurir au XVIII[e] siècle. Elle y cesse comme art; elle se prolonge et s'exerce comme métier. Boucher et Vander Werf la prostituent à des scènes de boudoir; l'honnête Greuze se retranche dans la peinture de genre, et voilà l'art de van Eyck et de Raphaël employé à peindre des courtisanes pour les grands seigneurs, et des intérieurs, des antichambres et des cuisines, pour la bourgeoisie. Plus tard, lasse elle-même de la dégradation où elle est tombée, elle essaye d'une fausse grandeur, et sautant par-dessus le moyen âge qui est sa place, elle remonte à l'antiquité qui est celle de la sculpture; et alors elle fait des statues au lieu de tableaux, presque en même temps que la sculpture, par l'effet même de son impuissance, sort aussi de ses limites, et tourmentant le marbre, le colorant presque, fait des tableaux au lieu de statues. D'ailleurs, personne plus que moi n'admire Canova et David; on n'a pas plus d'esprit; on n'a pas plus de savoir-faire; ce sont de très-habiles artistes, peut-être même un grand statuaire et un grand peintre, mais dans un siècle où il ne pouvait y avoir ni peinture ni sculpture." Victor Cousin, "Cours de l'histoire de la philosophie," Oeuvres de Victor Cousin. Tome premier (Bruxelles: Société Belge de Libraire, 1840) 119. First written in 8 volumes from 1815–29, *Cours de philosophie* appeared later in 1854 as *Du vrai, du beau, et du bien*. Victor Cousin, Du vrai, du beau et du bien, 5th ed. (Paris: Didier, 1855).

[186] In his comments on *Les Trois Grâces* de Jean-Jacques Pradier, Gustave Planche compared the work to Canova's sculptures and reinforced Cousin's view that Canova and David had both breached the appropriate limitations of their media. "Or, la sculpture, qui de tous les arts et le plus sévère, le plus abstrait, le plus en dehors de toutes les habitudes de la vie réelle, ne s'improvise pas impunément; on ne joue pas avec le marbre comme avec la couleur: l'erreur est plus facile à commettre, plus difficile à réparer. C'est avant tout, un art de conscience et de méditation; c'est tout à la fois la forme la plus durable et la plus laborieuse de la pensée humaine. [...] Il [Pradier] s'est construit un système qui rappelle tout à la fois l'arrangement de Canova et le travail de Girardon. Il est aussi maniéré que le premier, aussi mou que le second; il se trompe, comme Canova, en suivant dans la composition une idée plutôt pittoresque que sculpturale. Or, à mon avis, ce défaut est grave, et ne va jamais sans de fâcheux résultats; ce n'est jamais sans un préjudice notable qu'on se méprend sur les attributions de l'instrument que l'on emploie. Voyez presque en même temps le sculpteur italien peindre en marbre, et le chef de la dermière école française, David, sculpter sur la toile. [...] [L]a *Madeleine*, que ses admirateurs les plus passionnés proclament son chef-d'œuvre, la *Madeleine* elle-même serait plus belle sur la toile qu'en carrare. L'impression qu'on

Cousin's view that sculpture had to be relegated to the dustbin of history. Amédée Duquesnel, for instance, contrasted ancient Greek sculpture, which was "impassioned for physical beauty" with the Christian "spiritualization of beauty." "All of antiquity," he continued, "could not have created the *Magdalene* of Canova."[187] Likewise, in an obituary to the artist from 1822, one writer noted that in the *Magdalene* Canova had managed to concentrate in one sole figure all that which paganism uses to seduce, and that which Christianity offers for serious thought.[188] It was, in short, the "statue-dogma of Christianity."[189]

éprouve en la regardant rappelle bien plus *Correggio* que *Phidias*, et les *Sabines* ressemblent bien plus à un bas-relief qu'à un tableau." Gustave Planche, Salon de 1831 (Paris: Imprimerie et Fonderie Pinard, 1831) 142-44.

[187] "En Grèce, la sculpture se passionne pour la beauté physique [...] Le christianisme spiritualise la beauté; elle ne consiste plus seulement dans l'harmonie des formes, mais dans l'expression de la pureté et de l'amour de l'âme. Aussi depuis le christianisme les grands sculpteurs se sont-ils appliqués à faire deviner l'âme dans les contours du marbre. Toute l'antiquité n'aurait pu enfanter la Madaleine de Canova." Amédée Duquesnel, Histoire des lettres avant le Christianisme. Cours de littérature, 7 vols. (Paris: Eugène Renduel, 1836-1844) vol. 1, 46-47.

[188] Yet even this writer could not suppress a fear that Canova had moved too far into the territory of painting. He worried that if artists followed Canova's path, and continued to push expression to its extreme, the arts would regress as they had under Pierre Le Gros II (1666-1719), Gian-Lorenzo Bernini (1598-1680) and Anselme Flamane (1647-1717). "Toutes les ressources qu'offroit le sujet on été mises à profit; et l'on diroit que le sculpteur, en nous exprimant si bien des formes dont le jeûne et les douleurs n'ont point encore complètement effacé la beauté, a cherché à fondre, à concentrer dans une seule figure tout ce que le paganisme employoit pour séduire, et ce que le christianisme peut offrir de plus grave à la pensée. Le sujet de la *Madeleine pénitente* une fois admis, il nous paroît difficile de l'imaginer plus heureusement que ne l'a fait Canova; mais tout en mettant le talent de l'artiste hors de discussion, nous pensons que celui que écrira son histoire, sera obligé de traiter la question de savoir: Si cette innovation n'est point un empiétement de la statuaire sur le domaine de la peinture; et si les artistes qui prendront l'art où Canova l'a laissé, par la nature même de la direction dans laquelle ils se trouveront entrainés, ne reviendront pas à l'exagération d'expression, au mépris de la forme, et aux mouvemens contournés dont les successeurs des Le Gros, des Bernin, des Flamant, faisoient un si pernicieux usage lorsque Canova entra dans sa carrière." D., "Beaux Arts. Antoine Canova," 4.

[189] "Une des plus grandes gloires que puisse ambitionner un artiste moderne, c'est d'avoir obtenu la récompense morale que l'on vient de décerner à Canova dans Paris même. Une grande église était dédiée à la *Madeleine;* il fallait orner le fronton du temple; un des meilleurs artiste de France, devant représenter la sainte, n'a pas cru pouvoir mieux faire que de prendre le type inventé par Canova; désormais la *Madeleine* n'aura plus d'autres traits, une autre attitude, une autre douleur. Canova pendant sa via a eu bien des détracteurs à Paris, mais jamais réparation fut-elle plus éclatant? L'immortalité de nos monuments vient consacrer celle de Canova. Je me souviens d'avoir dit un jour à notre célèbre et ingénieux sculpteur, M. Pierre-Jean David, que la statue de la *Madeleine* me paraissait la *Statue-dogme du christianisme*, c'est-à-

A.G. Schlegel also railed against Cousin's "severe" judgment, for sculpture was no longer simply the "representation of the beauty of form [...] but also the expression of the sentiments of the soul."[190] Likewise, J. Coindet, in his *Histoire de la Peinture* pointed out that Canova's *Magdalene* physically denied Cousin's claim that modern sculpture could not exist. Indeed, since the *Magdalene* was a sculpture based on the idea of faith and repentance, outside the traditional bounds of antiquity, it merged the beauty of ancient forms "without losing any of the expression which compose the beautiful productions of both ancient and modern sculpture." *Penitent Magdalene* was a "victorious refutation" of Cousin's claims.[191] Perhaps Stendhal was the most vociferous

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dire de la religion de pardon et de clémence, et qu'il me parut partager entièrement cette opinion." "Canova (Antoine)," Biographie universelle ancienne et moderne. supplement. Cam-Ché (Paris: Chez I.-G. Michaud, 1836) vol. 60. Supplement, 104.

[190] Schlegel cites Cousin's refutation of modern sculpture directly in his text, then goes on to write, "Mais heureusement bon nombre de chefs-d'œuvre protestent contre cet arrêt trop sévère: la sculpture chez nous ne sera plus seulement la représentation de la beauté de la forme, mais sans empiéter sur la peinture elle sera aussi l'expression des sentimens de l'âme, et elle trouvera des modèles de pathétique dans cette sculpture grecque qui n'a pas exclusivement servi à l'adoration de la beauté humaine [....]." Schlegel, Leçons sur l'histoire et la théorie des beaux arts, par A.G. Schlegel, trans. A.F. Couturier (Paris: Pichon et Didier, Libraires, 1830) 386-87.

[191] Canova's works of art make a surprisingly lengthy appearance in this history of painting. Coindet's text, first published in 1849, reads: "Il y a encore quelques ouvrages de Canova dont on ne peut se dispenser de parler. Sa *Madeleine* surtout, qui a longtemps fait partie de la galerie Sommariva. *Madeleine pénitente* était un sujet tout à fait en dehors des notions de l'antiquité, une expression absolument chrétienne et pour laquelle la mythologie n'avait aucun type: la foi et la repentance qui ont éteint les ardeurs de la femme voluptueuse. Le monde est oublié; nulle passion terrestre ne profane cette existence vouée au repentir. L'esprit de l'Évangile et sa touchante sévérité animent cette figure: et l'artiste, habitué à répandre sur ses créations le charme d'une volupté contagieuse, s'est élevé ici jusqu'au plus haut degré de sublimité morale.

M. Cousin, dans son résumé du dix-huitième siècle, dit 'qu'il ne peut y avoir de sculpture moderne; qu'elle est exclusivement antique, car elle est avant tout la représentation de la beauté et de la forme, et que le soin comme l'adoration de la beauté appartient au paganisme.' La *Madeleine* de Canova est une victorieuse réfutation de ce paradoxe, qui, du reste ne soutient guère l'examen. Sans parler du *Moïse* de Michel-Ange, du *Christ* de Dannecker, des *Apôtres* de Thorwaldsen, qui sont bien des chefs-d'œuvre de sculpture, ni de tant d'autres ouvrages également admirables, inspirés par l'art chrétien, remarquons que la *Madeleine* de Canova pourrait égaler par la beauté des formes de la *Vénus* de Praxitèle, sans rien perdre l'expression qui en fait une des belles productions de la sculpture antique aussi bien que moderne; et que, depuis la Renaissance, plus d'un sculpteur a produit des œuvres inspirées par le paganisme et dignes de figurer au *Belvédère* ou la *Tribune*. Condamner la sculpture à ne plus exister, si elle ne rivalise avec Phidias ou Praxitèle, autant vaudrait dire que aucun peintre n'ayant égalé Raphaël pour l'expression divine, la peinture doit être supprimée." Coindet, Histoire de la peinture en Italie (Paris: Librarie Renouard; Henri Loones Successeur, 1873) 363.

petitioner for *Magdalene*'s modernity, for he not only claimed that Canova captured expression in modern sculpture, but that Canova had "invented" a new type of ideal beauty closer to modern tastes than that of the Greeks. Canova understood how the moderns "esteem spirit and feeling" more than physical brawn.[192]

Arguments that lay under the surface in 1808, wherein *Magdalene* reflected a new proto-romantic interpretation of sculpture, were, by the 1820s and 30s, made explicit. The work's modernity lay not only in its originality, which had been celebrated in 1808,[193] but also in its expressivity. The sculpture was physical proof that expression and Christian sentiment were not simply the province of painting, for in the *Penitent Magdalene*, Canova had used his "magical touch" to create "the ineffable expression of religious pain."[194] Likewise, the freedom of Canova's touch—its freedom from Academic

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[192] Stendhal, however, asserts that the French "loathe" Canova. "Rome vient de perdre Canova, qui a inventé un nouveau genre de *beau idéal*, plus rapproché de nos mœurs que de celles des Grecs. Les Grecs estimaient avant tout *la force physique*, et nous l'esprit et le sentiment. […] Est-il besoin d'ajouter que cet homme illustre est en exécration à l'école française; il avait de l'*expression*, et la *Madeleine Sommariva* le prouve […]." Stendhal, "Salon de 1824," Mélanges d'art et de littérature (Paris: Michel Lévy Frères, 1867) 232-233.

The degree to which the *Magdalene* captured modern sentiment is made manifest in an 1845 ode to "love" in which Canova's sculpture and Mary Magdalene in general are used as examples of "insatiable" love. Laverdant, in fact, argued that however one might want to critique Canova's sculptures, there was no doubt that "sculpture owed true progress to this artist [...for...] Canova made affection itself penetrate the marble." D. Laverdant, "Le Salon de 1845," La Phalange. Revue de la science sociale XIV Année. Ire série in-8. Tome Ier. (1845. Premier Semestre): 282.

[193] Even in the 1820s and 30s the *Penitent Magdalene's* originality continued to be celebrated by supporters of Canova's works such as Leopoldo Cicognara, Isabella Teotochi Albrizzi, Henri de Latouche and Quatremère de Quincy.

[194] "Peu de temps avant l'invasion définitive de Rome, un prélat grand amateur des arts, Monsignor Priuli, lui avoit demandé un ouvrage de son ciseau, laissant à son choix le sujet, pourvu qu'il fût religieux; Canova se commanda donc à lui-même la statue d'une *Madeleine pénitente*. Aucun ouvrage connu en sculpture, aucune tradition sur ce sujet, ne lui prescrivoit le genre, le style de composition, l'ajustement ou la proportion à suivre; rien enfin, dans l'antique ou le moderne, ne pouvoit ni guider ni contrarier son goût. Ce devoit être, et ce fut en effet, une production entièrement originale, une vraie création de son génie et de son ciseau. [...]

Or, l'admiration dont la Madeleine pénitente fut alors ici l'objet, ne peut être comparée qu'au sentiment indescriptible qui lui donna l'être. Ce fut, on peut le dire, pour la foule des spectateurs, quelque chose de nouveau, hors du cours des admirations ordinaires, et qui sembloit tenir de l'effet d'un miracle. On doit l'avouer, effectivement, aucun ouvrage n'avoit jamais paru tenire autant que celui-là, de cette idée

proscription and antique models—and his ability to capture expression and sentiment established the very type of artistic production that was celebrated most by the Romantics. For some contemporary writers, Magdalene was not simply co-opted by the Romantic school as an example of modern art, but indeed became one of the sculptures that best described the school's tenets. One of most vocal proponents of Romantic literature, for instance, Henri de Latouche, celebrated the *Penitent Magdalene*'s liberation from antiquity and the model alike. In comparison with ancient masterpieces, such as Laocoön, who merely reflected physical pain, and Niobe, who railed against the Gods, the despair, melancholy and acceptance of her fate exhibited by the *Penitent Magdalene* "could be called Romantic—and that, perhaps, is the secret to her success."[195]

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de création, que l'usage a trop souvent le tort de donner aux productions de l'art. L'idée positive de création, exclut par le fait l'idée de travail ou d'exécution, dans les œuvres de la main de l'homme. Il en étoit ainsi de l'impression que chacun recevoit de la vue du marbre, né sous le ciseau de Canova. Rien de remarquable surtout dans la dimension (petite nature) de la statue de Madeleine; rien dans sa composition, tellement simple, qu'elle exclut tout soupçon de composition, et qu'on ne sauroit trouver de formes pour la décrire; rien dans son ajustement et ses draperies, rien dans ses accessoires qui arrête les yeux; rien dans sa pose qui est sans mouvement, rien dans son action, puisqu'elle est immobile; ajoutons encore, rien qui saisisse les yeux dans son exécution, car elle ne laisse aucune trace propre à réléver la main de l'artiste. Et cependant une admiration universelle environnoit de toute part, cette touchante image de la pénitence chrétienne. On lui trouvoit une pieuse décence dans sa nudité, une savante vérité dans les nuds, mais surtout une affection indéfinissable de douleur religieuse, dans ce visage qui cesse d'être du marbre, et qui pleure.

Il faut effectivement y reconnoître, abstraction fait de toute analyse sentimentale, une sorte d'exécution magique, un je ne sais quoi de fondu dans les formes, qui semble exclure la réalité d'emploi d'un outil; en sorte qu'on l'eût pu croire être le résultat d'un souffle créateur, indépendant de la science de l'art." Quatremère de Quincy, Canova et ses ouvrages; ou, mémoires historiques sur la vie et les travaux de célèbre artiste 67-69.

[195] "Tout était neuf dans cette entreprise. Le génie des Grecs et l'appui des modèles est totalement oublié. Ce marbre, si pathétique, n'a point de rivaux chez les anciens; car l'admirable Laocoon ne reproduit que des douleurs physique; et Niobé, qui voit succomber ses enfants, est plutôt en révolte contre le ciel, que résignée à sa puissance. La Madeleine pénitente est une statue qu'on pourrait appeler romantique; et c'est peut-être là le secrete de son triomphe." de Latouche and Réveil, Œuvre de Canova, recueil de gravures d'après ses statues et ses bas-reliefs np.

Schlegel summarized the ethos of the era best. "The poetry of the ancients," he wrote, "was that of possessing. Ours is that of longing."[196] Well into the nineteenth century, sentiment and expression—the "exultation of suffering" so admired by the Romantics[197]—remained the key to truly modern sculpture. The trick, however, was not only that the artist had to capture these emotions in the work of art, but rather that he had to elicit them from the spectator himself. Madame de Stäel, for instance, argued that the aim of the artist was to "liberate the sentiment imprisoned in the depths of the soul."[198] Baudelaire, although not a fan of either Canova or of sculpture—the latter of which he famously deemed "boring"— nonetheless defined Romanticism in terms that recall Canova's *Magdalene*. Romanticism was "modern art: that is to say, intimacy, spirituality, colour, the aspiration to the infinite, expressed by all the means available to the arts."[199] More importantly, this "manner of feeling" was not something to be found in the outside world, but was only to be found within oneself.[200] In fact, Baudelaire's description of Romanticism nearly replicates the reaction the public had to *Penitent Magdalene*. Canova, after all, had not only captured this "mode of feeling" in the representation of Magdalene through his skill in carving, but he also had succeeded in eliciting deep

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[196] "In the Christian view, the perception of infinity destroyed the finite; the poetry of the ancient was a poetry of possession, ours is a poetry of longing; the former stands firmly on the grounds of the present; the latter balances between remembrance and anticipation." August Wilhelm von Schlegel, Vorlesungen über dramatische Kunst und Literatur, 2 vols. (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1966) vol. 1, 25, as cited in Wendy S. Mercer, "German Romanticism and French Aesthetic Theory," A Companion to Art Theory, eds. Paul Smith and Carolyn Wilde (Oxford: Blackwell, 2002) 150.

[197] Philippe Ariès, Georges Duby and Michelle Perrot, eds., A History of Private Life vol. 4. From the Fires of Revolution to the Great War (Cambridge, Mass: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1987-1991) 520.

[198] Madame de Staël, *De l'Allemagne* (1810), as cited in Wendy S. Mercer, "German Romanticism and French Aesthetic Theory," 155.

[199] Charles Baudelaire, "The Salon of 1846," 47.

[200] Charles Baudelaire, "The Salon of 1846," 46.

sensations from beholders of the sculpture. For all of their differences, at least in this instance, Canova and Baudelaire had similar aims. And, indeed, few sculptors succeeded as well as Canova had in capturing the essence of Romanticism and modernity, for even as late as 1878, Eugène Véron complained that "if we wish sculpture to become a truly modern and independent art, we must apply ourselves above all to developing it in the direction of the modern spirit, which is to say in that of expression and movement."[201]

By the 1820s and 30s, therefore, the *Penitent Magdalene* had been fully co-opted by French artists, critics and the public alike. Long gone were objections to the work's display in France that had hounded Canova in 1808. *Magdalene's* popularity among the Romantics gave the work new resonance in France. She was celebrated both for her expression and her embodiment of individual subjectivity, which were understood as particularly modern and French concerns. Canova's work was elevated to the status of a French national treasure. Even Sommariva himself undoubtedly flourished from his position as the work's patron. Praised as a "naturalized Frenchman,"[202] "who belonged to France for his taste, as for his affections,"[203] the French prided themselves on appreciating Sommariva's "noble generosity"[204] and the excellence of his collection.[205]

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[201] "[…] si nous voulons que la sculpture devienne un art vraiment moderne et indépendant, il faut que nous nous appliquions surtout à la développer dans le sens de l'esprit moderne, c'est-à-dire dans celui de l'expression et du mouvement. " Eugène Véron, L'Esthétique (C. Reinwald, Paris, 1878) 237.

[202] November 9, 1819. "Nous avons déjà signalé M. de Sommariva, qui presque naturalisé Français acquiert chaque jour de nouveux droits à la gratitude de nos peintres en achetant leurs tableux, ou en les invitant à lui en composer des nouveaux." Lettres à David, sur le Salon de 1819 par quelques élèves de son école, 163.

[203] "[...] quoique étranger d'origine, cet amateur distingué appartient longtemps à la France par son goût comme par ses affections. Son fils sert honorablement dans nos armées; sa galerie est ouverte au public; lui-même il en fait les honneurs avec urbanité, et les chefs-d'œuvre de nos artistes ne sont pas menacés par lui de l'exil; au contraire, il les rend au sol paternel." De Kératry, Annuaire de l'école française de peinture au lettres, sur le Salon de 1819 xiv.

Indeed, Sommariva's liberal patronage became a conduit by which the French ensured themselves of their cultural superiority. His patronage enabled the work of (adopted) "French" masters to remain on "paternal" soil, at a time when so many other works of art were "threatened with exile."[206]

Not only was Sommariva celebrated as a patron of the arts, who "chose" France over his own nation,[207] but the nationalist urge to protect cultural patrimony that emerged in the 1820s, 30s and 40s can be read as a macrocosmic representation of the impulse Sommariva himself expressed towards his collection. To put it another way, let us consider Susan Stewart's argument that one of the most modern ways of articulating the self was through the act of collecting. In her words, "the ultimate term in the series that marks the collection is the 'self', the articulation of the collector's own 'identity.'"[208] Therefore, the distinction Shlegel drew between "longing" and "possession" in fact collapses if we think of the way that "longing"—the desire for self-actualization—is often realized *through* the act of possession. One of the most modern ways of articulating the self was through the act of collecting. Collecting *is* a form of self-actualization. It is understandable, then, why *Magdalene,* of all works, was so easily co-opted by nationalist sentiment. The intense sentiment and longing for completeness captured by *Magdalene's*

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[204] Letter from "St-A..." "Il est impossible de prononcer ce nom [Sommariva] sans une bien juste vénération inspirée par alliance, si rare aujourd'hui, des faveurs de la fortune avec la passion des arts et une noble générosité." Lettres à David, sur le Salon de 1819 par quelques élèves de son école 140.

[205] Miel, Essai sur le Salon de 1817, ou examen critique des principaux ouvrages dont l'exposition se compose 209, note 1 and A. Jal, De Paris à Naples; études de mœurs, de marine et d'art, 2 vols. (Paris: Allardin, 1836) vol. 2, 89.

[206] See note 203.

[207] De Latouche and Réveil, Œuvre de Canova, recueil de gravures d'après ses statues et ses bas-reliefs np.

[208] Susan Stewart, On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection (Durham: Duke University Press, 1993) 162.

expression and which was echoed in beholders' responses could therefore perhaps be assuaged if only *they* could possess *her*.

The self-realization achieved through the act of collecting was not, however, limited to acts of possession by individuals alone. In this moment in early nineteenth-century France, when the nation-state was so new, the urge to protect cultural patrimony can be read as a way in which the state itself attempted to fulfill, complete, and actualize its own identity. The desire for possession could be, and indeed *was*, felt on a national level. The Romantic tension between the uniqueness of the individual and that individual's desire to achieve unity with nature and his fellow-man could be resolved through a communal act of ownership. Works owned by the nation belonged to the collective, and in so doing also symbolically belonged to each and every individual who made up that collective. Just as Sommariva himself strove to fulfill a psychological desire for completeness through his relentless act of collecting, so too did the new nation-state of France strive to actualize itself through its cultural patrimony and the creation of repositories for that patrimony—namely public museums. Yet it is also important to recognize the public museum contributed to and shaped the identity of the nation even as it was shaped by the nation. Just as a collector is shaped by his own collection, so too were the French nation and its citizens shaped by their national museums—particularly the Louvre. Carol Duncan, for instance, has pointed out that the civic rituals enacted by attending the Louvre allowed individuals to understand their identity in nationalist terms and assert their role as French citizens.[209] National longing therefore found its ultimate

[209] See Carol Duncan, "From the Princely Gallery to the Public Art Museum. The Louvre Museum and the National Gallery, London," Representing the Nation: A Reader. History, Heritage and Museums, eds. David Boswell and Jessica Evans (London and New York: Routledge in association with the Open University, 1999) 308-11.

fulfillment in the space of the museum. As in Girodet's *Pygmalion and Galatea*, the relationships between museum and nation, museum and citizen, and nation and citizen are characterized by a field of continuous emanations, transformations, desires and striving—all of which had art at its core.

With *Penitent Magdalene* adopted as one of the "riches of France,"[210] therefore, it was understood that it was the right and duty of French citizens to safeguard the work. With the death of Sommariva in 1826,[211] nothing changed in the status or exhibition conditions of the *Magdalene,* for the collection passed directly to his son, Luigi Sommariva, who maintained his father's townhouse in Paris. The sculpture, it seemed, had become a permanent part of Parisian cultural heritage. With the death of Luigi in 1839, however, and the subsequent sale of the collection, the situation changed drastically.[212] Despite criticisms of the quality of Sommariva's collection as a whole, "which reeked of Empire,"[213] visitors flooded the townhouse, "to which they knew the way as well as they did the way to the Louvre."[214] Although the collection had functioned

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[210] "Madeleine devait être une des richesses de la France. Destinée en vain à orner l'église d'un village où Canova est né, elle arriva par une suite d'évenements imprévus dans les mains d'un Français, M. Juliot; et de là dans celles de M. de Sommariva, qui semble avoir choisi notre patrie par la sienne. Puisse l'estime des connaisseurs les y retenir long-temps tous les deux!" De Latouche and Réveil, Œuvre de Canova, recueil de gravures d'après ses statues et ses bas-reliefs np.

[211] Walter Benjamin has poignantly noted that collections are only truly "comprehended" after the death of the collector. Walter Benjamin, "Unpacking My Library," trans. Harry Zohn, Illuminations, ed. Hannah Arendt (New York: Schocken Books, 1968) 67.

[212] For the sale catalogue of the collection, see Giovanni Battista di Count Sommariva and Charles Paillet, Catalogue de la galerie du Comte de Sommariva, comprenant la collection de tableaux de l'école d'Italie, celle des peintres de l'école française, quelques tableaux d'après les plus grands maîtres... groupes et figures en marbre... dont la Madeleine, un des chefs-d'œuvre de Canova... par Charles Paillet,... la Vente... Aura Lieu Les 18, 19, 20, 21, 22 Et 23 Février (Paris: Imprimerie de E.-B. Delanchy, 1839) 66.

[213] "Vous entrez, et, tout au bas de l'escalier, vous découvrez déjà de grandes toiles sans nom, sans couleur et sans forme, dont le dernier amateur en plein vent ne voudrait pas. Je ne sais quelle odeur d'empire vous saisit à la gorge; mais c'est qu'en effet vous êtes en plein dans l'art impérial." "De la Galerie de M. de Sommariva," L'Artiste 2 serie, tome II, 11 Livraison (1839): 185.

and was appreciated by the public in a dual manner—as both private collection and public museum—the realization that it was *not* a public museum dawned suddenly with the death of Sommariva's son and the threat of the collection's loss. Shaken out of any complacency towards Canova's *Magdalene* as a result of the sudden fear that it might leave Paris, the public began speculating immediately as to who might buy the work. Fear of its departure was fueled by the inevitable association between Canova and the last great exodus of cultural capital from Paris, in which he played a critical role—namely, the emptying of the Louvre after the fall of Napoleon.[215] Theories poured forth in the contemporary journals. Would *Magdalene* remain in France? Some writers hypothesized that King Louis-Philippe would purchase the work for the recently constructed church of the Madeleine.[216] Others hoped it would take its rightful spot in the Louvre, adding yet

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[214] This author, however, could not help deriding the overall quality of Sommariva's collection in his article, although he did praise the *Magdalene*. "La galerie de M. de Sommariva est en vente. Une seul marbre de cette collection avait rendu le nom de son propriétaire populaire parmi nous, tant nous sommes faciles en fait de renommée. Ce marbre, c'est la Madeleine de Canova, achetée par hasard par le comte de Sommariva, le père, chez un brocanteur où la Madeleine était en gage pour trois milles francs. Et nous étions si fiera, nous autres, de connaitre un étranger qui possédat la Madeleine, que nous disions à tout venant: Avez-vous vu notre Madeleine de Canova ?

Certes, quel que soit le mérite de cette œuvre d'un homme si longtemps vanté, et dont la gloire s'en va peu à peu, il faut avouer que cela ne suffisait pas tout-à-fait pour donner au comte de Sommariva et à son fils cette grande réputation d'excellents connaisseurs dans les œuvres d'art et de goût, et pourtant la chose est ainsi. Et à cette heure, que le dernier propriétaire de la Madeleine est mort, la foule se porte à cet hôtel, dont elle sait le chemin aussi bien que s'il fallait visiter la galerie du Louvre." "De la Galerie de M. de Sommariva," 185.

[215] "On vend en ce moment à Paris la célèbre galerie de tableaux de M. Sommariva. Le morceau capital de cette galerie est la Madeleine de Canova. Ce nom rappelle le dépouillement de notre musée national, en 1815. Le marquis de Canova (car ce grand artiste avait eu la ridicule faiblesse de vouloir être marquis) fut nommé par le gouvernement autrichien commissaire impérial, chargé de reconnaître et d'expédier en Italie tous les ouvrages de peinture et de sculpture que la conquête française avait enlevés à ce pays. Canova passa le Musée en revue et fit partir un grand nombre de caisses pleines de tableaux et de statues. En vertu de la mission dont il était chargé, l'artiste marquis prenait la qualité d'ambassadeur, et un jour, comme on le présentait sous-ce titre à M. de Talleyrand, celui-ci répartit: "L'ambassadeur? Vous voulez dire l'emballeur." La mission de Canova était en effet beaucoup mieux qualifiée par cette désignation." "Nouvelles et faits divers," La Presse 2 année (Feb. 21, 1839): [3].

[216] "Le roi aurait, dit-on, manifesté l'intention d'acquérir la Madeleine par Canova, qui fait partie de la collection Sommariva et de la placer dans une chapelle du temple de la Madeleine. Cette munificence royale rappellerait l'habitude qu'avaient les anciens d'orner leurs temples de plus beaux produits des arts et

another work to the long list of objects which owed their place in the museum to the King's generosity. Of course, the work's "touching and natural expression" was cited as one of the reasons the piece "must absolutely" remain in France.[217]

The moment passed, however, and the King did not purchase the work for the Louvre. Nonetheless, the French were spared the loss of the sculpture, for it was bought by the private collector Alexandre-Marie Aguado, the Marquis de Las Marismas (figs. 255-256).[218] Aguado did not have Sommariva's flare for exhibition techniques, but despite the fact that the sculpture "sadly, was placed in a somber room,"[219] the *Penitent Magdalene* remained on display in Paris where it continued to garner praise, for "no statue [had] been produced since antiquity that [could] compare" with it.[220] The death of

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de livrer ainsi à l'admiration des peuples les chefs-d'œuvre de leurs artistes. Nous espérons que cette nouvelle se confirmera, et que le chef-d'œuvre de Canova ne passera pas aux mains de l'étranger." Charles Malo, "Ephémérides," La France littéraire XXXIV (1839): 287.

[217] "Mais tout le reste [de la *Madeleine*] est si beau, mais l'expression est si naturelle et si touchante, qu'il faut absolument que ce marbre nous reste. Le roi a donné l'ordre qu'on l'achetât. Ce ne sera pas un des moindres ornements que devra le Musée de Paris à la sollicitude royale." "De la Galerie de M. de Sommariva," 186.

[218] The work's purchase by Aguado was met with inevitable disappointment by many, who had hoped the *Magdalene* would enter the Louvre. "La semaine dernière eut lieu la vente de la galerie de Sommariva; les tableaux et sculptures, au nombre de 144, ont atteint le chiffre de 210,728 fr.; voici le prix des principaux objets: La Madeleine, de Canova, a été adjugée à 63,000; à qui? s'est-on écrié. Au Musée?....A M. Aguado, a-t-on répondu [...]." "Nouvelles Des arts. Vente de la Galerie de Sommariva," Journal des Artistes XIII Année, 1er Vol. 8 (24 Feb 1839): 125.

For more on Aguado's collection, see Louis Viardot and Charles Gavard, Notices sur les principaux peintres de l'Espagne, par Louis Viardot, ouvrage servant de texte aux gravures de la 'Galerie Aguado' (Paris: Gavard, 1839) and Louis Viardot and Charles Gavard, Galerie Aguado; choix des principaux tableaux de la Galerie de Mr. le Marquis de las Marismas del Guadalquivir (Paris: Gavard, 1839).

[219] "Passant à la sculpture, nous parlerons de la belle *Madeleine* de Canova, chef d'œuvre de ce maître: malheureusement elle est placée dans une salle un peu sombre; mais qu'importe, elle y est; on serait déjà heureux de la toucher sans la voir. Honneur au marquis de Las Marismas, d'avoir enlevé aux Anglais cette précieuse sculpture. Dans le salon espagnol, il y a un autre statue de Canova d'un grand fini et d'une pose élégante." A.R., "Galerie Aguado," Le Ménestrel. Journal de musique et de litterature Septième année, n. 22.333 (26 Avril 1840): n.p. [2].

[220] "Matériellement parlant, la galerie de M. Aguado est très-belle et parfaitement disposée dans l'intérêt des objets exposés. On en sort plein d'admiration pour ce qu'on y a vu, et de reconnaissance pour l'hospitalité de bon goût qu'on y a trouvée. Depuis peu de temps une acquisition importante est venue se

Aguado in 1842, however, a mere three years after he had bought the sculpture, once again rendered the statue's status precarious. With astonishing rapidity, rumors swirled about its future fate when it was announced the Aguado collection would go on sale in Paris in March 1843. The Russian Emperor allegedly expressed interest in the collection, a rumor that was quickly squelched in the papers.[221] Some writers declared with certainty that Aguado had donated the statue to his parish church, Notre-Dame-de-Lorette.[222] Others had lingering hopes that it would be purchased for the Louvre. But with the collection on view before the sale, these aspirations were shattered, for no museum official stepped forward to purchase the work.[223]

The sale went on as planned, and from March 20-28, 1843, Aguado's collection was sold off, piece by piece.[224] *Penitent Magdalene* was sold to an Italian collector, the

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joindre aux richesses qu'elle renfermait déjà. La *Madeleine* de Canova, long-temps possédée par M. de Sommarive, a été payée soixante-trois mille francs par M. Aguado. Ce n'est pas trop, pour loeur ce magnifique ouvrage, de dire que la statuaire n'a rien produit depuis l'antiquité qui puisse lui être comparé." X.X., "Une Visite a la Galerie de M. Aguado (2e Article)," Journal des beaux-arts et de la littérature 23 (30 June 1839): 361-62. This article was preceded by another article detailing the collection. See X.X., "Une Visite a la Galerie de M. Aguado," Journal des beaux-arts et de la littérature 23 (20 June 1839): 337-42.

[221] "Quelques journaux ont annoncé que la collection Aguado devait être achevée par l'empereur de Russie. Il paraît que cette nouvelle est entièrement controuvée, et que la vente publique doit avoir lieu définitivement le 25 mars prochain." Henri Trianon, "Bulletin des beaux-arts," La France Litteraire. Revue. Politique. Sciences. Beaux-Arts X, end série (1842): 178.

[222] This rumor was repeated in numerous journals. "On assure que M. Aguado a l'égué à Notre-Dame-de-Lorette le magnifique chef-d'œuvre de Canova, *Madeleine repentante*." "Beaux Arts. Travaux Publics," La Vérité. Journal géneral du commerce et de l'industrie (7 Mai 1842): n.p. [3].

"On dit que par une des clauses de son testament, M. Aguado a légué à l'église de Notre-Dame-de-Lorette, sa paroisse à Paris, le magnifique marbre chef-d'œuvre de Canova, représentant Madeleine repentante, qu'il avait acheté il y a trois ans de la succession du marquis de Sommariva." "Faits et nouvelles," Bulletin des Beaux-Arts (5 Mai 1842): n.p. [4].

[223] "La vente de la galerie Aguado aura lieu le 20 mars prochain. Une première exposition précédera l'exposition publique des morceaux qui la composeront. Le jour de ces expositions n'est pas encore fixé. Jusqu'à présent la direction des musées royaux n'a fait aucune disposition pour l'achat de quelques-uns de ces morceaux que l'on doit désirer voir augmenter la collection du Louvre." "Nouvelles," Journal des beaux-arts et de la littérature X année, 1er volume.2 (15 Jan. 1843): 31.

[224] See Dubois, G. Benou, Alexis Wery and Bonnefons de Lavialle (Firm), Catalogue de Tableaux anciens des écoles Espagnole, Italienne, Flamande, Hollandaise et Allemande, statues anciennes et modernes,

Duke of Galliera, for 59,500 francs. He quickly exported the piece to Genova, where it remains today.[225] With the loss of the sculpture, journalists lambasted their countrymen for not taking action quickly enough to save the work. Léon Gozlan was by far the most vocal critic, and in an article entitled, *Un Crime de plus*, he bemoaned the death of Aguado. If he still lived, Gozlan wailed, "[h]is Magdalene would not be placed now in a wooden box, on a bed of straw, and wrapped in a canvas like a corpse."[226] That the sale of this work should occur in Paris was a national tragedy —had such an act occurred in any other country the Parisian press would have condemned them for losing a cultural treasure.[227] But, Gozlan concluded with a final blow:

> If there is a humiliating, shameful, thing for a nation, it is not that it does not produce great things; nations have centuries of despondency, as men have years of suffering. Moreover, a government is not responsible for the sterility of an epoch. But that which demeans, blots and discounts it, is to allow to be taken from its subjects the grandeur that the state alone should have and maintain. [...] Be that as it may, Canova's statue is already packed: she surrenders herself to Genova, where she will never leave, because the Lazzaroni of that country would rather shed their blood than to let her leave once they have her. In that great nation, art has seeped into religion and religion into the blood. They are always pagans,

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marbres, etc.: composant la galerie de M. Aguado Marquis de Las Marismas: dont la vente aux enchères publiques, aura lieu par suite de son décès en son hôtel ... à Paris (Paris: Impr. et lithographie de Maulde et Renot, 1843).

[225] "La *Madeleine* de Canova a été achetée 59,500 fr. à la vente Aguado par M. le duc Sarraglia [*sic*]." "Nouvelles," Journal des beaux-arts et de la littérature X année, 1er volume.13 (2 Avril 1843): 208.

[226] "Pourquoi est-il mort, ce généreux cœur castillan dont presque tous les artistes français ont connu les largesses? Sa Madeleine ne serait pas couchée aujourd'hui dans un caisse de sapin, sur un lit de paille, et cousue dans un toile comme une morte." Léon Gozlan, "Un Crime de plus," Les Beaux-Arts. Illustration des arts et de la littérature, ed. L. Curmer, vol. 1 (Typographie Schneider et Langrand: Paris, 1843) 70.

Gozlan also argued that sculpture was even less respected in France than painting. "Du reste, tout le temps qu'il posséda cette statue, aucun de ses voisins millionnaires de la rue du Mont-Blanc ne fut tenté de la lui acheter, même pour le prix qu'il avait eue, une faible somme, cinq ou six mille francs, je crois. Car en France il faut le dire, la statuaire, et cela paraît impossible, est encore plus dédaignée que la peinture." Gozlan, "Un Crime de plus," 70.

[227] "Si tous les artistes qui sont à Paris avaient seulement donné dix francs chacun, moins même, car ils sont plus de six mille à coup sûr, la Madeleine ne quittait pas Paris, où ils auraient toujours eu la ressource de la montrer pour quarante sous dans quelque salon de Curtius. Ils l'ont laissé vendre; ils la laisseront partir. Si pareil fait avait eu lieu à Berlin, tous les étudiants auraient assommé à coups de leur pipes les rouliers assez hardis pour poser sur leur ignoble charrette l'œuvre de Canova." Gozlan, "Un Crime de plus," 70.

> thank God! on that note. But you, you were under the Republic. You were under the Sphinx of the Egyptian campaign, under the lions of the Directory—the Republic, the Directory, the Empire did not know how to write, but they knew how to conquer (not to mince words, they knew how to steal.) You do not even know how to steal. They had taken, stolen, the *Transfiguration,* the *Apollo*, the *Venus* and one hundred other masterpieces. You, who did not even know how to keep them, who did not even have the lesser audacity to receive stolen goods, you have allowed the *Magdalene* of Canova to leave.
>
> You are despicable! But what should you have done? Smash it [the sculpture]. They would have reproached you less![228]

For Gozlan, there could be no more shameful thing for the French than the fact that they allowed the *Magdalene* to be taken from them. The great governments of France had amassed a wealth of artistic treasures, yet the government of Louis-Philippe could not even retain the treasures it had, much less create, or even obtain, new ones. Indeed, the French's self-identification as "men of letters" did *not* translate into richer cultural patrimony for the nation. For Gozlan, it merely signaled inactivity, ineptness, and lack of rigor in moments when true grit was required. In contrast, the Italians not only appreciated great works of art, they were willing to die for them. They had absorbed the fine arts completely into their blood, into their very cultural identity. The contrast

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[228] "S'il est un fait humiliant, honteux, pour une nation, ce n'est pas de ne pas produire de grand choses; les nations ont des siècles d'abattement, comme les hommes ont des années de souffrance; d'ailleurs un gouvernement n'est pas responsable de la stérilité d'une époque; mais ce qui l'avilit, l'efface, l'annule, c'est de laisser prendre aux sujets la grandeur que l'Etat seul devrait avoir et maintenir. [...] Quoi qu'il en soit, la statue de Canova est déjà emballée: elle se rend à Gènes, d'où elle ne sortira plus, car les lazzaroni de ce pays verseraient plutôt leur sang que de la laisser partir quand ils la tiendront. Chez ces bons peuples, l'art est passé dans la religion, et la religion dans le sang. Ils sont toujours païens, Dieu merci! de ce côté-là.

Mais vous, vous êtes au-dessous de la République, vous êtes au-dessous de Sphinx de la campagne d'Égypte, au-dessous des têtes de lion du Directoire; la République, le Directoire, l'Empire ne savaient pas écrire, mais il savaient conquérir (tranchons le mot, il savaient voler. Vous ne savez pas même voler.) Eux avaient enlevé, volé, la *Transfiguration, l'Apollon, la Vénus*, cent autre chefs-d'œuvre; vous, qui n'avez pas même su les garder, qui n'avez pas même eu l'audace secondaire de les receler, vous venez de laisser partir la *Madeleine* de Canova.

Vous êtes des infâmes!—Mais que faillait-il faire ? La briser. On eût parler de vous du moins!" Gozlan, "Un Crime de Plus," 70.

An interesting rebuttal to Gozlan's article can be found in *Le Cabinet de l'amateur*, in which "Cl. M." responds directly to Gozlan, arguing that private collections should indeed be sold and dispersed so that works of art can circulate. Museums, he argues, should only contain masterpieces—and it is clear he does not think Canova's *Magdalene* makes the cut! See Cl. M, "Vente de la Galerie Aguado," Le Cabinet de l'amateur et de l'antiquaire. Revue des tableaux et des estampes anciennes; des objets d'art d'antiquité et de curiosité 12 (1843): 139-52.

between the two nations was so striking that Gozlan even felt that if the French had not been able to keep the *Magdalene* for themselves, it would have been better to destroy the statue entirely than to allow her to fall into another country's hands.

Gozlan's strident berating of the public, French artists, and the French state for allowing the *Magdalene*'s export brought the status of the sculpture in France full circle. With the loss of the work came a painful reminder of the masterpieces that had slipped through French fingers in 1815.[229] The nation and its citizens, collective and individuals alike, had abdicated their proper responsibility to France's cultural heritage. They were all implicated in the loss of a work whose expression had rendered it central not only to Romantic identity, but to French identity as well. Throughout the century, indeed, the question of *who* was responsible for protecting the nation's cultural heritage would return again and again whenever Canova or the *Magdalene* were mentioned. Yet, despite the loss of the sculpture, the expressivity of the *Magdalene* would have long-standing effects on the production and reception of modern art. Expression would remain a key factor in French artistic theories well into the twentieth century. The sculpture, previously maligned for its foreignness, had become woven into the fabric of French cultural identity. Indeed, in Paris its form would remain forever visible, recycled, as it was, in the pediment of the Church of the Madeleine (fig. 257).[230]

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[229] This was particularly true in the years following the Empire, with the loss of objects in the Louvre compounded by the sale of great private collections such as those of Vivant Denon and Josephine Bonaparte, for instance.

[230] For more on incorporation of a Canova-inspired work on the pediment of the Church of the Madeleine in Paris, see Naginski, "Canova's 'Penitent Magdalene': On Trauma's Prehistory."

Conclusion

By examining the relationship Canova and his patrons had to the exhibition and display of his sculpture, this dissertation has recuperated a lost aspect of the great artist's work. Canova's and his patrons' attention to the position of his works and their settings, their use of rotating pedestals, mirrored panels, carefully chosen backdrops and lighting all encouraged viewers to engage fully and bodily with his works of art. These display techniques were carefully selected in order to celebrate Canova's talent and encourage viewers to spend time not just enjoying, but critically examining, inspecting and contemplating his sculptures. Beholders were encouraged to take the art of looking seriously, and so they did. Reactions to Canova's works inspired wide-spread debates about the nature of artistic production, the writing of art history, the context and significance of exhibitions and personal emotional reactions to works of art.

Unfortunately for Canova, however, transformations in exhibition practices over the course of the nineteenth century led to the gradual disappearance of these innovative displays. Settings that had once showcased his works to their best advantage were soon abandoned for displays that, regrettably, no longer highlighted his meticulous carving or his careful selection of subject matter. After his death, for instance, although visitors continued to flock to his studio, they were treated only to the sight of casts of works and pieces that had been left half-finished. Without Canova himself there to guide their viewing of his sculptures, viewers could easily misinterpret pieces as mere copies or

replicas based on antique models. In addition, other sculptors not only completed those partially finished works,[1] but also incessantly reproduced Canova's pieces to capitalize on his fame, leading to the mistaken belief that even during his life Canova had not carved his own sculptures.[2]

Likewise, transformations in patronage and collecting patterns also affected the display of Canova's works. Changing trends inspired by romanticism and realism chipped away at Canova's importance in broader European circles. Earlier works that made obvious use of classical models, such as *Triumphant Perseus*, modelled largely on the *Apollo Belvedere*, fell out of favour and were decried as mere copies of the antique, as we have already seen. In contrast, Canova's more lyrical and sensual works, such as *Cupid and Psyche*, were more widely admired instead. Who, after all, can forget the confession of the French writer, Gustave Flaubert, who felt compelled to kiss the armpit of *Psyche* when he finally saw the work in the Villa Sommariva in 1845?[3] Yet, even as he was brought to the brink of ecstasy by this encounter, little did Flaubert know that he was not even kissing an "original" Canova, but rather a copy by Adamo Tadolini![4]

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[1] Honour, "Canova's Studio Practice II: 1791-1822," 226 and 229.

The Duke of Buckingham, for instance, described a visit to Canova's studio in 1829, almost six and a half years after the sculptor's death. "January 1st, 1829. I went to Canova's studio, which is still shewn, the scholars of that great man since his death finishing and copying his models and statues." The Private Diary of Richard, Duke of Buckingham and Chandos, K.G. vol. 3, 52.

[2] Honour, "Canova's Studio Practice I: The Early Years," 146-47.

For more on the way Canova's own persona was transformed throughout the century, including the representation of him in his studio, see my own article, Christina Ferando, "Maidservant as Muse: The Dramatic Reinvention of Antonio Canova," Journal of Art Historiography 3 (2010).

[3] Gustave Flaubert, "Voyage en Italie," Oeuvres complètes, eds. Claudine Gothot-Mersch and Guy Sagnes, vol. 1. Oeuvres de jeunesse (Paris: Gallimard, 2001) 1111.

[4] See Mazzocca and Valle, Villa Carlotta 77.

Indeed, although Giambattista Sommariva had purchased a copy of Canova's *Cupid and Psyche* knowingly, his embrace of copies after Canova's work points to yet another cause for the decline of the artist's reputation. More and more collectors bought large scale marble replicas of Canova's sculptures, a propagation that both signalled his success *and* distanced viewers still more from what had been his careful treatment of marble. The copy after Canova's *Three Graces* visible in the Haight family home in New York, for instance, may have been a treasured memento from the family's Grand Tour through Europe in 1835-39, but it would not have born any trace of the master's hand (fig. 258).[5]

Equally stunning was the way Canova's pieces were "domesticated" by diminutive copies in multiple media. Canova's ethereal female forms, such as his *Hebe* and *Dancer with Finger on Chin*, for instance, were among the most commonly reproduced on a small scale, often transformed into decorative objects for the home (figs. 259-266). This was also the case with the *Penitent Magdalene*. The success of this particular work had emerged from the way Canova fused sensuality and piety in the saint's despondent form, yet the sculpture's miniaturization in mid-century drained any religious sentiment from the work.[6] Even the two lions he had carved for the tomb of

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[5] For more on this particular work, see the doctoral thesis, Lauren Keach Lessing, "Presiding Divinities: Ideal Sculpture in Nineteenth-Century American Domestic Interiors," Henry Radford Hope School of Fine Arts, Indiana University, 2006, esp. chp. 2, "Richard Kip and Sarah Roger Haight's Copy of Antonio Canova's Three Graces," 23-62. For more on the American interest in classical and neoclassical art, Wendy A. Cooper, ed., Classical Taste in America 1800-1840, 1st ed. (Baltimore and New York: Baltimore Museum of Art; Abbeville Press, 1993).

[6] In George Sand, *Histoire de ma vie*, Sand records a conversation with the actress Marie Duval, who displayed a miniature replica of the *Magdalene* on her bookshelf and admitted she spent hours looking at the work. Duval, however, does not contemplate *Magdalene* as a model of religious piety, but rather asks "pourquoi elle pleure, si c'est du repentir d'avoir vécu ou du regret de ne plus vivre." George Sand, Histoire de ma vie, 13 in 4 vols. (Paris and Liepzig: Chez Wolfgang Gerhard, 1855) vol. 11 in 4, 121.

Clement XIII became increasingly fashionable as the century progressed and were themselves frequently reproduced in miniature (figs. 267-268).

On the one hand, the miniaturization of Canova's work and its transformation into decorative objects drives home his status as the greatest sculptor of the epoch. In effect, these objects were the new "classics" of the nineteenth century. Just as canonical sculptures by ancient, Renaissance and Baroque masters had been reproduced broadly in multiple media throughout the eighteenth century,[7] so too were Canova's works consumed on a wide scale by diverse viewers. For instance, a glance at Johann Zoffany's painting, *Sir Lawrence Dundas and his Nephew in the Dressing Room in 19, Arlington Street, London*, from 1769 reveals a series of bronze miniatures that includes reproductions after the *Discobolus*, the *Apollo Belvedere*, and Giambologna's *Mercury* on the mantel of the fireplace (fig. 269). It does not take much imagination to envision Canova's works there in their stead. Even prints after his works remained popular, and Kapiton Zelentsov's painting of a Russian interior showing a print of Canova's *Three Graces* on the wall drives home the thoroughly international appeal of his sculptures (fig. 270). One cannot help but imagine that Canova himself would have been delighted that his work had achieved the exceptional status of cultural touchstone and marketable commodity in one. This was the ultimate triumph, the fulfillment of a goal that had begun in his studio thirty years before, in the deliberate comparison between *Triumphant Perseus* and the *Apollo Belvedere*.

Certainly, the circulation of these small-scale works represents the scope of Canova's success, achieved through his attention to display and the promotion of

[7] For more on the eighteenth-century popularity of objects based on classical antiquities, see Haskell and Penny, Taste and the Antique: The Lure of Classical Sculpture, 1500-1900 esp. chp xii, "New Fashions in Copying Antiquities," 93-98.

attentive viewing practices. Yet, there was undoubtedly a darker side to his wide-spread fame. The proliferation of small-scale copies and the transformation of his works into decorative objects fundamentally distanced these pieces from what had been the very core of Canova's art. Viewers no longer were required to think critically about the form, content, and context of his large-scale sculptures. This is not to say that the small-scale reproductions of Canova's works could not invite serious contemplation. They may have done, yet such reflection was of a personal sort, and occurring as it did in the private sphere, it served only to highlight the way aesthetic response was increasingly linked to individual emotions over the course of the nineteenth century.

At the same time, the solidification of art history as an academic discipline in its own right further shattered Canova's reputation. These small scale replicas, ornamental commodities, and tourist souvenirs had no place in a history of art that privileged the grand, the beautiful, the original, and, most importantly, the unique. Given the strict hierarchy of the study of the fine arts in the twentieth century which has all but ignored decorative arts in favor of painting and sculpture, it is no surprise that Canova's reputation reached the nadir that it did. In fact, even the replication of the majestic cameos after Canova's works, which had once been so highly prized in and of themselves, was simply another indication of how Canova remained popular—but only at the very margins of what was considered "art."

The private collections which had allowed such intimate and intense viewing of Canova's sculptures themselves decreased in number over the course of the century. Not only were many collections sold, as was the case with those of Berio, Sommariva and Aguado, but the conceptualization of the home as a private space meant that fewer and

fewer collectors had broad "open door" policies that allowed visitors to come and see their works of art. Those collections that did remain intact, on the other hand, did so through a unique transmutation from private collection to public museum,[8] within which the physical engagement with Canova's works which the sculptor had so encouraged was simply no longer considered a proper mode of behavior.

Indeed, within public museums, Canova's sculptures fared worst of all. First of all, these public spaces quickly became a location in which proper behavior was enforced in order to shape the ideal modern citizen. Restrictions on what was considered appropriate behavior meant that viewers might admire Canova's work, but no longer did they engage physically with the sculptures. No longer did they rotate his sculptures as they pleased in order to view them from all sides; no longer did they reach out and touch the marble to dispel the illusion of flesh; no longer did they guide their torch to admire his modeling skills. Indeed, technological developments over the course of the century eradicated some of these practices altogether. The advent of electricity, for instance, meant that torchlight was no longer required if one wanted to view sculpture in the evening.[9] Even as viewers' behavior was modified, therefore, museum displays themselves were altered. Canova's sculptures did not fare well, for instance, against the modernist aesthetic of the "white cube." Gone were the walls with carefully chosen palettes that both cast a warm glow on the white marble and allowed it to stand out against them. Gone, too, were the hidden alcoves and enclosed viewing spaces that lent

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[8] Higonnet, A Museum of One's Own: Private Collecting, Public Gift 168-207.

[9] For more on the use of electric lighting and heat in the National Gallery, London, see Geoffrey N. Swinney, "The Evil of Vitiating and Heating the Air: Artificial Lighting and Public Access to the National Gallery, London, with Particular Reference to the Turner and Vernon Collections," Journal of the History of Collections 15.1 (2003): 83-112.

Canova's works such mystery. Isolated against bright white walls, it is no surprise critics found Canova's works cold and lifeless.

Modern tastes combined with a conservative approach to cultural heritage make it unlikely that Canova's display techniques will ever be recaptured completely. Recently, however, there have been valiant attempts to employ unusual lighting effects and even to enable his works to rotate. These techniques certainly combat the idea of the frigidity of Canova's works. Yet, above all, we must not use such techniques solely for entertainment, but rather employ them in such a way as to be true to Canova's own engagement with his works of art. That is, regardless of how we may now encounter Canova's sculptures, we would do well to recall the intensity, thoughtfulness and consideration with which he wished people to approach his works and his deep-rooted commitment to the art of looking.

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Appendix A

Archivio di Stato di Roma. Camerale II, Busta 6, Antichità e Belle Arti, Fasc. 188.

This document appears to be an undated draft of a letter or declaration written on behalf of the papal government, regarding the purchase of Canova's *Triumphant Perseus*. There is significant crossing out of words and rewriting in another hand; whenever possible I have included the annotations and revisions. Nonetheless, I have favored a clean transcription that respects the general sense of the letter, rather than attempting to render the particulars of its editing.

It is possible this letter was sent from the Ercole Consalvi, the Cardinal Secretary of State at the time, to one of Giuseppe Bossi's representatives in Milan.

This folder also contains a draft of the contract between Canova and the Pope for the purchase of *Triumphant Perseus* and the two pugilists*, Damoxenos* and *Creugas*, which I have not transcribed here.

Phrases in brackets [] were either impossible to decipher with absolute certainty or were completely illegible. All underlined phrases are emphasized in the original text.

Il celebrissimo scultore Canova offrì al Sig Card^{e} Litta allora Tesoriere l'acquisto del suo impareggiabile Gruppo del <u>Perseo</u>. Il Cardinale chiedè prima tempo a riflettere; poco dopo per suo <u>particolare sentimento</u> rispose, che non credeva, che il Governo potesse

prestarsi a questo acquisto nelle presenti circostanze. Egli non interpellò mai il Papa a questo proposito, nè diede la risposta a nome di Sua Santità.

Appena giunse a notizia del Santo Padre l'avvenuto, ed appena seppe in conseguenza che si pensava di trasportare fuori di Roma questa rara produzione, che fa onore al secolo, in cui viviamo, e che formerà epoca più [illegible] a venire nella storia delle belle arti, dichiarò, che il Tesoriere avea operato senza sua intelligenza, e che era anzi sua nota volontà di acquistare questo prezioso monumento più tosto, che di permetterne la [illegible] in un'estero.[1] Tanto più che le condizioni dell'acquisto erano tali, che a fronte della di lui importanza non compromettevano le forze del Principato. Dopo la perdita immensa degli ogetti di arte che formavano uno dei principali ornamenti di questa Capitale, connobe egli che troppo interessava l'impedire, che non rimanesse priva anche di questo monumento, il quale potea in qualche maniera riparare una parte dei passati danni. Tra la risposta data di proprio opinione da M^{r}. Tesoriere, e la questa dichiarazione di Sua Santità, in seguito della quale fù a di lei Nome concluso il Contratto con il Canova, non passarono ventiquattro ore. Fù un mero accidente, che il Tesoriere dasse la risposta nella mattina del Sabato, e che perciò il Canova nella Posta di quel giorno scrivesse al Bossi, che rimanevagli libero l'acquisto della statua. Nella seguente Domenica e perciò molto prima che pervenisse questa lettera al Bossi già era giunta al Canova la dichiarazione di Sua Santità, e già era concluso il Contratto con il Principato. Le Lettere stesse prodotte dal Bossi ne forniscono la prova.

[1] Although the annotated text is illegible, the original draft reads "…più tosto che permetterne la estrazione giacche le condizione dell'acquisto…" The significance is clear. The Pope wished to prevent the exportation of Canova's sculpture.

In conseguenza di questi fatti non può il Bossi estero, e privato porsi in gara con il Principe naturale per pretendere la prelazione in questo acquisto. Le ragioni, che escludono la sua pretensione, sono evidenti.

Primieramente il Tesoriere non poteva disporre della volontà del suo Principe. Molto meno poteva con il suo privato sentimento toglierli il diritto di acquistare un'ogetto, che interessava anche il bene, ed il decoro pubblico. Sicchè la momentanea privata risposta del Tesoriere non potè fare ostacolo alla immediata determinazione del Principe stesso inscio dell'avvenuto.

In secondo luogo siccome ogni Governo ha un diritto d'impedire la estrazione dei prodotti del proprio suolo, così ha molto più quello d'impedire la estrazione di quelle produzioni d'ingegno, che o ritrovate, o nate nel suo stato attraggono a loro una particolare affezione.

Questi principj, che dipendono dalla Sovranità Territoriale di tutti i Governi, sono fianchegiati nel Governo Pontificio dalle Leggi vigenti, le quali proibiscono l'estrazione degli ogetti di arte senza speciale licenza del Governo medesimo. Si fatte leggi proibitive della l'estrazione di questi ogetti negli Esteri, includono molto più il diritto del Sovrano di acquistargli a preferenza degli Esteri stessi.

Non fa dunque il Santo Padre che prevalersi dei proprj incontrastabili diritti, allorchè sostiene la validità dell'acquisto del Monumento in questione, al quale per tutti i riguardi non farà mai per rinunciare. Qualunque privata convenzione fatta dal Bossi con il Canova non potè togliere al Sovrano l'esercizio di una facoltà, che deriva in lui egualmente dalle conseguenze dell'alto dominio dalla disposizione delle leggi speciali, e dai principij stessi del diritto naturale, che attribuiscono [illegible] ad ogni nazione, così

ad ogni Principe il diritto di [interesse presso] di loro cio che per opera o di valore o di arte ci produce nei loro dominj. Il Card^e^. Seg.^io^ di Stato si da l'onore di partecipare, Cittad^o^ Ministro, la fermezza, in cui il S. Padre è, di non ricedere da queste inconcusse ragioni [,] per conservare l'acquisto fatto, e nello stesso tempo la fiduccia, che voi stesso siate per [ravvisarne], e farne conoscere la efficacia.