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To contact the staff at
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In This Issue

A Novel Nymphaeum

Raphael's Inaugural Architectural Commission in Rome Reconsidered

ALEXIS CULOTTA

"After illustrious Rome fell prey to barbarian Furies, all the gods withdrew, as the city collapsed. But where Agostino Chigi founded his kingly palace, and restored a truly ancient splendor, gods and their consorts at once descended again from the heavens." [1] So wrote Neapolitan humanist Girolamo Borgia of sixteenth-century Sienese banker Agostino Chigi's Roman *villa suburbana*, now better known as the Villa Farnesina. A magnificent structure nestled along the banks of Rome's arterial Tiber River, the Farnesina has been the subject of significant study as scholars search for a better understanding of its enigmatic patron, Chigi, and the artistic masters at work there.

For all the words that have been spilled on the villa, however, too few have probed Raphael's contributions. His rendering of the *Triumph of Galatea* (c. 1512–1513) in the loggia of the same name tends to be glossed over in a review of his work, and his design for the decorative program in the adjacent Loggia di Amore e Psiche (1518–1519) has often been discounted as the handiwork of his workshop.[2] What has been most lacking is an examination of his role as architect of the villa's stables and riverfront casino. These two projects represented the inaugural works of his architectural career, one that John Shearman lauded as exhibiting "a density of activity which would be startling enough in eight years from the life of a man with nothing else to do."[3] To date, the analysis of these initial structures has remained most general. Stefano Ray's *Raffaello architetto* (1974)[4] and the subsequent compendium of a similar title published by Ray, Christoph Frommel and others (1984)[5] offer the most complete published account of these two structures. Though foundational, their analysis amounts to mostly measurements and preliminary observations, particularly in the case of Raphael's first architectural project, that for Chigi's riverfront casino.

The perfunctory nature of this structure's analysis is due in part to the lack of information on its design and construction. No ground plans or full preliminary sketches for the structure survive; the building itself, which suffered the wrath of the Tiber's flooding as early as 1514, was already in a ruinous state by the late sixteenth century.[6] Though the casino was rebuilt for its magnificent banquet of 1518, the next great flood of the Tiber in 1531 no doubt inflicted more damage, leaving Frommel to find in Du Pérac's drawing of 1577 only fragments of what once stood.[7] By the following century painter Gaspare Celio wrote of only the ruins of the casino along the banks of the Tiber.[8]

Deciphering the design of this celebrated riverfront casino is all the more problematic due to the lack of conclusive visual documentation. None of Raphael's sketches, plans or even dimensions for the casino survive, save for a few rudimentary cartoons. Indeed, much of what is presumed of the riverfront casino has been handed down through drawings of Rome along the Tiber, all of which reveal the villa and its accompanying outbuildings with varying inaccuracies and inconsistencies. A final confounding factor in exploring this riverfront structure is understanding how it functioned in conjunction with the supposed accompanying subterranean grotto, highlighted in the epigrams written by Egidio Gallo and Blosio Palladio in

contemporaneous commemoration of Chigi's fabled villa.[9] Both Gallo's and Palladio's poems describe a grotto serving as a fishpond or bathing and boating pond lined with seating and accessible from exterior stairs,[10] where, as Gallo describes, "the Nymphs flock together with tremulous leap, [and] straightway hide themselves in the first mouth of the pond. . . . in which they enjoy residing with busy song."[11] Though Gallo conjures a fantastical underground lair with his prose, any hard evidence for its existence has yet to materialize.

Despite these challenges, this examination will propose a novel reconstruction of the riverfront casino along with its relation to the supposed grotto below as a revival of the nymphaeum, an architectural type dormant since ancient times. Following a brief discussion of Raphael's development as an architect and the early influence of architect and antiquarian Baldassarre Peruzzi on his production, discussion will then turn to a detailed analysis of the riverfront casino. It will use scholarly knowledge of similar structures, such as the relatively contemporaneous nymphaeum at Genazzano — attributed to both Donato Bramante and Peruzzi — and the Casino del Bufalo, as well as the extrapolation of Farnesina data, to suggest that Raphael's design for this riverfront casino was drawn from the ancient nymphaeum. In addition to showcasing the potential level of exchange between Raphael and Peruzzi during their tenures at the Farnesina, this research also offers several insights and hypotheses into the design of this casino in an effort to illuminate a portion of Raphael's contribution to the fantastical feel of Chigi's Farnesina

Blurry Beginnings

Raphael's architectural career has suffered from little remaining evidence.[12] Though he was involved in a number of architectural commissions from 1514 on,[13] few have survived in sketches and even fewer still stand. Furthermore, it is impossible to pinpoint the moment at which Raphael's interests turned to architecture or, for that matter, archaeology. One can turn, however, to John Shearman's discussion of Raphael's sketch of the Pantheon (U 164 Ar) to propose the initiation of Raphael's architectural interests as around the year 1506.[14] This reinforces Raphael's early presence in Rome, and it also positions this sketch as one of the first examples of Raphael's pure study of architecture.[15] Raphael had already begun such exploration through the architectural elements he wove into his paintings. The earliest known architectural drawing[16] appears in a study for the *Coronation of Saint Nicholas of Tolentino* (Musée des Beaux Arts, Lille), wherein a quickly drafted *cortile* overlaps with the bottom right-hand corner of the page.[17] Such architectural study would develop into the grandly painted architecture of Raphael's early works, as seen in the famous *Spozalizio della Vergine* (1500–1504), but Raphael's sketch of the Pantheon interior marks a pivotal moment, as Raphael began his transformation from architectural painter to architect through a concurrent study of the antique.

Architectural design was, in the early years of the *cinquecento*, inextricably linked to study of the antique, or in other words, archaeology. As Marcia Hall comments, "The Rome in which Raphael arrived in 1508 was already a massive construction site."[18] The construction of which Hall speaks is a quite literal one, as by 1508 Rome was in the midst of the massive *renovatio* led by Pope Julius II. As Raphael's sketch of the Pantheon illustrates, he gleaned inspiration from the structures of antiquity, both extant and extinct.

Raphael's exploration of the antique and of architecture continued to punctuate his painterly

production in the years following. His inclusion, for example, of the Roman Torre de Milizie in *Saint George and the Dragon* (1506), his quotation of an ancient *Death of Meleager* relief (the only examples of which were in Rome) in his design for the *Baglioni Entombment* (1507), his miniature rendition of the *Forum Transitorium* in the *Esterhazy Madonna* (1508), or his quotation of the *Ciampolini Jupiter* in his unfinished *Madonna del Baldacchino* (1507–1508),[19] all allude to his ongoing ruminations on antique architecture that he carried with him to the Villa Farnesina.

Raphael's expansion from artist to architect and antiquarian was also encouraged by his growing companionship with Peruzzi, a relationship that is noteworthy because it provides the contextual basis for the forthcoming exchange between the two in the design of Chigi's riverfront casino. Practically the same age, the two became close associates once in contact with each other, as attested to by Raphael serving as guarantor for a property rented by Peruzzi in Rome in late 1511.[20] Furthermore, Mary Quinlan-McGrath suggested that Peruzzi was already borrowing from Raphael's artistic approach in his design for Chigi's astrological ceiling in the Farnesina, completed at approximately the same time as this guarantorship,[21] and evidence exists to suggest that Raphael was, in turn, quoting Peruzzi in his depiction of the chariot of *Galatea* in the same loggia. Raphael gleaned his inspiration for this chariot from the basic concept of the *carro* derived from the literary precedents of Philostratus[22] and Poliziano, yet, as Millard Meiss surmises, "he found them not quite what he wanted. . . . [and instead] gave the nymph a sort of super-shell. . . .[that was] unprecedented in the arts and in iconographic tradition."[23] The explanation for this paddle-wheeled contraption, which subsequently became absorbed into the iconography of Galatea,[24] has never been further probed, however its inclusion parallels Peruzzi's concurrent development of a similar waterwheel structure for Chigi's gardens.

Debuting at the first of Chigi's lavish festivities of 1518,[25] according to Frommel, Peruzzi's monumental waterwheel aimed to facilitate water movement from the Tiber to both irrigate the gardens and replenish the fountains and, from contemporary reports, was a feat of engineering. [26] While construction on this garden waterwheel had not yet begun when Raphael executed his *Galatea*, it is plausible that he was aware of Peruzzi's designs and thus chose to

Fig. 1 Raphael, *Madonna d'Alba*, circa 1511. Sketch on paper. Inv. Pl. 456. © RMN-Grand Palais / Art Resource, NY.

reference this engineering accomplishment preemptively. This would suggest that Peruzzi and Raphael might have already enjoyed camaraderie at this stage in artistic production, a suggestion reinforced by the fact that Raphael includes another reference to Peruzzi's contemporaneous work within the loggia. As Quinlan-McGrath notes, Raphael's positioning of a seahorse in the left-hand portion of *Galatea* was intended to engage with the same beast included in Peruzzi's rendition of Pisces in the spandrel on the opposite side of the room.[27] Thus while this seahorse is a playful jab, the reference to Peruzzi's waterwheel is undoubtedly a laudatory one, applauding his associate's accomplishment while further tying this visual representation to the actual gardens outside. In other words, the collaborative engagement between the two, both of whom sought innovation in the midst of *all'antica* architectural forms,[28] encouraged Raphael to conceive of an initial architectural design that was both unprecedented and unparalleled.

Around 1513, roughly the same time as he commissioned Raphael's *Galatea,* Chigi decided to add to his antique oasis by asking Raphael to design and build a porticoed enclosure along his property's riverfront.[29] The result was an apparently magnificent structure, so sumptuous that, as folklore would have it, it would host an elaborate banquet in the summer of 1518 that culminated in a procession of the dinner party to the edge of the Tiber to dispose of all of Chigi's silver serving pieces in the river, an extravagant performance to reinforce Chigi's endless wealth.[30] The exact date of the casino's construction remains elusive. Stefano Ray argues that the building in Raphael's preparatory sketch for his

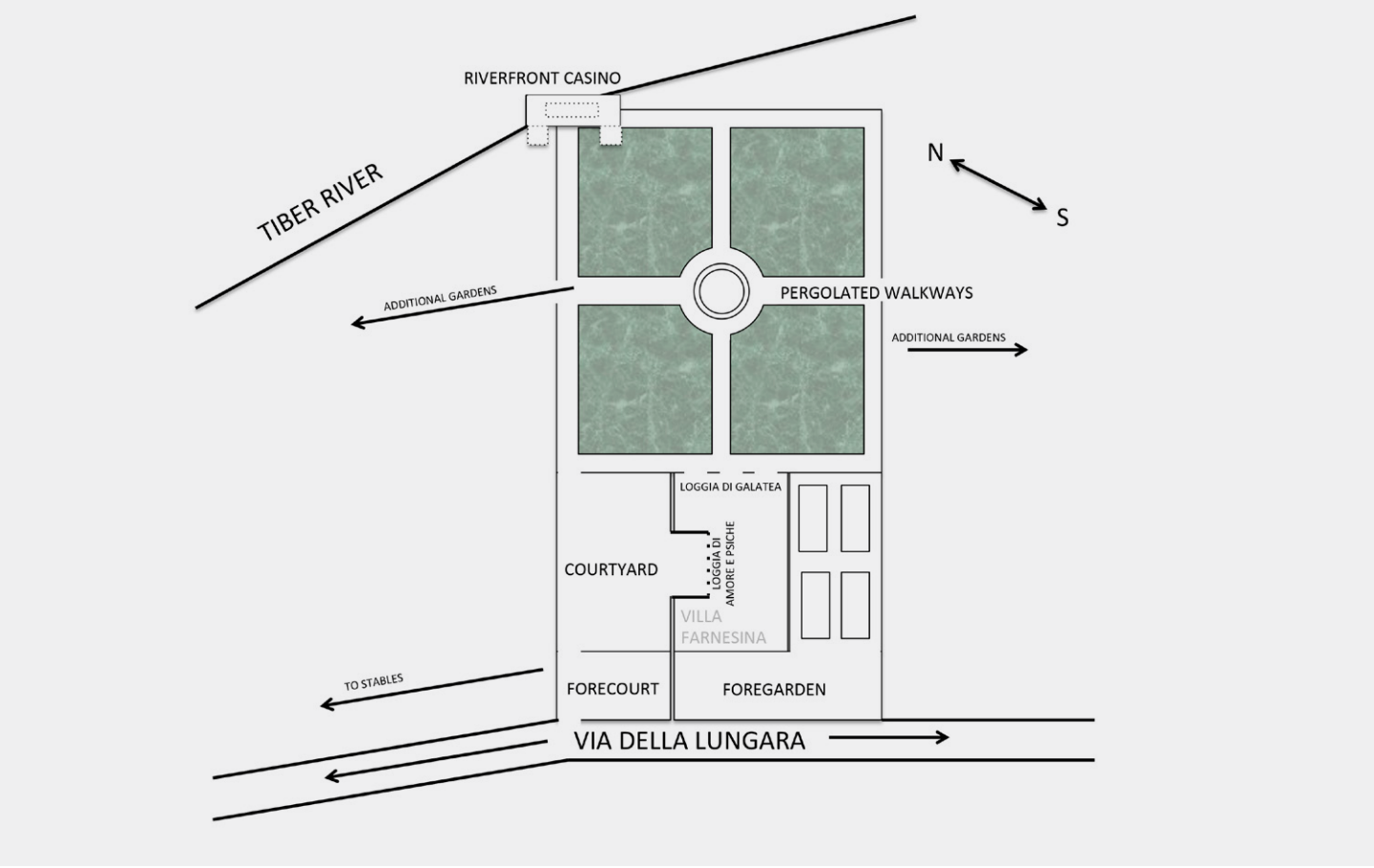

Fig. 2 Author's Drawing of Ground Plan of Farnesina Gardens Reflecting Riverfront Casino.

Fig. 3 Émile Du Pérac, *Nova Urbis Romae Descriptio*, 1577. Map of Rome. © British Library Board/Robana/ Art Resource, NY.

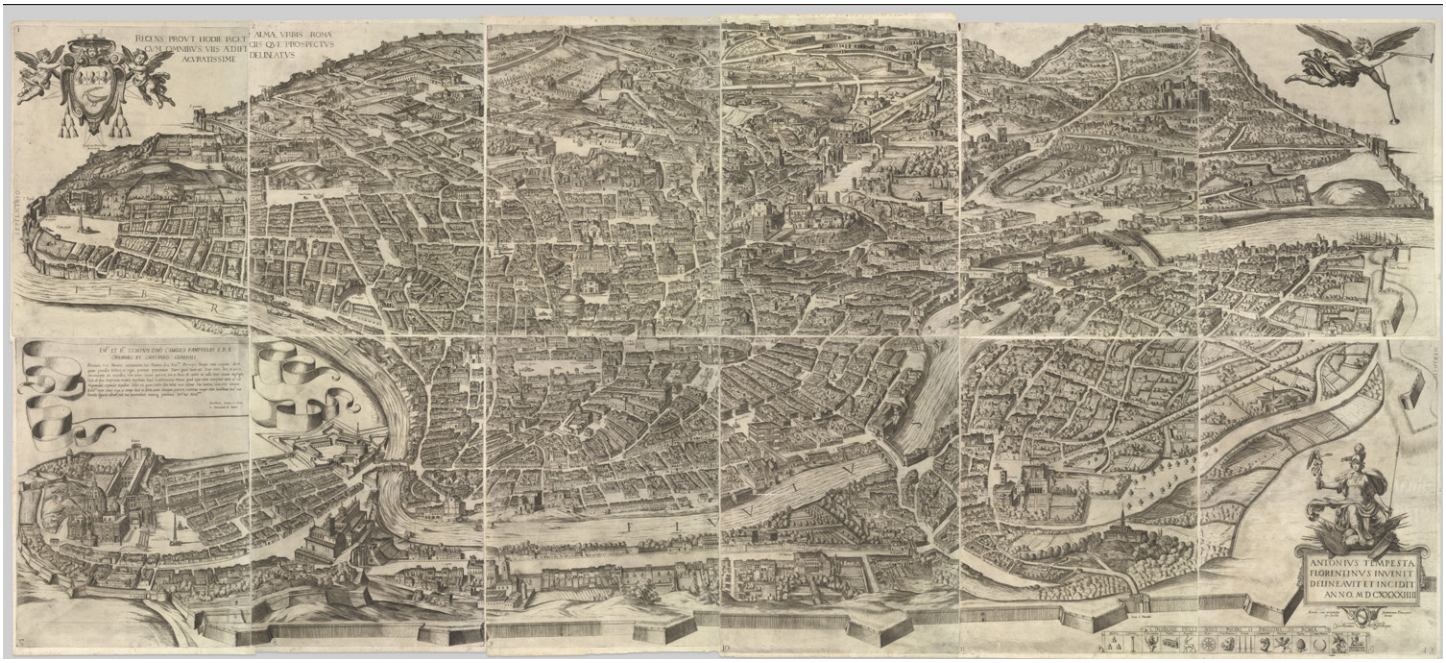

Fig. 4 Antonio Tempesta, *Plan of the City of Rome*, 1645. Published by Giovanni Domenico de Rossi, Italian, 1619–1653; dedicated to Cardinal Camilio Pamphili. Etching with some engraving, undescribed state (printed from 12 plates). 41 5/16 x 94 ½ in. (105x240 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Edward Pearce Casey Fund, 1983 (1983.1027(1-12)). © The Metropolitan Museum of Art/Art Resource, NY.

Madonna d'Alba (Musée Wicar, Lille) **(Fig. 1)** was an early design of this casino,[31] which would place its design around 1511.[32] Further reinforcing this date is Egidio Gallo's mention of the casino, or at least of its plans, in his 1511 epigram,[33] suggesting a feasible starting date concurrent with, or immediately in succession to, the *Galatea*.[34]

Pooling similarities across sketched depictions, one can surmise that the casino was likely nestled along the bank of the Tiber nearly equidistant between the stables (not yet built) and the villa **(Fig. 2)**, as implied in Frommel's twentieth-century ground plan recreation.[35] The casino was connected to the villa by a pergolated walkway, an element reiterated by Frommel

and the remnants of which are visible in a detail of Du Pérac's 1577 depiction of Rome **(Fig. 3)**[36] as well as Antonio Tempesta's *Pianta di Roma* of 1593 (Metropolitan Museum of Art (1983.1027, 1–12) **(Fig. 4)**. The casino itself consisted of open porticoes to both the river and the garden that created an entertaining pavilion, the archways of which were adorned with engaged pilasters of an unknown order.[37]

Building on these general attributes, an undated sketch by Sallustio Peruzzi suggests that the casino was capped with a unique pediment and perhaps even a second floor.[38] A second level to the casino is reiterated in Ray's analysis of the aforementioned sketch at Lille. Ray goes further to describe the structure as potentially having a first level consisting of four bays each enclosed with a balustrade, on top of which was a second floor mimicking the first yet reduced in size and capped with an attic level decorated with volutes.[39] He also suggests the that secondary level might also have included a navigable walkway to allow one to perambulate from side to side in keeping with the dual open façades below.[40] Ray comments, however, that the inclusion of a second level is problematic, and in an attempt to resolve this issue proposes that the first level seen in the Lille sketch is actually part of the building's foundation, or basement, serving as a servant's area for banquet cooking and preparation.[41] An alternate explanation for the presence of two levels is that the secondary level was actually designed to account for the large podium and to accommodate accessibility to the grotto below. If this were the case, the first level would have functioned as the central access point to the underground grotto with the second level being the main entertaining arcade which, by nature of its elevation, would guarantee not only the best viewing point for the garden but also for the villa itself, as illustrated in an anonymous sketch in Budapest's Szépmüvészeti Múzeum.[42]

If this orientation of the fragmentary casino seen in the Budapest sketch is accurate (its architectural features accord with those described textually), one is faced with another conundrum requiring speculation. This sketch shows a bay of an open portico, open with an archway on the left yet enclosed on the right. If the casino did indeed have two porticoes, one of which opened onto the gardens and the other the river, this would imply that the casino ran along, not perpendicular to, the river's edge. Frommel also suggests this alignment along the shores of the Tiber.[43] In consideration of this orientation, it would seem that this drawing illustrates the end of the riverfront casino, from which the double open portico would have extended southward along the riverbank. This assumption, supported by the singular archway of the structure included in Tempesta's 1593 map, would suggest that the casino perhaps assumed a U-shaped structure that faced toward the villa.[44]

In other words, if one merges these architectural attributes of the riverfront casino with the drawings of its ruins by Du Pérac, Tempesta, and the anonymous Budapest sketch, one can envision a riverfront casino that assumed a shape akin to that of the villa, with two projecting bays extending from the riverfront on either end of the casino. The casino loggia thus may have extended southward to meet the pergolated walkway, remnants of which are again visible in the Budapest drawing, that returned to the courtyard in front of the villa. This would leave ample room for the four-arch portico included in the Lille sketch; however, one may speculate that there were five archways, almost precisely replicating the façade of the villa itself.[45] Presuming a structural similarity between the riverfront casino and the villa, one could propose an extrapolation of stylistic design as well, a straightforward simplicity that is suggested in the Budapest drawing, including archways springing from Doric piers to create the open-air portico,

Fig. 5 Nymphaeum Column — Genazzano, 1506–1510, Bramante, Donato (1444–1514)/Mondadori Portfolio/ Electa/Francesco Tanasi/Bridgeman Images.

capped with a cornice decorated with dentil molding running underneath.[46]

Ray's closing remarks on this riverfront casino not only reinforce this proposed layout but also extend it by invoking parallels to the contemporary nymphaeum built at Genazzano near Palestrina presumably for Pompeo Colonna **(Fig. 5)**. As Ray remarks, "the Bramantesque 'nymphaeum' . . . offers an intriguing indication towards a potential solution that is both full-bodied and modeled with strength."[47] Advancing Ray's initial remarks, a comparison of this structure at Genazzano and Raphael's riverfront project suggests that Raphael perhaps incorporated a nymphaeum into his designs.

Raphael himself has never been associated with the Genazzano nymphaeum; Peruzzi, on the other hand, has been linked to its design in some capacity.[48] This connection, combined with the necessity for Raphael's casino's design to accommodate the functionality of Peruzzi's garden waterworks, suggests collaboration between Raphael and Peruzzi, a sharing of ideas that arguably resulted in both one of the earliest Renaissance revivals of the nymphaeum type in Rome and the artful blending of the fantasy of the garden with the functionality of Peruzzi's aquatic engineering within the Farnesina grounds.

Frommel's analysis of the Genazzano nymphaeum, which he attributes to Bramante,[49] yields the ground plan of a central three-bay structure, flanked on either end with exedrae extensions. Attached to these central bays through columned archways was a secondary set of three chambers, the central one of which also was augmented with an exedra. The entirety of the rear wall of the nymphaeum was punctuated with small niches. The extant remains, including this inner-columned wall that separated the two halves of the structure, reveal paired Doric columns supporting pediments extending from either arch base, the inner arches decorated with equidistant circular openings.

Following Frommel, scholars have proposed other influences evident in the nymphaeum's design. James Ackerman, for example, describes this design as "too inelegant in detail for the architect of Saint Peter's," and thus proposes that it is borrowed from Raphael's designs for a garden loggia at the Villa Madama.[50] The recent work of Piers Dominic Britton, perhaps most pertinent to this current analysis, draws parallels between a sketch by Peruzzi (UA 529 Ar) **(Fig. 6)** and the designs for this nymphaeum. Though this drawing most often associated with Peruzzi's preparations for work at Saint Peter's, Britton points out specific elements included in the drawing that suggest ruminations on alternate structures. He cites, for example, the two uppermost plans, which are direct quotations from the water court and nymphaeum at Hadrian's Villa in Tivoli.[51] Furthermore Britton isolates the plan located at

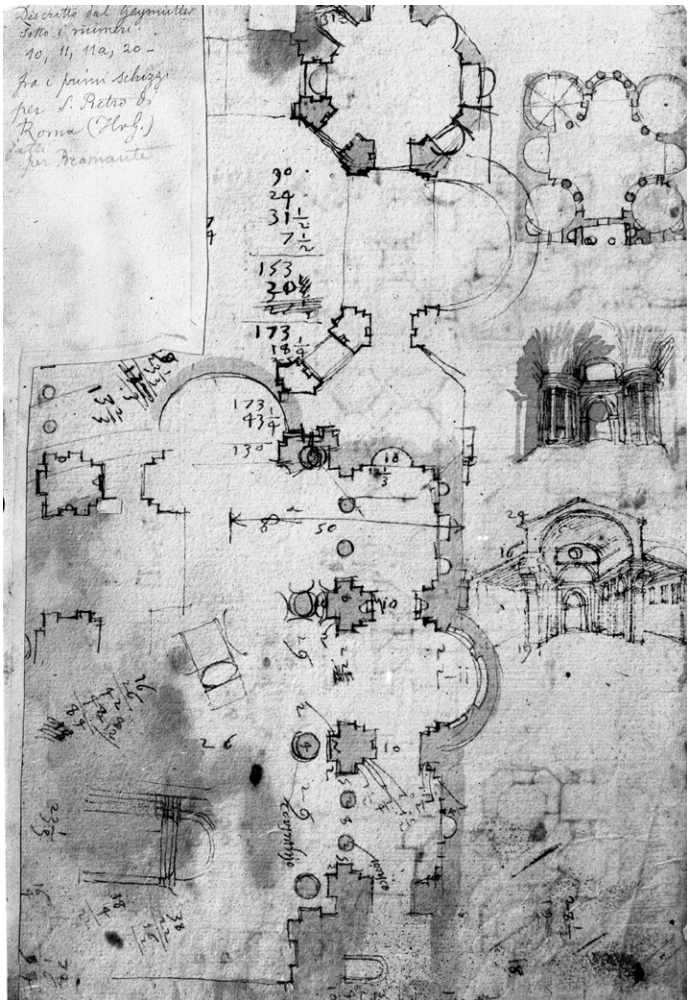

Fig. 6 Baldassarre Peruzzi, *Architectural Sketches* (UA 529 Ar). Uffizi, Florence.

the lower center of the sketch as not only quoting another antique structure, that of the Basilica of Maxentius and Constantine, but also remarkably similar to the rear elevation wall of the Genazzano nymphaeum.

Britton asks whether Peruzzi is studying from or designing for the Genazzano nymphaeum, a question whose answer is contingent on when Peruzzi began as assistant on the design of Saint Peter's. He cites the work of Meg Licht, who proposes Peruzzi was assisting Bramante as early as 1505.[52] Setting aside the ongoing complication of chronology, Britton and Licht's analyses shed insight into Peruzzi's potential role in the architectural revival of the antique nymphaeum. Pushing this hypothesis further, and in consideration of Ray's preliminary association between the Genazzano nymphaeum and the Farnesina casino, one could propose that Peruzzi's peripheral ruminations in ink were not intended for work at Genazzano but rather at the Farnesina.

While this connection cannot be reinforced with a comparison of ground plans, it is nevertheless supported by a comparison of both the verbal descriptions of the casino and the Lille drawing **(Fig. 1)** with the Genazzano ground plan. Though Raphael's sketch includes four bays to Genazzano's three, the engaged pilasters that appear across Raphael's façade are identical to those in the remnants of the nymphaeum. Furthermore, the thickening of lines that Ray mentions in Raphael's sketch, which he attributes to supports for an upper-level porch, could instead be perceived as the implication of an exterior curved wall, accommodating an exedra within, and further aligning this sketch with the nymphaeum's design. What is perhaps most striking in connecting these two structures is a comparison between the ruin in the anonymous Budapest drawing and Frommel's reconstructed elevation for the Genazzano nymphaeum. The similarity between the building in the Budapest sketch and what would be the equivalent portion of Frommel's reconstruction suggests that some connection between the two structures is plausible.

Further reinforcing the presence of a nymphaeum component within Raphael's Farnesina casino design is the potential connection with the Muses and allusions to Parnassus. The Farnesina grounds were to be an ideal locale for humanist contemplation. Drawing allusions to the sacred waters of Parnassus' Hippocrene spring, the waters of the nymphaeum would recall that revered mount and thereby conjure imaginative imagery of the Muses who lived there.

Additionally, the notion of the nymphaeum as the space where the nymphs could come and bathe in its waters again furthers the role of Chigi's grounds in the congregation of mythological deities and entities. Creating this allusory connection would in turn be reinforced by the presence of antiquities, like the Sarcophagus of the Muses, which during Chigi's lifetime would have been kept there, thereby completing the fantasy.

The potential connection between the nymphaeum designs and the designs for Raphael's Farnesina casino is significant for several reasons. In regards to the nymphaeum, the link offers further support to a date of creation within the first two decades of the sixteenth-century, as originally argued by Frommel and perhaps furthers Britton's argument by reinforcing Peruzzi's role as creator, rather than assistant. Most importantly, however, this sheds enlightening new perspective on the design and function of Raphael's Farnesina casino.

Coinciding is the revelation of Raphael's already-established collaborations with Peruzzi on this architectural project as well as insight into how this casino functioned in conjunction with the grotto. Raphael's design of a riverfront casino that echoed the design of Peruzzi's villa must have been deliberate, perhaps in an effort to engage the architect who shared, and perhaps somewhat inspired, Raphael's flair for antiquity. The notion that Peruzzi had some influence over Raphael's design for the casino is strengthened with the knowledge that Peruzzi not only devoted a great deal of time to the design of Chigi's gardens,[53] but has also been solidly credited with the creation of the supposed underground grotto,[54] the next feature to merit reconsideration.

Situated below the casino, the accompanying grotto space, so lauded by Gallo and Palladio, is visible in Du Pérac's illustration and was apparently still identifiable as late as the 1880s.[55] Scholars have repeatedly accepted Gallo's description as fact,[56] however one must question the accuracy of his claims, particularly since no other accounts from the period reinforce his description. Having established the flowery nature of Gallo's embellishments on the villa, it is plausible that his account is more fantastical than factual. There is in fact no evidence to suggest such an extensive underground lair was ever constructed, a point reinforced by the few vestiges of this grotto that have been identified in period drawings, none of which suggest such a grandiose structure. Further complicating the grotto's existence is the downward slope of the Tiber bank, which would have made any full-scale grotto a noticeable intrusion on the shoreline and would have most likely created such a pitch as to have made the construction of the accompanying riverfront casino impossible.[57]

Thus it seems necessary to offer a wholly different interpretation of the riverfront grotto, not so much as a pleasure space but rather as a more utilitarian access point for water supply to the villa's cisterns, fountains, and garden irrigation systems. Frommel added credence to this proposal by attributing the design of the grotto to Peruzzi, who was deeply embroiled in engineering the water supply to the villa grounds. It would follow that, for such a feat of engineering, a more efficient, rather than aesthetic, design was employed.

Gallo's words could, however, be read as indicating the presence of a nymphaeum, which was sometimes used interchangeably with "grotto" to refer to an elaborate water feature or reflecting pond sometimes secluded within a manmade cave. Known to antiquity simply as the sanctum in which the nymphs resided, the concept of the nymphaeum was frequently misinterpreted by *cinquecento* scholars. As Frank Alvarez posits, "the nature of the nymphaeum

[in the Renaissance] was . . . . a subject of controversy among scholars . . . at times frankly admitting bewilderment at the vague and often contradictory literary evidence."[58] Pomponio Leto likened the nymphaeum to a source of water,[59] similar to an aqueduct, as did Andrea Fulvio,[60] while Fabio Calvo illustrated several nymphaea in his eventual *Antiquae urbis Romae* of 1527 yet avoided full description of their function.[61] Moreover, those structures that ascribed to the features of a nymphaeum, such as the water pools, were commonly referred to instead as *grotta* or *fontana*.[62] Thus, perhaps Gallo is indeed referring to a nymphaeum, taking the form of an above-ground grotto-like space on the casino's ground level, accessible from the gardens yet seemingly entering into an underground lair.

This leaves room for an additional below-ground component to the casino, but it would seem that this underground space, perhaps viewable from the above-ground nymphaeum, served a more practical purpose by creating a clandestine, and thereby seemingly magical, means by which the villa's cisterns could be filled and the garden could be watered.. Such a practical component bolsters claims for a collaborative interaction between Raphael and Peruzzi, a link strengthened by Peruzzi's engineering of Chigi's garden fountains and perhaps this grotto component itself. [63]

The fountains once part of the Farnesina grounds were an additional source of spectacle. A Mantuan ambassador in attendance at Chigi's 1518 festivities for Pope Leo X described an "underground fountain" that transported water from the Tiber "with some ingenuity," and Frommel mentions Peruzzi's engineering of a monumental waterwheel, perhaps the same structure noted by the ambassador, at the same event.[64] Remnants of other fountains suggest that the gardens were indeed dotted with such aquatic features, which would have required a carefully crafted plumbing network and a vast resource of water. The Tiber, of course, was an obvious source, however the fact that Chigi's grounds went literally to the water's edge meant that any siphoning of the Tiber's waters could not interrupt the mood the gardens and the riverfront casino conjured.

Thus, it seems as if one could envision the Farnesina casino as having two "grottos." The first, a ground-level nymphaeum, was described by Gallo as a metamorphic space where the Gods "could occasionally set aside their weighty cares on coming from the pure ether."[65] Below this would have been a secondary "grotto" open to the Tiber and thus filling the Farnesina's water reserves. The oculus that Gallo describes, then, would be the connection between the two spaces, situated in the floor of the riverfront casino's ground level grotto. If this oculus was adequately large, it would appear as it if was the enclosure of a wading pool upon approach, yet, when at its edge visitors could look into it to view fish in the waters below. Furthermore, the exterior stair that was said to lead down to the grotto was also probably present, however its use was most likely for periodic maintenance, not revelry.

A rarely cited interpretation of the grotto as the figurative entrance to the Underworld supports this reinterpretation of the underground grotto as not for pleasure but rather for practicality within the overall scheme of the villa. As Shearman and Schwarzenberg proposed, the grotto was envisioned as the portal to Hades, in part in an effort to conjure a connection between the garden feature and the proposed rendition of Psyche's visit to the Underworld that would have appeared on the interior of the Loggia di Amore e Psiche.[66] Thus, while amplifying the visual impact of the Farnesina, this interpretation also works in some regard to minimize the grotto's role as an actual entertaining space. While Gallo's vision of the grotto as the play space of Nymphs would no doubt attract Chigi's visitors to enter, the

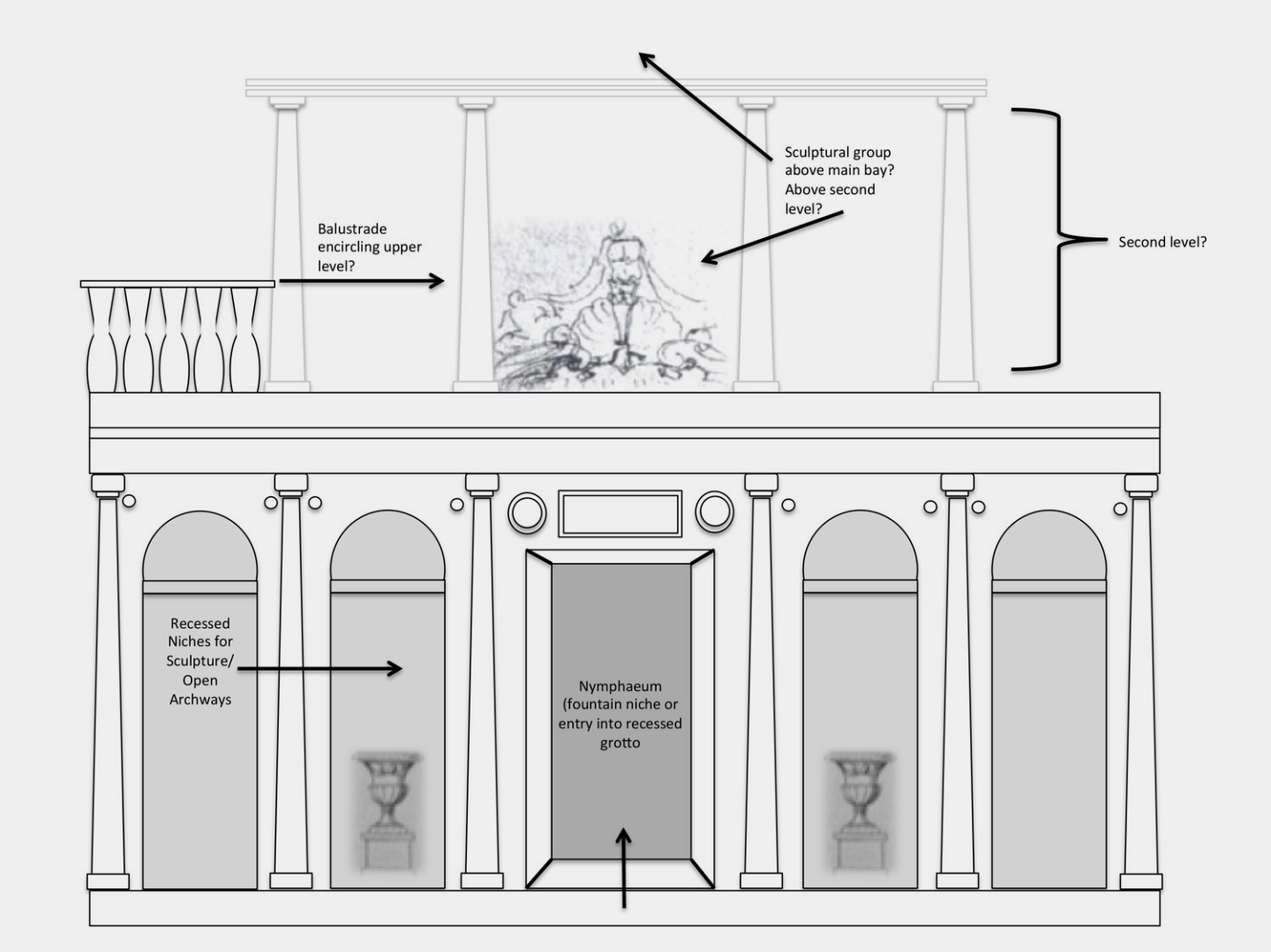

Fig. 7 Author's Speculative Reconstruction of the Farnesina Casino.

interpretation of this grotto as a stand-in for the Underworld, complete with Charon's ferry, would seem wholly unappetizing, and thus the ability to merely peek in from above would undoubtedly satisfy anyone's curiosity.

This interpretation of the Farnesina casino displaying two grottos also helps to explain Gallo's reference to the cave being "improved with the help of a chisel."[67] This most likely alludes to the presence of sculpted figural groups, perhaps of ancient origin, inside the grotto. The Tiber sculpture, for example, whose presence was noted in Chigi's collection but whose location on the grounds has never been speculated upon would have been a fitting incorporation here. Thus, while this underground grotto was predominantly a functional space, scaled for the transport of water and not for leisure, it was nevertheless designed to fit into the villa's overall message. Gazing through the oculus into the grotto from the riverfront casino, seeing fish swim about, the viewer would be swept up as if peering into Gallo's resting place of the Gods.

Based on this various connections, one can offer a hypothetical reconstruction of Raphael's Farnesina casino **(Fig. 7)**. The lower level might

have appeared as a three- or five-bay structure, either echoing the Genazzano nymphaeum or the Farnesina façade, set on an enlarged podium. The central bay would have been slightly enlarged as it potentially served as an entry into the ground-level grotto that was perhaps extended with the addition of a rear exedra, akin to Peruzzi's sketch **(Fig. 6)**. At the rear of this grotto might have appeared Chigi's ancient Tiber statue, in front of which a wading-pool like opening would have served as the viewing oculus unto the subterranean grotto below. Drawing comparisons with the Lille sketch **(Fig. 1)**, above this grotto entryway might have appeared an inset relief panel, perhaps corresponding to the secondary façade level with additional niches for sculpture and a central decorative element, and on either side of the grotto entry would have appeared additional niche sculptures. If an additional set of bays existed on either end, these might have provided another set of niches for the display of sculpture, or they could have equally functioned as portals to a rear extension running along the riverfront that allowed for views of the Tiber. This rear porch would have allowed for riverfront dining, however its presence is unconfirmed.[68]While this proposed plan is purely conjecture, it is worth consideration, as the fact remains that Raphael's inspiration for the casino, potentially designed in tandem with Peruzzi, represents not only his first architectural commission, but could also represent his first collaboration with Peruzzi and one of the first revivals of the ancient nymphaeum in Renaissance Rome.

As much as this design process was one of architectural exploration of antique methods, so too was it a major contributor to the fantastical feel of Chigi's property. It served as a continuation of the opulence begun in the open loggia of the Sala di Galatea, wherein the mythological tale of Polyphemus and Galatea plays out in the visual program. Sebastiano's painting of Polyphemus, whose unrequited love for Galatea results in his transformation of Galatea's true paramour, Acis, into a flowing river, would have been visible to those standing near the riverfront nymphaeum. Raphael's Galatea would also have been visible, both frescoes appearing in the once-open loggia bays. Though Acis is conspicuously absent, he is symbolically present in the babbling waters of the Tiber audible to those who stood near the riverfront nymphaeum and gazed back upon the villa. Thus, as one gazed upon the villa as it once stood, with loggia bays open to the garden and as the waters of the Tiber lapped onto the shores nearby, it would appear as if Acis was joining the characters of Polyphemus and Galatea to bring the ancient story to life in a blur of temporal context.

The completion of the riverfront nymphaeum was far from Raphael's final contribution to the elaborate villa compound; on the contrary, in the years following he would design both Chigi's stable complex as well as visual programs in collaboration with Peruzzi that would remain unfinished at the time of his sudden death in 1520. This unusual riverfront structure is, however, a watershed moment in Raphael's career in that it both marks his arrival as an architect and foreshadows his innovative approach to incorporating antique design principles into contemporary architecture. His manipulations of *all'antica* styling were no doubt influenced by his associations with Peruzzi and thus contributed to the novelty of his designs, both artistic and architectural.

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Alexis Culotta *holds a Ph.D. in Art History from the University of Washington. She specializes in Renaissance and Baroque art and architecture with a focus on the art of early 16th-century Rome. She is currently a professor of Art History at the American Academy of Art as well as a lecturer at the Art Institute of Chicago. Additionally, Alexis*

serves as a Staff Writer for the Italian Art Society Blog (http://italianartsociety.tumblr.com) and continues independent research extending from her dissertation.

Endnotes

1. Ingrid Rowland, "Some Panegyrics to Agostino Chigi." *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 47 (1984); 195. As quoted from Borgia's poems, B.A.V., MS Bard. Lat. 1903, fols. 99–100, which were published without identification of author by Giuseppe Cugnoni, *Agostino Chigi il Magnifico* (Roma: A cura della Società Romana di Storia Patria, 1878), 69–70.

2. This is not to discount the recent work of both Bette Talvacchia ("Raphael and his Collaborators: A Revolutionary Configuration," in Bette Talvacchia, *Raphael* (London: Phaidon, 2007) and Rosalia Varoli-Piazza (Rosalia Varoli-Piazza, *Raffaello: la loggia di Amore e Psiche alla Farnesina* (Milano: Silvana, 2002), but rather to point out the long historiography prior to this recent scholarship that downplayed the importance of this commission.

3. John Shearman, "Raphael as Architect," *Journal of the Royal Society of Arts*, 116 (5141) (April 1968), 389.

4. Stefano Ray, *Raffaello architetto: linguaggio artistico e ideologia nel Rinascimento romano* (Roma: Laterza, 1974).

5. Christoph Luitpold Frommel, Stefano Ray, Manfredo Tafuri, Howard Burns, and Arnold Nesselrath, *Raffaello architetto* (Milano: Electa, 1984).

6. Christoph Luitpold Frommel, *Die Farnesina und Peruzzis architektonisches Früwerk* (Berlin: W. de Gruyter, 1961), 32; David Coffin, *The Villa in the Life of Renaissance Rome*. Princeton Monographs in Art and Archaeology, 43 (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1979), 87; Tizio, MS Chigi G.II.37, 333v–334r.

7. "Nella veduta di Du Pérac del 1577, si distinguono i resti di muri. La parete settentionale è chiusa, il frammento del muro occidentale aperto da una dinestra sul giardino" (Christoph Frommel, "La Villa Farnesina," in C.L. Frommel, G. Caneva, and A. Angeli, *La Villa Farnesina a Roma = The Villa Farnesina in Rome*. Mirabilia Italiæ, 12 (Modena: F.C. Panini, 2003), 2: 42).

8. Cugnoni, 107; Frommel, *Die Farnesina,* 33.

9. Gallo and Palladio's panegyrics were written between 1511–1512, the full text of each translated in: Mary Quinlan-McGrath, "Aegidius Gallus, De Viridario Agustini Chigii Vera Libellus. Introduction, Latin Text and English Translation." *Humanistica Lovaniensia – Journal of Neo-Latin Studies,* Vol. 38 (1989), 1–100; Mary Quinlan-McGrath ,"Blosius Palladius, *Suburbanum Agustini Chisii.* Introduction, Latin Text and English Translation." *Humanistica Lovaniensia*, 39 (1990), 93–156.

10. Elsa Gerlini, *Villa Farnesina alla Lungara, Roma* (Rome: Istituto Poligrafico e Zecca Dello Stato, 1988), 17.

11. Quinlan-McGrath, "Aegidius Gallus," 5: 116–117, 89; Gallo continues: "for under Jupiter runs the easy descent into a cave, a cave worked by art. . . either it is a grotto, or that which the Gods decided to be the spot among the bowels of the Earth, where they could occasionally set aside their weighty cares on coming from the pure ether. Within are sweet waters, which the wall itself receives from the Tiber by the way of a double window. . . ." (Quinlan-McGrath, "Aegidius Gallus," 5: 132–141, 90–91).

12. Ray reinforces this point: "Il nodo del problema sta nei documenti che, nell'insieme, sono troppo frammentari e lacunose, e lasciano pertanto in ombra ampie zone dell'opera. Il disegni, in particolare, sono molto pochi, non soltanto in rapporto ai disegni di figura che conosciamo, ma anche in sé per sé." (Stefano Ray, "Il Volo di Icaro, " in C.L. Frommel, S. Ray, and M. Tafuri, eds., *Raffaello Architetto* (Milan: Electra, 1984), 47).

13. For more on Raphael's significance as an architect, please see: John Shearman, "Raphael as Architect," *Journal of the Royal Society of Arts*, 116 (5141) (April 1968), 389.

14. Shearman, "Rome, Raphael," 107–146..

15. As Arnold Nesselrath reaffirms: "Apart from a very few small and minor sketches only one drawing

after the antiques from Raphael's early years is preserved, his perspectival views of the Pantheon." ("Raphael's Archaeological Method," in A. Chastel, *Rafaello a Roma: Il Covegno del 1983* (Rome: Edizioni dell'Elefante,1986), 358).

16. This is not to exclude an ink sketch by Raphael circa 1498 that depicts a series of architectural pediments; this drawing however depicts no buildings but rather mere architectural adornments, which Paul Joannides suggests were "variant designs for the pediment of a tomb or plaque." (Paul Joannides, *The Drawings of Raphael: with a Complete Catalogue* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983),134).

17. As illustrated in Joannides, Plate 4, Cat. 14v, 41, 137.

18. Marcia B. Hall, "Introduction," In *Cambridge Companion to Raphael*, ed. M.B. Hall. (NY: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 4.

19. Frommel, "Raffaello e la sua carriera architettonica," 17.

20. Giuseppe Morolli, "*Le Belle Forme degli Edifici Antichi": Raffaello e il Progetto del Primo Trattato Rinascimentale sulle Antichità di Roma.* Florence: Alinea, 1984), 24; Cristiano Tessari suggests that Peruzzi and Raphael might have met as early as the turn of the century (*Baldassarre Peruzzi: il progetto dell'antico* (Milan: Electa, 1995), 20).

21. As Quinlan-McGrath comments: "Although the elements for the decorative format which Peruzzi chose were available in contemporary designs, no one other than Raphael had ever combined them with such robust vigor. . . . Peruzzi, like Raphael, took stiff, mechanical figures and gave them heroic dimension, classical grace and decorative life" (Quinlan-McGrath, "The Villa of Agostino Chigi: The Poems and The Paintings" (PhD Diss, University of Chicago, 1983), 251).

22. Philostratus, *Immagines* II, 18, "Cyclopes," trans. by Arthur Fairbanks (London: W. Heinemann, 1931).

23. Millard Meiss, "Raphael's Mechanized Seashell: Notes on a Myth, Technology and Iconographic Tradition," *The Painter's Choice: Problems in the Interpretation of Renaissance Art* (New York: Harper and Row, 1976), 205–206.

24. Later versions by Marcantonio Raimondi, Pietro da Cortona, and the circle of Annibale Carracci all included this paddle wheel feature.

25. Frommel, *Die Farnesina,* 8; Cremona, 528; Ludwig von Pastor, *Geschichte der Päpste im Zeitalter der Renaissance und der Glaubensspaltung: von der Wahl Leos X. bis zum Tode Klemens' VII. (1513–1534), Vol. 1 Leo X* (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 1907), 152; Ludwig von Pastor, *Geschichte der Päpste seit dem Ausgang des Mittelalters* (Freiburg, 1885–1933), vol. 28, 152.

26. A letter to Chigi from January 27th, 1519, from Antonio and Nicola Burchiella, presumably engineers themselves, talks of Chigi's desire for a fountain in the garden and the necessity to mechanize water movement, either from drilling into the ground or pulling it from the Tiber, to feed it. (Ottorino Montenovesi, *Agostino Chigi banchiere e appaltatore dell'allume di Tolfa*. Archivio della Società Romana si Storia Patria, vol. 60 (Rome: 1938), 121.

27. Quinlan-McGrath, "The Villa," 315.

28. For a significantly more in-depth discussion of Peruzzi's antiquarian and architectural pursuits, including his designs for the Farnesina, as well as his ongoing engagement with Raphael, please refer to my dissertation: " 'Finding Rome in Rome': Raphael's Transformative Roles at Agostino Chigi's Villa Farnesina." (December 2014).

29. The attribution of riverfront casino to Raphael was first proposed by Gaspare Celio (Celio, 128), and subsequently accepted by Geymüller (Enrico di Geymüller, *Raffaello Sanzio studiato come architetto con l'aiuto di nuovi documenti* (Milan: Hoepli, 1884), 38f) and Frommel (Frommel, *Die Farnesina,* 32–33).

30. Added to this fable is that, prior to this lavish display of excess, Chigi had his servants line the riverbed with nets, allowing an easy retrieval of goods the following morning. While the accuracy of this fable can be doubted, its presence is significant in that it suggests that, while portions of the garden were obliterated in the flood of 1514, the riverside loggia apparently survived relatively unscathed, as it was used for this party of epic proportions only four years later in 1518. For more on the scope

of the 1514 flooding, please see Tizio's summary, quoted in note 7.

31. Stefano Ray, "Opere per Agostino Chigi," in C.L. Frommel, S. Ray, and M. Tafuri, eds., *Raffaello Architetto* (Milan: Electra, 1984), 119. This sketched structure bears visual similarity to the painted architecture of Pinturicchio's *Incoronazione di Enea Silvio Piccolomini* in the Piccolomini Library in Siena, where Raphael was also commissioned to work in 1502–1503 (as evidenced by a signed *modello*; Shearman, *Raphael in Early Modern Sources*, 75).

32. Though Ray seems quite certain of the link between this sketch and the riverfront casino, there is no documentary evidence that secures this suggestion. What this drawing does bear noticeable similarity to, however, is a sketch of tower as dictated through Alberti and known to have been published in Cosimo Bartoli's 1550 translation of *De Re Aedifactoria* (*L'Architettura di Leon Battista Alberti trodotta in lingua fiorentina da Cosimo Bartoli . . . con l'Aggiunta de Disegni* (Florence: Lorenzo Torrentino, 1550); illustrated in *On the Art of Building in Ten Books*, trans. by J. Rykwert, N. Leach and R. Tavernor (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1992), 259). While it is unknown if a similar sketch accompanied earlier editions of Alberti, such a connection could prove edifying, as it would support later arguments for Raphael's adherences to Albertian principles in a harmonic exchange with Vitruvius and Peruzzi.

33. From Quinlan-McGrath's translation of Gallo (Quinlan-McGrath, "Aegidius Gallus," 5: 123–129, 90–91.)

34. Ray, " Opere per Agostino Chigi," 119.

35. Frommel, *Die Farnesina,* 25.

36. Etienne Du Pérac and Antoin Lafréry, *Nova Urbis Romae Descriptio* (Rome: Antonius Lafreri, 1577).

37. Coffin, 97; reiterated by Ray, "Opere per Agostino Chigi," 119.

38. As Ray comments, "La difficoltà maggiore sta nella presenza di un secondo piano, piu stretto, che ripete il primo." (Ray, "Opere per Agostino Chigi," 119).

39. Ray, "Opere per Agostino Chigi," 119.

40. Ibid.

41. Ibid.

42. Inv. No. 1997. Though the Szépmüvészeti Múzeum records this sketch as being titled, "View of a City," Cremona proposes this view reveals a portion of Chigi's property by identifying the Ponte Sisto in the background. For more on this connection, please refer to: Alessandro Cremona, *Felices Procerium Villulae: Il Giardino della Farnesina dai Chigi all'Accademia dei Lincei* (Rome: Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei, 2010).

43. Frommel, *Die Farnesina,* 25.

44. Unfortunately, Tempesta's map is subdivided into twelve sheets, and the Farnesina appears along the seam of two sheets. Thus, while one bay of a riverfront structure is visible, this page division cuts off any additional bays of the riverfront casino.

45. Also informative is the fact that, at the same time, Bramante was almost complete with his work on the Tempietto (a dating is based on Mark Wilson Jones' assumption that the Tempietto was not complete until roughly 1514 (Mark Wilson Jones, "The Tempietto and the Roots of Coincidence," *Architectural History*, 33 (1990), 1–28). There Bramante merged an ecclesiastical message with his interest in ancient structures, including quotations from numerous sources such as,, according to Jones, the Pantheon and Hadrian's villa at Tivoli (Jones, "The Tempietto," 17–18), two essential sources for both Raphael and Peruzzi as well. Raphael's knowledge of the Tempietto is no doubt reflected in his designs for Chigi's Chapel in Santa Maria del Popolo, begun at approximately the same time, and thus it is possible that he modeled the design of Chigi's riverfront casino as a reduced-scale emulation of his villa.

46. With these design elements in mind, it seems one could look to a later riverfront casino constructed on the property, roughly in the mid-eighteenth century, that might have borrowed its design from Raphael's original. For an expanded discussion of the evolution of the Tiber embankment, please refer to: Roberto Lanciani, *The Ruins and*

Excavations of Ancient Rome (New York: Benjamin Blom, 1897).

47. Ray, "Opere per Agostino Chigi," 119.

48. For more on this link, please see: Piers Dominic Britton, "A Peruzzi Drawing and the Nymphaeum at Genazzano." *Notes in the History of Art,* 19 (4) (Summer 2000); also: Meg Licht, ed., *L'Edificio a pianta centrale: Lo sviluppo del disegno architettonico nel Rinascimento* (Florence, 1984).

49. Christoph Luitpold Frommel, "Bramantes 'Ninfeo' in Genazzano," *Römisches Jahrbuch für Kunstgeschichte*, 22 (1969) 137–160. This attribution was subsequently questioned by Christoph Thoenes ("Note sul 'ninfeo' di Genazzano," *Studi Bramanteschi* (Rome, 1974), 575–583) and Arnaldo Bruschi (*Bramante* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1977), 1048ff) and still today remains debated.

50. James S. Ackerman, "The Tuscan/Rustic Order: A Study in the Metaphorical Language of Architecture." *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, 42 (1) (Mar., 1983), 26.

51. Britton,1.

52. Licht, 93–94.

53. Frommel, *Die Farnesina,* 8. Cremona also mentions another reference to Mantuan ambassador's account of an "underground fountain" in the garden that transported water from the Tiber "with some ingenuity." (Cremona, 528; Ludwig von Pastor, *Geschichte der Päpste*, 152).

54. Frommel, "La Villa," 42.

55. Gerlini, *Villa Farnesina*, 17.

56. See, for example, Gerlini, *Villa Farnesina,* 17; Coffin, *The Villa*, 97.

57. Frommel, 'La Villa," 45.

58. Frank Joseph Alvarez, "The Renaissance Nymphaeum: Its Origins and Its Development in Rome and Vicinity" (PhD diss., Columbia University, 1981), 49.

59. Pomponio Leto, "De vetustate urbis," *De Roma prisca et nova* (Rome, 1523), 23; Alvarez, 55.

60. Andrea Fulvio, *Antiquaria urbis* (Rome, 1513), 40; Alvarez, 55.

61. Alvarez, 54.

62. Alvarez, 63.

63. Frommel, *Die Farnesina,* 8; Frommel, "La Villa," 42.

64. Cremona, 528; Ludwig von Pastor, *Geschichte der Päpste*, 152; Frommel, *Die Farnesina,* 8.

65. Quinlan-McGrath, "Aegidius Gallus," 5: 134–136, 90.

66. Shearman, "Die Loggia der Psyche in der Villa Farnesina und di Probleme der Letzten Phase von Raffaels graphischen Stil," *Jahrbuch der Kunsthistorischen Sammlungen in Wein* 60 (1964), 71; Schwarzenberg, "Psychen-Statue," 118.

67. Quinlan-McGrath, "Aegidius Gallus," 5: 133–134, 90.

68. It is also possible that the upper level of the Farnesina casino served as the dining pavilion, as it did for the Casino del Bufalo's upper level belvedere. As Christian recounts: "It is likely the del Bufalo entertained their quests in the upper loggia of the casino, which would have served as a dining pavilion" (Christian, *Empire,* 282).

Strategies of Signification in Romanesque Sculpture

The Coiled Man in the Archivolt at Vézelay

ALICE ISABELLA SULLIVAN

The sculptural program of the three narthex portals of the Abbey Church of Sainte-Madeleine at Vézelay was designed and executed sometime in the early decades of the twelfth century (ca. 1104–ca. 1132) **(Fig. 1)**.[1] The sculptures of the two side portals, organized in two horizontal registers, are framed by floral archivolts. The right tympanum shows themes central to Christ's early life, such as the Annunciation, the Visitation, the Nativity, and the Adoration of the Magi. The left tympanum illustrates events that took place after Christ's resurrection, like the Supper at Emmaus and the resurrected Christ among his apostles. The central tympanum, significantly larger in scale than the two side tympana, has in the center an enthroned Christ in a mandorla **(Fig. 2)**.[2] Seated in two groups around Him, the twelve apostles appear to receive the tongues of fire that emanate in the form of straight rays from the fingers of Christ's outstretched hands, thus signaling the descent of the Holy Spirit that gave Christ's apostles the power and authority to go forth and preach the gospel to the world. On the lintel, directly below this main Pentecostal scene, two long processions showing people from different corners of the world converge on the trumeau where the figure of Saint John the Baptist stands erect before a cross and holds a disk with a now-fragmentary Lamb of God. From the outer edges of the lintel, eight large archivolt-like compartments — each comprising a group of human figures — rise symmetrically on each side of the central scene and surround the arc of the tympanum. Two semicircular archivolts frame the main portal sculptures: the inner depicts a cycle of the labors of the months and the signs of the zodiac set in alternating figured medallions, while the outer consists of carved foliage.

Adolf Katzenellenbogen has characterized the sculptural program of the Vézelay narthex portals as "one of the most tempting and brittle iconographical enigmas of medieval art."[3] Indeed, for nearly two hundred years, scholars have studied these Romanesque sculptures in an effort to situate their imagery within larger theological frameworks and interpret aspects of their iconography in relation to theology and contemporary monastic life and culture.[4] The sculptures of the central portal, which announce the entrance into the sacred space of the church that extends beyond the carved façade, have received the most attention. Scholars, however, have only discussed secondarily the inner cycle of the labors of the months and signs of the zodiac that frames the central tympanum. This is arguably the earliest example of such a scheme in

Fig. 1 Interior of narthex, Abbey Church of Sainte-Madeleine, Vézelay, ca. 1104–ca. 1132. Photo: Romanesque Archive, Visual Resources Collections, Department of History of Art, College of Literature, Science & the Arts, the University of Michigan.

Fig. 2 Central narthex portal, Abbey Church of Sainte-Madeleine, Vézelay, ca. 1104 – ca. 1132. Photo: Romanesque Archive, Visual Resources Collections, Department of History of Art, College of Literature, Science & the Arts, the University of Michigan.

Fig. 3 Central portion of the archivolt, central narthex portal, Abbey Church of Sainte-Madeleine, Vézelay, ca. 1104 – ca. 1132. Photo: Romanesque Archive, Visual Resources Collections, Department of History of Art, College of Literature, Science & the Arts, the University of Michigan.

Fig. 4 West portal, Cathedral of Saint-Lazare, Autun, ca. 1130. Photo: Romanesque Archive, Visual Resource Collections, Department of History of Art, College of Literature, Science & the Arts, the University of Michigan.

the archivolt of church portals, and central to the discussion to follow.[5]

The archivolt consists of twenty-nine full medallions; a half medallion near the midpoint of the cycle; and two half-rosettes, one at the beginning and one at the end of the sequence.[6] Whereas scholars have identified the signs of the zodiac in this cycle, they have given little attention to the medallions that represent the months and their specific labors.[7] What is more, within this archivolt, three-and-a-half medallions interrupt the cycle directly in the middle **(Fig. 3)**. These roundels show the compressed and twisted body of a bird in a half medallion,[8] and a dog, a man, and a siren, each coiled into a circle, conforming to the circular formats of their respective roundels. In this position, these three-and-a-half medallions stand directly above the head of the central enthroned Christ in the tympanum below.[9] These peculiar carvings, because of their distinctive iconographical features and particular placement within the portal program, have posed problems to interpretation and, therefore, have been inconclusively addressed in scholarship. Since these creatures fall between the zodiac signs of Cancer and Leo, Simona Cohen and Judy Scott Feldman, for example, have interpreted them symbolically, suggesting that they represent the summer solstice "that symmetrically divides the signs of the zodiac into their diurnal and nocturnal houses."[10] A roundel showing *Annus*, the personification of the year, similarly interrupts the labors and zodiac cycle in the archivolt around the western tympanum at the Cathedral of Saint-Lazare in Autun, completed around 1130 **(Fig. 4)**. Marjorie Jean Hall Panadero has proposed that the circular creatures in the Vézelay roundels may be understood as symbols of eternity, perhaps inspired by the imagery of the snake biting its tail — a long established motif by the early twelfth century.[11] Moreover, because

of their circular poses, their placement directly above the head of Christ, and the fact that they are three in number, Peter Low has advanced that these figures may relate to the important feast of Pentecost represented in the tympanum below, thus symbolizing "the everlasting life of the resurrected Christian soul" anticipated and enabled by this holy event.[12] The iconography of these roundels, however, suggests that the creatures may have been intended as symbols of vice. The three medallions, according to Low, show creatures "who have bound themselves into circles of eternal powerlessness under the force of the presence of the triune god below," and, as a result of their sinfulness, are in a state of perpetual spinning, slipping, and even "stumbling" on the surface of the cornerstone or keystone, denoted by the space occupied by Christ's head.[13] These varying interpretations attest to the enigmatic nature of these circular figures for present-day viewers, which may or may not have been so puzzling for their twelfth-century audiences.

Out of the three and a half medallions at the apex of the archivolt cycle at Vézelay, the visual vocabulary and placement of the medallion with the coiled man is both peculiar and sophisticated in its conception **(Fig. 5)**. This carved motif is placed in a prominent location on the central portal, although one subordinate in the hierarchy of subject matter and peripheral in relation to the sculptures of the main tympanum below. The coiled man relief shows a neatly clothed man with an impassive countenance. He has a long, strong-boned nose, almond-shaped eyes, and straight hair. His body is in a contorted, acrobat-like position, secured in place by the fact that he is deliberately holding both his ankles with his hands and is bringing his head to his feet. This circular pose and the regular folds in his garments denote a state of perpetual motion. This image of the coiled man elicits a multitude of readings. In what follows, I investigate this

Fig. 5 Medallion with the coiled man, central narthex portal, archivolt detail, Abbey Church of Sainte-Madeleine, Vézelay, ca. 1104 – ca. 1132. Photo: Holly Hayes.

carved medallion in light of current approaches to the study of Romanesque sculpture — advanced by scholars such as David Williams, Thomas E. A. Dale, Ilene H. Forsyth, William J. Travis, and Kirk Ambrose, among others — that circumvent problems of identification and symbolism and do not impose a particular reading on any one sculpted motif.[14] This method, rather, allows various interpretations derived from the formal qualities and sculptural context of the carvings to coexist, providing insight into the active viewing expected of the original audiences, as well as the intentions of Vézelay's designers. These recent studies moreover have increasingly distanced themselves from a dictionary approach to the iconography of Romanesque architectural sculpture and some of its more peripheral and puzzling subjects, such as the coiled man in the archivolt at Vézelay.

There are no textual sources that elucidate how contemporary viewers understood the motif of the coiled man at Vézelay. Therefore, the carving's formal qualities and sculptural milieu provide insight into its iconographical conception and multi-layered meanings. These meanings, as will be revealed, are rooted in medieval discourses

centered on man's sinful nature, body-soul dualities, and scientific astrological thought — all distinct yet interrelated issues greatly debated at the turn of the twelfth century when this sculpture was likely designed and executed for the main narthex portal at Vézelay.

The coiled man invites speculation because it can be interpreted independently, as well as in relation to other roundels in the archivolt cycle and to figures in the tympanum below. As I argue, the motif also finds analogies with medieval depictions of the zodiac man or the microcosmic man often represented at the center of circular zodiacs. However, not one interpretation provided here for this particular sculpture of the coiled man may be claimed as authoritative over any other given the limited existing information we have today about how Romanesque sculpted motifs in particular, and medieval monumental sculptural programs in general, were designed, executed, mediated, and received.

Symbols of Vice and Virtue

Two formal aspects of the medallion with the coiled man are noteworthy for they stand in contrast to the prominent features of the central figure of Christ in the tympanum below: first the man's circular body and second the deliberate positioning of his head toward the ground. The early twelfth-century theologian and mystic William of St-Thierry (1085–1148), to whom Bernard of Clairvaux (1090–1153) wrote his *Apologia*, discussed this particular corporeal position along with his theories about the human body and soul. In his work *The Nature of the Body and Soul*, William distinguished man from beast in that man could reason because he was cast in the image of God, the Creator.[15] As a result, man stands erect, "reaching toward heaven and looking up."[16] This stance, according to William, signifies "the imperial and regal dignity of the rational soul."[17] Those who ignore the rational soul and are more concerned with the lusts of the body are said "to have put off the image of the Creator and have put on another image, one that looks at the ground like an animal, one that is beastly."[18] A similar figure bent back into a circle with its head positioned toward the ground, and in this case placed directly above a wheel, is depicted to the left of the text on a page from a Psalter from Bury St. Edmunds.[19] This early eleventh-century marginal image pictorializes verse 14 of *Psalm* 82 that reads: "O my God, make them like a wheel; and as stubble before the wind" and has been interpreted as an image of victory over evil, more specifically, over sinfulness and the enemies of the church.[20] Therefore, the circular form of the human body with the head positioned toward the ground, present in the Psalter illustration, the Vézelay medallion, and described in the writings of William of St-Thierry, suggest the sinful character of the figures represented.

The corrupt nature of the coiled man is further accentuated when this motif is considered in relation to the adjacent medallions containing the dog and the siren. In the context of the central portal at Vézelay, the dog and the siren were intended as symbols of evil and sin, respectively. First, the visual similarities and proximity of the coiled dog in the top medallion to the two dog-headed (cynocephalic) creatures with human bodies in the upper left archivolt-like compartment below suggest a negative meaning for the coiled dog **(Fig. 6)**. In the tympanum compartment, the Cynocephalus to the left holds a sword in its left hand and brings its right hand to its throat, while the one to the right unquestionably clutches its throat, suggesting perhaps the fact that it is mute.[21] From a Christian point of view, their gestures indicate that they are unable to understand or to employ speech in a clear or coherent fashion and thus resort to violence toward what is unknown, such as the new teachings of Christ.[22] The meaning of these two figures is further elucidated, as Low has

Fig. 6 Cynocephali, detail of the archivolt-like compartment from the left, central narthex tympanum, Abbey Church of Sainte-Madeleine, Vézelay, ca. 1104 – ca. 1132. Photo: Romanesque Archive, Visual Resource Collections, Department of History of Art, College of Literature, Science & the Arts, the University of Michigan.

Fig. 7 Panotii female figure, detail of the right lintel, central narthex tympanum, Abbey Church of Sainte-Madeleine, Vézelay, ca. 1104 – ca. 1132. Photo: Jane Vadnal.

shown, by verse 17 from *Psalm* 21 that reads: "For many dogs have encompassed me: the council of the malignant hath besieged me. They have dug my hands and feet."[23] In this instance, dogs or dog-headed creatures are associated with Christ's Jewish tormentors, and more generally with all Jews and other non-believers.[24] A miniature from the ninth-century Khludov Psalter shows figures with canine countenances surrounding and threatening Christ (Cod. 129, fol. 19v). The accompanying inscription identifies the figures as "the Hebrews, the ones called dogs."[25] In the context of the central portal at Vézelay then, the coiled dog in the archivolt medallion, because of its proximity to and visual correlations with the dog-headed creatures in the tympanum compartment below, is a motif that may have been intended as a symbol of evil.

The siren, on the other hand, one of the most common hybrids included in Romanesque sculpture, was regarded throughout the Middle Ages as a symbol of carnal pleasure (*voluptas*) and lust (*luxuria*), and was popularized by early Christian fathers such as Ambrose, Augustine, and Paulinus of Nola.[26] Its essential meaning, as Thomas E. A. Dale has elucidated, derives from Isaiah's declaration against Babylon (*Isaiah* 13:21–22):

> But wild beasts shall rest there, and their houses shall be filled with serpents, and ostriches shall dwell there, and the hairy ones shall dance there: And owls shall answer one another there, in the houses thereof, and sirens in the temples of pleasure.[27]

As a symbol of carnal pleasure, lust, avarice, and the sin of deception, the siren was believed to lure the religious man away from God and his vocation.[28] Moreover, in the case of the Vézelay siren, her naked upper body, with its stylized and pronounced rib cage and hanging breasts, is similar to the representation of the Panotii female figure furthest to the right, and thus furthest from God, on the right lintel **(Fig. 7)**.

The siren's negative connotations thus correlate to those of the monstrous races represented on the right lintel, which consist of people from lands beyond those of God's original chosen few.[29]

The coiled man in the central medallion could also represent a symbol of vice. Scholars, in fact, have repeatedly described the Vézelay coiled man as an acrobat.[30] In this guise, the acrobat's corporeal deformity as a result of his contorted and unstable bodily position was believed to stand in sharp opposition to the stability of monastic ideals.[31] Twelfth-century monastic writers, such as the Cistercian abbot Bernard of Clairvaux, often criticized the corporeal deformities of acrobats and dancers for they stood "as a contrast for the intellectual acrobatics of the mind performed by monks."[32] Moreover, because the Vézelay coiled man is framed by the dog and siren, two motifs perceived as symbols of evil and sin, respectively, the coiled man too, as a result of his circular body and unstable condition, could be interpreted as a sinful creature. Significant and worth noting, however, is that the coiled man is outwardly coiled and downward facing whereas the dog and the siren are inwardly coiled and with their heads upright — distinctions that set the coiled man apart from the medallions with the dog and the siren.

In the context of the central portal the meanings of the framing roundels with the dog and the siren gain nuance. These two motifs derive their initial negative connotations from their distinctive iconographies and visual associations with figures in the tympanum below, such as the Cynocephali creatures and the Panotii female figure. However, these peripheral deformed subjects present in the tympanum compartments and the lintel undergo a symbolic process of transformation that is visually attested to in the sculptural scheme of the main portal.

As the central sculptures visualize, on one level, the founding moment of the church at Pentecost, the peripheral monstrous figures represent the witnesses of this miracle of transformation. Therefore, these marginal figures become less and less monstrous-looking from top to bottom and from the lateral edges of the lintel to the center as they approach the center and are symbolically welcomed into the church.[33] Because of associations with figures in the tympanum below, this transformation and potential for redemption can also extend, though indirectly, to the dog and the siren in the archivolt roundels. As a result, these carved motifs should not be interpreted exclusively as symbols of evil and sin for their meanings are, in fact, more nuanced.

Fig. 8 *Beatus Vir — Sacred and Profane Music*, St-Remigius Psalter, Reims, ca. 1125. Cambridge, Saint John's College, MS. B 18, fol. 1r. Photo: By permission of the Master and Fellows of Saint John's College, University of Cambridge.

This is true for the coiled man as well. The meanings of this sculpture depend on its distinctive formal qualities, as well as on its central placement relative to the archivolt cycle and the sculptural scheme of the tympanum below. Although scholars have often described the coiled man as an acrobat, he is unlike representations of figures intended as acrobats found in visual representations from the Middle Ages. For example, in a Psalter from St-Remigius in Reims, a work contemporaneous with the Vézelay narthex sculptures, a page contains a juxtaposition of sacred and profane music **(Fig. 8)**. Sacred music is depicted in the top register in the form of David playing the lyre. Profane music is depicted in the lower register by way of a monstrous-looking creature in the form of a bear playing a drum. At the time this miniature was created, sacred music was equated with the "harmony of psalmody, the staple of monastic life," while profane music had a particularly negative connotation, expressed in this instance by the presence of the demonic-looking figure.[34] In the lower register of the page, moreover, this central monstrous creature is surrounded by dancers and acrobats performing handstands. Because of their disorderly, off-balanced bodies, the acrobats especially were believed to represent "those who most deformed the image of God."[35]

The particular representation of acrobats in the Psalter differs from the coiled man in the central medallion at Vézelay. Although both the acrobats and the coiled man have their heads toward the ground, the Vézelay coiled man appears to be looking directly at Christ below, which consequently signals a stronger connection to the divine. The acrobats in the manuscript illumination, by contrast, have their heads furthest away from the upper register and thus from the representation of the most sacred figure in the picture, namely, David. Furthermore, whereas the acrobats in the manuscript are depicted with disheveled garments and twisted bodies, the Vézelay coiled man has neat hair and orderly garments, and his body maintains a restrained position.

In the early decades of the twelfth century, when the coiled man may have been designed for the main narthex portal at Vézelay, theologians such as Bernard of Clairvaux and Hugh of Saint-Victor were discussing how the human body could function as a site for understanding the inner life of the soul. Orderly exterior appearances could thus reflect "the harmonious nature of the godly soul," while corporeal deformities were believed to furnish "metaphors for the soul's potential degeneracy," as Dale has explained.[36]
A devout soul, therefore, was believed to manifest itself outwardly through disciplined and orderly movements of the body.[37] In a sermon on the Song of Songs, for example, Bernard of Clairvaux explained that in order to understand the beauty of the soul (*decor animae*) one must "observe a man's outward bearing, not because morality originates from conduct, but because conduct mediates morality….The beauty of actions is visible testimony to the state of conscience…."[38] Bernard continued: "When the motions, the gestures and the habits of the body and the senses show forth their gravity, purity, and modesty…then beauty of the soul becomes outwardly visible."[39] These beliefs were echoed by another contemporary theologian, Hugh of Saint-Victor (ca. 1096–1141), who explained in his major work on the cultivation of virtue, *De institutione novitiorum*, that the body (in gesture, carriage, and speech) reflected the state of the soul and imposed order on it:

> Just as inconsistency of mind brings forth irregular motions of the body, so also the mind is strengthened and made constant when the body is restrained through the process of discipline. And little by little, the mind is composed inwardly to calm, when through the custody of discipline its bad motions [emotions] are not allowed free play outwardly. The perfection of virtue is attained

> when the members of the body are governed and ordered through the inner custody of the mind.[40]

Outward appearances and movements of the body can, thus, both reflect and condition the inner life of man. In the case of the coiled man at Vézelay, although his body is in a contorted position, his orderly outward appearance — since he is fully clothed, has shoes on both feet, has neatly arranged hair, and assumes a restrained position — may attest to the devout conduct of his inner being. Although his head is situated toward the ground, his eyes are open and gaze downwards, directly at the figure of Christ below.

Zodiacal Interpretations

The deliberate placement of the coiled man at the midpoint of the archivolt cycle of the labors of the months and signs of the zodiac suggests his associations with a microcosmic man.[41] Images of the microcosmic man show the correspondences between man and the universe. Although figures encircled by the zodiac were frequent in the iconography of the Mithraic mysteries[42] and in ancient Jewish tradition,[43] the earliest extant medieval example is a representation of the circular zodiac with a human figure at the center found in an eleventh-century manuscript now in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris (MS Lat. 7028, fol. 154r).[44] Contemporaneous representations survive in which Christ replaces the figure of *Annus* at the center of the zodiac, as examplified by the miniature that introduces the Song of Songs in the Bible of Saint Vaast in the collection of the Bibliothèque Municipale, Arras (MS 559, fol. 141v).

Didactic images of the microcosmic man visualize the influence of the planets on various parts of the body, such that each zodiac sign corresponds to a particular body part: Aquarius relates to the ankles, Pisces to the feet, Aries to the head and face, Taurus to the neck, Gemini to the arms and shoulders, Cancer to the breast, Leo to the heart, shoulder blades and sides, Virgo to the stomach and intestines, Libra to the hips and buttocks, Scorpio to the genitals, Sagittarius to the thighs, and Capricorn to the knees.[45] This codification of the influence of the heavenly bodies on the parts of the human body represents an important medieval contribution to astrological thought. In some extant examples, the zodiac signs are superimposed on the human body, as exemplified by the *Zodiac Man* represented in a fourteenth-century manuscript now in the Bodleian Library, Oxford **(Fig. 9)**. In other examples, the human figure is found at the center of the circular zodiac with lines connecting the zodiac signs and the parts of the body thought to be under the influence of these astrological markers. By the fourteenth century, the highly contorted form of the human body within the framing circle of the zodiac — such that the man's feet almost touch the back of his head — was used to express these zodiacal correlations.[46] An Italian illumination from ca. 1400 shows a bearded man in such an outwardly coiled position surrounded by the zodiac signs **(Fig. 10)**. Placed at the center of the circular zodiac and presented in a coiled form, the human figure in this guise embodies the

Fig. 9 *Zodiac Man*, MS Savile 39, fol. 7r, after 1387. Photo: Bodleian Library, University of Oxford.

Fig. 10 *Zodiac Man,* MS Canon. Misc. 559, fol. 2r, ca. 1400. Photo: Bodleian Library, University of Oxford.

perfect image of unity, continuity, and perpetual recurrence, similar to the passing of time from year to year, often implied in representations of the zodiac.[47]

In contrast to the coiled man at the center of the circular zodiacs, however, the Vézelay coiled man is in a reversed position. That he is depicted backwards is justified by the fact that the zodiac cycle in the archivolt runs in the opposite direction than the zodiacs present in the circular examples. Zodiac cycles that run clockwise, as represented in the archivolt at Vézelay, functioned as a representation of the passing of time. Counterclockwise zodiacs, by contract, generally appeared in secular contexts and were intended as representations of the sky. This distinction between clockwise and counterclockwise zodiacs is visually articulated in an eleventh-century copy of *De rerum naturis* by Rabanus Maurus (ca. 780–856) in the Biblioteca dell'Abbazia, Montecassino. Here, a clockwise zodiac framing *Annus* illustrates the text of a chapter dealing with time (Cod. 132, fol. 135v), while a counterclockwise zodiac framing busts of *Sol* and *Luna* depict the sky (Cod. 132, fol. 118r).[48]

Beginning in the fifth century and continuing through the early decades of the twelfth century, commentaries on verse 14 from *Genesis* 1 —" And God said: Let there be lights made in the firmament of heaven, to divide the day and the night, and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days and years" — established a strong connection in Christian thought between notions of time and stellar constellations.[49] This redefinition of time, formulated during the first half of the twelfth century, developed from these earlier commentaries, and took place at the time when a large number of scientific astrological texts from the Arab-speaking world were flooding the Latin-speaking West.[50] This conception of time corresponds, as Cohen has explained, with the initial integration of the zodiac cycle *as a time cycle* in religious iconography.[51]

The labors and zodiac cycle at Vézelay is placed on the outer archivolt, at the edge of the temporal universe, and interspersed with medallions that represent the monthly labors, thus functioning as a representation of the passage of time on earth. In surrounding the Christian imagery in the tympanum below, this earthly time also defines the progress of human history that is embedded in the divine plan for salvation. This cycle at Vézelay, then, enhances the overall meaning of the sculptural scheme of the central portal and of the entire façade program.[52] That the Vézelay zodiac cycle in the archivolt runs clockwise is noteworthy for two reasons. First, it symbolizes the passage of time on earth, and second, it validates, at least in part, why the coiled man at its midpoint was designed in a reversed pose,

which contrasts with the position of the circular zodiac man in other extant examples **(Fig. 10)**.

Medieval thinkers regarded the relationship between the macrocosm of the universe and the microcosm of the human body as two concepts inextricably linked.[53] This macrocosmic-microcosmic analogy played an important role in the theoretical and practical framework of the Christian Platonic world of the Middle Ages in which interrelations and correspondences between God and man, heaven and earth, doctrine and history were hotly debated. These discussions were rooted in Plato's *Timaeus* from ca. 360 B.C. In his long monologue on cosmology, Plato fundamentally expressed the idea that man should reflect as nearly as possible the universe. He proceeded to compare the motions of the body to the motions of the intelligence and those of the universe, adding that man should learn "the harmonies and revolution of the universe" so that he may be able to imitate them through the soul.[54] Medieval theologians and thinkers adopted Plato's ideas that the physical world and everything in it was modeled after a greater spiritual reality and elaborated them further, eventually disseminating these ideas through their commentaries. Bernardus Silvestris (ca. 1085–1178), for example, a neo-Platonist philosopher and poet of the twelfth century, dealt with the relationship between macrocosm (which he called the megacosmos) and microcosm. In his poem *Cosmographia*, Bernardus wrote that man was created in "God's true likeness," of the same elements as the universe, as a "second universe," "a spark drawn from the heavens."[55] A century earlier, Remigius of Auxerre (ca. 841–908), a Benedictine monk and prolific commentator on classical Greek and Latin texts, also suggested that man's rational soul stands midway between the irrational souls of beasts and the spirits of angels, in harmony with the world.[56] However, that man was created as a second universe, a microcosm, all in the image of God the creator, was stated first in *Genesis* 1:26–27.[57] Unlike God, however, man was made up of a material body and an immaterial soul. Yet, through his soul, especially a devout one, made manifest through orderly movements of the body, man could potentially achieve salvation.

For the coiled man in the archivolt medallion at Vézelay, then, if he were in fact intended to represent in its coiled form the human microcosm, he appears as an earthly, human-form reflection of the divine macrocosm embodied in the figure of Christ below. The coiled man's orderly outward appearance and zodiacal associations suggest the temporal dimensions of man's existence on earth, which are paralleled by his potential eternal existence in heaven, achieved through salvation. Therefore, the medieval concepteurs who designed the sculptural program for the narthex portals at Vézelay and who placed the coiled man in the most central medallion of the archivolt around the main tympanum, and thus above the head of Christ, revealed through this motif a symbolic view of man and also of the human world, of the microcosm — a view that exposed aspects of reality that challenged other means of understanding.

Conclusion

The original intentions of Vézelay's designers of the narthex sculptures are, of course, not known. Also unknown is whether the medallion with the coiled man and its adjacent roundels that interrupt at the apex the archivolt cycle around the main tympanum were conceived and executed along with the rest of the portal sculptures, or whether they were a later addition designed independently of the labors and zodiac archivolt sequence. Regardless, the placement of the coiled man carving at the center of the program is significant. It is precisely this placement of the medallion within the sculptural context of the narthex portals and its distinctive formal qualities

that provide insight into its nuanced meanings and its zodiacal associations.

The readings provided here for the medallion with the coiled man reveal that this carving and its meanings are not transparent. The same is true of the entire sculptural program of the narthex portals, which has served as a topic of scholarly debate for decades. The Vézelay narthex sculptures belong, in fact, to a complex, well-thought-out program, designed to engage the faithful who would have regularly interacted with the carvings and who would have brought with them distinct levels of knowledge and understanding of scripture and contemporary debates. Since Vézelay served as a starting point on one of the four pilgrimage roads to the Pyrenees, the route to the shrine of Saint James the Greater at Santiago de Compostela in Galicia, the audiences would have included not only Vézelay's lay public, monks, and clergy, but travelers as well, such as pilgrims, who came from all corners of the world. In this context, we can assume that the carvings of the narthex portals were designed in such a way as to serve as a vehicle for contemplation, eliciting multivalent and shifting interpretations among Vézelay's wide-ranging audiences.

Until recently, scholarship that has dealt with iconographically enigmatic Romanesque carved motifs, such as the Vézelay medallion with the coiled man, has often focused first and foremost on issues of identification and symbolism, rather than examining, for instance, the varying strategies employed to express meanings through the sculptures. This approach has yielded divergent scholarly interpretations that have divorced the carvings from their immediate and larger contexts. This is true also of the medallion with the coiled man at Vézelay. This roundel belongs to an elaborate iconographical program, yet scholars have often dismissed it in their studies of the narthex sculptures because of its iconographical peculiarities and its physically subordinate status relative to the main scenes around it. The readings provided here for the medallion with the coiled man, grounded in its formal qualities and its sculptural milieu, as well as revealed in the context of issues debated in the early twelfth century, at the time when this sculpture was likely designed and executed for the Vézelay narthex portal, have elucidated this motif's symbolic content while providing insight into the original intentions of its designers.

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Alice Isabella Sullivan *is a Ph.D. Candidate in the Department of History of Art at the University of Michigan where she is completing a dissertation titled "The Painted Fortified Monastic Churches of Moldavia: Bastions of Orthodoxy in a Post-Byzantine World." For the 2015–2016 academic year she is a Chester Dale Fellow at the Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts (National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.), and a fellow of the Dolores Zohrab Liebmann Foundation. She holds an M.A. from the Williams College Graduate Program in the History of Art, and a B.A. from Bowdoin College.*

Endnotes

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1. For a detailed description of the sculptures of Vézelay's three narthex portals, see Peter Low, "Envisioning Faith and Structuring Lay Experience: The Narthex Portal Sculptures of Sainte-Madeleine de Vézelay," Ph.D. dissertation (Johns Hopkins University, 2001), 15–28. For dating evidence, see ibid., 314–320.

2. Peter Low has argued that this central figure of Christ represents the Trinity as it visualizes the *filioque* clause, officially confirmed as part of the Nicene Creed in 1098, at the Council of Bari. This clause states that the Holy Spirit, denoted in the Vézelay sculptures by the rays of light emanating from Christ's hands, proceeds from both the Father and the Son, and not just the Father. Low, "Envisioning Faith and Structuring Lay Experience," 68–141. See also, Joseph Gill and Berard L. Marthaler, "Filioque," *New Catholic Encyclopedia* (Detroit: Gale, 2003), V, 913–934.

3. Adolf Katzenellenbogen, "The Central Tympanum at Vézelay: Its Encyclopedic Meaning and Its Relation to the First Crusade," *Art Bulletin* 26 (1944): 141.

4. Recent publications on the Vézelay narthex sculptures include: Low, "Envisioning Faith and Structuring Lay Experience;" ibid., ""You Who Once Were Far Off": Enlivening Scripture in the Main Portal at Vézelay," *The Art Bulletin* 85, no. 3 (2003): 469–489; ibid., ""As a stone into a building": Metaphor and Materiality in the Main Portal at Vézelay," *Word & Image* 22, no. 3 (2006): 260–267; ibid., "Innovation and Spiritual Value in Medieval Monastic Art: The Case of the Main Narthex Portal at Vézelay," *The Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 42 (2012): 657–698; Emma Simi Varanelli, "'*Diversi, non adversi*': L'interpretazione del timpano della Pentecost di Vézelay, un unicum nel panorama dei modelli medievali della cominicazione visiva," *Arte Medievale* 1, no. 2 (2002): 55–75; Christian Ann Zeringue, "Evaluation of the Central Narthex Portal at Sainte-Madeleine de Vézelay," unpublished M.A. thesis (Louisiana State University, 2005); Kirk Ambrose, *The Nave Sculptures of Vézelay: The Art of Monastic Viewing* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 2006); and Martine Jullian, "Calendrier roman, calendrier gothique. Vers une nouvelle mise en ordre du temps," *Bulletin archéologique du Comité des Travaux Historiques et Scientifiques. Archéologie, histoire de l'art, époques médiévale et moderne* 34 (2008): 35–52.

5. Marjorie Jean Hall Panadero, "The Labors of the Months and the Signs of the Zodiac in Twelfth-Century French Facades," Ph.D. dissertation (University of Michigan, 1984), 18–93, esp. 23, 30–31.

6. The sequence of whole medallions begins on the left with the roundel for the month of January and proceeds up to the medallion with the zodiac sign of Cancer. After the three-and-a-half medallions that interrupt the cycle, the sequence descends with the zodiac sign of Leo and continues until the last full medallion for the month of December, on the bottom right. This last medallion is identified by the inscription: OMNIBUS IN MEMBRIS DESIGNAT IMAGO DECEMBRIS. Charles Porée, *L'abbaye de Vézelay* (Paris: H. Laurens, 1922), 49. The first full medallion has been interpreted as January in light of the last medallion in the cycle, identified as December. Véronique Frandon, "Lœuvre romane: la voussure du calendrier," in *Le Patrimoine de la basilique de Vézelay*, ed. Marcel Angheben (Charenton-le-Pont: Flohic, 1999), 66, 73.

7. The following studies have provided various interpretations for the order of the medallions that represent the months and their respective labors: Joan G. Caldwell, "The Four Seasons at Vézelay," *Source* 3, no. 3 (1984): 1–7; Panadero, "The Labors of the Months and the Signs of the Zodiac," 44–46; Véronique Frandon, "Du multiple à l'Un: Approche iconographique du calendarier et des saisons du portail de l'église abbatiale de Vézelay," *Gesta* 37, no. 1 (1998): 83; Low, "Envisioning Faith and Structuring Lay Experience," 24–25; Judy Scott Feldman, "The Narthex Portal at Vézelay: Art and Monastic Self-Image," Ph.D. dissertation (University of Texas, Austin, 1986), 106–108. Scholars disagree in regard to some of the enigmatic 'additions' to the cycle. Frandon, for example, has argued that the third medallions from the left and the right, as a result of their ambiguous imagery, can be interpreted, respectively, as either depictions of the months of February and November, or as representations of two seasons. Frandon, "Du multiple à l'Un," 77–83.

8. The half-medallion with the bird remains, by and large, the most enigmatic carving of the entire sculptural program at Vézelay.

9. It is possible that these sculpted roundels that interrupt the labors and zodiac cycle at Vézelay were not part of the original conception of the central portal sculptures. They may have been a later addition. However, the iconography and placement of these medallions were carefully conceived relative to the surrounding sculptures, whether or not this occurred in the early twelfth-century or at a later date.

10. Simona Cohen, "The Romanesque Zodiac: Its Symbolic Function on the Church Façade," *Arte Medievale* 4, no. 1 (1990): 51; ibid., *Transformations of Time and Temporality in Medieval and Renaissance Art* (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 110; Feldman, "The Narthex Portal at Vézelay," 116. As the three medallions are placed on the central axis and thus also above the figure of Saint John the Baptist on the trumeau below, they may also relate to the Feast of John the Baptist which falls on June 24, approximately six months before Christ's birth.

11. Isodore de Seville in his *Etymologiae* discusses the circular nature of the year using the symbol of a serpent biting its own tail. Referenced and translated in Panadero, "The Labors of the Months and the Signs of the Zodiac," 96–100, 247.

12. Low, "Envisioning Faith and Structuring Lay Experience," 97–100. Also, the event of Pentecost was described as having begun and ended in the same place (i.e. on the first day) thus symbolized by the circle. Low has also suggested that the dog, the man, and the siren could symbolize the "eternity, and eternal unity, of the triune God" embodied in the figure of Christ below. Ibid., 68–141.

13. Ibid., 283–284. As Low has explained, 1 Peter 2:4–5 elaborates on the concept of the *lapis angularis*, the Christ as cornerstone metaphor found in *Ephesians* 2:11–22, in eschatological terms: "For it stands in scripture: 'See, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone/keystone chosen and precious; and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame.' To you then who believe, he is precious; but for those who do not believe, 'The stone that the builders rejected has become the very head of the corner,' and 'A stone that makes them stumble, and a rock that makes them fall.' They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to." This point is further elaborated in *Matthew* 21:42–44 where only those who "produce the fruits of the kingdom," meaning the gifts of faith and devotion to God, will avoid this "stone of stumbling." For the non-believers the cornerstone is thus "a stone that makes them stumble" and "a rock that makes them fall." The placement of the three circular figures directly above the head of the central Christ, and consequently on the surface of the *lapis angularis* (or corner stone) and their suggested perpetual motion, stresses their sinful conditions.

14. Recent studies that stress the multivalent character of Romanesque sculpture include: David Williams, *Deformed Discourse: The Function of the Monster in Medieval Thought and Literature* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1996); Thomas E. A. Dale, "Monsters, Corporeal Deformities, and Phantasms in the Cloister of St-Michel-de-Cuxa," *The Art Bulletin* 83, no. 3 (2001): 402–436; Ilene H. Forsyth, "Narrative at Moissac: Schapiro's Legacy," *Gesta* 41 (2002): 71–93; William J. Travis, "Of Sirens and Onocentaurs: A Romanesque Apocalypse at Montceaux-l'Etoile," *Artibus et Historiae* 23, no. 45 (2002): 29–62; Kirk Ambrose, "The 'Mystic Mill' Capital at Vézelay," in *Wind and Water in the Middle Ages: Fluid Technologies from Antiquity to the Renaissance*, ed. Steven A. Walton (Tempe, Arizona: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2006), 235–258; and ibid., *The Marvelous and the Monstrous in the Sculpture of Twelfth-Century Europe* (Woodbridge, UK: Boydell Press, 2013).

15. William of St-Thierry wrote in *De natura corporis et animae, Pat. lat.,* vol. 180, 714B: "Erecta hominis figura ad coelum extensa, et sursum aspiciens, imperialem regalemque dignitatem animae rationalis significat…. Hujusmodoi enim homines imagine Creatoris exuta, aliam induerunt imaginem terram respicientem, pecudalem, bestialem. Non enim secundum furorem hominis ad Deum est similitudo….Haec et his similia ab irrationali humana sibi contraxit natura." Translated in Dale, "Monsters, Corporeal Deformities, and Phantasms," 408, n. 52–54. See also the translated and edited edition by Michel Lemoine (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1988); and *On the Nature of the Body and the Soul*, trans. B. Clark in Bernard McGinn, ed., *Three Treatises on Man. A Cistercian Anthropology*, The Cistercian Fathers Series, 24 (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 1977), 101–152.

16. Ibid.: "Erecta hominis figura ad coelum extensa, et sursum aspiciens…"

17. Ibid.: "…imperialem regalemque dignitatem animae rationalis significat…"

18. Ibid.: "Hujusmodoi enim homines imagine Creatoris exuta, aliam induerunt imaginem terram respicientem, pecudalem, bestialem."

19. *Psalm* 82, Bury St. Edmunds Psalter, second quarter of the eleventh century, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, MS Reg. Lat. 12, fol. 90v. For an image, see: http://www.oberlin.edu/images/Art315/10939.JPG.

20. *Psalm* 82:14. All biblical passages are reproduced after the Douay-Rheims Bible, accessed November 17, 2014, http://www.drbo.org. Low, "Envisioning Faith and Structuring Lay Experience," 97, esp. n. 68; Robert M. Harris, "The Marginal Drawings of the Bury St. Edmunds Psalter (Rome, Vatican Library MS Reg. lat. 12," Ph.D. dissertation (Princeton University, 1960); Elizabeth C. Temple, *Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts 900–1066: A Survey of Manuscripts Illuminated in the British Isles* (London: Harvey Miller, 1976), II, 100–102.

21. Katzenellenbogen, "The Central Tympanum at Vézelay," 144.

22. Low, ""You Who Once Were Far Off,"" 477.

23. Low has discussed this Psalm verse in relation to the dog-headed figures in the archivolt compartment of the central tympanum at Vézelay. Low, ""You Who Once Were Far Off,"" 477.

24. In their works, Christian writers have referred to Muslims and even Mongols as dogs because of their alleged impurity. See John Block Friedman, *The Monstrous Races in Medieval Art and Thought* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1981), 67–69; David Gordon White, *Myths of the Dog-Man* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 61–62; and Debra Higgs Strickland, *Saracens, Demons and Jews: Making Monsters in Medieval Art* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003), 159–160, 204–206, 223–224.

25. "ΕΒΡΑΙΟΙ ΟΙ ΛΕΓΟΜΕΝΟΙ ΚΥΝΕC" Khludov Psalter, Moscow, State Historical Museum, Cod. 129, fol. 19v. Strickland, *Saracens, Demons and Jews*, 285, n. 23. On this image, see Kathleen Corrigan, *Visual Polemics in the Ninth-Century Byzantine Psalters* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 48–49; Debra Hassig, "Iconography of Rejection: Jews and Other Monstrous Races," in *Image and Belief: Studies in Celebration of the Eightieth Anniversary of the Index of Christian Art*, ed. Colum Hourihane (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), 34–35 and fig. 12. For contemporary sources that equate Jews to dogs, see James Marrow, "*Circumdederunt me canes multi*: Christ's Tormentors in Northern European Art of the Late Middle Ages and Early Renaissance," *Art Bulletin* 59, no. 2 (1977): 174.

26. Dale, "Monsters, Corporeal Deformities, and Phantasms," 418–420; and Pierre Courcelle, "L'interprétation évhéméristе des Sirènes-courtisanes jusqu'au XIIe siècle," in *Gesellschaft-Kultur-Literatur, Rezeption und Originalität im Wachsen einer europäischen Literatur und Geistigkeit. Beiträge Luitpold Wallach gewidmet*, ed. Karl Bosl (Stuttgart: Anton Hierseman, 1975), 33–48.

27. Dale, "Monsters, Corporeal Deformities, and Phantasms," 419, n. 110.

28. Ibid., 419. Dale cites Werner of St-Blaise (d. 1126), *Liber deflorationum,* PL, vol. 157, 848A–849B, at 849B; Peter Damian (d. 1072), *De perfectione monachi*, 11, PL, vol. 145, 306C, cited in Courcelle, "L'interprétation évhéméristе des Sirènes-courtisanes jusqu'au XIIe siècle," 44–45; and the Cistercian Thomas of Froidmond, a contemporary of Saint Bernard of Clairvaux, *De modo bene vivendi,* PL, vol. 184, 1285A–86B, at 1285D–86A; See also, Debra Hassig, *Medieval Bestiaries: Text, Image, Ideology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 104–115.

29. Low, ""You Who Once Were Far Off,"" 478. On the right lintel, the figures furthest to the right, with the large ears, represent the Panotii, people of India or Scythia; the next figures are the Pygmies, inhabitants of Africa; the final group consists of contemporary knights from Western Europe. For the identification of figures that belong to the monstrous races, see: Pliny, *Natural History* 4.13.95, 7.2.30, 6.35.188, trans. Harris Rackham (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1942; London: W. Heinemann, 1947), II, 192, 478, 526; and *Isidori Hispalensis Episcopi Etymologiarum sive Originum Libri XX*, 11.3.19, ed. Wallace M. Lindsay (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1911), II.

30. See the sources listed in n. 4 above.

31. Dale, "Monsters, Corporeal Deformities, and Phantasms," 413.

32. Ibid., 414. Bernard also wrote in a letter: "A good sort of playing it is which is the object of men's ridicule, but

offers a beautiful spectacle to the angels….In fact, what else do seculars think we are doing but playing when what they desire most on earth, we fly from; and what they fly from we desire? In the manner of acrobats [*joculatorum*] and dancers [*saltatorum*] who with their heads down and feet up, stand or walk on their hands and thus draw all eyes to themselves. But this is not a game for children or the theater were lust is excited by the effeminate and indecent contortions of the actors, it is a joyous game, decent, grave and admirable, delighting the gaze of heavenly onlookers." Bernard of Clairvaux, *Epistola LXXXVII ad Ogerium,* PL, vol. 182, 217B. Translated in Dale, "Monsters, Corporeal Deformities, and Phantasms," 414, n. 90.

33. Low, ""You Who Once Were Far Off,"" 480, 481, 486.

34. Dale, "Monsters, Corporeal Deformities, and Phantasms," 412; and Chiara Frugoni, "L'iconographie de la femme au cours des Xe–XIIe siècles," *Cahiers de Civilisation Médiévale* 20 (1977): 177–188.

35. Dale, "Monsters, Corporeal Deformities, and Phantasms," 412.

36. Dale, "Monsters, Corporeal Deformities, and Phantasms," 408.

37. Ibid.

38. Bernard of Clairvaux, *Super Cantica Cantorum Sermo* 85.10–11, in *Sancti Bernardi Opera*, eds. Jean Leclercq, Charles H. Talbot, and Henry Rochais (Rome: Editiones Cistercienses, 1957–1958), II, 314. Translated in C. Stephen Jaeger, *The Envy of Angels: Cathedral Schools and Social Ideals in Medieval Europe, 950–1200* (Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1994), 111.

39. Ibid.

40. Hugh of St-Victor, *De institutione novitiorum*, chapter 10, PL, vol. 176, 935B. Translated in Jaeger, *The Envy of Angels*, 260.

41. The microcosmic man was known variously as the Zodiac Man, the Man of Signs (*homo signorum*), the Lord of the Signs (*dominus signorum*), the Anatomical Man, and the zodiacal *melothesia*. For examples and sources see Charles W. Clark, "The Zodiac Man in Medieval Medical Astrology," *Journal of the Rocky Mountain Medieval and Renaissance Association* 3 (1982): 13, ns. 2–6.

42. A Roman marble relief now in Modena shows the figure of the mystic deity of procreation Phanes entwined by the serpent Chronos emerging from the cosmic egg while surrounded by the twelve signs of the zodiac (CIMRM 695). See David Ulansey, *The Origins of the Mithraic Mysteries: Cosmology and Salvation in the Ancient World* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), esp. 120–121.

43. An example is the sixth-century mosaic from the Beth Alpha synagogue that shows a charioteer encircled by the twelve signs of the zodiac. Tim Hegedus, *Early Christianity and Ancient Astrology* (New York: Lang Publishing, 2007), 235.

44. The contents of the manuscript are described in Augusto Beccaria, *I codici medicina del periodo pre-salernitano (secoli IX, X e XI)* (Rome: Edizioni di Storia e Litterature, 1956), 152–155; and Clark, "The Zodiac Man," 24.

45. This relation between the signs of the zodiac and the parts of the human body was described in the earliest astrological treatise *Astronomica*, written by the Roman poet and astrologer Marcus Manilius sometime in the first century AD. For a critical edition, see G.P. Goold, *Manilius: Astronomica* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1977), esp. 118–119.

46. Harry Bober, "The Zodiacal Miniature of the Très Riches Heures of the Duke of Berry: Its Sources and Meaning," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 11 (1948): 15.

47. In the outermost archivolt that surrounds the central tympanum at Vézelay, directly to the right of the zodiac sign of Aquarius, a very small coiled man is carved in the vegetal decorations. In contrast to the coiled man in the center-most medallion, he is not fully circular for he is not holding his ankles with his hands, and he is also not clothed. He is depicted, however, in an analogous position, with his head toward the ground and with neatly arranged hair. If the coiled man in the center-most medallion is in fact related to the passage of time denoted by the zodiac cycle in the archivolt, then one explanation for the presence of the small coiled man next to the zodiac sign of Aquarius (the sign that begins the archivolt cycle) is that he marks the beginning of this time cycle.

48. Diane O. Le Berrurier, *The Pictorial Sources of Mythological and Scientific Illustrations in Hrabanus*

Maurus' De rerum naturis (New York and London: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1978). For a more detailed explanation see Cohen, "The Romanesque Zodiac," 47; ibid., *Transformations of Time and Temporality in Medieval and Renaissance Art*, 102; and Véronique Frandon, "Les saisons et leurs représentations dans les encyclopédies du Moyen Âge: l'exemple du *De Universo* de Raban Maur (1022–1023)," in *L'enciclopedismo medieval: Atti del convegno San Gimignano, 8–10 ottobre 1992*, ed. Michelangelo Picone (Ravenna: Longo, 1994), 55–78.

49. For an analysis of twelfth-century commentaries on *Genesis*, see Panadero, "The Labors of the Months and the Signs of the Zodiac," 186–210.

50. I am differentiating here between superstitious astrological practices and scientific astrology. In the Middle Ages, the Church argued strongly against the former and slowly accepted the latter. The works of Albumasar (787–886), especially his guide books to scientific astrology, such as *Great Introduction to Astronomy*, *Great Conjunctions*, and *Shorter Introduction to Astronomy*, were particularly important and became the first Arabic scientific writings to be translated into Latin. See Vicky Armstrong Clark, "The Illustrated 'Abridged Astrological Treatise of Albumasar': Medieval Astrological Imagery in the West," (Ph.D. diss., The University of Michigan, 1979), 5–31; Max L. W. Laistner, "The Western Church and Astrology during the Early Middle Ages," *The Harvard Theological Review* 34, no. 4 (1941): 251–275.

51. After examining theories about time written in exegetical and philosophical texts prior to and during the twelfth century, such as Bede's *Hexaemerom* (8th century) and Rabanus Maurus's *Commentaria in Genesim* (9th century), as well as Honorius Augustodenensis's *Hexaemerom* and Hugh of Saint-Victor's *In Solomonis Ecclesiasten, Homilia XIX* and *De proprietate quatuor temporum anni*, Simona Cohen concluded that the labors and zodiac cycles on church façades were in fact intended as representations of the passage of time. See Cohen, "The Romanesque Zodiac," 43–54.

52. Panadero, "The Labors of the Months and the Signs of the Zodiac," 247.

53. Some of the more important critical studies include: George Perrier Conger, *Theories of Macrocosms and Microcosms in the History of Philosophy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1922); Fritz Saxl, "Macrocosm and Microcosm in Medieval Pictures," in *Lectures*, ed. Friedrich Saxl (London: Warburg Institute, 1957), I, 58–72; Leonard Barkan, *Nature's Work of Art: The Human Body as Image of the World* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1975), 8–46; Marie-Thérèse D'Alverny, "L'homme comme symbole: le microcosme," in *Simboli e simbologia nell'alto medioevo* (Settimane di Studio del Centro Italiano di Studi sull'alto Medioevo XXIII) (Spoleto: Presso la Sede del Centro, 1976): 123–195; and Williams, *Deformed Discourse*, 108.

54. Plato, *Timaeus*, trans. Benjamin Jowett, accessed November 19, 2014, http://classics.mit.edu/Plato/timaeus.html.

55. Bernardus Silvestris, "Microcosmos," chap. 12, in *The Cosmographia of Bernardus Silvestris*, trans. Winthrop Wetherbee (1973; repr. New York: Columbia University Press, 1990), 117.

56. Edmund Taite Silk, ed., *Saeculi noni auctoris in Boetii Consolationem Philosophiae commentaries*, Papers and Monographs of the American Academy in Rome 9 (Rome: American Academy in Rome, 1935), 335–336; and Elizabeth Sears, *The Ages of Man: Medieval Interpretations of the Life Cycles* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986), 18–19.

57. *Genesis* 1:26–27 — "And he said: Let us make man to our image and likeness: and let him have dominion over the fishes of the sea, and the fowls of the air, and the beasts, and the whole earth, and every creeping creature that moveth upon the earth. And God created man to his own image: to the image of God he created him: male and female he created them."

Parnasse e(s)t Patrie:

Louis XIV in Undying Bronze

THADEUS DOWAD

"The eminent virtues, the great deeds, and the considerable number of illustrious men of various states and characters of genius who appeared under the reign of our Monarch, Louis XIV, shall remain the source of great admiration in all the ages to come."[1]

– Évrard Titon du Tillet
Le Parnasse François, 1732

On September 1, 1715, the King of France Louis XIV died. He died in his private bedchamber at Versailles, the victim of a rather undignified affliction: a fetid, gangrenous leg. In his last hours, he was surrounded by a congregation of his closest courtiers, his great-grandson and heir, the Duke of Anjou, his wife, Madame de Maintenon, and the Cardinal de Rohan, who performed the last rights. They had all gathered at the king's behest for a few final words of farewell. To his highest attendants, he expressed his gratitude for their services and entreated them to serve the Dauphin with the same loyalty they had shown him. He also apologized for not being able to reward them better.[2] To his morganatic wife, who had hardly left his side in weeks, he affirmed his love and devotion; she would join him just four years later. And lastly to his young heir, he imparted perhaps the most famous missive of his reign: "I am leaving you, but the state remains forever."[3]

Before a quarter of eight in the morning, the king was gone. Shortly after the Grand Chambellan had shouted the three "*Vives*" from the royal balcony and the castle began bustling with preparations for the funeral, one of the nobles present at the death, Philippe de Courcillon, Marquis de Dangeau, retired to his study to reflect on the king's passing. In his personal journal, he writes, "The king died this morning at a quarter past eight. He yielded up his soul without any effort, like a candle going out."[4] Thus a rather sobering end to a life hailed in poetry and prose as absolute and incomparable. The Sun King's immortal flame, it seems, extinguished not with the magnificent supernova of a star, but with the listless thread of smoke off a candlewick.

Inflected in the sobriety of Dangeau's remarks is a tinge of insecurity over the legacy of the monarch's reign. He seems to anxiously wonder: will the magnificence of Louis' France similarly go out like a candle flame? Will the "immortal king"[5] and his state really live on now that its sun had suddenly gone out? Anxiety over both the literal and symbolic permanence of Louis XIV had in fact begun to ferment years before the king had shown any sign of giving out. By the time of his death, Louis was predeceased by most of his immediate family. His last surviving son, the Dauphin, had died in 1711. Barely a year later, the Duke of Burgundy, the eldest of the Dauphin's three sons and then heir to the throne, followed his father. And Burgundy's elder son, Louis, Duke of Brittany, joined them a few weeks later.[6] Three heirs had passed in the three years before Louis' own departure. The Duke of Anjou, the future Louis XV, was just five years old at the time of his great-grandfather's death, and the seven years preceding his accession would mark a regency fraught with political subterfuge in the Parlement and endless squabbles among the heir's titular guardians.[7] For a king like Louis XIV, who had spent his sixty years on the throne yoking himself to the immortality of God and the French State, a threat to his lineage was in no uncertain terms

a threat to the permanence of his very being. It jeopardized the absolute monarch's very ontology: for a man that exists both temporally and divinely, any fractures or contravention to his authority imperiled the rhetoric of everlasting power he had so deftly crafted in life.

Compounding this concern over Louis' pedigree was a prevailing sense that with his passing, France had entered into a period of degeneration. After all, how would it be possible to outdo the accomplishments achieved under the reign of "Louis, the most perfect model of all kings / On whose creation the Heavens expended all their treasures"?[8] Charles Perrault, academician and author of the celebrated panegyric, "*Le Siècle de Louis le Grand*," was just one of many Frenchmen who acknowledged this predicament. He realized that as Louis' reign was the apogee of France's greatness — in the arts and sciences as much as in politics — all that followed would inevitably be retrograde. Perrault's poem, then, is as much a glorification of the king as an omen of impending decline. Cultural historian Joan DeJean has identified this admission as a crucial element of a "fin-de-siècle mentality"[9] at the turn of the eighteenth century, characterized by a deep-seated uncertainty over the possibility of progress beyond Louis' life. She notes that those witnessing the end of Louis' reign were "tainted by their position at the end of the line;"[10] for them, "progress was literally always already over."[11] Yet while DeJean is correct in diagnosing a prevalent cultural angst, her study nonetheless omits a paralleling optimism, the hope that the preeminence of Louis' rule could be preserved beyond his death. For some, the king's passing was not necessarily an indication of his absence *tout court.* "The state," after all, "remains forever," and the notion that Louis subsisted in the bodies he created and governed in life stimulated a widespread eagerness to demonstrate the king's continued presence, the perseverance of his immortal self.

Indeed, it is at this moment of great uncertainty over the monarch's futurity that a stream of artists took up the challenge to not only be the first to fashion Louis' post-mortem image, but to use their art to keep his eternal flame ablaze. Among those to take up the call was the rather curious figure of Évrard Titon du Tillet. Like many of his fellow blue bloods, Titon fulfilled several capacities in his life at court. The son of the director of the Royal Armaments Manufacture under Louis XIV, Titon began his career as an army captain before studying law and entering politics as an Avocat du Parlement.[12] Titon later ingratiated himself with the Duchess of Burgundy, mother of the future Louis XV, and her high esteem of the young courtier allowed Titon contact with the wizening Louis XIV.[13] Adding to his cachet at court was his highly regarded erudition, particularly in regards to the arts. His eldest brother held the title of Procureur du Roi et de la Ville de Paris, which placed him in charge of overseeing the most important monuments to Louis XIV dedicated in Paris.[14] Titon, like his brother, had a particular interest in sculpture, a penchant no doubt inherited from their father who had proudly presented an equestrian statuette to Louis XIV in 1701.[15] In the years before Louis' death, Titon travelled extensively — to Rome certainly and perhaps to Switzerland, England, Holland, and Germany, as well.[16] He studied the great masterpieces, both ancient and modern, and dedicated ample time to the study of antique poetry. [17]

Owing, then, to his affinity for the king and his sophisticated knowledge of both sculpture and verse, Titon found himself in a particularly strong position at Louis' death to undertake a project many other artists were leaping feverishly to complete. Titon's contribution to this effort was the *Parnasse François* **(Figs. 1–2)**, a wildly intricate bronze sculpture topped with an enthroned figure of Louis in Apollonian guise, surrounded by the great writers, poets, and

Fig. 1 Augustin Pajou (1730-1809) and Louis Garnier (1639-1728). *Parnasse François*. Conceived after 1708 by Évrard Titon du Tillet (1677-1762). 1708-1721. Medallions by Simon Curé and completed with additional medallions and statuettes by Augustin Pajou. Bronze, 260 x 235 x 230 cm. RMN-Grand Palais / Art Resource, NY.

Fig. 2 Augustin Pajou (1730-1809) and Louis Garnier (1639-1728). *Parnasse François*. Conceived after 1708 by Évrard Titon du Tillet (1677-1762). 1708-1721. Medallions by Simon Curé and completed with additional medallions and statuettes by Augustin Pajou. Bronze, 260 x 235 x 230 cm. RMN-Grand Palais / Art Resource, NY

musicians who typify the prolific artistic output of his reign. Beyond simply glorifying Louis' artistic eminence, this distinguished cadre is critical to the work's immortalizing ambitions. With their successes beholden to the magnanimity of their monarch, these artists — and indeed the French arts in general — become extensions of the king's glorious being, and the *Parnasse*, in affirming the connection between king and artistic triumph, allows Louis to live forever in the continued achievements of France's artistic masters. One finds that atop Titon's Parnassian mount, Louis continues to reign much as he had in life.

The original bronze model of the *Parnasse François*, which stands at an imposing seven

Fig. 3 Augustin Pajou (1730-1809) and Louis Garnier (1639-1728). *Parnasse François*. Conceived after 1708 by Évrard Titon du Tillet (1677-1762). 1708-1721.

and a half feet high at its fullest extent, has been held in the royal collection at Versailles since Titon's death. It represents a steep, craggy mountain springing with laurel, palms, myrtle, and oak entwined with languid vines of ivy. The peak is surmounted by a rearing Pegasus, beneath which sits the god Apollo crowned with a laurel wreath and plucking at his lyre. In the accompanying description, Titon informs us that the god represents none other than Louis XIV and that the Three Graces partway down the mountainside, dancing to the lyre's tune, personify three celebrated female poets of the monarch's reign: Madame de la Suze, Madame Deshoulières, and Mademoiselle de Scudéry.[18] Below Apollo, to his left, a nude female figure leans against an urn that spills forth a stream of water. However, she is not the Castalian spring typical of Parnassian iconography, but a French counterpart, the nymph of the River Seine, whose waters make Paris the true home of the arts. In a similarly nationalistic spirit, the nine Muses have been replaced by the great poets and musicians of Louis' kingship: Corneille, Racine, Molière, La Fontaine, Boileau, Chapelle, Segrais, Racan, and Lully, the latter holding a portrait medallion of the famed librettist Quinault.[19] **(Fig. 3)** Each of the fifteen principal figures on the model measures between eleven and eighteen inches high.[20] All around them float little winged flame-headed genius figures in various positions of movement and flight. Some of these carry portrait medallions and scrolls listing the names of poets and musicians not quite so accomplished as to merit personification. Titon placed two of these little figures between Racine and Racan, with one holding up an inscription and the other pointing to it. It reads: "To the glory of France and the most illustrious French poets and musicians, Titon du Tillet envisioned and elevated this French Parnassus in 1721. L. Garnier executed it."[21]

Foremost among the peculiarities of this ostentatious work, then, is that it was not sculpted by the same man who conceived it. The *Parnasse François* was actually first conceived as early as 1708, and twelve years passed before Titon finally succeeded in giving the work sculptural form. Accompanying the sculpture was a series of descriptive discourses, simply titled *Le Description*. In this ekphrastic text, Titon lays out in lucid detail the entire program for his piece, including a prolix explanation of its iconography, a complete account of each figure and attribute, and a 270-page *liste alphabétique* of the ninety writers and musicians to feature in either medallions or full-figures along the Parnassian mount; this ambitious task was naturally never realized. Titon would later expand the *Description* into a comprehensive illustrated volume with

several engraved decorations to underscore its prevailing themes: immortality, fame, and the glory of the arts. Louis Garnier, the sculptor and bronze-smith responsible for the work's actual construction, completed Titon's piece sometime between 1718 and 1721,[22] yet it is difficult to attribute this work to either a specific date or artist since the work was added to continuously by many hands up until Titon's death in 1762.[23] Still, the critical reception of the sculpture makes evident that Titon himself — and no less than he — was considered the true author of the exquisite *Parnasse*.

That Titon conceived of the work as a monument to the departed king is stated expressly. In the preface to the *Description*, Titon makes no mention of the project's beginnings prior to the king's death. Instead, he asserts with considerable aplomb that his *Parnasse* is not only intended as a memorial to his beloved king, but is in fact the *first* such monument since the monarch's death. He writes, "…I understand that a person who works only for the glory of departed Great Men cannot be to the liking of all the living, and he must hope that posterity will not look down upon him for having sought to contribute something to the glory of his nation and of Louis the Great, and to see that he is the first after his death to have endeavored to consecrate a monument to his memory."[24] Though entirely untrue, Titon's remark nevertheless provides a telling glimpse into how the artist envisaged the project. He offers it as the first monument to a king who was never meant to die, or more accurately, to a king dead only in body but immortal in essence. While the presence of the Muses, the nine children of the god of memory, certainly foregrounds the mnemonic thematics of the piece, one cannot help but wonder what stakes Titon has in being *the first* to memorialize a being that lives forever. Equally enigmatic is what the Greek Parnassus lends such an effort.

Beginning with a passage from the preface to the *Description*, Titon comments on the relation between his own Parnassus and that of the Greeks. He writes, "in the end, they looked on Parnassus as a site destined to immortalize those celebrated in the sciences and arts, above all the poets and the musicians, who after their deaths should be placed there and crowned by the hand of Apollo to form with this brilliant god and his nine sagely sisters the most perfect poems and concerts."[25] For Titon, Parnassus was a site that, owing to the grace of its divine guardian, conferred immortality on those artists whose work merits such timelessness. Like the Graces and Muses they personify, these artists are worthy to inspire greatness in artists across time; these are the men and women, like the Greeks themselves, deserving of everlasting emulation.

For Titon, certain steps were necessary in order to be awarded entry into Parnassus. On the one hand, the living, would-be artist must drink of Castalia's waters (or in this case, the Seine's) to be endowed with what early eighteenth-century writers called "*enthousiasme poétique*,"[26] a sort of fuel of emulation. The poet would then, like Pegasus, take off with his newfound wings to heights of poetic genius. The second step was to be taken only after the poet's death. Then, Titon explains, he will be miraculously transported back to the mountain where he had received his initial inspiration. Apollo will crown him and invite him to participate with the Muses in concerts of verse and song.

In this one detects a certain familiar ring. The image of a divine authority bestowing greatness and ascendancy on an artist, transforming him or her into a model to be followed, applies as much to Apollo's Parnassus as it does to Louis' France. Indeed, with the king's institutionalization of artistic practices in the *académies*,[27] Louis developed a system of criteria for the adjudication of praise and merit in artistic achievement. The

bureaucratic network attending the establishment of the academies placed Louis at the head of the country's entire artistic infrastructure. It was by his favor (and by proxy, the favor of his appointed *secrétaires*) that an artist reached the heights of eminence, to a category worthy of imitation. The allegorization of Louis in the figure of Apollo, then, is quite fitting. The Sun King has become the Sun God, and those artists who triumphed under his reign are present not in celebration of themselves, but of the god-king that elevated them to fame.

From the iconographic arrangement to its pyramidal structure, Titon's work presents Louis as the locus of France's artistic achievements. He has created an ideal image of the king's courtly life within a timeless Parnassian milieu. His personified Muses and Graces are not only positioned at lower registers in reverence to their divine host, but orbit neatly around him, literalizing the Sun God-King as the center of their universe. Their organization thus evokes the structure of the Versailles court, which as Norman Bryson has shown, operated entirely in relation to the physical kingly body, the veritable "center of the nation's strength."[28] Bryson notes, for example, that within Louis' court "the marks of absolute favor are not titles or responsibilities but admission to the bedchamber, to witness and assist at the most creatural acts."[29] Proximity to the king, in other words, was commensurate with courtly power and prestige, and the arrangement of Titon's figures negotiates this symbolic distance to denote both distinction and deference on the part of his entourage. Yet while redolent of the court at Versailles, the *Parnasse* also appears like a world apart. The primeval bluff on which the constellation of figures stands seems to exist entirely out of time. With its flowering tendrils and cascading falls, the Parnassian mount is nothing short of a paradise, a mythological playground for Apollo's chosen few. Accordingly, the figure of Louis, metamorphosed into the Sun God, functions much as he did in life: he is both the leader of a company of distinguished courtiers and the divine overseer of a bucolic domain *sans pareil*. Embodied within Titon's work, then, are both the temporal and divine lives of the king, his dual being preserved in Parnassian metaphorics.

Contrary to the typical court of noblemen, however, Titon's train of figures is comprised solely of academic artists. In turning attention to the academic history of Louis' reign, Titon impels a consideration of the *Parnasse* in relation to the event that came to define the king's artistic legacy: the Quarrel of the Ancients and the Moderns. This dispute — or as some have called it, all-out "culture war"[30] — began in January, 1687 when Charles Perrault delivered his pleonastic poem *Le Siècle de Louis le Grand* before the Académie française, lauding the artistic and scientific accomplishments of his modern French confreres over those of antiquity. Battle lines were immediately drawn, as those Moderns arguing that the "classics" had at last been surpassed began to square off with the latters' trenchant defenders, the Ancients. Yet this standoff was much more than some petty esoteric quibble. At stake was nothing less than the historical status of Louis' France. As Dan Edelstein writes, "What the Moderns brought to the Quarrel was an unabashed celebration of present greatness, in none-too-sly attempts to flatter the greatest of all monarchs, the Sun King Louis XIV."[31] However, in returning to the issues and personalities of the previous generation, Titon was deliberately going beyond the Quarrel's partisan interests in order to create a revivalistic monument in glory of the French arts as a set of united, quarrel-*less* practices. Indeed, the *Parnasse* straddles the divide between Ancient and Modern categories on at least three distinct levels. In the most general sense, Titon chose a modern monarch and modern poets to represent the divine figures of Greece. Yet among these moderns number no small tally of outspoken *Anciens*. Perrault's

great rival Boileau, for example, is depicted quite prominently beneath the three Graces. In fact, Boileau, famously referred to as the "*législateur du Parnasse*,"[32] was an early adviser on the project, and his sundry artistic writings are referenced consistently throughout Titon's *Description*.[33] It is unsurprising, then, to find so many of the artists Boileau lauded in his satires, letters, and poems also featured on the *Parnasse*. Corneille, Racine, Molière, La Fontaine, Racan, Segrais — certainly all worthy of their Parnassian seat even without Boileau's designation — all feature prominently in the latter's writings, and Titon's invocation of Boileau throughout his *Dedication* situates his *Parnasse* — at least to some degree — under the banner of the Ancients.

Yet there are nearly as many *Modernes* to be found on the sculpture, as well. Boileau, for example, never had anything but invective for Lully and Quinault. Indeed, the lyric poet Quinault was a Modern both in that Boileau disapproved of him and in that Perrault defended him.[34] Perrault, in fact, went so far as to pit Quinault's original and diverse lyricism against the severity and repetitiveness of Boileau's own.[35] As for Titon's other Muse, Chapelle, Boileau had withdrawn his support for him after 1668.[36] Likewise, Madame Deshoulières, pictured as one of the Graces, figured among the adversaries of Boileau and Racine in the "*cabale*" following the first performance of *Phèdre* in 1677.[37] Boileau leveled a veritable campaign against another of Titon's Graces, Mademoiselle de Scudéry, an attack that climaxed with a satirical dialogue that ridiculed her two most popular novels, *Cyrus* and *Clélie*.[38] Madame de la Suze, too, famously sympathized with the Moderns' case along with her fellow Graces.[39]

However, Titon did much more than simply invent modern analogues for various aspects of the classical mount. He also celebrated a new concept of creativity that the Moderns claimed all their own. Indeed, the neoteric notion of genius ("*génie*") is everywhere to be seen in the *Parnasse*. Introduced into the Quarrel by Perrault and his Modern companions, genius was for them the necessary accompaniment to progress in the arts. In his poem *Le Génie* (1686), Perrault sought to replace Boileau's emphasis on poetical rules with both personal, internal faculties and originality.[40] To this end, he advocated such concepts as "*enthousiasme poétique*," which — as mentioned — is thematized in the magical flowing streams along Titon's sculpture.

This second aspect of the *Parnasse*'s modernity relates directly to its third. Celebrating not the Golden Age of some ancient past, Titon's project instead orients itself towards the celebration of a modern *Age d'Or*. Of course, it was Perrault, beyond all others, who looked upon the Sun King as an unexampled ruler, superior even to the accomplishments of Emperor Augustus (a concession Boileau was absolutely not willing to make).[41] Perrault penned numerous discourses in support of his conviction, and his volume *Les Hommes illustres qui ont paru en France pendant ce siècle* (1696–1700) is undoubtedly the most relevant to the *Parnasse*. Not only is Perrault's text referenced in Titon's *Description*,[42] but its programmatic ordering of the great academicians of Louis' reign into biographical studies and portrait engravings presages the sort of deific pantheon of French intellectualism fundamental to Titon's own program.

In his writings, though, Titon does not quite go as far as Perrault and the Moderns in touting the superiority of their century. To be sure, Titon and his work have no real stake in such partisanship since the Quarrel had largely been settled with the signing of a resolution by Perrault and Boileau in 1701, bringing the debates to a temporary conclusion. Despite this reconciliatory gesture, the Quarrel would continue in a less bellicose fashion through the first decades of the

eighteenth century; however, the debate would shift its attention to the merits of Homeric poetry, with little mind paid to the earlier issues of Louis' artistic preeminence. Titon's work ultimately contributes to neither of these exchanges; it comes far too late to leave its mark on the first iteration of the Quarrel and has nothing to say about Homer. Rather, it is precisely the harmony with which Titon incorporates Ancient and Modern topoi that constitutes the sculpture's novelty both within and apart from the dispute. For rather than being a weapon in a rhetorical arsenal, the *Parnasse* is a retrospective and reconciliatory project, bringing figures and ideas on both sides of the exchange into an integrated whole under the auspices of Louis. As such, it occupies a significant and decidedly early position in a quite different enterprise: the Louis XIV Revival.

Yet, "revival" rings with a certain discordant note. Historians of the period have certainly acknowledged the existence of a "Sun King revivalism" that emerged sometime in the mid-eighteenth century, and typified by the literature of Voltaire and the artistic ideologies of the Comte d'Angiviller.[43] However, a revival assumes a pause, an intersession, or rupture between the event in question and its subsequent resurrection. For Titon, though, adamant that his piece be the *first* to revive the memory of Louis — and this hardly a few years after his death — there is really no interruption to speak of between the king's passing and his appearance atop Mount Parnassus. Louis, in a sense, becomes contiguous with his own revival, a strange phenomenon that not only renders the term "revival" rather inapt, but also helps explain the exigency of Titon's project. Appearing more or less at the moment of Louis' death, the *Parnasse* functions less as a revivalist monument *per se* than a bronze receptacle for the king's immortal soul. Following the logic of Titon's sculpture, the king does not really die at all. Instead, he was to survive in sculptural form and continue practicing his kingly rites via the piece's unusual programmatics.

Titon accomplishes this seemingly impossible task by focusing his work on a single gesture: the elevation of the artist to fame. However, this divine privilege — as much Louis' as Apollo's — is not simply represented in the sculpted figure, but reenacted continuously. As suggested by its size, the sculpture was actually designed to host a conceivably endless accretion of figures and medallions over time, a transgressive temporal power suited to its timeless milieu. In fact, by 1732, the *Parnasse* was expected to hold an additional sixteen medallions and three bronze statuettes — with the many others listed in Titon's writings to be added later on.[44] Some of these figures, such as Clément Marot and Marguerite Navarre, predate Louis' reign by a century, and several others would not die until decades after Titon's own death. Stretching both backwards and forwards in time, then, the sculpture binds both France's artistic heritage and its destiny to the figure of Louis. With each appended figure, the Sun God-King continues to exercise his exclusive powers of crowning these artists into Parnassus. He remains, in this effect, very much alive; he is the inheritor of France's artistic past, the leader of its present, and the guarantor of its future, much as he was in his earthly life.

Nevertheless, in shifting his dominion — his *patrie* — from France to Parnassus, the continued performance of kingly power becomes contingent on France's continued successes in the arts specifically. In other words, without the consistent production of great artists in France, its Apollonian king cannot continue to perform his singular privilege of inducting them into the Parnassian realm. To this effect, his power — along with his immortality and kinghood — becomes commensurate with France's artistic power. As long as great artists

continue to be affixed to Titon's sculpture, Louis will continue to effectuate his rites as king. He lives on in the continued greatness of France's artists, and the sculpture, the veritable stage for this agglomeration of figures, becomes the seat for Louis' enduring sovereignty. It is here in Parnassus, where the mortal artists meet their divine patron, that the privileges of Louis' reign are rehearsed *ad infinitum*. As it grows and lives, so Louis lives on, as well.

In this regard, presenting a reconciliation of the Quarrel becomes of utmost importance. There is no benefit for Titon in presenting the Quarrel as an antagonistic and ideologically fraught set of discourses — however historically accurate that may be. Instead, Titon incorporates the opposing Ancient and Modern camps into a harmony, one representative of the entire political spectrum of artistic exchanges facilitated by the academic institutions Louis established. Titon's work, then, can be understood as a sort of sculpted exegesis on the Quarrel: its pairing of dogged Ancients alongside their equally dogged Modern counterparts skirts the knotty issues of the Quarrel while still acknowledging the plurality of voices that comprised it. The piece suggests that whatever allegiance these figures held during the Quarrel, they nonetheless collectively owe the very capacity to host such a debate to none other than their king — not to mention their careers, their successes, and their fame after death. In reigning over such a harmonious society of otherwise adversarial artists, Titon's Louis becomes the great reconciler, the god-king that not only allowed the Quarrel to play out but facilitated its resolution. The statue itself becomes the best evidence to that compromise: not simply in its assemblage of Ancient and Modern academicians, but in its elevation of Modern subjects through an ancient Greek valence, the work both shows and tells the consummation of the Quarrel.

In its two-pronged program — to at once convey unity and endurance, while allotting for future changes — the work's material serves a pivotal function. Indeed, bronze satisfies a variety of structural and symbolic functions for Titon. On the one hand, no material is more identifiable with the court of Louis XIV. As historian Jonathan Marsden has noted, the origins of most, if not all, early collections of bronzes outside of France can be situated in a wider desire to emulate the magnificence of Louis' own.[45] Accordingly, the turn of the eighteenth century marked a pan-European vogue for bronze inspired in part by the spectacular collection Louis amassed and displayed so conspicuously at court. Yet Louis' predilection for bronze was no mere matter of personal taste, but constitutive of the king's symbolic character. Its weight and polished luster connote at once endurance, stability, and wealth, and compared with the other sculptural media, namely marble or ever-fashionable terra cotta, it is remarkably robust. However for Titon, it was bronze's malleability that he found so advantageous to his program. For a sculpture that is intended to grow and continually reconfigure itself, bronze offered a protean character that stone, clay, or even painting simply could not. With bronze, cracks can be welded smooth, figures can be easily rearranged, and more tors of craggy rock can always be added to the mount. Resilient yet mutable, bronze was the only material worthy to both house Louis' undying spirit and serve as the bedrock of his new domain.

Nevertheless, the *Parnasse*'s material contains another story, one that complicates the image of the sculpture painted thus far. In truth, Titon's bronze sculpture was not begun as an autonomous artwork, but as a model for a much larger project: a colossal public monument likely intended for either Paris or Versailles. Titon commissioned numerous paintings of his intended statue, including one *in situ* atop a dedicatory pedestal from Nicolas de Poilly

four years before he had even written the first *Description*. Poilly's painting marks the earliest conception of what the *Parnasse* was to be: an imposing life-size Parnassus on earth. Titon even had the painting engraved for the frontispiece of his 1732 edition of the *Le Parnasse François*. His inability to find a willing patron, though, frustrated his efforts to realize the monument as originally conceived. Throughout the 1720s and 1730s, Titon commissioned a handful of different paintings and engravings to help market the work to possible benefactors, from public works committees to individual aristocratic patrons.[46] In one such engraving, the *Parnasse* is pictured as the centerpiece of a sunken rococo garden, its personification of the River Seine transformed into actual flowing water. Yet despite the wide acclaim Titon received for the images and model of his proposed project, he never came close to finding the adequate funds, even from Louis XV himself. As the likelihood of a monumental Parnassus diminished, Titon increasingly turned his attention to the bronze model. He continued adding figures up until his death, at which time he had come to see that he had, after all, realized a part of his goal: the model had in fact *become* the monument.[47]

This other story encased in the work, then, bespeaks a significant shift in France's artistic disposition. That a work such as the *Parnasse*, so quintessentially baroque and so quintessentially *louisquatorzien*, failed to find support in the years after the monarch's death is rather telling. It seems that the grandiosity of the baroque, expressed perhaps most famously in the resplendence of Versailles, but above all else inhered in the glorious image of Louis XIV himself, had passed along with its greatest patron. Thus the plan of 1708–1721 for a magnificent monument to baroque monarchy and its patronage had transformed over the years into a salon conversation piece, an Enlightenment meditation on the ideal ruler-patron, rather than a public reenactment of Louis' sovereign prerogatives. Before it was eventually gifted to Louis XV a few years before Titon's death, the work had remained in its master's home, cogitated upon in private by Titon's learned guests.

As much as the program of the *Parnasse* strives to preserve the existence of the departed king, the frustrated endeavor to complete the work as originally envisioned begs a reconsideration of Titon's scheme entirely. Rather than examining the work as a performance of absolutist power, what might one find in positioning the project as a harbinger of Enlightenment politics instead? At least two striking discoveries come to light. Firstly, while there is little visual evidence to contest the courtly spirit of Titon's scene, its assemblage of *grands hommes* into a constellation of praiseworthy idols nevertheless looks ahead to a similar project undertaken just a few years later to consecrate a secular, nationalist pantheon of French cultural heroes. Well before the conversion of Soufflot's church of Sainte-Geneviève into a lay temple, there existed a "pantheon of paper"[48] composed of what would become the founders of a new national legend: Rousseau, Diderot, Voltaire. Moreover, the beginnings of this mythos can interestingly be traced to the very panegyric discourses of the Académie française, of which Titon's numerous writings are a consummate example.[49] But even more fundamentally, it was the artistic, political, and historical dialectics limned over the course of the Quarrel that, in Edelstein's words, "precipitated the Enlightenment narrative."[50] Titon's weaving together of these dialectical strands, visualized quite literally in the peaceful commingling of Ancients and Moderns atop his Parnassus, thus betrays the very sort of synthetical thinking that "allowed Enlightenment actors to imagine a future that drew heavily on an ancient past."[51] Therefore, though Titon's Apollonian Louis sits quite comfortably at the head of his retinue, it is

ironic that these same figures will be gradually transformed into a pantheon in which the king has no real place. These men and women on whom the immortality of Louis hinges will actually come to displace him, and this move transfigures the *Parnasse* into a grim portent, proleptically signaling the demise of the very entity it seeks to commemorate. Is Titon's celebratory scene, then, in fact charged with the unsettling tenors of a forthcoming regicide?

Apart from the destabilizing currents of the Enlightenment, there is also a way in which Titon's program reveals the impossibility of Louis' absolutist agenda. If one follows the accretive potential of the *Parnasse* to its logical conclusion, the continued addition of figures and medallions over time inevitably produces a structure in which physical distance from the Apollonian Louis comes to mirror a historical chronology. An imagined world in which all figures exist communally in reverence of the king becomes instead one in which those closest to the kingly body share in greater glory than those further apart. The timelessness of the Parnassian setting thus breaks down into a symbolic representation of the passage of historical time, an outcome inimical to the portrayal of Louis as the absolute center of France's past, present, and future. In the rhetoric of absolutism, these three temporal categories are understood to concatenate in the body of king;[52] however, the realities of sculptural space prevent its appended figures from existing in the same relation to the king as those added before them. In another ironic twist, then, the ambitiousness of Titon's project ultimately sheds light on the constraints of Louis' own absolutist ambitions.

Therefore, as a result of both the anti-monarchical future it augurs and the absurdity of its expansive program, the immortalizing ambitions of Titon's *Parnasse* seem to collapse on themselves. In this regard — and only adding to its incongruity — the piece marks not only the passing of Louis himself, but the end of his political system along with him. The work's program and its history thus tell two very different stories. On the one hand, one finds an object that sustains the monarch through a conceivably endless execution of his absolutist powers, and on the other, a bold indication of the end to the baroque extravagance and absolutist puissance emblematic of the same monarch's reign. Yet might one of these interpretations be deserving of more credence than the other? Recalling DeJean's diagnosis of the profound anxiety kindled at the end of Louis' reign, it becomes tempting to couch Titon's project within this idiom of progressive impossibility or, rather, as a part of a larger, insurmountable fear that the glory of Sun King marked the apex of French progress; all that followed would simply be degeneration. Yet, this anxiety was clearly not so crippling that it prevented those loyal to Louis from challenging the inevitability of this post-mortem decline. Unaware of the events that would transpire just thirty years after his death, Titon was confident in the ability for his beloved monarch to live beyond the barriers of his temporal being, and the *Parnasse*, as extravagant as it is complex, is fundamentally a monument to this earnest belief in the king's eternalism. A hope in the absolutist dream, then, continued parallel to DeJean's prevailing fear, even as Titon's work ultimately evidences the hopelessness of such a dream.

In this sense, the two stories of the *Parnasse* may not be as irreconcilable as first imagined. The work speaks to a real optimism in the perpetuity of Louis' France following his death, while also foretelling the collapse of that France. Positioned at the nexus of two historical moments — the end of Louis' reign and the beginning of the Enlightenment — Titon's piece succeeds in voicing the many contradictory expectations and frustrations of its moment. Curiously, the countervailing stories of Titon's project in

fact accurately relay the two political currents circulating at the time of its conception: one retrospective, the other progressive. In spite of himself, then, Titon created a work that in its attempt to keep Louis alive, demonstrated precisely why — whether in 1715 or later — the king inevitably will and indeed *must* die.

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Thadeus Dowad *is a second-year PhD student in the History of Art Department at UC Berkeley. His research focuses on comparative studies of modern empire from the seventeenth to twentieth centuries, with a particular interest in photography, archaeological science, and Franco-Ottoman relations. He received his BA in the History of Art from the University of Pennsylvania and an MA from the Graduate Program in the History of Art at Williams College.*

Endnotes

1. All translations are my own unless stated otherwise. "*Les vertus éminentes, les hauts faits de ce Monarque et le nombre considerable d'Hommes Illustres dans tous les états et dans tous les caracteres de genie different qui ont paru sous son Regne, feront l'admiration de tous les siècles à venir.*" Évrard Titon du Tillet, *Le Parnasse François, Dedié au Roi* (Paris, 1732), épître p. 2.

2. Geoffrey Treasure, *Louis XIV* (London: Pearson Education, 2001), 332.

3. Quoted in Ian Dunlop, *Louis XIV* (New York: Saint Martin's Press, 1999), 466.

4. "*Le roi est mort ce matin, à huit heures un quart et demi, et il a rendu l'âme sans aucun effort, comme une chandelle qui s'éteint.*" Philippe de Courcillon, *Journal de Marquis de Dangeau: 1713–1715*, eds. Eudoxe Soulié and Louis Dussieux (Paris: Firmit Didot frères, 1856), 136.

5. The notion of the "immortal king" or the "two-bodied king" first emerged within medieval political theological discourses — in England, especially — and is therefore certainly not unique to Louis XIV. However, in the context of the absolutist French court, the notion of kingly immortality acquired a special meaning beyond a co-existence in the divine and temporal realms. As a king politically and rhetorically constructed as the apogee of French achievement, Louis XIV and his immortal being became coterminous with the country's future greatness. Accordingly, the endurance of French artistic and political authority hinged on the continuation of Louis, himself, hence the various attempts to demonstrate the perseverance of his kingly prerogatives following his death. I see Titon du Tillet's *Le Parnasse François* as one such attempt. For more information on the two-bodied king, see Ernst H. Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies: A Study in Medieval Political Theology* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1997); for more information on the cultural anxiety following Louis' death, see Joan DeJean, *Ancients against Moderns: Culture Wars and the Making of a Fin-de-Siècle* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997).

6. Dunlop, *Louis XIV*, 463.

7. For a first-hand account of court and Parlement politics during the regency of Louis XV, see Charles Pinot Duclos, *Mémoires secrets sur le règne de Louis XV: La régence et le règne de Louis XV* (Paris: Firmit Didot frères, 1881).

8. "*De Louis, des grands rois le plus parfait modèle / Le ciel en le formant épuisa ses trésors*" Charles Perrault, "Le Siècle de Louis le Grand," *Parallèle des anciens et des modernes en ce qui regards les arts et les sciences* (Paris: 1688–97), 170.

9. Joan DeJean, "Did the Seventeenth Century Invent Our Fin de Siècle? Or, the Creation of the Enlightenment That We May at Last Be Leaving Behind" in *Critical Inquiry* 22, no. 4 (Summer, 1996), 803.

10. Ibid., 805.

11. Ibid., 804.

12. Judith Colton, *The Parnasse François: Titon du Tillet and the Origins of the Monument to Genius* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979), 13.

13. Ibid., 14.

14. Ibid., 15–16.

15. Ibid., 16.

16. Titon mentions an Italian voyage on several occasions in

the last edition of his *Description du Parnasse François* (Paris, 1760). Colton notes that two letters of Titon contain information regarding other travels he made during this period. In one dated July 24, 1749, Titon claims to have travelled to Switzerland, Holland, England, and parts of Germany. In another letter to Voltaire, dated July 1753, Titon states that he spent three years traveling Europe, though there is no mention of when or where he journeyed. Cf. Colton, *The Parnasse François*, 14, note 3.

17. Colton, *The Parnasse François*, 14.

18. Titon, *Le Parnasse François*, 30.

19. Ibid.

20. Geneviève Bresc-Bautier and Guilhem Scherf, *Cast in Bronze: French Sculpture from Renaissance to Revolution* (Paris: Musée du Louvre Editions, 2009), 354.

21. "*A la Gloire de la France et des plus illustres Poëtes et Musiciens François, Titon du Tillet a inventé et fait élever ce Parnasse François en 1721. L. Garnier l'a executé.*" In the *Description* of 1727, Titon speaks of this very inscription, but it is worded somewhat differently: "*A la Gloire de la France et de Louis le Grand, et à la mémoire immortelle des illustres poëtes et musiciens François, Titon du Tillet a inventé et fait élever ce Parnasse François dédié à Louis XV. Roi de France et de Navarre. MDCCXVIII.*" Titon, *Le Parnasse François*, 47–48.

22. Colton notes that while the inscription of the scroll states that the work was completed in 1721, Titon speaks of 1718 as the date of the *Parnasse*'s completion. Gaston Brière has tried to account for this discrepancy by suggesting that the statuettes may have been ready by 1718, while the rest of the work took three more years to complete (Gaston Brière, "Le Parnasse Français" in *Bulletin de la Société de l'histoire de l'art français* (1928), 77–84). Cf. Colton, *The Parnasse François*, 22, note 26.

23. Two other bronzesmiths are known to have contributed casts to the final sculpture: Simon Curé (1680–1734) and Augustin Pajou (1730–1809). For a detailed summary of the construction of the *Parnasse*, see Colton, *The Parnasse François*, 107–116.

24. "*…j'ai bien compris qu'une personne qui ne travaille que pour la gloire des Grands Hommes qui ne vivent plus, ne peut pas être du gout de tous les vivans* [sic.]*, et qu'elle doit espérer que la postérité ne lui sçaura* [sic.] *mauvais gré d'avoir cherché à contribuer en quelque chose à la gloire de sa Nation et a celle de Louis le Grand, et de voir qu'elle est la première qui ait hasardé de consacrer après la mort de ce Monarque quelque Monument à sa mémoire.*" Titon, *Le Parnasse François*, 71.

25. "*…enfin ils regarderent le Parnasse comme un lieu destiné à immortaliser les Personnes Celebres dans les Sciences et les beaux Arts, sur-tout les Poëtes et les Musiciens, qui devoient après leur mort y être placés, et couronnés de la main d'Apollon pour former avec ce Dieu brillant, et ses neuf sçavantes Soeurs les Poëmes et les Concerts les plus parfaits.*" Titon, *Description du Parnasse François* (1727), x–xi.

26. Titon, *Description du Parnasse François* (1727), xi.

27. Louis XIV and his functionaries oversaw the founding of the Académie de peinture et de sculpture (1648), the Académie de musique (1669), and the Académie d'architecture (1671), among others. The only *académie* to predate Louis' rule is the Académie française, established by his father, Louis XIII, and his chief minister, Cardinal Richelieu, in 1635.

28. Norman Bryson, *Word and Image: French Painting of the Ancien Régime* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 40.

29. Ibid.

30. See for example, Dan Edelstein, "Quarrel in the Academy: The Ancients Strike Back," in *The Enlightenment: A Genealogy* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2010), 37–43.

31. Ibid., 39–40.

32. This was a commonly used designation for Boileau in the years Titon was working on the *Parnasse*. Cf. Louis Gabriel Michaud, *Biographie universelle ancienne et moderne* (Paris: 1811–1828), s.v. Nicolas Boileau-Despréaux.

33. Titon's fullest statement of his dependence on Boileau can be found in the 1760 *Description* (p. 41). He also notes that he sought Boileau's advice in the 1743 supplement to *Le Parnasse François* (pp. 821–22) and in part 2 of the 1760 *Description*. For more information on the relationship of Titon and Boileau, see Colton, *The Parnasse François*, 95–97 & 96, note 99.

34. Charles Perrault, *Les Hommes illustres qui ont paru en France pendant ce siècle* (Paris: 1696–1700), 1: 81–82. Titon refers to Perrault's discussion of Quinault

(*Description*, p. 286), and he repeatedly points to conciliatory statements about Quinault made by Boileau, as well (ibid., pp. 287–88). Cf. Colton, *The Parnasse François*, 97, note 105.

35. Perrault, *Les Hommes illustres qui ont paru en France pendant ce siècle*, 286–287.

36. Although Chapelle and Boileau had once been close friends, their friendship soured after 1668, perhaps incited by disagreements over Racine's *Les Plaideurs*, which premiered in November. Boileau, thus, would have had little reason to insist on the inclusion of someone for whom he had no real sympathy for nearly 40 years. Titon nonetheless includes Chapelle on his own list of friends (*Description*, p. 141). On Titon's relationship with Chapelle, see Jean Demeure, "L'Introuvable Société des 'Quatre Amis' (1644–1665) in *Revue d'histoire littéraire de la France*, 36 (1929), 170–180.

37. The "*cabale de Phèdre*" broke out between rival supporters of Racine's *Phèdre* and those of the contemporaneous *Phèdre* by the playwright Jacques Pradon. This rivalry was rather vitriolic, with champions on both sides often appearing at one another's performances to sabotage them with incessant booing and hissing. Madame Deshoulières supported Pradon in this debacle, thus garnering the ire of Racine's most vocal backer, Boileau. For more information on the *cabale*, see the introduction of Jean Racine, *Phèdre*, trans. Julie Rose (London: Nick Hern Books, 2001), i–xvi.

38. Though Titon omits any mention of Boileau in his accounts of Mademoiselle de Scudéry, Boileau's antipathy for the novelist is well documented. Cf. Armand Gasté, *Madeleine de Scudéry et le 'Dialogue des Héros de Roman'* (Rouen, 1902) and Claude Aragonnès, *Madeleine de Scudéry, rein du Tendre* (Paris, 1934).

39. On Madame de la Suze and her affiliation with the Moderns, see Antoine Adam, *Histoire de la littérature française du XVIIe siècle* (Paris, 1948–56), 3: 170–172.

40. For more information on Perrault's understanding of progressive genius *vis-à-vis* Boileau, see J.B. Bury, *The Idea of Progress: An Inquiry into its Origin and Growth* (London, 1924), chaps. 4 & 5.

41. Boileau and many of those in the *Ancien* camp considered Augustus a ruler of unsurpassable distinction, his only equal being Louis XIV, himself. Perrault's first statement of Louis' superiority came in the poem, "Le Siècle Louis le Grand," first read aloud to the Académie française on January 27, 1687. From October 1688 to 1697, Perrault published an expanded defense of the monarch's reign and of the modern age more generally in his *Parallèle des anciens et modernes*. For more information on the historical arguments of the Quarrel, see DeJean, *Ancients against Moderns*, chaps. 1 and 4.

42. Titon, *Description* (1727), 111.

43. Representative texts of this period include Voltaire, *Siècle de Louis XIV* (Paris, 1751) and D'Angiviller's notes on the *grands hommes* in *Procès-verbaux de l'Académie royale de peinture et sculpture*, ed. Anatole de Montaiglon (Paris, 1888). Many aspects of the revival in the Louis XIV period have been studied; however, I have been unable to locate a single study of the phenomenon in its entirety. Relevant literature includes Claude-François Lambert, *Histoire littéraire du règne de Louis XIV* (Paris, 1751) and Nicolas Bricaire de la Dixmerie, *Les Deux Ages du goût et du génie français sous Louis XIV et Louis XV* (The Hague, 1769). More recent examples in the fields of visual and material culture include Calin Demetrescu, *Le Style Louis XIV* (Paris: Amateur, 2002) and Nicolas Milovanovic and Alexandre Maral, *Louis XIV: l'homme et le roi* (Versailles: Chateau de Versailles, 2009).

44. Among the figures Titon had cast by the bronzesmith Simon Curé and intended to incorporate in the sculpture include the poets Clément Marot (1496–1544), Marguerite de Navarre (1492–1549), François Maynard (1582–1646), Antoine Houdar de La Motte (1672–1731), Jean-Baptiste Rousseau (1671–1741), Prosper Jolyot de Crébillon (1672–1778), Jean François Regnard (1655–1709), Voltaire (1694–1778), Philippe Néricault (1680–1749), Melchior, Cardinal de Polignac (1661–1742), François Collin de Blamont (1690–1754), and Bernard Le Bovier de Fontenelle (1657–1757); as well as four musicians: Marin Marais (1656–1728), Élisabeth Jacquet de la Guerre (1665–1729), André Campra (1660–1744), and André Cardinal, alias Destouches (1672–1749). Titon also intended six special medallions to be added for poets who composed verse in Latin: Gaucher de Sainte-Marthe (1536–1623), René Rapin (1621–1687), Jean de Santeul (1630–1697), Jean Commire (1625–1702), Charles de la Rue (1643–1725), and Jacques Vanière (1664–1729). Cf. Bresc-Bautier and Scherf, *Cast in Bronze*, 354. For the full table and description of figures, see Titon, *Description du Parnasse François* (1760), 21–44. For the original *liste alphabétique*, see

Titon, *Description du Parnasse François* (1727), 92–366.

45. Jonathan Marsden, "The International Taste for French Bronze Sculpture" in *Cast in Bronze: French Sculpture from Renaissance to Revolution*, eds. Geneviève Bresc-Bautier and Guilhem Scherf (Paris: Musée du Louvre Editions, 2009), 19.

46. For a detailed description of Titon's protracted and frustrated search for a patron, see Colton, *The Parnasse François*, 20–51.

47. See the épître of Titon, *Description du Parnasse François* (1760).

48. The phrase "*Panthéon de papier*" is used by Jean Claude Bonnet in reference to mid-century efforts to establish a laicized cult of French genius. Cf. Jean Claude Bonnet, *La Naissance du Panthéon: Essai sur le culte des grands hommes* (Paris: Fayard, 1998).

49. Ibid.

50. Edelstein, *The Enlightenment*, 45.

51. Ibid.

52. For more information on the temporal dimensions of Louis' kingship, see Bryson, *Word and Image*, 39–41.

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