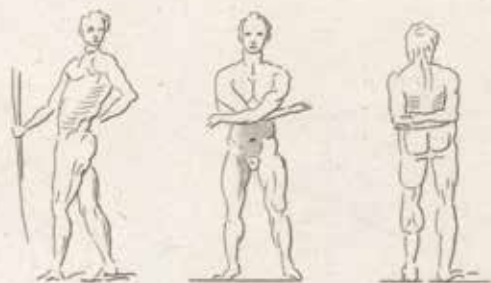


F.15

F.16



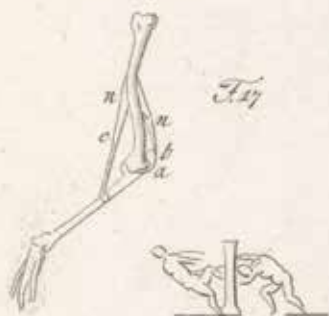
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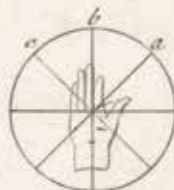
F.19



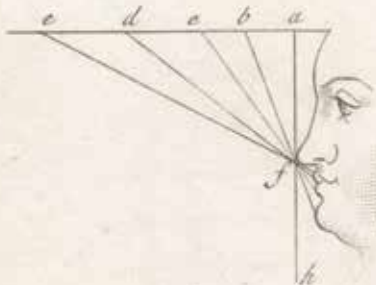
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Acquisitions

Rijksmuseum Research Library

• GEERT-JAN KOOT •

Leonardo da Vinci and his Treatise on Painting

The *Trattato della pittura* is regarded as Leonardo da Vinci's legacy to the science of art. Art historians have long since recognized the significance of the Treatise on Painting in the study of Leonardo's work. Although Leonardo da Vinci did not write the Treatise, this text was primarily responsible for the dissemination of his art theory from the mid-sixteenth century to the early nineteenth. Artists, scientists, and scholars, Nicholas Poussin and Galileo Galilei among them, read it avidly as an authoritative record of Leonardo's thoughts. It is, in fact, a disorganized and fragmented text that was compiled by Francesco Melzi (1491-1570), one of Leonardo's pupils, but it was accepted as a Leonardo original for centuries. The Rijksmuseum acquired three different editions, all fundamental sources for art-historical investigation focusing not exclusively on Leonardo's original writings and theories but also on the legacy of his ideas among Renaissance and Baroque artists, scholars, and natural philosophers.

- 1 LEONARDO DA VINCI (1452-1519); revised by Carlo Pedretti, transcription by Carlo Vecce *Libro di pittura: edizione in facsimile del Codice Urbinate lat. 1270 nella Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana* Florence (Giunti) 1995

Two volumes in one case (vol. 1: Facsimile volume of *Libro di pittura*; vol. 2: Commentary volume accompanied by publisher's leaflet; includes a facsimile volume, a text volume with transcriptions and critical apparatus, and a notarized colophon sheet), illustrations (some colour); 36 x 27 cm
Edition of 998 numbered copies and 35 copies not for sale (no. 411 of 998)

This edition contains the facsimile reprint of Francesco Melzi's compilation, known as the *Codex Urbinas Latinus 1270*, the archetype for the abbreviated manuscripts that served as the basis for the first printed editions of Leonardo's *Trattato*. Carlo Vecce wrote a new transcription of the text, published in the second volume.

Francesco Melzi was apprenticed to Leonardo in 1506, and lived with him in his home. After Leonardo's death in 1519, Melzi inherited his collection, artworks and writings. Among the manuscripts were the notes that laid down the practice of painting as well as much broader thematic subjects of a scientific nature. More than forty manuscripts and fragments have been

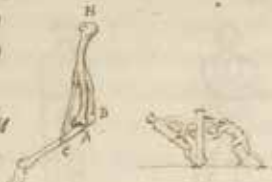
inventoried and can be traced back in part to the *Codex Urbinas Latinus 1270*, the manuscript compiled by Melzi. It is likely that this Codex was based on many more manuscripts that have been lost or whose whereabouts are unknown. An inventory of the recovered manuscripts is on the digital platform <http://www.treatiseonpainting.org/home.html>. Records of all known editions of the *Trattato della Pittura* can also be found there.

Melzi's editing of Leonardo's original notes raises questions about the authenticity of the text. A comparison of the manuscripts with Melzi's compilation shows that he stuck closely to Leonardo's meticulous way of expressing himself and his use of language. The printed editions of the *Trattato*,

dell'osso detto baintorio l'uno di dietro all'altro di
 dietro e' nato
 de il braccio
 quel che lo
 S'elie l'omo piu
 tirare che ne
 Prouasi per
 ponderibus doue dice infra li pesi d'equal potentia quel
 lo si dimostrarà piu potente che sarà piu remoto dal
 polo della loro bilancia / sequita ch'essendo h, b, mus-
 colo et, h, c, muscolo di potentia in fra loro equali il
 muscolo dinanzi h, c, e' piu potente chel muscolo di dietro h, b,
 perche' esso e' fermo nel braccio in, c, sito piu remoto dal polo
 del gomito, a, che non e' h, il quale e' di la da esso polo e' egli
 e' concluso l'intento, ma questa e' forza semplice, e' non com-
 posta come si propone di uoler trattare et doueua mettere
 questa in anti, ma la forza composta fia quella che fac-
 cendosi una operatione cole braccia ui s'aggiungie una
 seconda potentia del peso della persona e' delle gambe
 come nel tirare et nello spingere che oltre alla potentia
 delle braccia ui s'aggiungie il peso della persona e' la
 forza delle schiene et delle gambe la qual e' nel uoler
 distendersi come sarebbe di due a' una colona che uno
 spingesse la colona et l'altro la tirassi

Qual e' maggior potentia nell'huomo
 quella del tirare, o quella del spingere -

Altro maggior potentia ha l'huomo nel tirare che nello spin-
 gere perche' nel tirare ui s'aggiungie la potentia de' muscoli
 delle braccia



by contrast, are drastically abridged versions of the texts in the *Codex Urbinas Latinus*. The wide range of subjects includes the definition of painting as a science ('scientia'), the relationship between painting and the other branches of science, encouraging the study of optics, and detailed dissertations on rendering perspective and light and shade. It is also clear that the original illustrations were only small sketches that were worked up into detailed full-page prints, sometimes by well-known artists like Poussin.

It can be concluded that the *Trattato della Pittura* encompasses far more than a manual for painters. The significance of the subjects goes way beyond the bounds of a painters' handbook. The work is much more a view of a complex combination of related scientific aspects arising out of the practice of the artistic creative process. This facsimile edition of Melzi's original manuscript sheds light on the scope and richness of Leonardo's ideas.

delle braccia che sono creati solo al tirare e non al spingere
perche quando il braccio e diritto li muscoli che mouono il
braccio gomito, non possono hauere alcuna actione nel spin-
gere piu che si auesse l'humo appoggiando la spalla alla co-
sta che lui uole remouere del suo sito nella quale solo sa-
dobra li ueni che dirizzano la schiena in conuata e quelli
che dirizzano la gamba piegata et stano sotto la coscia et
nella popa dietro della gamba et con l'anciluso al tirare
aggiungieri la potentia delle braccia et la potente astensione
della schiena et delle gambe, insieme col peso del huomo
nella qualita che richiede la sua obliquita et allo spingere
concorre il medesimo mancandosi la potentia delle braccia
perche tam e a spingere con un braccio diritto senza uita
come ha uere interposto un pezzo di legno infra la spalla et
la cosa che si spinge.

Delle membra che piegano e che ufficio

La carne che si uita in chi pigameti
La carne che uita le giunture dell'ossa et si altre parte
a lor uicini crescono et diminuiscono nelle loro grossez-
ze secondo il piegamento od astensione dell'i predetti
membri, cioe crescono dalla parte di dentro del angolo
che si genera nelli piegamenti de membri et crescianno
no et astendano nella parte di fuori dell'angolo super-
iore et esteriore e in mezo che si interpone infra l'angolo
conuesso e concauo partecipa di tale accrescimento o
diminutione, ma tanto piu o meno quanto e son piu
uicini o remoti all'angoli delle dette giunture piegate
del uolere la gamba senza la coscia.

LITERATURE (NOS. 1-3):

Kate Trauman Steinitz (preface by Elmer Belt), *Leonardo da Vinci's Trattato della pittura: Treatise on Painting: A Bibliography of the Printed Editions 1651-1956 based on the complete collection in the Elmer Belt Library of Vinciana* (Los Angeles) preceded by a study of its sources and illustrations, Copenhagen 1958 (*Library Research Monographs*, 5)
Pablo Alvarez, 'The Anthony J. and Frances A. Guzzetta Collection of Leonardo da Vinci Collection Highlight: Leonardo, Traitté de la Peinture', *The University of Rochester Library Bulletin* 44 (1994), <http://rbscpl.lib.rochester.edu/3377> (consulted 7 March 2017)

Claire Farago, *Re-reading Leonardo: The Treatise on Painting across Europe, 1550-1900*, Farnham 2009

Francesca Fiorani, *Leonardo da Vinci and His Treatise on Painting*, The Institute for Advanced Technology in the Humanities, University of Virginia, 2012, <http://www.treatiseonpainting.org/home.html> (consulted 7 March 2017)

PROVENANCE:

OMI – Old Manuscripts & Incunabula, New York; acquired by the Rijksmuseum, 2016
(inv. no. BI-2016-2152).

- 2 LEONARDO DA VINCI (1452-1519); edited by Guglielmo Manzi, with notes by Giovan Gherardo De Rossi and drawings by G. Francesco De Rossi
Trattato della pittura di Lionardo da Vinci, tratto da un codice della Biblioteca vaticana
 Roma (nella Stamperia De Romanis; drawings that illustrate the work of the Leonardo da Vinci Painting Treaty, drawn faithfully from the originals of the Vatican codex) 1817
 556 differently numbered pages; 29 x 23 cm
 1 facsimile with many illustrations; 33 x 24.5 cm
-

This is the earliest published transcription of Leonardo's essays and precepts on painting based on the original manuscript in the Vatican. According to Pablo Alvarez, 'Leonardo da Vinci planned to publish a treatise on painting but he was never able to see his project materialize. His notes on this subject were dispersed in numerous autograph manuscripts written in a span of years from 1490 through 1513. After Leonardo's death in 1519, his papers passed to his friend and pupil Francesco Melzi. In his attempts to arrange this material into publishable form, Melzi managed to edit the notes on painting from eighteen books, of which only seven and a fragment are extant today. Melzi's compilation, known as the *Codex Urbinas Latinus 1270*, was the archetype for the abbreviated manuscripts that served as the basis for the first printed editions of Leonardo's *Trattato*. While the *Codex Urbinas* contained six books, the abbreviated manuscript versions only included books 2, 3, and 4.' (River Campus Libraries, <http://rbscp.lib.rochester.edu/3377>, consulted 7 March 2017.)

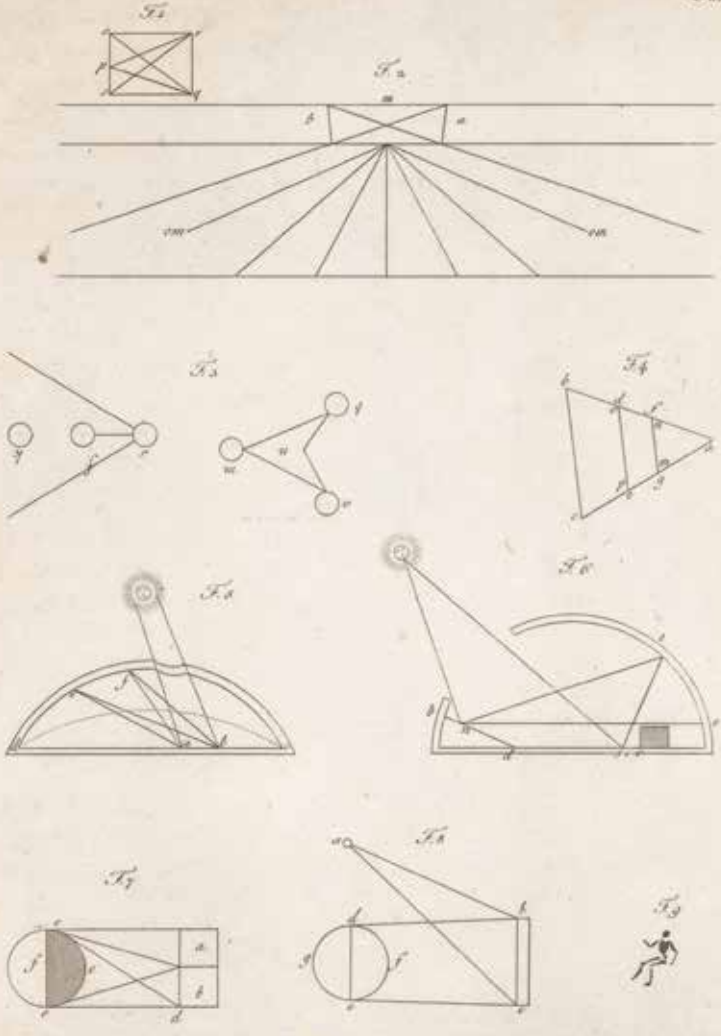
After Leonardo's death Melzi produced a compilation of his writings that resulted in the creation of the *Codex Urbinas* in Milan around 1540, although the manuscript was not mentioned in the inventory of the Delle Rovere library in Casteldurante prior to 1626. It was among the possessions of Francesco Maria della Rovere, the last duke of Urbino, a city acquired in that year by the Papal States. The ownership of the manuscript did not change, although it did move from place to place: in 1631 the book went from Casteldurante to Urbino and in 1657 on to the Biblioteca Alessandrina in Rome. Finally, the book was given a place in the Vatican library. Despite these moves, the work remained unknown until the end of the eighteenth century. In 1817 the text was transcribed and published by the librarian of the Biblioteca Barberiniana, Guglielmo Manzi. (<http://www.treatiseonpainting.org/home.html>, consulted 7 March 2017).

The illustrations are chalcographic reproductions of drawings by Giovanni Francesco de Rossi after the original drawings in the Codex.

PROVENANCE:

Matthäus Truppe Buchhandlung & Antiquariat, Graz;
 acquired by the Rijksmuseum, 2016
 (inv. no. BI-2016-1428-9).

Tab. 3



3 LEONARDO DA VINCI (1452-1519)

On the title page: 'Translated from the original Italian, and adorn'd with a great number of cuts. To which is prefix'd, the author's life; done from the last edition of the French' London (J. Senex) 1721
213 pages, 35 plates, folded diagrams; 21 x 14 cm

The first edition in English of Leonardo da Vinci's *Trattato della pittura*, originally published in Italian in 1651 in France. The first edition printed in Italy did not appear until 1733 in Naples. The English translation was the first in a series of publications of a scientific or philosophical nature for the benefit of the fine arts in England. The publisher and bookseller John Senex delighted in promoting Newtonian culture. At that time art literature in England was almost non-existent and based primarily on the numerous translations of texts produced in France, relating to the world of the Académie royale de peinture et de sculpture. The English translation of the *Trattato* changed all that, showing Leonardo as an artist, scientist and theoretician. Hogarth's *Analysis of Beauty* (1753) was in part indebted to Leonardo's

writings, and Reynolds used him extensively in his lectures. John Senex was appointed a Fellow of the Royal Society in 1728 because of this translation. The translation is anonymous. It is likely that the publication was financed by William Taylor, who had achieved economic success, two years before, with the publication of Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*.

The anonymous illustrator was unable to interpret formulae for muscular action to match Leonardo's own precise observations.

PROVENANCE:

Bogislav Winner Rare Books & Manuscripts, London
acquired by the Rijksmuseum, 2015
(inv. no. BI-2015-4800).





The Treatises of Perspective by Abraham Bosse

The printmaker Abraham Bosse is known for his art theory and as the author of books on a variety of technical subjects. He wrote several treatises which were inspired by the theories of perspective written by the civil engineer and mathematician Girard Desargues (Lyon 1591-1661). The fact that these were translated into several languages, some as late as the eighteenth century, shows that they were considered valuable reference works.

4 ABRAHAM BOSSE (TOURS 1602/04-1676)

Maniere universelle de Mr. Desargues, pour pratiquer la perspective par petit-pied, comme le geometral: ensemble les places et proportions des fortes & foibles touches, teintes ou couleurs

Paris (De l'imprimerie de Pierre Des-Hayes) 1648

342 pages with different numbering, 163 plates: illustrations (engravings); 22,5 x 14 cm

Added engraved title page with date 1647. Portrait of Michel Larcher followed by the engraved first page of the dedication to him. Plates are numbered 1-156, with 151 and 156 repeated. All but three are printed on both sides of the leaf, preceded by another added engraved title, with date 1647.

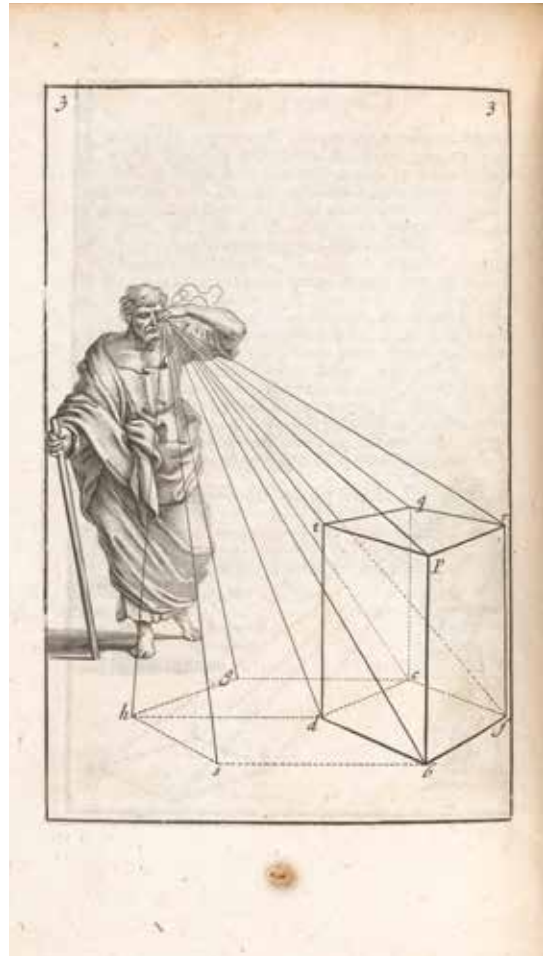
Errata (engraving) on verso of final leaf.

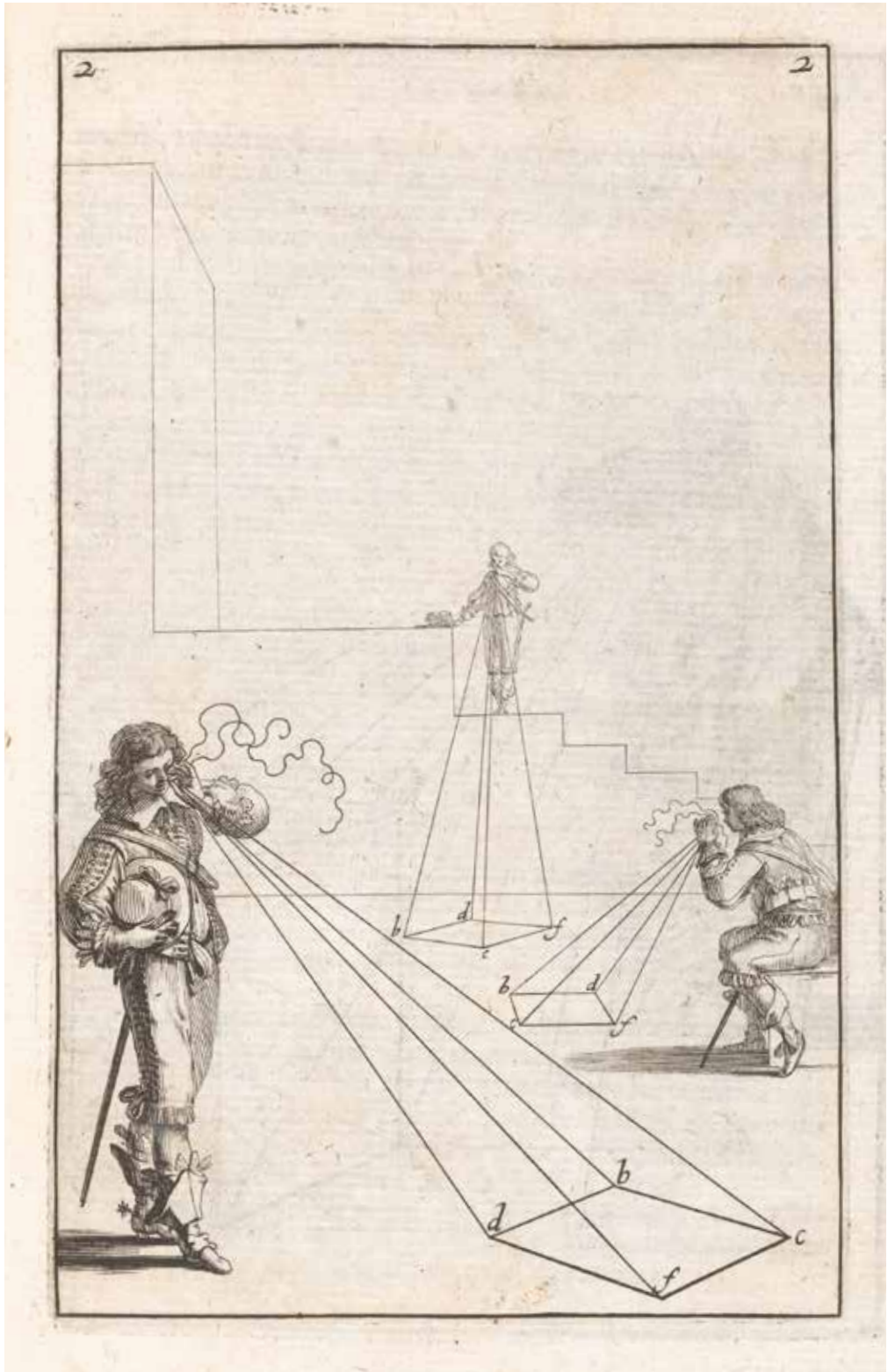
This instruction book, inspired by Desargues, the inventor of projective geometry, was intended to gradually teach the subtleties of perspective through the understanding of mathematics. Part one also contains some pages on shadow and shade, the second part is dedicated to such things as the prospect of irregular surfaces and the third to the *Exemple de l'une des manières universelles du S.G.D.L. touchant la pratique de la perspective* (1636) by Desargues as well as additions that he had probably written. In this treatise Bosse contrasts two ways of executing a painting, the first by copying objects as seen by the naked eye, the second by using definite measurements. This last procedure, called perspective, including light and shade and colour, is the single indispensable precept to the point that when it is absent, paintings must be regarded as badly executed and fatally flawed, no matter how well conceived in other ways. Desargues invented this new method using geometry to solve the most fundamental problem of perspective theory: the means of constructing a three-dimensional space on a two-dimensional surface.

PROVENANCE:

Librairie Henri Godts, Brussels; acquired by the Rijksmuseum, 2016

(inv. no. BI-2016-4196).





5 ABRAHAM BOSSE (TOURS 1602/04-1676)

Traité des pratiques géométrales et perspectives, enseignées dans l'Académie royale de la peinture et sculpture

Paris (chez l'auteur [by the author]) 1665

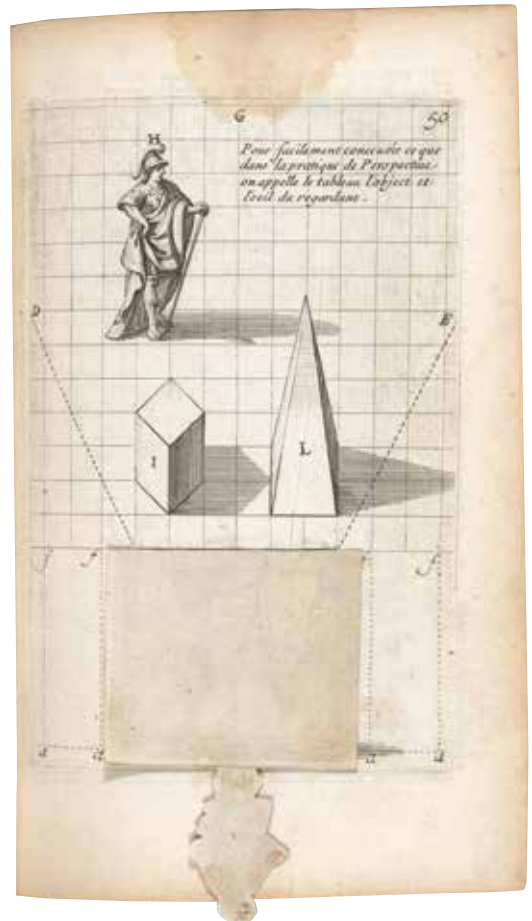
2 parts in 1 volume (16 unnumbered pages, 140 pages, 67 engraved plates, 1 plate with 2 moving parts), illustrations; 18 x 12 cm

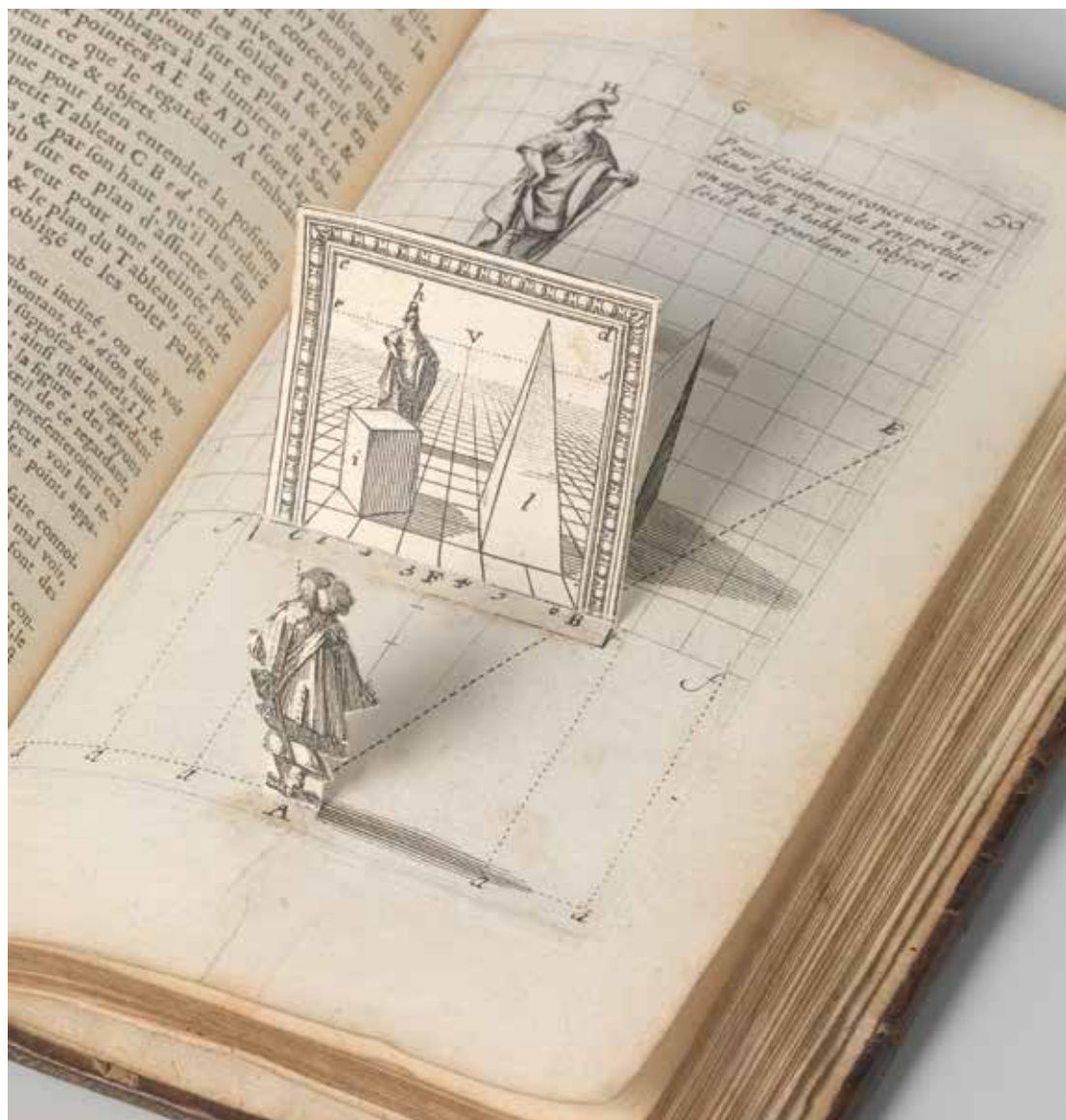
Lessons given in the l'Académie royale de la peinture et sculpture; Practices by figures of the things said before and which were taught and explained in the Académie royale.

In 1648, when Cardinal Mazarin established the Académie royale de peinture et de sculpture, Abraham Bosse was made a founding member. Bosse was invited to teach perspective with the title 'member honoraire', because at that time the academy did not admit artisans such as printmakers. However, his publicizing of Desargues' methods in the same year embroiled him in a controversy with Charles Le Brun and his followers who had different methods, and also a belief that 'genius' rather than technical method should be the guide in creating artworks. Goldstein pointed out that in 1652 a French translation of a 'treatise' bringing together some of Leonardo's notes on painting was brought into the academy and was said to encompass all that one would wish to know about that art. Armed with Desargues's ideas, Bosse saw the shortcomings of Leonardo's treatise as a useful tool to combat his opponents in the academy. Bosse objected on the grounds that the notes were random and that the book was full of errors, principally in its observations on perspective. In 1657, Bosse's adversaries offered an easier perspective method by Jacques Le Bicheur (published in 1660) as an alternative to his, and yet another such alternative was published by Grégoire Huret in 1670. Accused of plagiarism, Bosse was forced to withdraw from the academy in 1661; he established his own school as an alternative. He eventually responded to the attacks in this book published in 1665 detailing his perspective course in the academy. This treatise is also a defence of his ideas, illustrated with sixty-seven engraved plates including a frontispiece and dedication leaf, the whole entirely drawn and engraved by Abraham Bosse.

Abraham Bosse integrated three-dimensional structures mounted on a page to explain the spatial arrangement of perspective. On one of the illustrations a pop-up of a figure and a window are pasted on the page. The figure and the window

stand perpendicular to the page. A front view from above the page shows the stretching of shapes. A view of the angle shows the silhouette of a figure located at the point of view. The framed image, placed perpendicular to the surface, shows the perspective to the corrected distortions (see illustration).





LITERATURE (NOS. 4, 5):

Carl Goldstein, *Print Culture in Early Modern France*:

Abraham Bosse and the Purpose of Print, Cambridge 2012, p. 153

Jacques Desbiens, *La fenêtre brisée. Traité de perspective appliquée*

à holographie de synthèse, Doctorat en Études et Pratiques

des Arts, Université du Québec à Montréal, 2012, p. 31,

<http://www.archipel.uqam.ca/5381/1/D2447.pdf> (consulted

7 March 2017)

PROVENANCE:

Librairie ancienne des Trois Islets, St Briac sur Mer; acquired

by the Rijksmuseum with the support of the Van der Vossen-

Delbrück Fonds, 2016

(inv. no. BI-2016-0592).

Artists' Manuals and Recipe Books in the Rijksmuseum Research Library

The collection of technical art sources covers primary documentation concerning the practical application and use of techniques, materials, tools and machines for the making of objects of art and culture from the Middle Ages to the present day. This collection of over eight hundred printed and written technological treatises was founded some decades ago and is growing by a few dozen titles each year. In February 2017 two exceptional French books were acquired: an early book on colour theory and its use, and a nineteenth-century manuscript with nearly a hundred recipes for cloth dyes, and dyed felt samples.

6 JACQUES D'ENGHIEN (SICILE, DIT LE HÉRAUT)

Le blason des couleurs en armes, liurees, et devises, tres vtille et subtil pour scauoir et congnoistre dune et chascune couleur la vertu et propriete. Item pour apprendre la maniere de blasonner les dictes couleurs en plusieurs choses. Nouuelleme[n]t imprime

France, 1525-30?

52 pages, 10 coloured woodcuts; 13.5 x 9 cm eded by another added engraved title, with date 1647. Errata (engraving) on verso of final leaf.

This book is based on the work of Sicile, héraut du roi Alphonse d'Aragon, de Sicille, de Maillorque domicilié à Mons en Hainaut. This could be Jacques d'Enghien (died 1436), a French herald from Mons who was in the service of the king of Sicily. The treatise was printed in Paris as *Le blason de toutes armes* about sixty years after his death in 1495. At least thirteen French editions followed. The edition acquired by the Rijksmuseum is based on the revised and enlarged version of 1505, *Le blason des couleurs*, which contains a second treatise without antecedent editions. As the new title indicates, Sicile's treatise had been changed from a treatise on the emblazonment of arms to a reference book on colours in arms, liveries and devices, which contained two treatises specifically on colour. This edition therefore cannot be considered a mere heraldic treatise.

Very few printed treatises on colour and its use published before 1550 have survived. This book is not only one of the major sources of information concerning fifteenth- and sixteenth-century colour theory in Europe, it is also the key to understanding of the concept of colour in Northern Europe. *Le blason des couleurs* is quoted and used as source material by Johan Huizinga in *The Waning of the Middle Ages*, his analysis about the sense of beauty in the fifteenth century.

The first treatise follows the pattern of the earlier edition. Essays on each of the heraldic colours are followed by lists of alternative methods of blazoning and correspondences.

A significant change from the original treatise is the lack of heraldic information. All the information relating to heraldry that was not specifically relevant to colour has been removed.

The second treatise contains theoretical material relating to classical and medieval colour theory and the origins of colour. The classical theory of colour was based on Aristotle's scheme of seven colours, relating to human types, human behaviour like simplicity and honesty, the seven metals, and the seven planets. This first part is followed by chapters devoted to different aspects of colour: the signification of the individual colours, the meaning of each colour and how each colour should be worn according one's estate. The last chapter is a summary of facts and observations concerning colour. The book ends with a poem praising the blazon of colour.

Karel van Mander used *Le blason des couleurs* as one of his sources for *Grondt der edel vry schilderconst* in 1603. As well as many paraphrases and quotations, Van Mander states that painters must attend to all details to depict each one clothed to his estate. This is the theme and subject of the entire second treatise. The sentences stating that pink is worn by courtesans and clerks, and violet is worn by merchants and women and men living on their rents are taken directly from *Des couleurs*. Van Mander sought practical ideas in *Le blason des couleurs* about colour that could be taught to students in the same way that such concepts as the imitation of nature, variety and composition were taught.

LITERATURE:

- Sicille (published and annotated by Hippolyte Cocheris), *Le blason des couleurs en armes, livrées et devises ...*, Paris 1860
- Johan Huizinga, *Herfsttij der middeleeuwen*, Haarlem 1947, pp. 398-401 (tr. *The Waning of the Middle Ages*, London 1924, pp. 248-51)
- Karel van Mander (ed. and with commentary by Hessel Miedema), *Grondt der edel vry schilder-const*, Utrecht 1973, vol. 2 (*Commentaar*), pp. 608-24
- Hessel Miedema, 'Karel van Mander's Grondt der edel vry schilder-const', *Journal of the History of Ideas* 34 (1973), p. 661
- Elizabeth Nelson, *Le blason des couleurs: a Treatise on Color Theory and Symbolism in Northern Europe during the Early Renaissance*, Providence, RI, 1998 (unpub. PhD diss. Brown University), pp. 137-41, 199-200

PROVENANCE:

- Frederik Muller Rare Books, Bergen op Zoom; acquired by the Rijksmuseum with the support of the Willy van der Mandele Fonds, 2017
(inv. no. BI-2017-1963).



Blason sur les douze moÿs de l'ā

May.

Juing.



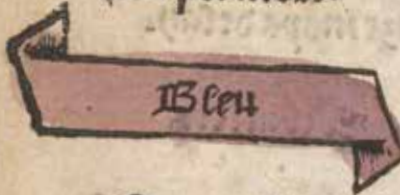
Juillet

Aoust



Septembre.

Octobre.



Novembre

Decembre



¶ Bancunes merueilles du monde singu-
laritez & proprietes touchāt les couleurs

Le blason des couleurs. ff. c. clxxx.

Pour mettre fin a nostre liure nous escri-
 rons aucunes merueilles du monde tou-
 chât les couleurs: & plusieurs singularitez: truis-
 phes & pprietes dicelles. ¶ Et premierement en
 Hibernie croist Vne riche pierre noire qu'on ap-
 pelle gest de quoy len faict les riches escharpes
 & patenostres. ¶ Ille en Vne cite en italie nom-
 mee teridone ya Vne grât merueille q̄ si aucun
 bourgeois ou laboarcure doit m̄rir celle an-
 nce quât il faict labourer sa terre en la raye du
 guercet apperra clere ment effusion de sâg &
 signifie ce sâg la mort & haine du possesseur de
 l'heritage ou cela est aduenu. ¶ Item au pays
 de puèce en certains riuages q̄ sont sur la mer
 croist certains petis arbres q̄lz appellēt qualz.
 Et enuirs la racine de ces arbres/ quât viēt au
 moys de may il se cōcrec & engēdre de moult pe-
 tites boissettes plaines dhumeur rouge cōe sang
 & les gēs du pays les seichēt au soleil qui se-
 ble de morceaux de cupz rouge. Et en la fin
 de l'este en ces morceaux s'engēdrēt petis vers
 q̄ ont dedâs leurs corps Vne humeur au si rou-
 ge q̄ sang de laquelle est faicte le ver meillon
 dont sont ainctz draps de soye. Et les lettres
 des liures faictes. ¶ Item en sirie aucunes gēs

7 ANONYMOUS

Livre de recettes et descriptions de colorants, avec des échantillons de feutre teintés
Southeast France, c. 1820

62 pages, including a few blanks in the main text; 20 x 15 cm

Manuscript in dark brown ink on paper, written in an early nineteenth-century round-hand script, with recipes or descriptions of nearly a hundred dyes, each with a large heading, and about twenty (of about thirty) small samples of dyed cloth mounted in the margin. Some ten of the dyed felt samples have been lost, but they sometimes left a little colour behind, so it is possible to see what was intended. The limp sheepskin parchment wrapper was made from the front cover of a folio journal of 1722: 'Journal 1722'

This anonymous and undated manuscript provides recipes and descriptions of nearly a hundred dyes, intended for dyeing cloth or felt, many with a small piece of dyed felt mounted in the margin as a colour sample. The text is divided into two parts, the first part ending on page 20 with 'Fin de la première partie|En couleurs c[] aires'. The main text ends at the foot of page 35 with 'Louis, par la grace de dieu, roi de France et de Navare à tout ceux qui se presentes verront, salut la divine Éliza jubit'. This almost certainly refers to Louis XVIII, who reigned from 1814 to 1824, the only Louis who truly reigned between 1792 and 1830. 'La divine Éliza' remains a puzzle.

Laurens Hesselink had the watermark researched in an attempt to date the manuscript and to determine its origin. The paper is watermarked: bell (about 30 x 18 mm, centred on a chain line) = 'BLAÇONS', meaning the town of Blaçons (Drôme, Dauphiné) near Valance in south-east France. The pages following the main text were later used for writing exercises using the text of a 'Sonnet pour la jeunesse' that appeared in a 1822 catechism, drafts of letters perhaps also intended as exercises, and a few miscellaneous notes. Two of these items are dated 1827 and 1840. There is a primitive drawing of a man and woman on the paste-down at the end.

The textile industry has long occupied a prominent place in the French economy. From the seventeenth century onwards, encouraged by Colbert, the textile sector became structured and rapidly developed, especially in the Province (outside the capital). Textile dyeing technology changed dramatically with the discovery of aniline dyes, the first completely synthetic dyes, by the Englishman W.H. Perkin, in 1856. Prior to Perkin's discovery, all textile dyes were derived from natural sources such as plants, insects, and minerals.

This is a remarkable recipe and sample book for cloth dyes. The in-depth analysis of such books is of paramount importance for material-technical research, providing insight into the materials and techniques used in its production. The colour samples are a unique source for research into the composition of the dyes as described.

LITERATURE:

Unpublished description by Laurens R. Hesselink
Sigrid Eyb-Green (ed.), *Sources on Art Technology: Back to Basics: Proceedings of the Sixth Symposium of the ICOM-CC Working Group for Art Technological Source Research, Held at the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, 16-17 June 2014*, London 2016

PROVENANCE:

Forum Rare Books, 't Hout; acquired by the Rijksmuseum with the support of the Willy van der Mandele Fonds, 2017
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