

Monk or lover? A nineteenth-century artist's dilemma

Lois Oliver

“You are in love?” said Girodet. They both knew that the finest portraits by Titian, Raphael, and Leonardo da Vinci were the outcome of the enthusiastic sentiments by which, indeed, under various conditions, every masterpiece is engendered.

(Balzac, *La Maison du Chat qui pelote*, 1830)¹

Your life should always be regulated as if you were studying theology, philosophy or other sciences, that is: eat and drink temperately at least twice a day, consuming light yet sustaining food and light wines. There is one more rule which, if followed, can render your hand so light that it will float, even fly like a leaf in the wind, and that is: not to enjoy too much the company of women.

(Cennini, *Il Libro dell Arte*, written before 1437, first published 1821)

In 1848 Alexandre Antigna exhibited a *Scène d'atelier* (fig. 1) at the Paris Salon. It was one of seven pictures exhibited by the artist that year, when all entries were admitted. (His other exhibits comprised *L'éclair*; *Le matin*; *Leçon de lecture*; *Le soir*; *Portrait de Mme **** and *Portrait de M. V.*) An artist, holding palette and brushes, turns away from the sacred work in progress on his easel, where he has outlined an angel appearing to a monk, to enjoy a break with his two models. The 'monk' is now playing cards with the 'angel' who relaxes in an alluring state of undress, casually smoking a cigarette. Her pashmina and parasol, fashionable accessories, are discarded to one side. And so, the holy vision on the easel disguises a much earthier reality. The picture sets up an opposition between the sacred and the secular, the ideal and the real, *invenzione* and *imitatio*. Such a construction could be used to emphasize the artist's powers of imagination and idealisation, attributes long considered crucial for ambitious artists aspiring to work at the pinnacle of the academic hierarchy of genres as *peintres d'histoire*, composing religious pictures or scenes from classical history and mythology. Such skills were deemed unnecessary

¹ Honoré de Balzac, *Oeuvres Complètes*, 25 vols, Paris : Houssiaux, 1869–79, vol. 1, 32: ‘-Tu es amoureux? dit Girodet. Tous deux savaient que les plus beaux portraits de Titien, de Raphaël et de Léonard de Vinci sont dus à sentiments exaltés, qui, sous diverses conditions, engendrent d'ailleurs tous les chefs d'oeuvre.’

in the more lowly genres of portraiture, genre, landscape, still life and animal painting. But the trick is that this is not a break in a modelling session at all. This is the scene that Antigna has chosen to construct and exhibit: significantly it is a genre painting depicting a contemporary artist's studio, rather than a more elevated work.



Figure 1 Alexandre Antigna, *Scène d'atelier*, 1848 Salon
Oil on canvas, 40.3 x 32.1cm, Sotheby's New York, 17 February 1993, lot 62A

Antigna's picture is one of hundreds of images of artists exhibited at the Paris Salon during the first half of the nineteenth century. Between 1815 and 1855, these included 219 exhibits described as self portraits (*portraits de l'auteur* or *portraits de l'artiste*); thirty sculpted busts and one hundred paintings that can be positively identified as portraits of nineteenth-century artists (the total number of such likenesses is almost certainly higher as sitters were frequently only identified by their initials); 470 paintings, sculptures and engravings representing historical and legendary artists of the past; and 120 exhibits entitled *Intérieur de l'atelier* or similar. Taken together these images constitute an unparalleled index to the preoccupations of their makers and the predilections of their projected audiences during a crucial period when new concepts of artistic identity were being forged in France under

conditions of far-reaching political, cultural, social and economic change.² Antigna's *Scène d'atelier* is one of a substantial proportion (thirteen per cent) of these Salon exhibits that are marked with an asterisk in the accompanying *livrets*, indicating that when they were submitted to the Salon these works remained the property of their makers. It is clear that artists either produced these works speculatively for the art market because they were confident that they would appeal to gallery-goers and collectors, and/or that the subjects held a personal attraction for the artists themselves.



Figure 2 Jean-Pierre-Alexandre Antigna, *Self Portrait*, about 1845
17 x 13.5cm, Private Collection

[Image reproduced in *Alexandre Antigna*, Exh. cat: Orléans, Musée des Beaux-Arts, 1978]

Antigna's picture appears to be at least in part autobiographical, according to one of the earliest pieces on Antigna published in Pierre Larousse's *Grand Dictionnaire Universel*:

Antigna (Jean-Pierre-Alexandre), French painter, born in Orléans in 1818. A pupil of Paul Delaroche, he started out making religious paintings and exhibited in succession *The Nativity* (1841), *The Vision of Jacob* (1842), *The Temptation of St Anthony* (1843), without any success. In 1845, apart from a *Repentant Magdalene*, he sent to the Salon various genre pictures, including a *Beggar* and *Bathers*, which attracted attention. From then on, he had the good sense to abandon religious painting in order to paint nothing but ordinary subjects, usually drawn from rural life.³

² Lois Oliver, *The Image of the Artist, Paris 1815-1855*, PhD thesis (unpublished), London, Courtauld Institute, 2013.

³ Pierre Larousse, *Grand Dictionnaire Universel du XIXe siècle*, 17 vols, Paris: Larousse & Boyer, 1864-1886, vol. 1, 442, entry for 'ANTIGNA': 'Antigna (Jean-Pierre-Alexandre), peintre français, né à Orléans en 1818. Elève de Paul Delaroche, il a commencé par faire de la peinture religieuse et a exposé successivement *la Naissance de Jésus-Christ* (1841), *La Vision de Jacob* (1842), *La Tentation de Saint Antoine* (1843), qui n'eurent aucun succès. En 1845, outre une *Madeleine repentante*, il envoya au Salon divers tableaux de genre, entre autres un *Mendiant* et des *Baigneuses*, qui attirèrent sur lui l'attention. A partir de cette époque, il a eu le bon esprit de renoncer aux tableaux de religion pour ne peindre que des sujets familiers, empruntés d'ordinaire à la vie rustique.'

Thus, it seems we can read the picture as narrating Antigna's own career shift from religious art to genre painting. And indeed, the artist strongly resembles the curly-haired young man who appears in a self portrait drawing of 1845 (fig. 2). The Larousse entry applauds the 'good sense' of Antigna's decision, perhaps implying that this was a necessary recalibration of his talents to a less demanding art form, but it might instead be interpreted as a bold and deliberate challenge to the academic hierarchy of genres. Artists of the previous generation, including Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres and Paul Delaroche, had already challenged the traditional category of history painting, with works variously defined as historical painting, *le genre historique* or *le genre anecdotique*.⁴ Antigna belonged to the generation of artists who set new modern subjects before the Paris Salon audience. In 1850 he would exhibit *L'Incendie* (262 x 282cm, Musée des Beaux-Arts, Orléans) a Realist depiction of a working-class Parisian family trapped in their burning tenement, a subject that would be categorized as genre, but executed on a large scale to compete with history painting, provoking the censure of Paul Mantz, who objected: 'Enlarge your frames, multiply your volumes in vain; you will never make of genre painting a heroic picture, and of a simple Parisian painting an epic.'⁵

Antigna's *Scène d'atelier* may be small-scale, but it is worthy of close attention because it articulates several major issues that concerned nineteenth-century French artists. Its format exemplifies a key shift in the art market, notably the rise of modern genre scenes such as this designed to appeal to the new bourgeoisie, while the treatment of the subject reflects the popular demand for amorous storylines concerning the Bohemian art world (a demand amply supplied by regular contributors to *L'Artiste* and by Henri Murger's *Scènes de la vie bohème*, which was serialized from 1845 to 1849, and transferred to the stage in 1849).⁶ Add to this the growing challenge to the Academic tradition, symbolized by the classical casts set aside on a shelf; the increased popularity of landscapes such as that framed on the back wall; and the advent of Realism. Certainly, the composition highlights the creative challenge posed by the competing ideologies of the post-1815 Bourbon Catholic revival, that gathered momentum during the July Monarchy, and rising religious scepticism and anticlerical opposition to the Church's renewed power: to many the new religious art appeared as mere masquerade.⁷ Indeed, Antigna's picture brings to mind Courbet's famous retort when asked to include angels in a painting for a church: 'I have never seen angels. Show me an angel and I will paint one.'⁸

⁴ For a thorough exploration of this theme, see Stephen Bann and Stéphane Paccoud, eds, *L'Invention du passé*, Exh. cat: Musée des Beaux-Arts de Lyon; Monastère royal de Brou, Bourg-en-Bresse, Paris: Hazan, 2014.

⁵ Paul Mantz, 'Le Salon', *Feuilleton de L'Événement*, 15 February 1851.

⁶ See Eleonora Vratskidou, 'L'artiste, héros romanesque de la presse littéraire. De *L'Artiste* au *Musée des Familles* (1831-1840)', in Alain Bonnet and Hélène Jagot, eds, *L'Artiste en représentation. Images des artistes dans l'art du XIXe siècle*, Exh. cat: Musée de La Roche-sur-Yon, 2012, 225-43.

⁷ On the revival of religious painting in France c.1800-1860 see Bruno Foucart, *Le Renouveau de la peinture religieuse en France (1800-1860)*, Paris: Arthena, 1987.

⁸ Cited in Paul Mantz, 'le Salon', *Le Temps*, 17 May 1885, 1; and Vincent Van Gogh, letter to Theo van Gogh, 14 July 1885 in *Letters: The Complete Illustrated and Annotated Edition*, Leo

Antigna's decision to depict an artist with an unfinished painting of an angel and monk is precisely calculated. The theme echoes Antigna's own earlier religious works. The visionary encounter on the easel suggests Jacob and the angel, while in the foreground we have the temptations of the flesh, a playful variation on the temptation of Saint Anthony, so-called father of monasticism. Saint Anthony's resistance to temptation proved a popular theme at the Salons of the 1830s and 1840s, partly no doubt, because it provided a religious alibi for scenes of unabashed lasciviousness.⁹ Saint Anthony also gradually emerged as a figure for the artist himself (an alternative model to Saint Luke). This has been recognized in connection with Cézanne's series on *The Temptation of Saint Anthony*, produced in the 1870s.¹⁰ What has previously gone unnoticed is the fact that this association is anticipated here and in other images from the first half of the nineteenth century.

'The habit does not make the monk', as the proverb goes in French and English.¹¹ In Antigna's studio scene, the 'monk' appears to have succumbed to, or at least agreed to play cards with, a less than repentant Magdalene. Antigna's card playing motif is crucial. Card playing was a common pastime, but it was also believed to reveal character. In 1848, the year this picture was exhibited, an article on card players was published in *Le Magasin Pittoresque*. It concluded with a variation on a famous proverb: 'Show me how you play and I will tell you who you are.'¹² In Antigna's studio scene, the monk is playing with the young woman, but the artist has not yet entered the game. Their game might be interpreted as an allegorical contest between virtue and vice, or 'a representation of war'.¹³ On the table is the card that has just been played, hearts or diamonds, probably a six or seven of hearts. The young woman turns to the artist with her handful of cards, as if inviting him to make a move: 'Some men adore women who play at seduction as one plays cards (Balzac).'¹⁴ She resembles a bohemian gypsy fortune teller promising to foretell the secrets of his future. Yet he retains a certain distance from her; they are connected but also separated by the chair.

Jansen, Hans Luijten and Nienke Bakker, eds, London and New York : Thames & Hudson, 2009.

⁹ See Paul Delaroche, *The Temptation of Saint Anthony*, c. 1832, London, Wallace Collection. For a review of Octave Tassaert's *La tentation de Saint Antoine* (Salon de 1849) in relation to earlier versions, see Théophile Gautier, 'Salon de 1849' *La Presse*, 4 août 1849, 2.

¹⁰ Theodore Reff, 'Cezanne, Flaubert, St Anthony and the Queen of Sheba', *Art Bulletin*, 44, June 1962, 113–25.

¹¹ Pierre Larousse, *Grand Dictionnaire*, vol. 11, 381, entry for 'MOINE': 'Prov. L'habit ne fait pas le moine.' See also Melissa Percival, 'Portraits of Mademoiselle de Charolais as a Franciscan Friar : Gender, Religion and Cross-dressing', *Art History*, vol. 37, 5, November 2014, 890–911.

¹² *Magasin Pittoresque*, 1848, 357: 'On dirait alors, en parodiant un proverbe célèbre: *Montre-moi comment tu joues, je te dirai qui tu es.*'

¹³ Pierre Larousse, *Grand Dictionnaire*, vol. 3, 462, entry for 'CARTE' notes that card games might be understood as 'une représentation de la guerre.'

¹⁴ Balzac, cited in Pierre Larousse, *Grand Dictionnaire*, vol. 3, 462, entry for 'CARTE': 'Certains hommes adorent les femmes qui jouent à la séduction comme on joue aux cartes (Balz).'

Antigna's *Scène d'Atelier* is not just about what the artist should paint, and how he should paint it. The conjunction of the monk and young woman in the artist's studio points to an important personal question for the artist himself: should an artist live the life of a monk or a lover? This question permeates the writings of nineteenth-century male artists, from Eugène Delacroix's *Journal* to the letters of Auguste Rodin and Vincent Van Gogh.¹⁵ Far from being a simple question of work/life balance or the artist's religious devotion, this dilemma went to the heart of nineteenth-century debates concerning the nature of artistic creativity. In the French language, the word 'Auteur' used of the artist was also applied to 'God', 'the Creator' and 'the father of a family', aptly conveying the potential for both synthesis and tension between all these concepts. What was the relationship between artistic creativity, virility, and spirituality? Antigna's *Scène d'atelier* is one of an important group of images dating from the first half of the nineteenth century in which we can see French artists working through these ideas.

In assessing the nature of their own artistic inspiration and that of their contemporaries, nineteenth-century French male artists were profoundly influenced by a range of contradictory role models and conflicting concepts of creativity that they had inherited from the classical and Christian traditions. By the mid nineteenth century these were not only prominent in the artist biographies that dominated French art historical discourse, but also highly visible in French painting. In 1971 Francis Haskell drew attention to the volume and importance of pictorial representations of historic artists in his article 'The Old Masters in Nineteenth-Century French painting', noting that such subjects offered artists 'very obvious possibilities of self-identification.'¹⁶ Haskell posited that 'the vast majority of these paintings propagate a consistent view of the artistic vocation (...) in the past, at least, they proclaim almost unanimously, the painter had everything – fame, fortune, family, love and friends.'¹⁷ In fact, nineteenth-century artists displayed an equal fascination with the professional and personal challenges faced by their predecessors, and it is clear that they chose to depict particular episodes from the lives of artists of the past according to perceived parallels or contrasts with their own experience. This theme was further explored in the ground breaking exhibition *La Peinture dans La Peinture* (Dijon, Musée des Beaux-Arts, 1983), and during the last decade a number of scholars have directed their attention to the emergence of a

¹⁵ Eugène Delacroix, *Journal*, Michèle Hannoosh, ed., 2 vols, Paris : José Corti, 2009, 24 January 1824: 'Encore ait-je fait la mia chiavatura dinanzi colla mia carina Emilia. Ce qui n'a point ralenti mon ardeur. Il faut être jeune pour faire de tout cela.' Rodin, letter to Camille Claudel, 12 October 1886 in Alain Beausire and Hélène Pinet eds, *Correspondance de Rodin*, 2 vols, Paris: Musée Rodin, 1985-1986. Van Gogh, letters to Emile Bernard, 19 June 1888, 26 June 1888, 5 August 1888; letter to Paul Gauguin, 3 October 1888; letter to Theo Van Gogh, 21 October 1888 in *Letters*, ed. Jansen, Luijten and Bakker. See also Alexander Sturgis, Rupert Christiansen, Lois Oliver and Michael Wilson, *Rebels and Martyrs: the image of the artist in the nineteenth century*, Exh. cat: London, National Gallery, 2006, 138–81.

¹⁶ Francis Haskell, 'The Old Masters in Nineteenth-Century French Painting', *Art Quarterly*, 1971, 55–85, 55.

¹⁷ Haskell, 'The Old Masters', 68.

particular idea or the recurrence of specific figures in nineteenth-century representations of artists.¹⁸

What makes the images of historical and legendary artists particularly fascinating, and has often been overlooked, is the extent to which these pictures not only indexed the preoccupations of nineteenth-century artists, but also had a direct impact on how they understood their own artistic practice and that of their contemporaries. This is the pictorial equivalent of the textual phenomenon that Kris and Kurz identified as 'enacted biography', whereby tropes from texts on the lives of past artists were re-enacted by subsequent generations.¹⁹ What I wish to propose here is that the self portrait figure included by Antigna in his 1848 *Scène d'atelier* is depicted (perhaps with a touch of parody) as the bemused heir to an eclectic range of pictorial predecessors.

As Haskell noted, prior to the late eighteenth century, representations of artists from the past had been limited to a repertoire of a few select figures. There was a tradition stretching back to the fifteenth century of representing the Evangelist and patron saint of painters, Saint Luke, in the act of depicting the Virgin and Child, a theme that gave a welcome boost to the status of artists, asserting the dignity of a profession ordained to communicate divine truths.²⁰ Often, as in the case of Rogier van der Weyden's rendition of the theme (c.1435-1440, Boston, Museum of Fine Arts) and Nicolas de Hoey's 1603 version for the chapel of the *Conférie des peintres* in the *Couvent des Jacobins* at Dijon (Dijon, Musée des Beaux-arts), Saint Luke was a self portrait. After the attacks on the Church by Voltaire and the *encyclopédistes*, representations of Saint Luke painting the Virgin and Child, once widespread, became rare in French art, but in 1819 Saint Luke reappeared at the Paris Salon in Louis-Mathurin Clérian le père's *Saint-Luc peignant La Vierge* (location

¹⁸ Alison McQueen, *The Rise of the Cult of Rembrandt. Reinventing an Old Master in nineteenth-century France*, Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2003; Alain Bonnet, *Artistes en groupe. La représentation de la communauté des artistes dans la peinture du XIXe siècle*, Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2007; Thierry Laugée, *Figures du génie dans l'art français, 1802-1855*, Paris: Presses de l'université Paris-Sorbonne, 2016; Lois Oliver, *The Image of the Artist*; Marc Gotlieb, 'The Painter's Secret: Invention and Rivalry from Vasari to Balzac', *The Art Bulletin*, 84: 3, September 2002, 469–90; Marc Gotlieb, 'Creation and Death in the Romantic Studio', in Michael Cole and Mary Pardo, eds, *Inventions of the Studio, Renaissance to Romanticism*, Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 2005, 147–83; Marc Gotlieb, 'Pedagogical Disaster in Romantic Art Fiction', *French Studies: A Quarterly Review*, 61: 1, January 2007, 14–25; Jenny Graham, 'Amorous Passions: Vasari's Legend of Fra Filippo Lippi in the art and poetry of the Nineteenth Century', *Studi di Memofonte, Rivista On-Line della Fondazione Memofonte*, In Memoria di Francis Haskell, 12, July 2014, 187–201. Exhibitions exploring the theme have included *Rebels and Martyrs: the image of the artist in the nineteenth-century*, London, National Gallery, 2006; *L'Artiste en représentation. Images des artistes dans l'art du XIXe siècle*, Musée de La Roche-sur-Yon/Lyon: Fages éditions, 2012; *L'Invention du passé*, Musée des Beaux-Arts de Lyon; Monastère royal de Brou, Bourg-en-Bresse, 2014.

¹⁹ Ernst Kris and Otto Kurz, *Legend, Myth and Magic in the Image of the Artist: A Historical Experiment*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1979, 132.

²⁰ Anne-Marie Lecoq, 'Le Boeuf de saint Luc; sept tableaux', in Pierre Georget, and Anne-Marie Lecoq, *La Peinture dans La Peinture*, Exh. cat: Dijon, Musée des Beaux-Arts, 1983, 92–95.

unknown), the theme once again considered appropriate in the context of the Bourbon Catholic revival.

In the classical tradition, however, art was frequently associated with earthly love. According to Pliny the Elder, love was the inspiration for the first drawing, made by a young Corinthian woman Dibutade, who traced her beloved's shadow on a wall in order to fix his image before they parted. This led to the invention of sculpture, when her father, a potter, applied clay to the outline.²¹ The French founder of the *Musée des Monuments Français*, Alexandre Lenoir, appears to have spoken for many of his generation in 1810 when he wrote 'whether that tradition is true or false, it is at least ingenious to have attributed to love the invention of an art made to charm every moment of life'.²² Joseph-Benoit Suvée's monumental canvas of the subject (1791, Bruges, Groeninge Museum) was followed by Louis Ducis's *L'Origine de la peinture* (1808 Salon) depicting the couple linking hands as Dibutade traced her beloved's shadow (Charles-Paul Landon, *Annales du Musée - Salon de 1808*, Paris, 1808, vol. 1, plate 56). The theme was reprised by Claude-Antoine Fleury (*L'origine de la peinture*, 1814 Salon) and Anne-Louis Girodet-Trioson.²³ In Girodet's rendition of the scene, Cupid himself holds the torch to cast the shadow, and reaches out to guide Dibutade's arm as she traces her beloved's outline with one of the god's arrows. Girodet also drew a parallel homo-erotic theme from the works of the ancient Greek poet Anacreon, which he translated: his illustration to Ode XXIX, *L'amour fait le portrait de Bathille* depicts Anacreon instructing the artist as he paints a portrait of Bathyllus, while Cupid writes his name.²⁴

The myth of Pygmalion recounted in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* offered a contrasting model, since it was after renouncing earthly love that Pygmalion was able to create a statue so beautiful that he fell in love with his own creation of perfect female form. Understanding his (unspoken) desire, Venus breathed life into the statue.²⁵ Thus Pygmalion's renunciation of mortal desire allowed him access to the forbidden magic of creation, enabling him to fulfil the artist's dream of becoming a creator God. When Girodet's pupil François-Louis Dejuinne painted his *Portrait de M. Girodet* (1822 Salon, fig. 3), it is highly significant that he chose to portray Girodet as a new Pygmalion, dedicated to the pursuit of the *beau idéal* and impervious to the charms of ordinary women. Girodet is depicted at work on his own *Pygmalion amoureux de sa statue* (1819 Salon, Paris, Musée du Louvre), spotlighted at the centre of the composition. Presented in profile, Girodet mirrors his image of the

²¹ Pliny, *Naturalis Historia*, XXXV.

²² Alexandre Lenoir, *Musée impérial des monuments français: Histoire des arts en France, et description chronologique des statues en marbre et en bronze, bas-reliefs et tombeaux des hommes et des femmes célèbres, qui sont réunis dans ce musée*, Paris: Verlag, 1810, 71, quoted in Thierry Laugée, *La Représentation du génie artistique dans la première moitié du XIXe Siècle Français*, PhD thesis (unpublished), Paris IV – Sorbonne, 2009, 127: 'Que cette tradition soit fausse ou vraie, il est au moins ingénieux d'avoir attribué à l'amour l'invention d'un art fait pour charmer tous les instans de la vie.'

²³ Illustrated in *Girodet 1767-1824*, Exh. cat: Paris, Musée du Louvre; Chicago, Art Institute of Chicago; New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art; Montréal, Musée des beaux-arts de Montréal, French edition, Paris, 2005; English Edition, Paris: Gallimard, 2006.

²⁴ *Girodet 1767-1824*, French edition, Paris, 2005, 122, 125.

²⁵ Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, X.

ancient sculptor as he turns away from his model and towards Dejuinne (standing) and their patron Sommariva (seated at left) for whom both *Pygmalion* and this portrait were painted.²⁶

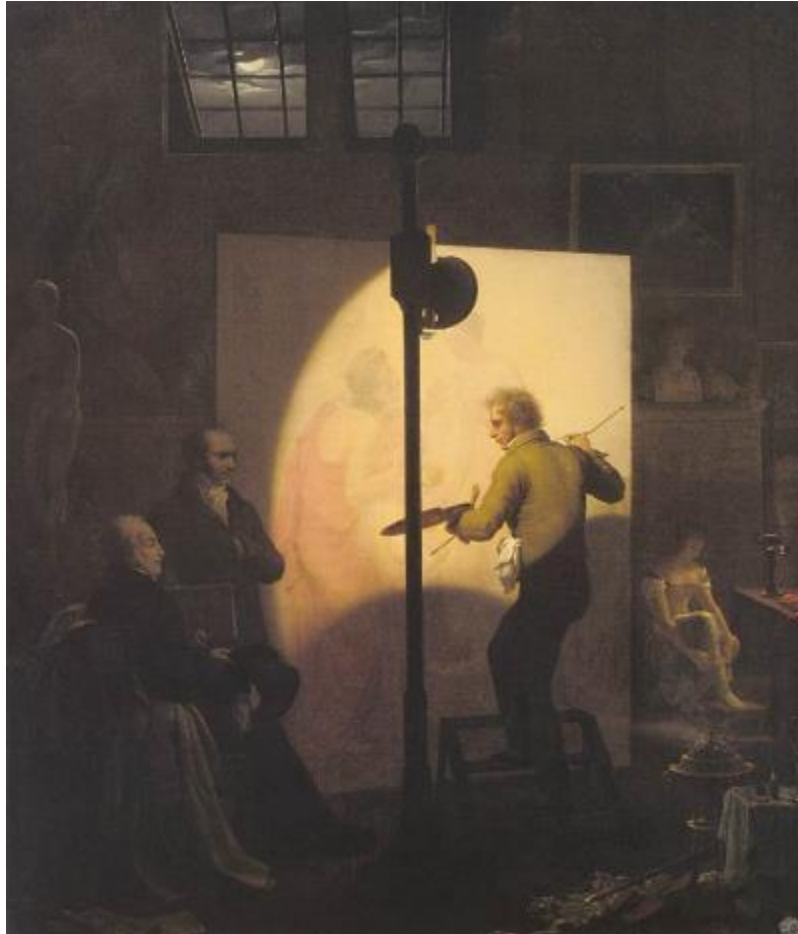


Figure 3 François-Louis Dejuinne, *Portrait de M. Girodet*, 1822 Salon
Oil on canvas, 65 x 54.5cm, Montargis, Musée Girodet
[Image: © Montargis, Musée Girodet]

His model's state of undress might prove distracting to less disciplined artists (the footstool that she uses for support as she pulls on her stocking is reminiscent of the foot warmers that symbolize erotic arousal in amorous seventeenth-century Dutch scenes²⁷) but Girodet has been working from nature with the ideal forms of classical statuary in mind, represented by the copy of the

²⁶ This standing figure is identified as the engineer Bréguet (who had made a watch for Sommariva) in *Girodet 1767-1824*, 467, but as Dejuinne in Richard Dagonne, 'Le Portrait de Girodet peignant "Pygmalion et Galatée" de François-Louis Dejuinne trouve sa place à Montargis', *La Revue des Musées de France, Revue du Louvre*, 2007-2, 17-18. On the theme of visitors in the studio, see Lois Oliver, 'Les visiteurs dans l'atelier de l'artiste: variations sur un thème pictural au XIXe siècle', in *L'Artiste en représentation*, 157-169.

²⁷ See for example: Jan Molenaer, *A Young man and woman making music*, 1630-1632 and Jan Steen, *An Interior with a man offering an oyster to a woman*, 1660-1665, both London, The National Gallery.

Capitoline Venus placed higher on the left. Thus Girodet embodies the academic ideal: idealising nature by drawing on his knowledge of the classical past, and refining his understanding of classical art through a close and professional observation of nature. To the right is Girodet's desk, and in the foreground his violin, attesting to his ability in the sister arts of poetry and music, and connecting him with the god Apollo. And so, the artist attains artistic harmony and a quasi-divine status through the chaste discipline exemplified by Pygmalion.

Girodet's former lover Julie Candeille drew a rather different comparison between the artist and Pygmalion in a letter dated September 1814:

I know you are doing Pygmalion, which will be lovely. You know what it is to bring a woman to life. When you performed this service for me, I was already quite an old Galatea...since you, my heart has only paid in counterfeit coin. Never has a man, no never my friend, never has a man had such power over a woman. Think of me as you finish your Pygmalion.²⁸

In Dejuinne's depiction, however, the night-time setting emphasizes Girodet's dedication to his work and rejection of other potentially tempting distractions as he paints late into the evening, a habit attested to in contemporary memoirs. The lamp by which he works was specially engineered for him by his pupil Antoine-Claude Pannetier in around 1806.²⁹ The imagery is very close to that seen in Guérin's *Le Vigilant* (1816, lithograph, 23.9 x 32.5cm, University of Michigan Art Museum, Inv. 1961/2.35), showing a young artist renouncing sleep and love in order to concentrate on his quest for the *beau idéal*. The moon glimpsed through the window also makes a visual link to Girodet's famous *Sleep of Endymion* (1791, 1793 Salon, 1814 Salon, Paris, Musée du Louvre) representing the mortal loved by the goddess of chastity, Diana, a small version of which is also shown hanging on the back wall above what is perhaps a bust of Diana, in counterpoint to the female model below.

The *Grand Dictionnaire Universel* warned artists to be wary of professional female models, in similar terms:

"Young artist", says M. de la Bédollière "look at them coldly; do not see your model as anything other than a gracious statue, do not try to

²⁸ Julie Candeille, letter to Girodet, 14 September 1814, one of 357 letters from Julie Candeille placed in the Musée Girodet by the Durzy library, Montargis (Filleul donation, 1967), vol. 3, no. 33: 'Je sais que vous faites Pygmalion: celà sera beau. Vous savez ce que c'est que d'animer une femme. Quand vous me rendîtes ce service j'étais déjà une assez vieille Galathée...depuis vous, mon coeur ne paie qu'en fausse monnaie. – Jamais homme, - non, mon ami; jamais homme n'eût sur une femme un tel empire. Pensez à moi en terminant le Pygmalion.' English from *Girodet 1767-1824*, English edition, Paris : Gallimard, 2006, cat. 136.

²⁹ *Girodet 1767-1824*, cat. 136; Dagorne, 'Le Portrait de Girodet peignant "Pygmalion et Galatée"', 17–18; on Girodet's habit of working by lamplight see also P.-A. Coupin, *Oeuvres posthumes de Girodet-Trioson, peintre d'histoire; suivies de sa correspondance; précédées d'une notice historique, et mises en ordre*, 2 vols, Paris : J. Renouard, 1829, 1: xliv; J. J. L. Whiteley, 'Light and shade in French Neo-Classicism', *The Burlington Magazine*, 873, December 1975, 768–73, 771.

become a Pygmalion to that white Galatea, and remember this proverbial saying: Whatever it is, I fear the Greeks, even when bringing gifts".³⁰



Figure 4 Charles Meynier, *Apelle et Campaspe*, 1822

Oil on canvas, 111.5 x 145cm, Rennes, Musée des Beaux-arts, Inv. D 822.1.1

[Image: © Rennes, Musée des Beaux-arts]

The classical tradition also provided other variations on the theme of art and love. Moving from the realm of myth to ancient history, the legend of Apelles provided a supremely rich source of inspiration for French artists, not only through its articulation of the close relationship between artist and patron, but also in its evocation of love as both potential distraction and inspiration for the artist. Instructed by Alexander the Great to paint a portrait of his favourite concubine, Apelles fell in love with the beautiful model himself. The artist's emotions risked interrupting his task and rupturing the trust between patron and artist, but the artist's passionate feelings resulted in a work of such unprecedented beauty, that Alexander allowed the artist to keep Campaspe for himself. Jacques-Louis David's unfinished canvas *Alexandre, Apelle et Campaspe* (c. 1813-1823, Lille, Musée des Beaux-arts) vividly conveys the tension inherent in the scene, showing the artist caught between power and love. Indeed, the painting has been richly interpreted as an expression of David's increasing estrangement from Napoleon's imperial court.³¹

³⁰ Pierre Larousse, *Grand Dictionnaire*, vol. 11, 359, entry for 'MODÈLE': 'O Jeune artiste, dit M. de La Bédollière, regardez-les froidement; ne voyez dans votre *modèle* qu'une gracieuse statue; n'essayez pas de devenir le Pygmalion de cette blanche Galatée, et méditez ce vers proverbial: *Quidquid id est, timeo Danaos et dona ferentes.*'

³¹ Paul Spencer-Longhurst, 'Apelles painting Campaspe by Jacques-Louis David: Art, Politics and Honour', *Apollo* 135, 361, March 1992, 157-62; Philippe Bordes, *Jacques-Louis David, Empire to Exile*, Exh. cat: Los Angeles, The J. Paul Getty Museum; Williamstown, Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute, 2005, cat. 31; Helen Weston, 'David's *Alexandre, Apelles and Campaspe*', in Mark Ledbury, ed., *David after David: Essays on the Later Work*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2007, 139-51.

On the left is Apelles's patron Alexander, in the guise of Mars, god of War, and on the right, Campaspe as Venus. Both are ready to be immortalized by the artist as gods, but Apelles lowers his brush, his back turned to Alexander, transfixed by Campaspe's beauty, unable to continue with the picture lightly-sketched on his easel (just as Antigna's artist leaves his sketch similarly abandoned). Behind Apelles, Alexander raises his hand, as if realising what is happening, while Campaspe turns modestly away from the artist's gaze, holding her hair to cover her face. Meanwhile, in Charles Meynier's *Apelles et Campaspe* (1822, fig. 4), Apelles kneels with his hand on his heart, looking up in gratitude towards Alexander as he accepts the Emperor's unexpected gift. On the easel is the picture that earned Apelles his reward, appropriately showing Campaspe as Venus, while Apelles adopts the kneeling pose of Cupid.

In all these images from the classical tradition, art and desire are inextricably linked, albeit in various permutations. These artists of the past are all shown to possess a heightened appreciation of physical beauty. Crucial to our understanding of the dilemma presented in Antigna's *Scène d'atelier* is the fact that in the early nineteenth century, the relatively clear demarcation between the Christian and classical images of the artist became blurred in numerous pictures of the Old Masters, many of which were inspired by an enthusiastic reading of Vasari and other artist biographies.



Figure 5 Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres, *Raphaël et la Fornarina*, 1814 Salon
Oil on canvas, 64.8 x 53.3cm, Cambridge MA, Fogg Art Museum, Inv. 1943.252
[Image: ©Fogg Art Museum]

Ingres's *Raphaël et la Fornarina* (1814 Salon, fig. 5) was pivotal, inaugurating a theme that would become one of the most popular of the next two decades. Here Ingres reunited Raphael with the presumed mistress believed to be portrayed in *La Donna Velata* (c. 1514, Florence, Palazzo Pitti) and the more intimate nude *Portrait of a Woman* (1518-1519) in the Galleria Nazionale in Rome (where Ingres was then

living), seen in Ingres's picture as a work-in-progress. But in the background is Raphael's *Madonna à la chaise* (1514, Florence, Palazzo Pitti), for which the Fornarina was also believed to have modelled. Indeed, Ingres's Fornarina is an extended quotation of the *Madonna à la chaise*, dressed in green, now embracing Raphael in place of the Christ Child. Thus, crucially, Ingres's Raphael is the heir to both Apelles and St Luke. Vasari had written of Raphael's weakness for women with ambivalence, describing it as both a source of inspiration to the artist and the cause of his premature death, that prevented him from completing the most perfect expression of his belief and his art, the *Transfiguration*, left unfinished at his death (1516–20, Vatican Museums and Art Galleries).³² It is hardly surprising that Ingres, whose work reveals his own appreciation of the female form, should have been attracted to the theme of love as inspiration in the life of his artistic hero. His own *Grande Odalisque*, also painted in 1814 (1819 Salon, Paris, Musée du Louvre), owes much to Raphael's portraits of his presumed mistress. Nevertheless, Ingres's composition sets up an intricate interplay between art, love and religion, combining Raphael's nude portrait in its imagined half-finished state on the easel with his finished picture of the *Madonna à la Chaise* in the background, and Ingres's 'portrait animé' of the Fornarina: with this flourish, Ingres reprises the role of Pygmalion by bringing an image of a woman 'to life'.



Figure 6 : Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres, *Raphaël et la Fornarina*, c. 1813-1840
Oil on canvas, 35.5 x 27.5cm, Columbus, Museum of Art, Inv. 1957. 013
[Image: © Columbus Museum of Art]

Ingres painted several variants on the theme. Haskell was perplexed by Ingres's choice of subject, writing: 'it is curious that even Ingres should have paid so much more attention to Raphael's relationship with the Fornarina than with his

³² Giorgio Vasari, *Le Vite de' piú eccellenti architetti, pittori, et scultori italiani, da Cimabue insino a' tempo nostri*, 1550 edition, Luciano Bellosi and Aldo Rossi, eds, Torino: Giulio Einaudi, 1996, 610–41.

work'.³³ But Ingres's repeated iterations of the theme demonstrate his serious engagement with key questions concerning artistic creativity. In his 1840 version (fig. 6) he increased the tension between love and religion. The Fornarina is more explicitly seductive, and behind Raphael is his last religious masterpiece, the *Transfiguration*, left unfinished after his untimely death. The figure hovering in the background has been variously interpreted as Raphael's rival, Michelangelo, or his collaborator Giulio Romano (believed by some to have completed the *Transfiguration*).³⁴ His monk-like habit is, however, worthy of note and suggests a different significance: by the 1840s, French artists were increasingly concerned with the question of whether artists should be monks or lovers.



Figure 7 Alexandre-Evariste Fragonard, *Raphaël rectifiant la position d'un modèle pour son tableau "La Vierge à l'enfant"*, c. 1820

Oil on canvas, 140 x 115cm, Grasse, Musée Fragonard

[Image: © Grasse, Musée Fragonard]

Numerous artists took up Ingres's theme of Raphael and the Fornarina. Jean-Henri Marlet's *Raphaël, dans son atelier, peignant sa maîtresse* appeared at the 1817 Salon. Alexandre Menjaud's *Raphaël et la Fornarine* (1819 Salon) portrayed the Fornarina as the improbable model for one of France's greatest cultural treasures, François I's celebrated *La Sainte Famille* (Paris, Musée du Louvre).³⁵ The same Salon featured François-Barthélémy-Auguste Desmoulins's *Raphaël dans son atelier, il peint le tableau de la sainte Cécile* (1819 Salon), proposing the Fornarina's contribution to Raphael's *Ecstasy of St Cecilia* (1514, Bologna, Pinacoteca Nazionale). Meanwhile, Alexandre-Evariste Fragonard chose to emphasize the idea that Raphael enriched

³³ Haskell, 'The Old Masters', 64.

³⁴ Haskell, 'The Old Masters', 83, n. 19 notes that John Shearman believed the figure to be Giulio Romano, not Michelangelo.

³⁵ See C. Normand after Alexandre Menjaud, *Raphaël travaille, d'après la Fornarine, à son tableau de la Vierge aux anges*, 1819, engraving published in Charles-Paul Landon, *Annales du Musée- Salon de 1819*, Paris : Impr. Royale, 1819, vol. 2, plate 19.

Christian art with classical ideals of beauty by depicting Raphael adjusting the pose of his model for the Sistine Madonna with a bust of Homer and a Greek vase beside him: *Raphaël rectifiant la position d'un modèle pour son tableau 'La Vierge à l'enfant'* (c. 1820, Grasse, Musée Fragonard, fig. 7).

Antigna's *Scène d'atelier* (Fig. 1) bears a striking resemblance to Ingres's *Raphaël* (1814 Salon, fig. 5), which Antigna would almost certainly have known, and to Ingres's later 1840 version of the theme (Fig. 6), that he could perhaps have known. In all of these works the artist has turned away from his work in progress on the easel to relax with his model(s). A religious painting is pushed into the background, while the artist concentrates instead on a more intimate portrayal of his model; in the case of Antigna's artist this is the work that we actually see before us; it seems no coincidence that the exposed breast of Antigna's model echoes Raphael's famous portrait of the woman believed to be his mistress. All three pictures draw attention to issues surrounding the imitation and idealisation of nature, and tensions between revealed truth and artistic creation. Yet in the case of Antigna's picture, the nature of the artist's relationship with the woman in his studio is uncertain, and his choices are problematized to an extent that is absent from Ingres's portrayal of Raphael.



Figure 8 Louis Ducis, *La Peinture (Van Dyck)*, 1819 Salon
Oil on canvas, 80 x 62cm, Limoges, Musée des Beaux-arts, Inv. 4264
[Image: © Limoges MBA]

It was not just images of Raphael that brought together these Christian and Classical traditions. Louis Ducis introduced new variations on the theme in a series of works entitled *Les arts sous l'empire d'amour*, the first two of which were exhibited at the 1819 Salon. *La Peinture* (1819 Salon, fig. 8) depicts Van Dyck creating his first

masterpiece (an altarpiece) under the influence of love, a subject drawn from Descamps, whose account was paraphrased in the Salon *livret*.

Van Dyck, aged sixteen to seventeen, was on his way to Italy to study. Passing through Savelthem, a little town close to Brussels, he became enamoured of the charms of a young girl and yielded to the young Flemish girl's desire to have a picture of him for the altar of the parish; he chose the subject of Saint Martin, and painted himself in the guise of the saint, mounted on the horse that Rubens had given him for the journey. Van Dyck is consulting the girl that he loves about the picture that he is about to sketch.³⁶

The subject provides an amusing variation on the usual theme: rather than being inspired to paint the girl herself, Van Dyck instead paints a self-portrait memento in the guise of Saint Martin giving his cloak to a grateful beggar, a theme that serves to underline the social distinction between Van Dyck in his silk finery and the young woman in her peasant garb.

In contrast, *La sculpture* (1819 Salon, 1822 Salon, Limoges, Musée des Beaux-arts) depicts the Renaissance sculptor Properzia di Rossi abandoning her art in despair at unrequited love, to instead devote herself to religion, a narrative loosely derived from Vasari:

Just as Van Dyck made his first picture for love of a young girl; Properzia de Rossi, who died in Bologna in 1530, and who was worthy of being counted among the most famous sculptors of her time, made her last *bas-relief* for love. The subject is linked with the history of her life and her unique and unhappy love for a very handsome young man who rejected her. She thought in executing a *bas-relief* that represented a woman rejected like her, to make a sort of allusion to her unhappy passion. She did not want to sculpt any more, but instead busied herself with small subjects that proved that she only sought solace in religion.³⁷

³⁶ Pierre Sanchez and Xavier Seydoux, eds, *Les Catalogues des Salons des Beaux-Arts*, Paris : L'Échelle de Jacob, 1999-, vol. 1 (1801–1819), *Salon de 1819*, no. 371: 'Van Dyck, âgé de seize à dix-sept ans, se rendait en Italie pour y étudier. En passant à Savelthem, petit bourg près de Bruxelles, il s'éprit des charmes d'une jeune fille, et céda au désir que lui témoigna la jeune flamande d'avoir un tableau de lui pour l'autel de sa paroisse; il choisit le sujet de saint Martin, et se peignit lui-même sous la figure du saint, monté sur un cheval que Rubens lui avait donné pour sa route. Van Dyck consulte la fille qu'il aime sur le tableau qu'il vient d'ébaucher.'

³⁷ Sanchez and Seydoux, eds, *Les Catalogues des Salons*, vol. 2 (1819 [supplément] – 1834), *Salon de 1822*, no. 398: 'De même que Van-Dyck avait fait son premier tableau pour l'amour d'une jeune fille; Properzia de Rossi, morte à Bologne en 1530, et qui mérita d'être comptée parmi les plus célèbres sculpteurs de son tems, fit aussi par amour son dernier bas-relief. Le sujet est lié à l'histoire de sa vie et de ses singulières et malheureuses amours pour un très-beau jeune homme qui la dédaignait. Elle crut; en exécutant un bas-relief qui représentait une femme dédaignée comme elle, faire une sorte d'allusion à sa violente malheureuse passion. Elle ne voulut plus sculpter davantage; mais s'occupant toujours des arts, les petits

The subject is notable as a rare historical portrayal of a female artist and an (albeit reluctant) male muse. In most nineteenth-century French art, genius appears as male, inspiration as female, assumptions entrenched in the gendered French language (*le génie*, *le peintre*, *la muse*). Apart from Dibutade, the only other historic women artists to be represented at the Paris Salon were Maria Tintoretto and Sabine Steinbach, who first appeared twenty years later.³⁸

Ducis's themes proved popular with artists and collectors. A complete set of four pictures constituting the series *Les arts sous l'empire d'amour* was purchased by the *Maison du Roi*; the Duchesse de Berry also had a set of all four subjects in a single frame (1822 Salon, no. 398).³⁹ The series inspired numerous copies and variants, especially amongst porcelain painters.⁴⁰ Over the next twenty five years no fewer than eight representations of Van Dyck and the village girl of Savelthem were exhibited at the Paris Salon, three of them (by Jules Dehaussy, Désiré-François Laugée and Jean Van Eycken) appearing together at the 1847 Salon. Van Eycken's *Van Dyck à Savelthem* (sic) (1847 Salon) is perhaps identical with the picture he exhibited the following year, *Episode de la jeunesse de Van dyck* (1848 Salon), commissioned by M. le Prince de Ligne. Dehaussy and Laugée's 1847 exhibits, however, were both marked with an asterisk in the catalogue, indicating that they belonged to the artists, who were presumably confident that the theme was popular with buyers.

sujets qu'elle traita prouvent qu'elle ne chercha plus que dans la religion le calme auquel elle aspirait.' Vasari, *Le Vite*, Bellosi and Rossi, eds, 730.

³⁸ The 1839 Salon featured Elise Journet's *Maria Tintorella, dans l'atelier de son père montre sa peinture à des seigneurs venetiens*. The German artist Andre Friedrich exhibited a bas-relief of *Erwin Steinbach* (1842 Salon) showing the Gothic architect working alongside his son and daughter. This subject was reprised in Théophile Schuler's *Deux sujets de la vie d'Erwin de Steinbach* (1848 Salon). Léon Cogniet introduced the subject of *Le Tintoret enseigne à sa fille les préceptes de son art* (1843 Salon), a theme reprised by Louis-Georges Brillouin (1845 Salon); Eugenie Castel (1848 Salon); and one of Cogniet's own pupils, Julien de le Rochoenire (1852 Salon). Cogniet subsequently scored an outstanding success with *Le Tintoret et sa fille* (1843 Salon, Bordeaux, Musée des Beaux-arts), showing the Venetian master, his careworn features based on Tintoretto's famous self portrait (c.1588, Paris, Musée du Louvre), painting a last portrait of his dead artist daughter.

³⁹ Thierry Laugée, 'Les grandes maîtresses de l'art français' in Bann and Paccoud, *L'Invention du passé*, vol. 2, 66–75, 67. The following details are supplied in Laugée, *La Représentation du génie artistique*, 129: Louis XVIII paid 2000 francs each for *La Peinture* (1819 Salon, no. 371; for purchase see Arch. Nat. O³, 1400); *La Sculpture* (1819 Salon, no. 372; 1822 Salon, no. 400; for purchase see Arch. Nat. O³, 1408), and *La Musique* (1822 Salon, no. 399; for purchase see Arch. Nat. O³, 1407). His version of *La Poésie* (not exhibited at the Salon; Limoges, Musée des Beaux-Arts) was accepted in exchange for a work already commissioned but not realised representing Saint Cerbon (see Arch. Nat. O³, 1394).

⁴⁰ Porcelain versions included Louis-Ferdinand Lachassaigne's *La Musique* and *La Peinture* (1824 Salon, Paris, Petit Palais); Marie-Honoré Renaud's *Van Dyck peignant son premier tableau, d'après Ducis* (1827 Salon); and Ancelet's *Van Dyck, peignant son premier tableau, après M. Ducis* (1833 Salon); see Dominique Morel, 'Les arts sous l'empire de l'amour: deux vases en porcelaine de Paris d'après Ducis récemment identifiés', *Revue du Louvre*, February 2003, 71–5.

Information supplied in the Salon *livrets* implies a subtle shift of emphasis in the iconography over the course of three decades. The *livret* text accompanying Ducis's *La Peinture* (1819 Salon) mentions that Van Dyck was 'on his way to Italy to study' when the girl at Savelthem caught his eye, but the idea of love as a distraction from his studies is not emphasized within the pictorial field. Dehaussy chose to quote a similar portion from Descamps's text:

Van Dyck left Antwerp and passed through Brussels, with the intention of travelling to Italy; but his inclination for love led him to stop with a young peasant girl from the village of Savelthem, close to that town. He was so enamoured with the charms of this young girl, that she persuaded him to make two pictures for the parish. The first represented Saint Martin, etc.⁴¹

Laugée, however, extended the text for his *Van Dyck à Savelthem* (1847 Salon), as follows:

Rubens, concerned about the progress of his dear pupil, was worried that this inclination might prove an obstacle to his advancement. He used his friends to do everything to persuade Van Dyck to leave her. He reawakened in him the desire to travel, and above all, the desire for glory. Van Dyck abruptly left his mistress, but with regret. He left accompanied by the knight Nanni, and travelled throughout Italy.⁴²

The arrival of Rubens, determined to ensure that Van Dyck's rise to artistic glory should not be interrupted by an unsuitable liaison, suggests a similar composition to that rendered by Louis Rubio, now known through an engraving published by Goupil in 1860, which shows the weeping maiden comforted by her mother as Rubens, bidding farewell to her father with a handshake, leads his young protégé away, leaving the family with Van Dyck's painted reminder of his presence (fig. 9).

⁴¹ Sanchez and Seydoux eds, *Les Catalogues des Salons*, vol 5. (1846–1850), *Salon de 1847*, no. 440: 'Van Dyck quitta Anvers et passa par Bruxelles, dans l'intention d'aller en Italie; mais le penchant qu'il avait à l'amour l'arrêta auprès d'une jeune paysanne du village de Savelthem, près de cette dernière ville. Il fut tellement épris des attraits de cette jeune fille, qu'elle l'engagea à faire deux tableaux d'autel pour sa paroisse. Le premier représente saint Martin, etc.'

⁴² Sanchez and Seydoux eds, *Les Catalogues des Salons*, vol 5. (1846–1850), *Salon de 1847*, no. 966: '[...] Rubens, attentif aux démarches de ce cher élève, eut peur que cette inclination déplacée ne fut un obstacle à son avancement. Il employa ses amis et n'épargna rien pour l'en détourner. Il réveilla en lui le désir de voyager, et surtout celui de la gloire. Van Dyck quitta brusquement sa maîtresse, mais avec regret. Il partit accompagné du chevalier Nanni, et voyagea par toute l'Italie.'



Figure 9 Gautier after Louis Rubio, *Van Dyck emmené par Rubens*, 1860
 Hand coloured engraving, 52 x 65cm,
 Published by Goupil, 1860
 Bordeaux, Musée Goupil, 90.I.2.905
 [Image: © Bordeaux, Musée Goupil]

The idea of the artist distracted by love is central to Delaroche's *Philippo Lippi, chargé de peindre un tableau pour un couvent, devient amoureux de la religieuse qui lui servait de modèle*, (1822, 1824 Salon, fig. 10), where love and religion are represented in scandalous combination.⁴³ As related by Vasari, the friar was commissioned to paint an altarpiece for the convent at Prato, but disregarding his own religious vows (here symbolized by the cast-off habit), seduced the young novice he had chosen as his model. The story was retold in Stendhal's *Histoire de la peinture en Italie* (1817), which is the likely source for Delaroche's painting since the incomplete French editions of Vasari published before the 1840s excluded Fra Lippo Lippi.⁴⁴ In Delaroche's rendition of the scene, the lightly-sketched *Annunciation* on the easel (derived, as Stephen Bann has shown, from Le Sueur's 1652 painting in the Musée du Louvre rather than Lippi's oeuvre) is abandoned, as Fra Lippo Lippi instead announces his more earthly intentions that will lead to a rather different birth, that of his illegitimate son, the artist Filippino Lippi. As has been noted, Delaroche's work was in part inspired by Ingres's compositions showing the adulterous lovers *Paolo et Francesca* (he certainly knew the 1819 version now in Angers).⁴⁵ In Delaroche's picture, the artist's knee in red hose pressed against Lucretia's blue and white robes serves to create a *tricolore* at the centre of the composition. It is a striking conjunction, especially given the fact that the adoption of the *tricolore* during the Revolutionary period coincided with the closure of the French monasteries, and during the Bourbon restoration (1815-1830) the royal white flag was returned to official use.

⁴³ Norman Ziff, *Paul Delaroche. A Study in Nineteenth-Century French History Painting*, New York and London: Garland, 1977, 25–8; Stephen Bann, *Paul Delaroche. History Painted*, London: Reaktion, 1997, 74–8; Jenny Graham, 'Amorous Passions'.

⁴⁴ Vasari, *Le Vite*, Bellosi and Rossi, eds, 377–8; Stendhal, *Histoire de la peinture en Italie*, 2 vols, Paris: Didot, 1817, vol. 1, 106–7. See also Rudolf and Margaret Wittkower, *Born under Saturn: The character and conduct of artists. A documented history from Antiquity to the French Revolution*, London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1963, 155–9; Georgel and Lecoq, *La Peinture dans La Peinture*, 105.

⁴⁵ Ziff, *Paul Delaroche*, 25–26; Bann, *Paul Delaroche. History Painted*, 75–6.



Figure 10 Paul Delaroche, *Philippo Lippi, chargé de peindre un tableau pour un couvent, devient amoureux de la religieuse qui lui servait de modèle*, 1822, 1824 Salon, Oil on canvas, 65.2 x 50.5cm, Dijon, Musée Magnin, Inv. 1938 F 257
[Image: © Dijon, Musée Magnin]

The theme of scandal in the cloisters could have caused controversy in the context of the Bourbon Catholic revival, but reviewing the work at the 1824 Paris Salon, Auguste Jal admired the way in which Lucretia defended herself 'with so much grace, so much modesty and so much weakness.'⁴⁶ Meanwhile, the friar's lapse appears to have been regarded as a natural weakness of the flesh. The English poet Robert Browning showed similar indulgence towards the artist in 1855 when he gave him the lines 'You should not take a fellow eight years old/And make him swear to never kiss the girls.'⁴⁷ The eighteenth-century *philosophes* had made similar criticisms of religious orders, with Diderot warning against lifelong vows taken too young; his novel *La Religieuse* (published posthumously, 1796) describes the intolerable life of a young woman committed to a convent against her will. It is perhaps significant, however, that in 1832 when Delaroche submitted a list of his Salon paintings as part of an application for election to the *Institut*, he omitted this one,⁴⁸ and when he painted his *Hémicycle* (1841, École des Beaux-Arts, Paris), featuring portraits of seventy historic painters, sculptors, architects and engravers, he included just two monk artists both beyond reproach, Fra Angelico and Fra Bartolommeo. By the 1840s there was a new emphasis on divinely-inspired art and artist celibacy in France.

When Jules-Claude Ziegler exhibited his *Vision de saint Luc* (Dunkerque, Musée des Beaux-Arts, see fig. 11) at the 1839 Salon, the critic Jules Janin responded with an irreverent review in *L'Artiste*:

⁴⁶ Auguste Jal, *L'artiste et le philosophe, entretiens critiques sur le salon de 1824*, Paris : Ponthieu, 1824, 63–4; English from Ziff, *Paul Delaroche*, 27.

⁴⁷ Robert Browning, 'Fra Lippo Lippi' in *Men and Women*, 1855.

⁴⁸ Archives de l'Académie des Beaux-Arts, Élections 1832; cited in Ziff, *Paul Delaroche*, 28.



Figure 11 Attributed to Jules-Claude Ziegler, Replica of *Vision de saint Luc*, after 1839
Oil on canvas, 73.5 x 53.5cm, Dijon, Musée National Magnin, Inv. 1938 F 759
[Image: © Dijon, Musée National Magnin]

M. Ziegler, the author of the beautiful Daniel from last year, has this year given us the portrait of his fellow-artist Saint Luke, painting the portrait of the Virgin. Saint Luke may have been a great saint, on account of his pious works; but if we judge by the works of his brush, he was a dreadful painter; in fact, he left a portrait of the Virgin so frightful, that it might be taken for the work of the devil. For real saints in that genre, here is a much better litany:

Saint Rubens – pray for us!

Saint Van Dyck – pray for us!

Saint Raphael – pray for us!

(...) The saint is stiff and (...) looks as though he is stabbing his brush into a chemical compound. It seems to me, however, that with a divine model before his eyes, Saint Luke should be sure of himself, inspiration should descend with the Holy Virgin; what could be better in the life of a man of genius than the realisation of his most ideal dreams? Who therefore could remain unmoved when the Queen of Heaven visits him? Why no, Raphael was not like that when the Fornarina, his profane Holy Virgin, gave herself to him, because one smile, her beautiful face, her beautiful hands, her chaste and pure bearing, that half-veiled look, all her charms, all those graces have been enough to fill the world with the most divine images!⁴⁹

⁴⁹ Jules Janin, 'Salon de 1839, troisième article', *L'Artiste*, ser. 2, 2, 1839, 237–45, 240–1: 'M. Ziegler, l'auteur du beau Daniel de l'an passé, nous a donné, cette année, le portrait de saint Luc, son confrère, faisant le portrait de la Vierge. Le saint Luc pouvait être un grand saint,

As Janin indicates, by this date a secular French audience was less inclined to admire the early icons associated with Saint Luke, that appeared unsophisticated when, as he put it in terms that verged on blasphemy, they now venerated new artist-heroes: Saint Rubens, Saint Van Dyck, and above all, Saint Raphael. His tongue-in-cheek commentary clearly conveys the pervasive influence of legends locating artistic inspiration in earthly love.

But, it is notable in this context that Ziegler rejected numerous earlier precedents depicting Saint Luke painting the Virgin and Child from life (for example, Nicolas de Hoey's 1603 picture for the chapel of the *Confrérie des peintres* in the *Couvent des Jacobins* at Dijon, acquired in 1961 by Dijon, Musée des Beaux-arts), iconography that had been appropriated and secularized in precisely those paintings of Raphael and the Fornarina invoked by Janin. Instead, Ziegler drew on an alternative tradition, showing the Virgin and Child appearing in a heavenly vision seated on clouds (as seen for example in Claude Le Bault's *Saint Luc peignant la Vierge*, 1710, acquired by 1799 by Dijon, Musée des Beaux Arts). Although perhaps unfamiliar with these two works in 1839, Ziegler would have encountered both as Director of the Musée des Beaux Arts and École des Beaux Arts in Dijon from 1854. Saint Luke's attribute, the ox, also appears as part of Ziegler's vision. Thus Ziegler portrays the Saint as a holy visionary with access to the heavenly realm, a status confirmed by his halo, rather than as a proto-Raphael.

Ziegler's 1839 Salon painting can be linked with the revival in French religious art that gathered momentum during the July Monarchy and was accompanied by a renewed interest in the Christian artists of the past, whose work was understood to express a devout faith that many felt was lacking in

par ses oeuvre piés; mais si l'on en juge par les oeuvres de son pinceau, c'était un peintre détestable; il a laissé, en effet, un portrait de la Vierge si affreux, qu'on le pourrait prendre pour le portrait du diable. En fait de saints de ce genre, voici une litanie qui vaut mieux que celle-là:

Sancte Rubens – ora pro nobis!

Sancte Van Dick – ora pro nobis!

Sancte Raphaël – ora pro nobis!

Le Saint-Luc de M. Ziégler, debout devant son chevalet, est occupé à représenter la Vierge et l'Enfant-Jésus. La Vierge a bien voulu descendre des hauteurs célestes pour poser devant son peintre ordinaire; même, elle pousse si loin le naturel, qu'elle n'a pu se défendre de cet air morne et ennuyé qui est l'attribut ordinaire de tous les modèles terrestres. Le Saint est raide et assez mal vêtu, si bien qu'il ne lui manque que la blouse et le chapeau en papier pour ressembler tout-à-fait à Giraud ou à Pradier; le saint a l'air d'enfoncer son pinceau dans une composition chimique. Il me semble pourtant qu'avec le divin modèle sous les yeux, saint Luc devrait être sûr de son fait, l'inspiration devrait descendre sur lui en même temps que la Sainte-Vierge; et savez-vous un plus bel accident dans la vie d'un homme de génie, que la réalisation de ses plus beaux rêves? Qui donc pourrait rester ainsi immobile quand la reine des cieux lui rend visite? Mais non, Raphaël n'était pas ainsi quand la Fornarina, sa Sainte-Vierge profane, lui prêtait, pour un sourire, son beau visage, ses belles mains, ce maintien chaste et pur, ce regard à demi voilé, toutes ces beautés, toutes ces grâces qui ont suffi à peupler le monde des images les plus divines!

contemporary religious artistic production.⁵⁰ Ziegler himself had recently completed decorations showing the *Histoire du Christianisme* (1836-1838) for the *Église de la Madeleine* in Paris. François-René de Chateaubriand had asserted the distinctive nature of Christian artistic production in his hugely influential *Le Génie du Christianisme* (1802), opening his chapter on painting with an explicit contrast between the antique tradition of art inspired by love and the Christian tradition of divinely-inspired art:

According to the Greek tradition, a young girl, perceiving her lover's shadow on a wall, traced it with charcoal. Thus, according to antiquity, a fleeting passion produced the most perfect illusions. The Christian school found another master, in the great Artist, who, kneading some clay between his powerful hands, spoke the words of the painter: Let us make man in our image. So for us, art originated in the eternal idea of God.⁵¹

As we have seen, during the early decades of the nineteenth-century, most Paris Salon exhibitors favoured the 'Greek tradition', and illustrated related episodes from the lives of the Old Masters. One exception, a French artist who shared Chateaubriand's sensibility, was François-Marius Granet, who during the early decades of the nineteenth century produced a range of pictures on religious themes unparalleled in the oeuvres of his compatriots at home. Granet never painted Christ or the Saints himself, but instead painted religious rituals and Christian artists of the past, in numerous works inspired by his adopted city of Rome and nostalgia for the faith of the past.⁵² Granet's *Stella, peintre français, dans les prisons de Rome* (1810 Salon and 1814 Salon, Moscow, Pushkin State Museum of Fine Arts) expressed his sense of identification with his fellow compatriot in Rome and depicted the wrongly imprisoned artist (falsely accused of indiscretions with models) astonishing his fellow prisoners and guards by drawing a sublime image of the Virgin on the wall, thus displaying the artist's power to manifest the divine, and promoting painting as a means of salvation.

This was followed by a number of images by Granet showing artists working in monasteries: *Bernardo Strozzi, peintre et religieux genois, faisant le portrait du général de son ordre* (1827 Salon, destroyed by fire at the *Palais Royal*, 1848, engraving by Le Bas published in Antony Béraud, *Annales de l'école française des beaux-arts – première année, 1827*, plate 32); *Le Padre Pozzo, de la campagne de Jésus*,

⁵⁰ On the revival of religious painting in France c.1800-1860 see Foucart, *Le Renouveau de la peinture religieuse en France (1800-1860)*.

⁵¹ François-René Chateaubriand, *Le Génie du Christianisme, ou beautés de la religion chrétienne*, 5 vols, Paris : Migneret, 1802, vol. 3, 9: 'La Grèce raconte qu'une jeune fille, apercevant l'ombre de son amant sur un mur, le crayonna avec un charbon. Ainsi, selon l'antiquité, une passion volage produisoit l'art des plus parfaites illusions./ L'école chrétienne, a cherché un autre maître; elle le reconnoît dans ce grand Artiste, qui, pétrissant un peu de limon entre ses mains puissantes, dit les paroles du peintre: Faisons l'homme à notre image. Donc, pour nous, le premier trait du dessin a existé dans l'idée éternelle de Dieu.'

⁵² Denis Coutagne, *François-Marius Granet, Une vie pour la peinture, 1775-1849*, Exh. cat: Aix en Provence, Musée Granet, 2008. Bann and Paccoud, *L'Invention du passé*, vol. 1, 114–35.

peignant, entouré des religieux de son ordre (1839 Salon, location unknown); *Le Sueur peignant la vie de Saint Bruno au cloître des Chartreux* (ink on paper, Aix-en-Provence, Musée Granet); and *Un Moine Peignant* (1846 Salon, Besançon, Musée des Beaux-arts et d'Archéologie), depicting a monk painting the Coronation of the Virgin, a theme strongly associated with the Sieneese trecento.

In a series of related works apparently inspired by nostalgia for the cloistered lives of these historic artists, Granet also painted himself as an attendant carrying a cardinal's train in the monastery where Eustache Le Sueur had painted his famous Saint Bruno cycle, *Le Cloître des Chartreux* (Aix-en-Provence, Musée Granet); as a double-bass playing monk in *Réception des Cardinaux par une maîtrise à la villa du belvédère de Frascati*, (1822, Aix-en-Provence, Musée Granet); and as a monk in *La Mort de Poussin* (1834 Salon), an expression of his admiration for, and personal identification with, his fellow expatriate.⁵³



Figure 12 François-Marius Granet, *Vie de l'atelier de M. Granet, à Rome*, 1824 Salon, Oil on canvas, 80 x 100cm, Marseille, Musée des Beaux-arts, Inv BA 361
[Image: © Marseille MBA]

Granet's work also provides a direct precedent for Antigna's depiction of a card-playing 'monk' model. Granet's *Vie de l'atelier de M. Granet, à Rome* (1824 Salon, fig. 12) was exhibited with the brief explanation 'it shows his model dressed as a Capuchin friar.'⁵⁴ Like Antigna's *Scène d'atelier*, the *Vie de l'atelier de M. Granet* belongs within a tradition of images in which a picture within a picture (in this case a version of Granet's celebrated *la Choeur de la Chapelle des Capucins à Rome*) is surrounded by the elements of the composition in carefully constructed disarray,

⁵³ Denis Coutagne, *François-Marius Granet*, 222; Marc Gotlieb, 'Creation and Death in the Romantic Studio', 158.

⁵⁴ Sanchez and Seydoux, eds, *Les Catalogues des Salons*, vol 2 (1819 [supplément] – 1834), *Salon de 1824*, no. 2218: 'On y voit son modèle habillé en capucin.'

thus underlining the artist's powers of composition in uniting these elements in his acknowledged masterpiece.⁵⁵ Once again, however, other issues are at stake. Granet is placed at a distance from his lone female model: while she contemplates Granet's religious work in progress, the artist himself is seated at a table with his other two models, the 'celebrant' and 'friar', thus recalling images of his predecessor Le Sueur pictured amongst the white-robed Carthusian monks at Chartreux. But the fact that these are not friars but models, and that they are playing cards, emphasizes the fact that it is all a masquerade. Like Antigna's studio scene, the painting underlines the creative challenge involved in picturing religious scenes at a time of declining faith.

Of the subjects depicted by Granet, it was Le Sueur working amongst the monks of Chartreux that first proved most popular with French artists back at home. The theme was inaugurated at the Paris Salon by François-Barthélémy-Auguste Desmoulins who significantly paired *Raphaël dans son atelier* (discussed above) with *Le Sueur peignant la vie de Saint-Bruno dans le cloître des Chartreux* (both 1819 Salon). His choice of subjects can in part be credited to the influence of Victor Cousin, who drew particular attention to Le Sueur as a painter of religious art and especially praised his Saint Bruno cycle in his influential series of lectures *Du Vrai, du beau et du bien* delivered at the Sorbonne during 1815-1821. Cousin drew a distinct contrast between the life of Le Sueur, the 'French Raphael' and Raphael himself:

What a resemblance and, at the same time, what a contrast to the destiny of Raphael, who also died young, but in pleasure, with honours and on the point of being made a cardinal. Our Raphael [i.e. Le Sueur] was not the lover of the Fornarina or the favourite of a pope: he was a Christian; he is Christianity in art.⁵⁶

As the revival of French religious art gathered pace in the late 1830s and 1840s, the theme of Le Sueur working at Chartreux was reprised by Jean-Abel Lordon (1838 Salon); Charles Elmerich (1839, Pau, Musée des Beaux-arts); Elise Journet (1840 Salon, reproduced in *L'Artiste*, series 2, vol. 5, 1840, facing p. 232); Narcisse-Edmond-Joseph Desmadryl (1841 Salon); Valère-Adolphe Aze (1846 Salon); and Désiré-François Laugé (1855 Exposition Universelle, fig. 13).

⁵⁵ Coutagne, *François-Marius Granet*, 195–205. Granet first exhibited *la Choeur* at the 1808 Salon; the 1814 version (New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art) was bought by Caroline Murat; a larger version (probably that now in Cardiff, National Museum of Wales) was exhibited at the 1819 Salon. Demand for the theme led Granet to produce at least thirteen further variants and his success earned him the Cross of the *Légion d'honneur* (1819) and the ribbon of the Order of Saint Michael (1822).

⁵⁶ Victor Cousin, *Du vrai, du beau et du bien*, ninth edition, Paris : Verlag, 1862, 221: 'Quelle ressemblance à la fois et quelle différence avec la destinée de Raphaël, mort jeune aussi, mais au sein des plaisirs, dans les honneurs et déjà presque dans la pourpre. Notre Raphaël n'a pas été l'amant de la Fornarine et le favori d'un pape: il a été chrétien; il est le christianisme dans l'art.'



Figure 13 Désiré-François Laugée, *Lesueur chez les Chartreux*, 1855 Exposition Universelle
Oil on canvas, 173 x 241cm, Troyes, Musée d'art d'archéologie et de sciences naturelles, Inv. D.886.1
[Image: © R. M. N.]

Cousin also drew a distinction between Italian art of the quattrocento and cinquecento:

We talk about the faith that animated artists and inspired their works; this is true of the time of Cimabue and Giotto, but after Fra Angelico, at the end of the fifteenth century in Italy, I perceive above all a faith in art itself and the cult of beauty. Raphael, it is said, would have become a cardinal; yes, but always painting Galatea, and without leaving the Fornarina.⁵⁷

The late 1830s and 1840s witnessed a renewed interest in quattrocento art, in part inspired by the aesthetic values of several of Ingres's students, but also by religious concerns. This gathered momentum with the publication of Alexis-François Rio's *L'art chrétien* (published in volumes from 1836 onwards). Rio went further than Cousin, arguing that the only truly religious art was created in the Siena of Duccio and the Lorenzetti, the Florence of Fra Angelico and the Umbria of Perugino and the early Raphael.⁵⁸ In all other cases, he argued (including the work of Giotto, Masaccio, Raphael's Vatican *stanze*, and the later sixteenth-century

⁵⁷ Cousin, *Du vrai, du beau et du bien*, 187: 'On parle de la foi qui alors animait les artistes et vivifiait leurs oeuvres; cela est vrai du temps de Giotto et de Cimabuë; mais, après Angelico da Fiesole, à la fin du XVe siècle, en Italie, j'aperçois surtout la foi de l'art en lui-même et le culte de la beauté. Raphaël, dit-on, allait passer cardinal; oui, mais en peignant toujours la Galatée, et sans quitter la Fornarine.'

⁵⁸ Foucart, *Le Renouveau de la peinture religieuse en France*, 5, 29.

onwards), traces of naturalism and paganism were at odds with the very idea of religious art.

These ideas (widely adopted) contributed to a new interest in the artist-monks of the Italian Renaissance. 1839 saw the foundation of the *Confrérie de Saint Jean l'Evangeliste* at the *Couvent de la Quercia* near Rome, a French equivalent of the Brotherhood of Saint Luke (nicknamed 'Nazarenes') founded by Viennese students three decades earlier in 1810; this was soon followed by a similar enterprise, the *Confrérie du Bienheureux Angélique de Fiesole*. Artists joining these brotherhoods were required to adopt a monastic lifestyle that would inspire Christian art.⁵⁹ Not long afterwards the Dominican prior Fra Angelico made his Salon debut in Charles Landelle's *Le Bienheureux Angélique de Fiesole demandant des inspirations à Dieu* (1842 Salon), reproduced in *L'Artiste*, series 3, vol. 2, 1842, facing p. 119, with an extended description emphasising Fra Angelico's devout spirituality.⁶⁰



Figure 14 Michel Dumas, *Fra Giovanni Angelico da Fiesole*, 1845 Salon
Oil on canvas, 209.4 x 173cm, Langres, Musée de Langres, Inv. D 850-2
[Image: © Langres, Musée de Langres]

This was followed by Michel Dumas's *Fra Giovanni Angelico da Fiesole* (1845 Salon, fig. 14), commissioned by the *Maison du Roi*, which depicts the artist contemplating a crown of thorns, a tear rolling from his eye, red paint spilled on the floor echoing the blood of his Redeemer. Propped up in the foreground on the left is a picture of the founder of Fra Angelico's order, Saint Dominic, who also appears half hidden in the painting depicted in the background, Fra Angelico's celebrated *Le*

⁵⁹ E.-J Bailly, *Réglement de la Confrérie de Saint-Jean l'Evangeliste*, Paris : Verlag, 1840; Foucart, *Le Renouveau de la peinture religieuse en France*, 45–49.

⁶⁰ Sanchez and Seydoux eds, *Les Catalogues des Salons*, vol 4. (1841–1845), *Salon de 1842*, no. 1118; Unsigned article, 'Album du Salon de 1842, Fra Angelico da Fiesole', *L'Artiste*, ser. 3, vol. 2, 1842, 119.

Calvaire (c. 1440-45, Paris, Musée du Louvre), his profile meeting that of Dumas's painted Fra Angelico. As the *livret* explained:

The great artist never painted the sufferings of Christ without being moved to tears. Seated beside a painting representing the crucifixion, he contemplates a crown of thorns which calls to his mind the passion of the Redeemer.⁶¹

Fra Angelico also featured in Salon paintings by Fortuné Cartier (1848 Salon) and Henri Delaborde (1850 Salon). At around the same time, Fra Bartolommeo, who had previously only appeared in the context of the development of perspective (Tito Marzocchi de Belluci, *Raphael dans l'atelier de Fra-Bartolomeo, lui expliquant les règles de la perspective*, 1833 Salon, and *Raphael donnant des conseils de perspective à Fra Bartolomeo*, 1841 Salon, possibly the same painting) was now depicted as a religious visionary by Frederic Bouterwek in *le peintre Bartolomeo de Florence* (1846 Salon):

Painting his most beautiful picture (the Annunciation), in around 1520, the artist, after trying in vain to render a worthy representation of the features of the Holy Virgin, fell, as is related, into a profound sleep, during which the Archangel Gabriel, already completed in the picture, came out of the painting and painted the figure of the Queen of Heaven himself.⁶²

These decades also saw the re-evaluation of the three most celebrated masters of the High Renaissance. Jean Gigoux's *Derniers moments de Léonard de Vinci* (1835 Salon, Besançon, Musée des Beaux-arts et d'Archéologie) emphasized the artist's deathbed conversion, rather than his close relationship with his patron François Ier, which had been the primary focus of earlier treatments of the theme, such as Ingres's *François Ier reçoit les derniers soupirs de Léonard de Vinci*, 1818, 1824 Salon (Paris, Petit Palais). As has already been noted above, Ingres's 1840 treatment of Raphael and the Fornarina gave prominent place to Raphael's last great religious painting, the *Transfiguration*. In 1840 Achille Devéria published a series of six lithographs on the theme of the divinely inspired Raphael.⁶³ A year later J.-F. Boisselat exhibited *Le rêve de Raphaël Sanzio* (1841 Salon) accompanied by a quotation from Quatremère de Quincy's hagiographic *Life of Raphaël* (1824):

⁶¹ Sanchez and Seydoux eds, *Les Catalogues des Salons*, vol 4. (1841–1845), *Salon de 1845*, no. 517: 'Ce grand artiste ne peignait jamais les souffrances du Christ sans s'attendrir jusqu'aux larmes. Assis pres d'un tableau représentant le crucifiement, il contemple une couronne d'épines qui lui rappelle les douleurs du Redempteur.'

⁶² Sanchez and Seydoux eds, *Les Catalogues des Salons*, vol 5. (1846–1850), *Salon de 1846*, no. 236: 'Peignant son plus beau tableau (l'Annonciation), vers l'an 1520, ce peintre, après avoir fait de vains efforts pour rendre dignement les traits de la Sainte-Vierge, tomba, à ce qu'on raconte, dans un profond sommeil, pendant lequel l'archange Gabriel déjà achevé dans le tableau, s'en détacha et peignit lui-même la figure de la Reine des Cieux.'

⁶³ *Hommage à Raphaël. Raphaël et l'art français*, Exh. cat: Paris, Grand Palais. 1983, cat. 275–280.

From the age of eighteen, Raphael was inspired by the masterpieces of antiquity, and asked himself whether it were not possible to unite the beautiful pagan forms with the strictures of painting inspired by Christianity. One day, when he had exhausted himself in a battle between his imagination and his doubts, he dropped his brush, and placing his head on his hand, fell into a deep sleep. In his sleep, his studio appeared to him radiant with light; at his feet was an angel bowing down before a group of the Virgin, the Infant Jesus and Saint John the Baptist. The angel, after having pointed to the group which illuminated an immense aureole, placed before Raphael's eyes a canvas on which could be read these words: look, remember. Raphael, transported, immediately wanted to seize his chinks, and his movement woke him...the vision had disappeared; but it remained forever engraved in his memory.⁶⁴



Figure 15 François-Édouard-Barthélemy-Michel Cibot, *Raphaël et le Pérugin à Pérouse*, 1843 Salon
Oil on canvas, 74 x 56.5cm, Moulins, Musée Anne de Beaujeu, Inv. 744

[Image: © R. M. N.]

⁶⁴ Sanchez and Seydoux eds, *Les Catalogues des Salons*, vol 4. (1841–1845), *Salon de 1841*, no. 182: 'Dès l'âge de dix-huit ans, Raphaël s'exaltait devant les chefs-d'oeuvre de l'antiquité, et il se demandait si l'on ne pourrait point allier les belles formes païennes à la sévérité de la peinture inspirée par le christianisme./ Un jour qu'il s'était laissé entraîner à une de ces luttes de son imagination avec ses incertitudes, épuisé de fatigue, il laisse échapper son pinceau, et appuyant sa tête sur sa main, il s'endormit profondément./ Dans le sommeil, son atelier lui apparut resplendissant de lumière; à ses pieds était un ange prosterné devant un groupe de la Vierge, de l'Enfant-Jesus et de saint Jean-Baptiste. L'ange, après avoir montré du doigt ce groupe qu'illuminait une auréole immense, plaça sous les yeux de Raphaël une toile où se lisaient ces mots: *aspice, memento*. Raphaël, transporté, voulut aussitôt se saisir de ses crayons, lorsque ce mouvement le réveilla....La vision avait disparu; mais elle resta toujours gravée dans son souvenir.'

François-Édouard-Barthélemy-Michel Cibot's *Raphaël et le Pérugin à Pérouse* (1843 Salon, fig. 15) sets the scene of Raphaël's early apprenticeship amid visions of his later works - a personification of the *Vierge de Foligno* and a young boy with the traits of a future John the Baptist - and includes monks at the top of the steps in the background. Artists also returned to Vasari's eulogization of the 'divine' Michelangelo. Albert Barre's *Michel-Ange dans la chapelle Sixtine* (1847 Salon) was accompanied by the following extract: 'Heaven bestowed on Michelangelo, along with his other talents, a sublime poetic genius, in order to show in this one man the perfect exemplar of all those things most honoured among men.'⁶⁵ Thus genius was here represented as a God-given gift.

In conclusion, Antigna's *Scène d'atelier* (1848 Salon), which juxtaposes a self portrait with an alluring 'angel' model and a 'monk' model, was a wry and timely response to the inherently contradictory ideas concerning artistic inspiration, love and spirituality that had been invoked in pictures of the legendary artists of the past, exhibited at recent Salon exhibitions.

Lois Oliver is Associate Professor of Art History at the University of Notre Dame (USA) in London, and a Visiting Lecturer at the Courtauld Institute, where she completed her doctoral thesis *The Image of the Artist, Paris 1815-1855* in 2013. She previously worked on the curatorial staff of the V&A and the National Gallery in London, where she co-curated several exhibitions including *Rebels and Martyrs: the image of the artist in the nineteenth century* (2006).

loisoliver@btinternet.com



This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/)

⁶⁵ Sanchez and Seydoux eds, *Les Catalogues des Salons*, vol 5. (1846–1850), *Salon de 1847*, no. 78: 'Le ciel accorda à Michel-Ange, avec ses autres talents, un génie poétique sublime, pour montrer en un seul homme le modèle parfait de toutes les choses qui sont le plus en honneur parmi les hommes.'