

The
RUTGERS
ART
REVIEW

*Published by the Graduate Students
of the Department of Art History*

Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey

*Volume 27
2011*

Copyright © 2012
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey
All rights reserved
Manufactured in the United States of America
ISSN 0194-049X

Rutgers Art Review

Volume 27

Editors Catherine Kupiec, Mary Manning and Kathleen Sullivan

Editorial Board Kimberly Fisher
 Lauren Kane
 Kira Maye
 Colette Obzejta
 Leigh-Ayna Passamano
 Robyn Radway
 Melissa Yuen

Proofreaders Brenna Graham
 Lauren Henning
 Kate Scott
 Melissa Yuen

Faculty Advisor Benjamin Paul

The Rutgers Art Review (RAR) is an annual journal produced by graduate students in the Department of Art History at Rutgers University. The journal is dedicated to presenting original research by graduate students in Art History and related fields. For each volume the editors convene an editorial board made up of students from the department and review all new submissions. The strongest papers are then sent to established scholars in order to confirm that each one will contribute to existing scholarship. Articles appearing in *RAR* are abstracted and indexed online in America: History and Life, ARTbibliographies Modern, the Avery Index to Architectural Periodicals, BHA (Bibliography of the History of Art), Historical Abstracts, and the Wilson Art Index. The journal is distributed by subscription to many of the finest university, museum, and public libraries in North America and Europe. Beginning in 2013 *RAR* will be available for download on *RAR*'s website, as well as via the search engines listed above. For this reason we will no longer be accepting subscriptions for *RAR* from volume 29 onwards. For information about subscribing to paper volumes before Volume 29 please visit our website at <http://rar.rutgers.edu>.

Correspondence to *RAR* editors may be sent to rutgersartreview@gmail.com

CONTENTS

Volume 27

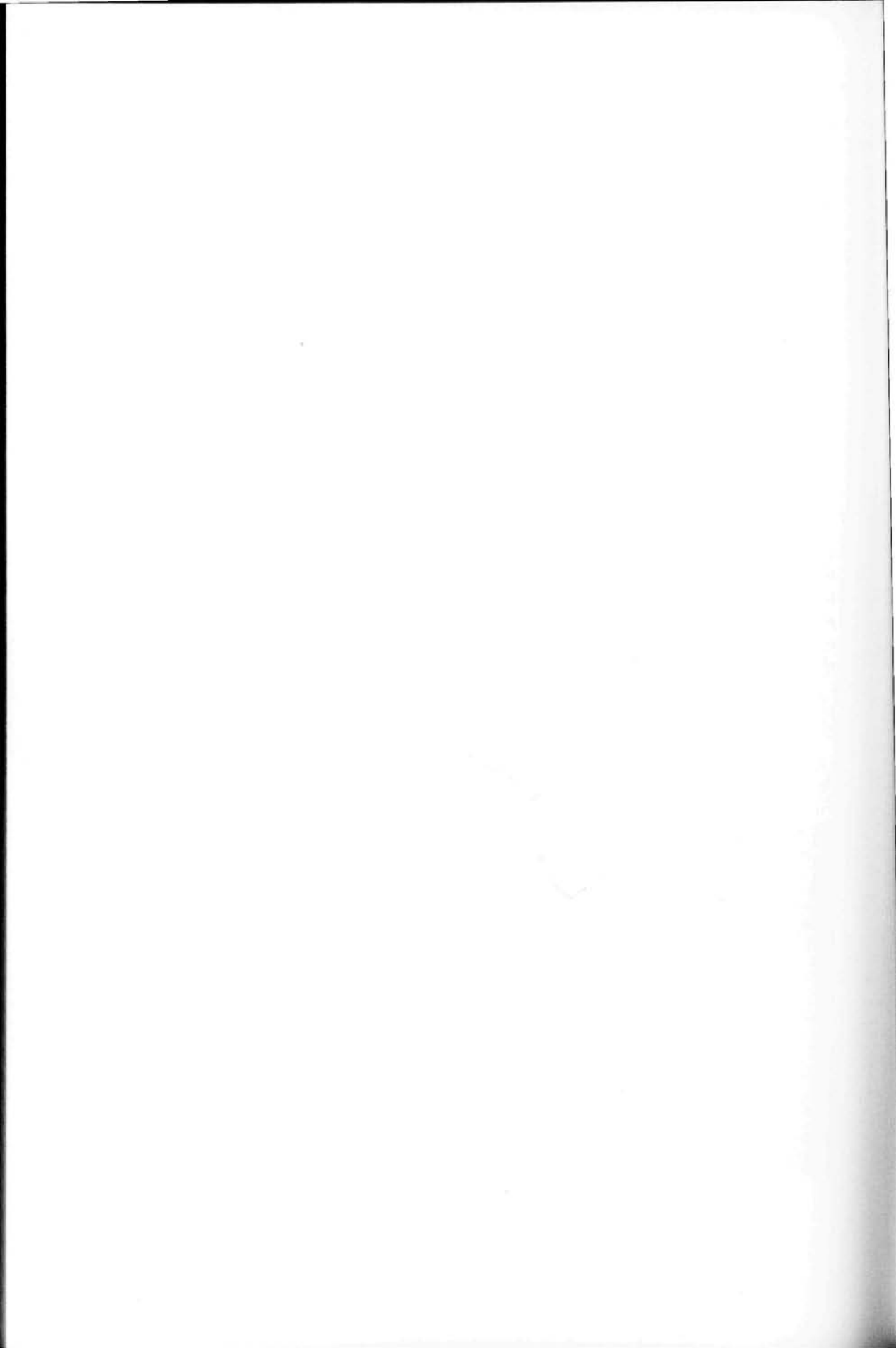
2011

Articles

- Holy Ground: Mud, Materiality, and Meaning in the Djenne Mosque
MICHELLE APOTSOS 2
- Iconography and Identity in Frederick Rihel's Equestrian Portrait
DENISE GIANNINO 17
- Marginalized Music?: Bernardo Strozzi's Peasant Musicians
CHARLOTTE POULTON 31
- A Pan-American Art Exhibit for the *World of Tomorrow*: The 1939
and 1940 Latin American Exhibitions at the Riverside Museum
SUSANNA TEMKIN 49

Acknowledgements

The completion of volume 27 of *The Rutgers Art Review* would not have been possible without the dedicated help of many individuals. Foremost among those to whom we owe special thanks are the graduate students who contributed their essays for publication: Michelle Apotsos, Denise Giannino, Charlotte Poulton, and Susanna Temkin. We are also indebted to the supervision of our faculty advisor Professor Benjamin Paul and to the stewardship of many past and present *RAR* editors. Many thanks to our editorial board for carefully reading, selecting and proofreading these papers for publication: Kimberly Fisher, Brenna Graham, Lauren Henning, Lauren Kane, Kira Maye, Colette Obzejta, Leigh-Ayna Passamano, Robyn Radway, Kate Scott, and Melissa Yuen. In addition to the hard work of these graduate students, many anonymous outside readers also graciously offered their time and expertise in reviewing these papers and enhancing the quality of the journal, and to them we extend our sincere appreciation. Finally, we would like to thank the Detroit Institute of Arts and The Bridgeman Art Library, New York, for permission to reproduce Bernardo Strozzi's *Street Musicians* on the cover of this volume.



Holy Ground: Mud, Materiality, and Meaning in the Djenne Mosque

Michelle Apotsos

"Architecture both reflects and affects society..."
-Labelle Prussin¹

In 1988 the Djenne Mosque in Mali, West Africa was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site, a designation that brought forth both international support and financial resources for the effective conservation and continuation of the unique traditions and reparation practices associated with the structure. As an organization dedicated to fostering cross-cultural collaborations and relationships, UNESCO operates under the premise of a worldwide heritage, composed of a variety of protected sites deemed to embody humanity's global legacy. And yet, the ideologically ambitious 'protection' that UNESCO has afforded this particular site may have inadvertently robbed the mosque of a crucial element that contributes to its capacity to function within its localized context: its ability to change or evolve over time and space.

While the idea of architecture as a fluid form seems antithetical to the typically stoic Western ideals of permanence and perpetuity, the ephemeral aspects of the Djenne Mosque's structural medium, earth, allow it to communicate and conceptually interact with its human counterparts through a variety of culturally coded semiotic channels. Because of the unique material nature of the Djenne mosque, which gives itself freely to the stresses of time and the environment, a specialized system of indigenous folklore and ritualized seasonal maintenance has developed around the structure to facilitate its signification and collaboration with the Djenninke community as a mode of actively reinventing and reinforcing cultural and material specificity. By arresting its ability to evolve, UNESCO may in fact have undermined the mosque's most fundamental signifying tool.

The initial premise underlying this hypothesis underscores the idea that built form is inherently communicative. As an organizer of space, a maker of place, and a source of cultural ethos, architecture, through its various physical and conceptual realities, demonstrates a program of visual aesthetic and social narrative that is mediated by the perception and experience of an observing participant and is in dialogue with its parent society as a culturally resonant symbol system. This codified scheme functions even at the most basic level of an architectural construct in which a structure's material being, as David Summers observes in formalist discussions, constitutes an inherent part of a work's expressive message due to its unavoidable conditioning of form.² And yet, materiality in architecture does not speak solely, or in the case of indigenous African architecture, even primarily through its formal capacities. The facets of materiality that are inherent in a structural medium are unaffected by the form the material will eventually assume and can therefore potentially signify in a manner dissociated from form. As I will show, the earth used to construct Mali's Djenne Mosque provides eloquent proof for this hypothesis and becomes a fitting demonstration of a material's potential symbolic properties. As such, it disproves the erroneous but commonly held assumption that the signifying aspects of the earthen medium, realized in this context as a Barthesian sign or 'form,' are inadvertent. The diverse layers of meanings and significations resulting from the various conceptual and material qualities of earthen material collaborate in a variety of ingenious ways to create imaginative displays of ideology, functionality, tension, and psychological aura for the target audience. Thus, it would be short-sighted to continue to categorize, as scholars have done in the

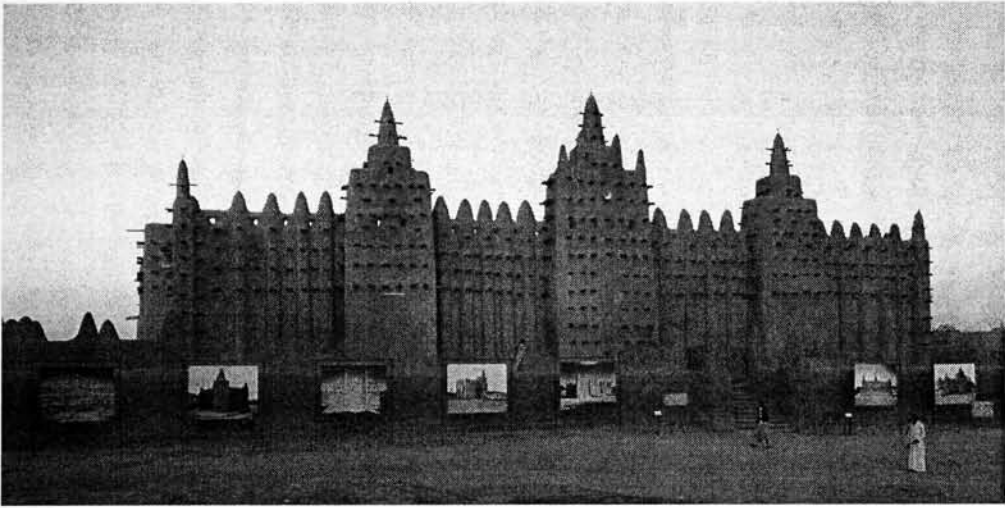


Figure 1. The Djenne Mosque, 1907, earth and timber, Djenne, Mali. *Adobe Mosques of Mali* Exhibition in Djenne. Copyright, Sebastian Schutyser, www.sebastian-schutyser.com

past, this signification as a semi-isolated incident that utilizes an “available tool kit” to construct meaningful form.³

Materiality as the basis for a methodological system of analysis is hardly a novel concept in disciplines oriented towards aesthetics and/or visuality, architecture being the glaring exception. Yet the medium often takes a back seat to issues of form and space in matters of hermeneutic significance within art historical discourse. Georges Didi-Huberman has engaged in in-depth explorations of the ways in which medium can complicate, compete with, and even displace formal dominance in matters of meaningful representation. In his analysis of wax in “The Order of Material: Plasticities, Malaises, Survivals,” he observes that traditional art historical discourses treat material as always “waiting for a ‘form’ to redeem it, which alone could provide a dignified outward appearance.”⁴ This lack of agency and assertive ability is also underscored by the term ‘plastic arts,’ in which the implied malleability of the medium automatically subjects it to the whims of formal composition. Yet Didi-Huberman makes a point of emphasizing the innate ductile qualities of media in order to highlight the sensual qualities and metaphors that have issued as a result of their material qualities. The palpable, demonstrative impressions associated with wax as being ‘soft,’ virginal, and warm, for example, provide a number of sensate connotations that form a nascent basis for meaningful representation and can readily be applied to the visceral plasticity of the earthen medium in architectural form.⁵

Importantly, however, the material flexibility of media such as wax and earth results in a number of contradictory realities. Favoring few specific tools, textures, or tonalities, these materials maintain and display the various impressions and textures left by the tools that have shaped them as an ode to their assemblage processes.⁶ Further implications are felt when Didi-Huberman observes, “it will...keep, without my even thinking about it or wishing it, the impression of my fingers and the traces of my most unwitting movements.”⁷ By retaining the unconscious gestures, inadvertent impressions, and slips of the artistic hand, each medium becomes empowered beyond the control of the creator. Thus, through the very act of subjugation that has, to this point, cast material as a minor player in the creative signifying process, it is able to attain agency via a blatant display of visual honesty that lies beyond the control of form, and this creates further implications regarding a medium’s phenomenological qualities. As ‘revelatory of being,’ matter “possesses a *viscosity*, a kind

of *activity* or intrinsic power, which is the power of metamorphosis, polymorphosis, or insensibility to contradiction," Didi-Huberman observes.⁸ As such, the medium maintains a type of subtle authorship independent of formal elements and becomes phenomenologically embedded in a 'fantasy of materiality,'⁹ which, in addition to evoking life outside its own reality, has the distinct flavor of a Barthesian myth.¹⁰

The deconstruction of the material condition reveals two primary realities of a medium: firstly, material exists as a physical substance that constitutes the basic element of every form; secondly, it exists simultaneously as a somehow 'lesser' substance—immature, unformed, subordinate, juvenile, and amorphous.¹¹ This latter, 'second order' myth in Barthesian terminology is the obvious target of Didi-Huberman's analysis, which aspires to demonstrate that the medium has the innate potential to escape its own subjugated objecthood by assuming the mantle of signifier as opposed to merely sign. In doing so, the medium assumes specific resonances as it immerses itself within the culturally informed, semiological systems of its own contextual environment, and thus invests itself with the communicative potential to engage in an experiential dialogue with its human participants. Methodologically speaking, materiality provides an insightful lens through which to think about and understand architecture, and provides a mode of analyzing architectural properties from a 'sensitotic' standpoint.¹²

An analysis of earth in the construction of the Djenné Mosque effectively brings this methodology into contextual focus. The mosque (Figure 1), located in Djenné, Mali, is the largest freestanding earthen structure in the world and has existed in one iteration or another for over five hundred years. The diverse functional and material realities of earth in the Djenné context not only buttress the area's regional spirituality, but also define and reify it on a basic level. Earth in the construction of the mosque evokes the essence of Djenné's own particular mythology that has been created over a millennia of social, political, and cultural shifts and exchanges. Yet this chronology raises a specific issue in terms of the mosque's continuing relationship with its community. Because societies must shift or adapt to survive, how have the mosque's material qualities remained 'in tune' with the cultural voice of Djenné's evolving community? It is this issue that will be unpacked throughout the remainder of the text.

Both the mosque and the city's turbulent history shed light on the development of the structure's particular cultural aura in relation to its building material; yet, the evidence provided by this narrative is somewhat problematic as many key aspects of Djenné's history are speculative at best. Yet one can distill a generalized account from available sources that suggests a method of deconstructing the primary realities of the mosque towards an understanding of its function as a collection of both conscious and unconscious cultural gestures.¹³ A main aspect of this history, of course, is the slow but steady incursion of Islamic doctrine into the West African narrative, a migration that facilitated many practical as well as ideological mutations as Muslim philosophies found fresh expression with the indigenous practices of a variety of cultural groups whose rich and diverse traditions created intricate patterns within the Islamic ideological tapestry. In return, Islamic ideology began to renegotiate its own ideological boundaries to contend with these indigenous systems and as a result, various Afro-Islamic hybrids emerged within African cultural space, and were expressed via material and architectural productions.

The original city of Jenne-Jeno, among the oldest recorded settlements in Sub-Saharan Africa, was initially established around 250 BCE as a rudimentary market site geared towards the region's nascent agricultural production.¹⁴ Over time, Jenne-Jeno developed into a thriving urban and cultural metropolis supposedly on par with its legendary sister city Timbuktu, but was eventually abandoned in favor of Djenné's current location around the beginning of the fifteenth century. The reasons for this shift are speculative, but some accounts indicate that the overwhelming presence of "non-Muslim practices" at the old Djenné site were intolerable to the "newly Islamicized popula-

tion."¹⁵ Centuries later, Djenne now exists as a remote desert village of a couple thousand residents with the Sahara Desert quickly encroaching from the North.¹⁶ Located in the inland Niger River Delta, Djenne rests on a flood plain that for part of the year becomes an island, giving Djenne the dubious honor of being dubbed the 'Venice' of Africa.

The mosque itself (Figure 1) is located in Djenne's main market square and acts as an architectural, cultural, and spiritual centerpiece for the community. The structure, with its distinctive aesthetic style and unique conceptual program, is commonly interpreted as an architectonic synthesis of spirituality: an Islamic construct utilizing the visual standards of local traditional practices to create a coordinated sign system emblematic of the resulting derivative culture. Because of the malleable characteristics of its medium, the mosque can be interpreted not only as a form, but as an event and an ongoing physical process as well, which continuously interacts with the environment, a reality that challenges Western architectural notions of stasis and continuity. Thus, it is fitting that the mosque's historical narrative, fraught as it is with demolitions, reconstructions, and relocations, directly mimics the structure's unique physical versatility.

However, a discussion of the origins of the Djenne Mosque must naturally begin with a discussion of the origins of its motivating spiritualities. The pre-Islamic religious practices that were so widespread among the sedentary communities in the West African savannah belt were based on agricultural events ordered around environmental conditions and seasonal changes, and produced a pantheon of minor deities that actively engaged with the human environment. Earth veneration in this context became the focus of a number of ceremonial practices aimed at promoting prosperity and renewal within the realm of communal life.¹⁷ As Prussin observes, "[man's] ties to the earth have been...profound, so that he placated it and compromised with it as often as he controlled it."¹⁸ In this context, earth veneration provided a nascent platform on which subsequent spiritual and cultural events were constructed, and these occasions would gradually lend an aura of mythological resonance to earth not only as a natural material, but as an architectural one as well.¹⁹

As Islamic practice came south across the desert in the "saddlebags of the caravan merchants" around 1000 CE, it carried with it innovative and alternative systems of trade, law, and urban politics.²⁰ Because Djenne's geographic location along the Niger made it a point of convergence for numerous trade routes and networks bridging North and West Africa, Djenne is often considered to be one of the primary distillation points for Islamic/Mande cultural and spiritual hybridity. It is interesting to note, however, that because the spiritual paradigms of sedentary life revolved around agriculture, animal husbandry, and the family, Islam as a religious system was initially unable to offer a more attractive spiritual alternative.²¹

Yet, Islamic ideology and practice within this context remained flexible and highly adaptive, and gradually assimilated the psycho-religious needs of the Djenninke community into its own by injecting itself into the ceremonial cycles of the community itself.²² In doing so, it also incorporated Djenne's pre-Islamic materialistic processes and technologies as a mode of cultural negotiation, integration, and strategic assimilation. Because pre-Islamic belief paradigms ascribed mythic characteristics to earthen material, and indigenous structures were often solely composed of it, the use of earth in the construction of the mosque was not only visually and culturally resonant with the surrounding communal area, but also made the structure more conceptually and spiritually 'digestible' to the community by overlaying its surface 'Islam-ness' with an already present, culturally indoctrinated layer of meaning and significance.²³ Thus, it was this ability to negotiate with and assimilate indigenous cultural paradigms that allowed Islamic practice to spread as rapidly as it did across the face of Sub-Saharan Africa, and caused not only the hybridization of both Islamic and indigenous cultural practice, but also a material alliance through the integration of local forms, meanings, and materials into Islam's own transplanted architectural programs. The resulting aesthetic has been colorfully described as "an indigenous savannah fabric into which select salient features

of North African Islam [were] woven like gold or colored threads."²⁴ Poetic as this statement is, however, it nonetheless oversimplifies the complex nature of Islam's impact on and interaction with the West African socio-cultural psyche.

Islamicization was and continues to be an ongoing process, not a singular momentous event or even a series of events. Over time, it has evolved into an authentically African phenomenon whose evolutionary progression, according to Benjamin Ray, is constituted of "a history of several phases and types of religion," resulting in the development of multiple religious and cultural syncretisms, all of which illustrate the distinctive character that defines sub-Saharan Islamic practice.²⁵ A key component in the reality of African Islamic philosophy, particularly that of West Africa, is that it is inherently pluralistic with "one Islam...structured by the requirements of the faith...[and] numerous local interpretations thereof once the core prerequisites are fulfilled."²⁶ To view Islam as an interloping religion assimilating into a foreign context is to ignore the greater function of the Islamic paradigm within the African context as not only a faith, but a worldview "with all the attendant material cultural implications which such a statement implies."²⁷ Additionally, when Islamic doctrines arrived, they did not find Africa an empty spiritual cup waiting to be filled. Numerous diverse customs and traditions of a multitude of African cultural groups acted as "contributing source[s]" or "active ingredient[s]" towards the development of a variety of Afro-Islamic identities that both acknowledged their hybrid foundations while also stressing their authenticity as truly African phenomena.²⁸ Such was the situation of the particular 'iteration' of Islamic practice that eventually developed in Djenne, whose cultural, architectural, and material components eventually formed the ideological predisposition of the first mosque and the later structures to come.

It is generally thought that Koi Konboro (dates unknown), Djenne's twenty-sixth king and the first to convert to Islam in the early thirteenth century, was responsible for creating the initial Djenne Mosque. Various accounts have Konboro either transforming his palace into the first Great Mosque of Djenne, or tearing down his palace to have a mosque erected in its place.²⁹ Presently, two main areas in Djenne have been identified as sites of various 'Great Mosques' over time, the first being the original location of Konboro's palace, and the second being the area where the current mosque now stands. It has been speculated that after its initial construction, the first mosque may have stood for six centuries until it was demolished during the iconoclastic reign of Sheku Amadou at the beginning of the 1800s, but this assumption is still debated and many alternative theories³⁰ abound.³¹ Yet it is important to mention one key figure in this long narrative: the legendary Mansa Musa (1312 CE – 1337 CE), king of the Malian Empire who, after his pilgrimage to Mecca in the fourteenth century, constructed numerous mosques throughout the region, though with an observant eye to the religious pluralism of his subjects.³² By incorporating large earthen mounds into the mosque architecture as a nod towards the West African tradition of the ancestral pillar, Musa contributed to the creation of a mediated structural form that spoke to both Islamic and indigenous spiritual paradigms.³³ Through this iconographic program, the mosque style not only acknowledged its syncretic origins, but also promoted the structural development of a more ideologically honest form of architecture that reflected the true nature of the communal religious-cultural condition at the time.³⁴ These pinnacles continue to line the rooftop of the mosque today; they also adorn numerous other structures within the Djennenke community and architectural forms as far south as the Gold Coast (Ghana) as a nod towards the celebrated *Sudanaise* style of building.

From Mansa Musa's time onward, the narrative of the mosque is one fraught with invasion and occupation, which often resulted in the building's destruction and subsequent reification in one form or another on each of the major sites previously addressed.³⁵ The mosque that currently exists in Djenne was rebuilt in 1907 under French colonial authority and has been interpreted as a symbol of French imperialism, leading many African scholars such as eminent architect and architectural historian Labelle Prussin to debate the mosque's stylistic authenticity as a valid rep-

resentation of an indigenous Djenninke architectural aesthetic.³⁶ Prussin holds that because the rebuilding occurred under a foreign administration utilizing outside funds and engineering, the structure inherently reflects a French academic vision. In addition, the narrative of the process suggests a distinct political agenda, enhanced by colonial accounts of the lackadaisical efforts of the local community in the rebuilding process.³⁷

While Prussin's opinion may have merit, it is one of many arguments put forth concerning this issue; in addition, it is important to point out that such formalistic opinions fail to take into account the roots of the mosque's cultural signification, which would indicate (more than any other piece of evidence) whether or not its visual strategy is 'authentic' in terms of its resonance with the indigenous community. This statement also provokes another problematic issue, which is the amorphous concept of authenticity. In viewing architecture as a cultural signifier, the question is not whether the form is representative of an appropriate or 'correct' traditional aesthetic (which would imply both cultural stasis and monolithic interpretation) but whether the aesthetic 'spoke to' its target community at the time of its creation and whether it has continued to resonate in this function as both the structure and its human participants have evolved over time. The material nature of the Djenne mosque plays a fundamental role in this authenticating process and is singularly responsible for its continued significance with and signification within its communal context.

The current mosque in Djenne (Figure 2) sits on a raised pedestal dais of mud brick held together by earthen mortar and covered with clay plaster.³⁸ The general thickness of the walls ranges one and a half to two feet, with denser areas located near the bottom to absorb the full

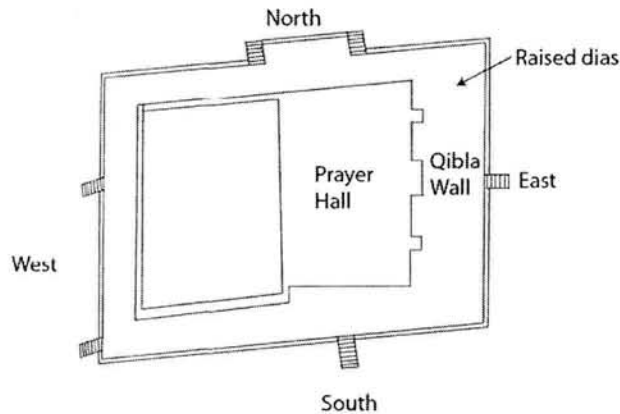


Figure 2. Schematic of the Djenne Mosque. Illustration by the author.

* Note to the reader: This plan is assumed to be current

weight of the structure. Its four facades are adorned with rounded pinnacles, engaged pillars or pilasters, and bundles of palm sticks called *toron* that are built into the sides of the walls to wick moisture from the interior while also providing scaffolding for yearly reparation events. Three massive rectilinear towers buoy the *qibla* wall, and the central tower incorporates a staircase leading to a perch on the roof where the *muezzin* calls the faithful to prayer. These earthen towers are capped with diminishing apices and crowned with ostrich eggs, which not only protect the delicate pinnacles from erosion, but also refer to indigenous fertility traditions.³⁹ Prussin notes that the mosque's "true African countenance" is on the northern face of the structure (Figure 3), where the compositions of form and void "echo[es] the innumerable carved wooden countenances in masking traditions and the facades of altar shrines" (Figure 4).⁴⁰ In addition, there are five earthen ancestral pillars that rise from the top of the wall, which itself is composed of positive and negative spaces that recede and advance like a geometric tide. These pillars pay homage not only to the continuous presence of the ancestors, a past that constantly and conscientiously informs the present, but also to the tenets of the Islamic faith in the form of the five pillars of Islam, which constitute the general framework of

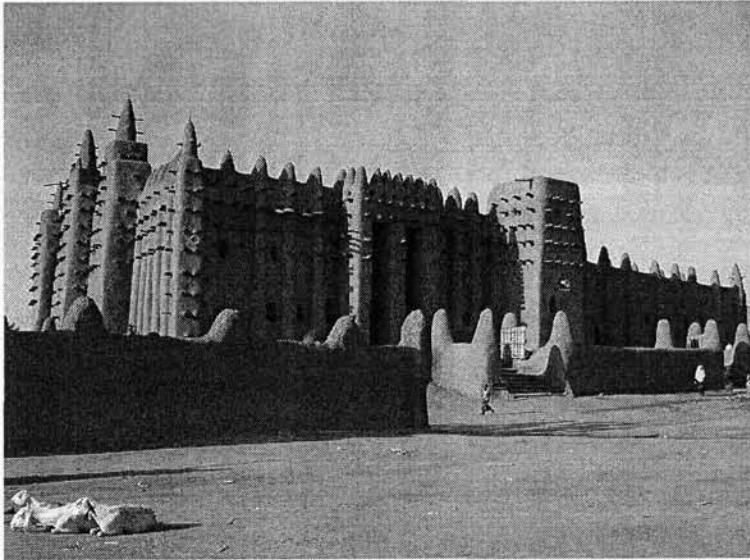


Figure 3. The Northern Face of the Djenné Mosque, earth and timber, Djenné, Mali. Copyright, Andy Gilham

Muslim life. One might speculate, then, that these aspects of Islamic faith have been assimilated into the indigenous fold like “newly adopted ancestors,” to quote Prussin.⁴¹

The spatial and formal elements of the mosque, aesthetically and conceptually dense as they are, nonetheless work, act, and signify together on the stage of Djenné’s primary communicative tool: its architectural material. Earth conveys the impression that the mosque is an outgrowth of the soil, reaching up like a gestural prayer to the heavens, and it is at this moment that the mosque’s cultural signification begins. Religious architecture, or architecture of the spirit, generally aims to identify and then signify humankind’s relationship with the invisible and the unknowable through a system of signs that reflect specific spiritual and cultural knowledge. The material qualities of the earthen medium are a principle element in this paradigm.⁴² Regarding earth as an architectural material, Prussin writes:

Like Mother Earth in other cultures, it is the source of well-being, of prosperity, of fertility, and of the continuity of life. It is the abode of the ancestors and the past, which validate the existence of the present and the anticipation of the future. Thus, all things formed and shaped by the earth carry, inherent in them, an expressive quality and a symbolic message.⁴³

Earth’s spiritual import and inherent signification are eloquently expressed in the genesis story of Djenné’s first mosque in which *djins*, or spirits, walked back and forth from the Niger river bank for days, carrying small baskets of mud on their heads that they then deposited on the spot that was to be the Djenné mosque.⁴⁴ Such folklore instills in the earthen medium a certain mystical quality associated with the idea of divine endorsement, which is embellished by the practical function of earth as the provider of sustenance and nourishment via its agricultural ‘blessings.’ By using earth as an architectural medium, man gives physical form to the spiritual protection that the earth abstractly and concretely provides. In addition, in constructing shelter from mud, man pays subconscious homage to the ancestors who have returned to the earth to watch over the daily activities of their descendants.

The distinctive material qualities of earthen architecture are also highlighted in their dynamic

interaction and expression within the physical environment. In the Djennanke context, the plastic characteristics of the earthen medium collaborate with seasonal changes of the desert habitat to catalyze a physical metamorphosis in built form whose visual mutations trigger a number of cultural actions, events, and consequences. Mud structures tend to 'melt' after the rainy seasons of the Sahel and thus must be maintained regularly to retain their shape and structural integrity. The life cycle of a structure is measured in terms of these material-oriented shifts, and the resulting periodic maintenance, which typically occurs on an annual basis, has assumed a ceremonial aspect informed by culturally specific social cycles within the community. The physical alteration of an earthen form provides a visual indication of the progression of time via changing textures, formal

anomalies, and shifting surface characteristics. This phenomenon, interestingly, contradicts a fundamental Western architectural premise that Donald Preziosi calls the "property of object-permanence."⁴⁵ This concept holds that the lasting aspects of traditional architectural forms are often assumed to be "sustained note[s] in an ongoing and dynamic orchestration of signs," with the typical physical longevity of a structure preserving the signifier in a way that verbal rapport and other forms of abstract communication cannot.⁴⁶ While the material form of the Djenne mosque obviously maintains its structural integrity for longer than a word or gesture, its earthen medium still signifies primarily from the base of its ephemeral nature and, as such, its resulting dynamic aspects are recognized, accommodated, and even celebrated in the seasonal activities that surround its maintenance.

The replastering and replenishment of Djenne are indicative of this 'material celebration', which occurs on an annual basis in a festive tradition that has been described appropriately as "as cyclical as the harvest," and in which the individuals of the community apply "new mud like balm on weathered skin...[to]...heal the erosion of annual rains."⁴⁷ This regenerative process not only safeguards the mosque's physical form, but also signals the rebirth of the land after the Sahelian rainy season. Additionally, the mosque's renewal allows the community to refresh their ties with the earth and their ancestors, a pilgrimage made possible by the laborious, mud-spattered replenishment of Djenne's earthen surface. Prussin calls such activity a "salvation event in which human experience is re-created and renewed in the

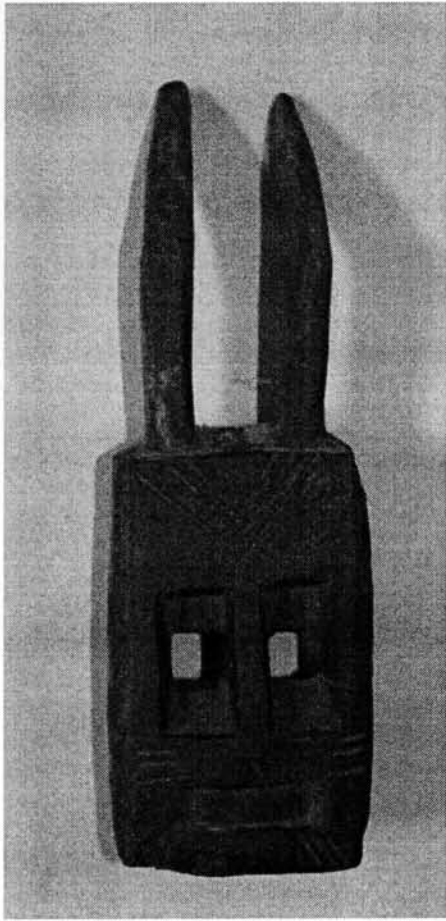


Figure 4. Dogon mask (possibly antelope).
Personal collection of the author

all-important ritual Present."⁴⁸ Through this act, the enduring ideologies of the Djenne mosque and community are reaffirmed, not through the permanent aspects of the structure's formal objecthood but through the realization of earth's reality as independent, referential, and above all ephemeral.

Such events underscore the specific power of the material medium over the physical form in terms of the phenomenological collaborations that take place between a structure and its human participants. W. J. T. Mitchell once observed that "a medium is more than the materials of which

it is composed.”⁴⁹ With this statement, Mitchell addresses the innate power of the medium to supersede its physical reality and assume a more dialectical role. It is this power that has the potential to advance, emphasize, and even undermine the agency of the institutions of ‘artist’ and ‘form’ via the fact that “the material aspects of a work are part of its intuitive, conceptual, and formal making.”⁵⁰ The mythologies surrounding mud in the Djenne Mosque utilize earth as a signifier, not just a sign, and thus evoke the aforementioned historical, aesthetic, and mythological narratives for a culturally informed audience who then utilize this information to interact with the structure. In other words, the various narratives of the medium act as a reservoir of context on which the mosque’s cultural resonance is based; narratives such as Djenne’s mythic origin story and its connection with the ancestral realm evoke fundamental truths of cultural, religious, and communal unity and reunion, all contributing to the living essence of the mosque itself.

The idea of earth as a building material or a composer of architectural form is empty, shallow, isolated, and impoverished; yet, earth as a mode of spiritual synthesis and ancestral worship connects itself fundamentally to the ontological realities of its communal context.⁵¹ This resonance only waits to be acknowledged by a human audience equipped with the cultural knowledge and intuition to appropriately comprehend these references. The viewer must say: “it is *I* whom it has come to seek. It is turned towards me, I am subjected to its intentional force, it summons me to receive its expansive ambiguity.”⁵² This acknowledgment reifies and naturalizes the ‘myths’ of the medium, giving them a more factual inflection and thus more interpretive cultural legitimacy. While some may argue that the idea of actualizing myth in this sense undermines analytic validity in terms of a ‘true’ historical narrative, Barthes argues that myth does not ‘deny’ things; it “purifies them, it makes them innocent, it gives them a natural and eternal justification...”⁵³ It gives them intrinsic clarity and eliminates contradictions. To utilize a final quote from Barthes: “...whatever its mistakes, mythology is certain to participate in the making of the world...mythology harmonizes the world, not as it is, but as it wants to create itself.”⁵⁴ This type of evidence in itself can be very useful in terms of deconstructing and reinterpreting the Djenne Mosque as a living structure, expressed through the ephemerality, movement, and evolution of its material qualities that invest it with a life beyond that implied by its form.

The importance of this paradigm within medium-oriented programs such as Djenne has been underscored in recent years by a resistance to the introduction of Western material technologies within many indigenous architectural construction paradigms. Such technologies have begun to affect spiritual constructs as well as domestic and commercial/business architecture with increasing frequency all over Mali, and West Africa more broadly. Alarming, iconic structures such as the Djenne Mosque are often in danger of being ‘refurbished’ by these technologies in the name of modernization. After refusing both a Saudi-based architectural firm that proposed to reconstruct the Djenne Mosque in concrete and a Libyan group that offered to replace the mosque’s traditional sand floor with tile, Djenne has now been branded a World Heritage Site by UNESCO, whose entrance into Djenninke cultural space has cloaked modern intrusion within a more surreptitious form.⁵⁵ UNESCO states that “World Heritage Sites belong to all the peoples of the world, irrespective of the territory on which they are located,” and, as a conservation organization, UNESCO “encourag[es] participation of the local population in the preservation of their cultural and natural heritage; [and] encourag[es] international cooperation in the conservation of our world’s cultural and natural heritage.”⁵⁶ Behind these words however lies an insidious element of cultural enforcement at play, in which preservation becomes a convenient mask for the resolute objectification of a site; pressure is brought to bear on aspects concerning how this new ‘object’ should be displayed not for its community, but for the world. In this way, the site becomes divorced from its context and appropriated by a more ‘global’ worldview.

Djenne is more at risk than most in this circumstance, due to the fact that so much of its cul-

tural significance is tied to its ability to shift and evolve over time and in tandem with its cultural context. By throwing it into the arena of international consumption under the banner of 'cultural preservation,' the Djenne Mosque's originary mythic aspects and resonance as a cultural signifier are being usurped. Instead of an embodiment of spirituality, communal unity, and eternal life, Djenne now refracts the exoticism and mystique of a globalized ideal of authenticity, a quality that carries eerie resonance with the colonial 'Other.' By 'cementing', as it were, the traditional practices and materials used in the mosque, Djenne has become a static object encased within a virtual museum as opposed to a dynamic living and evolving entity that interacts with its environment. The symbiotic aspects of its relationship with its community are now secondary; elements of spirituality, ancestral communion, and communal unity have been moved to the back of the bus by international preservation directives. Thus, by potentially usurping the meaningful characteristics of earth, UNESCO's preservation may, in fact, have become an act of destruction.

The worst possible outcome of this situation would be that the material voice of the mosque is silenced; form will retake the mosque as the dominant—albeit impoverished and inappropriate—signifier, the disastrous result of the world inserting itself into the definition of a regional identity. No longer allowed to progress, the mosque and its material nature might, in the future, cease to create a meaningful dialogue with its parent society, and the resulting rupture would deny the community the benefits of an interactive relationship with the structure and its underlying ideology.⁵⁷ One might also question whether or not Djenne was in need of these particular preservation efforts to begin with. To recontextualize Oleg Grabar's statement concerning the formation of Islamic architecture,

...a monumental form tends to survive only if the associations surrounding it continue to be meaningful. When such meanings disappear, wither away, or are no longer important, the form either disappears...or acquires new meanings.⁵⁸

Through various invasions, destructions, reifications, and religious evolutions, the Djenne mosque has endured, changed yet stoic in its continuing presence. Why does the issue of its preservation arise now?

Additional support for this argument comes from the most unexpected of places: Western architectural technology itself, which has swept over conventional modes of West African architectural construction in recent decades. Large-scale public buildings and private housing structures in Sub-Saharan regions are more often than not utilizing cement instead of mud in construction due to the fact that cement does not require the regular maintenance that a traditional earthen structure demands.⁵⁹ However, the fact that cement is both expensive and generally impractical within a sub-Saharan climate tends to fall by the wayside in the face of the inherent significations of cement that, far from being an ideologically neutral material, represent a sense of modernity and advancement, of technological achievement and progressive thinking based on its formidable material elements as well as its cultural connections with the Western world. As a nontraditional, secularly referential material, cement has developed its own signification as a material of development and evolution, not just because of the structures that it composes but because of its material and cultural connotations.⁶⁰

With this in mind, this paper is not designed to provide 'concrete' solutions to these problems, but aspires to frame them in such a way as to encourage further scholarship into the role of medium as signifier within architectural form while providing the potential scaffolding for a medium-based methodology in architectural studies. Many issues remain to be parsed on various scholarly fronts, particularly those concerning facets of "multifunctionality" i.e. architecture as art, housing, engineering, theatre, and even "three-dimensional economics," all of which pose interesting dilemmas for the interpretation of the medium's role within them.⁶¹ Additionally, the relationships and tensions

between collaborative or competing symbol systems within a structure necessitate an even more in-depth exploration of the functioning realities of medium within the architectural paradigm, addressing hierarchies of signification as well as the subjective, phenomenological experience of the viewer. As previously stated, these issues and others like them are beyond the scope of this project, but hopefully the idea of architecture expressed by the Djenne Mosque provides an alterative angle with which to approach meaning in built form via materiality as a "complicated tissue of events in which connections of different kinds alternate or overlap or combine and thereby determine the texture of the whole."⁶²

Funding for the previous research was generously provided by the Department of Art History at Tufts University and the Mary Anne Bours Nimmo Graduate Fellowship Fund at Stanford University. Michelle Apotos' article on the Djenne Mosque is an outgrowth of one of two qualifying papers she completed for her Master's degree in African Art History at Tufts University. Michelle is currently a Ph.D. ABD (all but dissertation) candidate in the Art and Art History Department at Stanford University, focusing on Afro-Islamic architecture. She is also a current recipient of the Mary Anne Bours Nimmo Graduate Fellowship and the Abbasi Program in Islamic Studies Research Grant, both of which have enabled her to pursue her dissertation research on the Islamic architecture of Northern Ghana. Michelle was a Peace Corps volunteer in Mali from 1999-2001 and has been actively researching the material culture of West Africa since that period.

Endnotes

- 1 Labelle Prussin, *Hatumere: Islamic Design in West Africa* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1986), 20.
- 2 David Summers, "Response: How is the Past in the Present?" *The Art Bulletin* 89, no. 3 (Summer 2007): 493.
- 3 Labelle Prussin, "An Introduction to Indigenous African Architecture," *The Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 33, no. 3. (Oct. 1974): 191. Architect and architectural historian Labelle Prussin was one of the first scholars to identify the potential significance of mud as a building material, although it did not constitute the primary theoretical thrust of her research.
- 4 Georges Didi-Huberman, "The Order of Material: Plasticities, Malaises, Survivals," in *Sculpture and Psychoanalysis* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2006), 196.
- 5 Ibid.
- 6 Ibid., 199.
- 7 Ibid., 201.
- 8 Ibid., 201-202.
- 9 Ibid., 197.
- 10 In terms of a "Barthesian mythology," I understand mythology in this sense to be an ideological or philosophical interpretation or construct applied to the original signification of a sign, in effect creating a tertiary structural element to the already existing sign-and-signification relationship. Briefly, each element in this relationship manifests in a particular way; in the simplest of terms, the sign constitutes the concrete manifestation of a signification, which in turn is the conceptual reality of that sign. A Barthesian myth takes the interpretation of this sign a step beyond this initial rapport and assigns an ideological signification to this relationship which, through cultural reinforcement, assumes equal status with that of the original signification.
- 11 Didi-Huberman, 195.
- 12 The term was coined by Henry John Drewal to describe his methodology of approach to African objects ("Senses in Understandings of Art," *African Art* (Summer 2005): 1, +4, +6, +88, +96.
- 13 Oral histories, written narratives, and traditions compose a majority of the source material concerning Djenné's past and often provide contradictory accounts of the area's development. Thus, over the years, a somewhat broad account of the origin and evolution of the Djenné area and its material culture has been compiled using available evidence and considerable license (Prussin, *Hatumere*, 180).
- 14 James L. Newman, *The Peopling of Africa: A Geographical Perspective* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), 109.
- 15 Timothy Insoll, *The Archaeology of Islam in Sub-Saharan Africa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 328.
- 16 Jean-Louis Bourgeois and Carollee Pelos, *Spectacular Vernacular: The Adobe Tradition* (New York: Aperture Foundation, Inc., 1996), 128.
- 17 Labelle Prussin, "West African Earthworks," *Art Journal* 42, no. 3, (Autumn 1982): 204.
- 18 Prussin, *Hatumere: Islamic Design in West Africa*, 24.
- 19 It was believed that the earth was the abode of the ancestors; thus, shrines or mounds were made to represent ancestral presence within the community and confer ancestral blessings. This idea of earth as protector was also emphasized by the granary structure, a form responsible for ensuring the livelihood of a community from one agricultural season to the next. Auspicious designs often decorated the outsides of these structures that were themselves given anthropomorphic female attributes, a full granary being called a "pregnant" granary, to emphasize their living, reproductive presence. Each example variously equates earth with ancestral abodes and presence as well as to a

spiritual mother figure independent of form (Prussin, "West African Earthworks," 204-205).

20 Bourgeois, *Spectacular Vernacular*, 18-21.

21 Insoll, 251.

22 Ibid., 252.

23 Roland Barthes, *Mythologies*, trans. Annette Lavers (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1957), 110. To refer back to Barthes, "mythical speech", as a vehicle designed to deliver information, is fashioned specifically for consumption; it is thus composed of material which has already been previously processed to make it more "digestible" or comprehensible for a viewer who is assumed to be aware and sensitive to its signifying connotations. The fact that earth was "signify-ory" before it was used to construct the mosque makes it easier to assimilate into a particular cultural mindset.

24 Prussin, *Hatumere*, 180.

25 B. C. Ray, *African Religions* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1976), 176; in Insoll, 1.

26 Ibid.

27 Ibid, 2.

28 Insoll, 11.

29 Bourgeois, *Spectacular Vernacular*, 128-137; Prussin, *Hatumere*, 182. Little is known about the appearance or structure of this first mosque as no drawings remain and other sources of information such as oral histories or historical narratives are "for various reasons unsatisfactory" (Bourgeois, *Spectacular Vernacular*, 129).

30 Prussin believes that Malaha Tanapo, the first chief of Djenné and a non-Muslim, tore down Konboro's mosque and later built another on the secondary site (*Hatumere*, 182).

31 National Museum of African Art, Smithsonian Institute. "Mali Empire and Djenné Figures." Accessed February 7, 2010. <http://africa.si.edu/exhibits/resources/mali/index.htm>.

32 Some credit Musa with the creation of the *Sudonaïse* style, seen in a majority of the traditional mud domestic and religious structures in Djenné both then and now. As these structures share similar stylistic characteristics, it is important to note that many of these domestic structures manifest similar spirito-cultural connotations as that of the mosque although on a less monumental scale. The use of mud as a construction material in both sacred and domestic structures highlights spiritual resonances between the two as specific examples of communicative cultural space with the attendant binary issue of public (secular) vs. private (sacred) designated areas. Further highlighting mud's particular resonance are commercial or business structures in the area which, while representing the *Sudonaïse* style via the formal aspects of pinnacles and embellished entrances, are typically composed of cement.

33 James Morris, text by Suzanne Preston Blier, *Butabu: Adobe Architecture of West Africa* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2004), 190.

34 These earthen mounds also provide an interesting contribution to the discussion of material signification. As earth embodies the abode of the ancestors and thus signifies the power of the ancestral presence, it would seem that form fulfills a largely secondary or subordinate role in this signification hierarchy as it necessarily bows to the material. This is not to say that the function of formal composition is entirely suppressed; rather, the myth "impoverishes it, it puts it at a distance, it holds it at one's disposal...the meaning loses its value but keeps its life, from which the form of the myth will draw its nourishment..." (Barthes, *Mythologies*, 118). One could also reasonably conclude that form in this secondary role may have acquired resonance from its association with its medium; thus, the mound itself would be unable to resonate at a sustainable level were it not for its specific earthen composition.

35 When the Songhay conquered the city in the late 1400s, Askia Mohammed again rebuilt the mosque on the original site of Koi Konboro; when the Moroccans invaded only a century later, they razed that mosque and again constructed another on the alternate site [Prussin, *Hatumere*, 182]. In

the early 1800s, Sheku Amadou, a strident Muslim and religious purist, declared the mosque too indigenously referential to promote orthodox Islamic practice; thus, he committed the iconoclastic act of plugging the structure's drains and gutters and allowing the mosque to "melt" in the water that collected around its base while building another mosque back on the original cite of Koi Konboro (Morris, *Butabu*, 190).

36 Bourgeois, *Spectacular Vernacular*, 139-147. In *Hatumere: Islamic Design in West Africa*, Prussin draws attention to the contradictions between the present mosque's structure and spatial dimensions, and the supposedly accurate accounts of Felix Dubois, a French journalist who first visited the city and provided a detailed description of the old Djenné mosque in the late 1800s (Prussin, *Hatumere*, 184).

37 Prussin, *Hatumere*, 184-186. The fact that the mosque was rebuilt under the direction of Ismaila Traore, who headed the Djenné masonry guild at the time, makes such statements questionable in terms of their reliability.

38 The pedestal on which the mosque sits is a practical feature that keeps the base of the mosque from eroding during the annual rains.

39 Jean-Louis Bourgeois and Carollee Pelos, "Magnificent Mud: Mosques in Mali," *MIMAR: Architecture in Development* 3 (1982): 9-10.

40 Prussin, *Hatumere*, 186.

41 Ibid.

42 Bruce Allsop, *A Modern Theory of Architecture* (Boston: Routledge, 1977), 7-9.

43 Prussin, "West African Earthworks," 204-205.

44 Bourgeois, *Spectacular Vernacular*, 129.

45 Donald Preziosi, *The Semiotics of the Built Environment: An Introduction to Architectonic Analysis* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1979), 6.

46 Ibid.

47 Bourgeois, *Spectacular Vernacular*, 60.

48 Labelle Prussin, "Non-Western Sacred Sites: African Models," *The Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 58, no. 3, (Sept. 1999): 424.

49 W. J. T. Mitchell, *What Do Pictures Want: The Lives and Loves of Images* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), 203.

50 Denzil Hurley, "About Making," *Perspecta* 19 (1982): 83-86.

51 Barthes, 119.

52 Ibid., 124.

53 Ibid., 143.

54 Ibid., 156.

55 Bourgeois, *Spectacular Vernacular*, 153. Bourgeois relates this information from an interview with an individual simply known as "Kontao."

56 *About World Heritage*, UNESCO World Heritage Centre, revised 23 Dec 2009, <http://whc.unesco.org/en/about/>, 23 December 2009.

57 UNESCO seeks to maintain local "agency" within this conservation project by preserving the practices and traditions associated with the mosque's maintenance and renewal as they have been carried out "traditionally." The main problem with UNESCO's program is that it doesn't allow for change, whether it is change in architectural practice, construction techniques, etc. It is these practices and their continuous evolution that allows Djenné to maintain its resonance with the community. By making such practices static, it is only a matter of time before the mosque ceases to resonate and becomes an architectural museum piece.

58 Oleg Grabar, *The Formation of Islamic Art* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1987), 70.

59 Nnamdi Elleh, *African Architecture: Evolution and Transformation* (New York: McGraw-Hill,

1997), 254.

60 Bourgeois, *Spectacular Vernacular*, 161.

61 Preziosi, 4.

62 W. Heisenberg, *Physics and Philosophy* (New York, 1957), 107; in Preziosi, 2.

Iconography and Identity in Frederick Rihel's Equestrian Portrait

Denise Giannino

Rembrandt's *Equestrian Portrait of Frederick Rihel* (c.1663; National Gallery, London) is fairly anomalous both in terms of the artist's *oeuvre* as well as the history of seventeenth-century Dutch portraiture (Figure 1).¹ As artistic production in the Dutch Republic flourished, many new portrait conventions emerged, especially for middle-class burghers, but the adoption of a courtlier mode of grand equestrian portraiture appeared only sporadically and primarily in depictions of the noble family of the Princes of Orange.² The intrigue surrounding the pictorial conventions, iconography, and issues of agency raised by Frederick Rihel's portrait stems partially from the fact that he did not hail from the aristocracy. He descended from a family that ran a successful publishing firm in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries in Strasbourg, and he established himself as a successful merchant in Amsterdam from 1642.³ Many aspects of the *Equestrian Portrait of Frederick Rihel* fall neither within the *burgherlijk* (middle class) nor in courtly modes of portraiture, making it a fruitful object of study.

The sitter was first identified by Isabella H. van Eeghen and Frederick Schwartz, who have suggested that the depiction of Rihel on horseback commemorates his appearance in 1660 as a member of the civic-honor guard that welcomed Mary Stuart (widow of William II, stadholder and Prince of Orange) and her ten-year-old son William III (future stadholder and king of England) to Amsterdam.⁴ This limited interpretation, however, addresses only one aspect of the sitter's life and identity as presented in his portrait. Through a more extensive consideration of the sitter's biography within the social and political milieu of Amsterdam in the second half of the seventeenth century, especially his commercial and familial relationships, additional possible motivations for Rihel's choice of an equestrian portrait emerge. The specific selection of costume, accessories and adoption of the equestrian-portrait type may reflect not only Rihel's momentous participation in the triumphal entry of Mary Stuart and William III, but also several other aspects of his life and interests: his reputation as a *paardenliefhebber* (horse lover), his trading enterprises as a dealer in arms, his wealth and current standing within the Amsterdam community, his social aspirations, and his family lineage. Key to this interpretation is a revealing familial emblem, an identifying element that has not been explored in the literature on Rihel (Figure 2). An unacknowledged printer's mark of the Rihel publishing firm that depicts an allegorical figure holding a halter and bridle, a personal and professional identifying image of the Rihel-family business, may significantly help us to understand the unusual iconography of Rihel's equestrian portrait. Such an interpretation contributes to a greater understanding of both this remarkable and monumental painting and the fluctuating portraiture conventions and strategies for the representation of identity at the end of the seventeenth century among burghers and the elite.

Rembrandt crafted Rihel's equestrian portrait as a visually striking statement due to its towering size (294 x 241 cm). The almost life-size horse and rider occupy much of the composition. Rihel straddles his horse, his posture erect, and gazes out towards the viewer. He wears a buff *kolder* (coat), gold embroidered sleeves, gloves and a *bandolier* (sash), from which a sword hangs. His costume also includes a white sash wrapped around his waist and tied at the back, resembling a kind of plumage. His left hand grips an embroidered red halter, acting as a bright splash of color in the otherwise earth-toned color palette of the painting. A *klover* (musket) is affixed to the halter, which

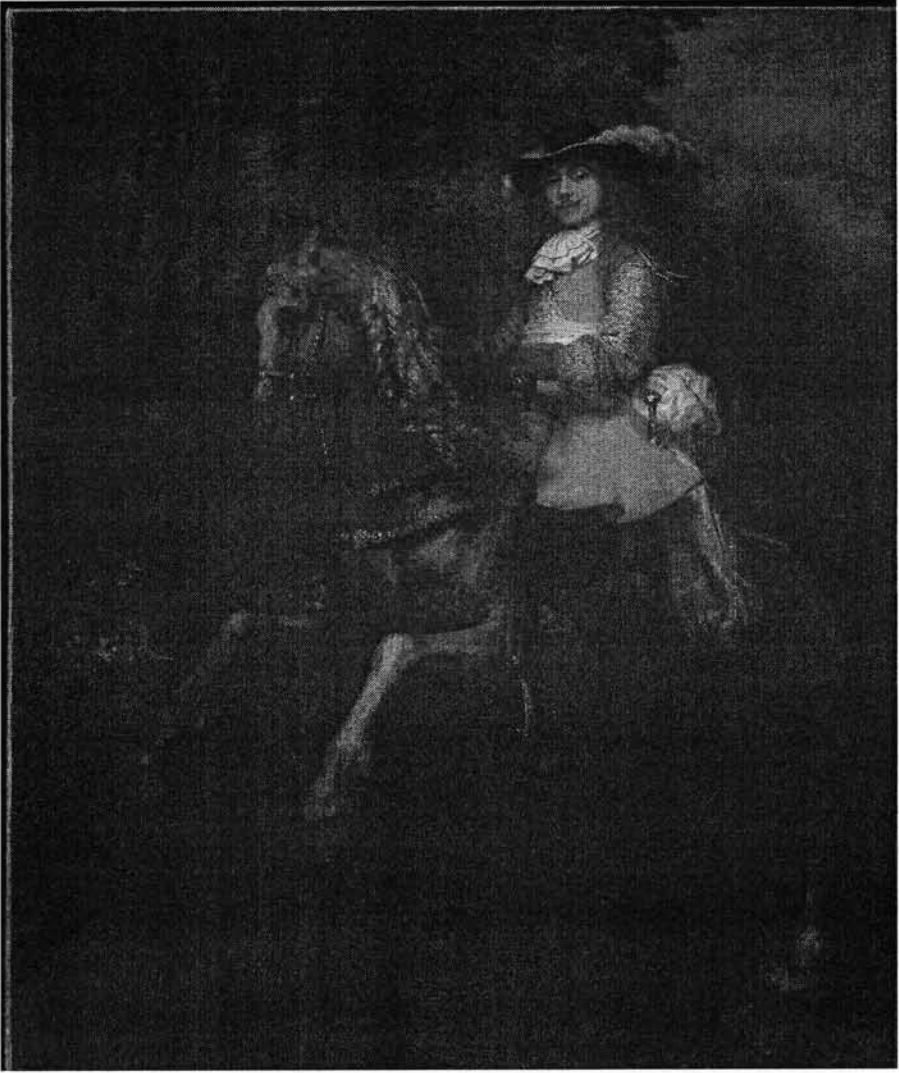


Figure 1. Rembrandt, *Portrait of Frederick Rihel on Horseback* (NG 6300), probably 1663, Oil on canvas, 294.5 x 241cm, National Gallery, London. Bought with a special grant and contributions from The Art Fund and The Pilgrim Trust, 1959. © The National Gallery, London.

Rihel uses to command his silver-gray steed to hold the *levade* position. Rembrandt foreshortened the horse and positioned him so that the steed appears to approach the space of the viewer. The luxuriant waves of Rihel's hair and the feather on his hat echo the flowing, stylized mane of the horse. The landscape background and outdoor setting echo the sinuous outlines of the figure and his horse. Behind the horse's legs, a carriage with three occupants, two coachmen and a groom on the running board, travels through the landscape. One of Amsterdam's gates, the Hieliegwegspoort (razed in 1663, shortly after Rembrandt completed the painting), is visible on the lower left.⁵

The visual and iconographic complexity of this portrait has garnered little critical attention



Figure 2. Rihel Printer's Mark, Title Page of *De statu religionis et reipublicae*, Carolo Quinto Caesare, commentarii, Published 1556. Courtesy of Special Collections, Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas Libraries.

for a number of reasons. The portrait of Rihel is quite unlike anything else Rembrandt painted. During the 1660s a number of individuals commissioned Rembrandt to paint their likenesses, but these portraits are either half-length or three-quarter length in format.⁶ Its nearest kin in Rembrandt's *oeuvre* is the *Polish Rider* in the Frick Collection. The *Polish Rider*, however, is a highly problematic foil for the Rihel portrait because both the authorship and the identification of the figure in this painting are still very much open to debate.⁷ Consequently, I do not consider the Frick painting to be crucial to my discussion of Rihel's portrait.

Both Gary Schwartz and Christian Tümpel discuss the portrait of Rihel within the

continuum of Rembrandt's artistic production, and Walter Liedtke briefly mentions it within the framework of equestrian portrait conventions. Yet, there has been neither sustained discussion of the sitter's agency, nor suggestions regarding possible motivations for the choice of iconography.⁸ Most scholars seem content to patently accept van Eeghen and Schwartz's conclusions that the portrait commemorates Rihel's participation in the triumphal entry of Mary Stuart and William III into Amsterdam in 1660. This interpretation is based on the inclusion of the carriage and two other shadowy figures behind Rihel on the right side of the portrait, which visually suggests that Rembrandt has depicted Rihel as part of a procession.⁹ An analysis of the setting certainly supports this interpretation, however, the setting is but one element of the painting. An expanded consideration of the iconography, including costume, accessories, and the equestrian portrait type, offers a fuller and more nuanced understanding of the sitter's identity.

Rihel's portrait explicitly partakes of equestrian portraiture conventions, therefore a consideration of the iconography and its possible associations and interpretations should address the identity of the sitter within the framework of this pictorial tradition. As noted above, the equestrian portrait type was not as prevalent in the Dutch Republic as in other regions of Europe.¹⁰ Typically, scholars credit the rarity of this genre to the absence of a monarch in the Dutch Republic.¹¹ Although the Republic lacked a political structure based on a monarchy, they did have a noble estate led by the Princes of Orange, who monopolized the office of *stadholder*, the highest political office and commander of the military.¹² In light of their status and political importance as *stadholders*, it is not surprising to see portraits of the members of the House of Orange (Johann Maurits, Frederick Hendrick, William II and William III) that include aristocratic pictorial conventions, particularly that of the equestrian portrait. They adopted the equestrian portrait, especially when it served the purpose of establishing or reifying their authority and sovereignty, since this portrait type was eminently suited to convey sovereignty, and military and political authority.

The conventional associations of equestrian portraits in the seventeenth century derive from the famous monument of Marcus Aurelius and its implications of Roman power, grandeur and order.¹³ In later Renaissance and Baroque sculpted and painted equestrian portraits the individual often wears armor and holds military accoutrements (spears, swords and batons), however, the horse was the critical element for establishing the symbolic context and allusions.¹⁴ The horse physically and metaphorically elevates the figure, inserts a narrative element, and establishes ideas of courtly nobility. In the seventeenth century, especially in Italy, Spain, and England, equestrian portraits often encompass one or several of the following themes: Christianity, rulership, and imperial rank and authority. The Christian theme connects military authority with the ideal of the Christian knight, the rulership and imperial themes equates the ability to govern with the accomplished horseman who is in control of his horse.¹⁵ Command of the horse and skill in equitation revealed the sitter's station and character, or as a seventeenth-century soldier claimed, "the highest one can say of a Prince is this, that he rides well, a phrase which embraces his virtue and bravery."¹⁶

Both the appearance and position of the horse visually conveyed noble status and virtue of the sitter.¹⁷ One of the most common poses for a horse in seventeenth-century equestrian portraits was the *levade*, an extremely difficult pose for both horse and rider. The *levade* is essentially a controlled rear, which requires the rider to hold the horse in a position where he bends his haunches, simultaneously keeps his body at a forty-five degree angle and tucks his head and forelegs close to his body.¹⁸ This pose can be seen in Rubens's *Portrait of the Duke of Buckingham* (1625, Kimbell Art Museum, Fort Worth, Texas), and Velasquez's *Portrait of the Count-Duke Olivares* (1636, Museo del Prado, Madrid). Similarly, Rembrandt depicts Rihel in command of his horse as he holds the *levade* pose, however, the claims of status and authority are markedly different.¹⁹

The concepts of military authority, sovereignty, and nobility embedded in the iconography of conventional equestrian portraiture are problematic for interpreting Rihel's and the few other

equestrian portraits of non-nobility, such as those painted by Paulus Potter and Thomas de Keyser. Certainly, many questions arise by the existence of these few equestrian portraits of middle class individuals: How might the noble associations of the equestrian portrait be relevant to middle class individuals? How might they be considered reflective of the identity of a sitter not from the aristocracy? What aspects of the personal and public identity are conveyed in such portraits? In an attempt to answer these questions as they pertain specifically to Rihel's portrait, a more extensive consideration of the sitter's biography proves a fruitful first step.

Frederick Rihel was born in 1625/26 in Strasbourg where his family ran an important publishing house. There is a dearth of information regarding Rihel's youth, but it seems that the closing of the family's publishing house in 1639 necessitated a different career path for Frederick.²⁰ In 1642, Rihel made his way to Amsterdam to live and apprentice as a tradesman with Guillelmo Bartolotti II.²¹ Bartolotti was part of the merchant elite in Amsterdam; at various times, his firm specialized in the 'rich trades' of sugar refinery, silk, Russian leather and furs, and caviar. He also dealt with overseas markets and provided capital for iron ore mines in Sweden.²² The initial arrangement between Bartolotti and Rihel stipulated a five-year apprenticeship, during which time Rihel also received room and board.²³ The business relationship between Bartolotti and Rihel seems to have been advantageous for both parties, since it continued long after the five-year apprenticeship ended. Rihel held increasingly important positions in the Bartolotti firm: accountant (1651), customs officer (1654), and managing clerk (1658).

After Bartolotti's death in 1658, Rihel became director of the firm and provisional director of Bartolotti's will and estate under the direction of his widow Jacoba van Erp.²⁴ Rihel also traded independently and established other business ventures, including one company that was a joint enterprise with one of Bartolotti's sons. In 1662 Rihel purchased Amsterdam citizenship, and although citizenship was not required for merchants, he likely took this step to facilitate his membership into the civic guard. Rihel continued to form important connections in the trade of iron ore and armaments in Sweden, which the Trips (Bartolotti's neighbors on the Herengracht) monopolized. When the Trips were forced to end their monopoly on the export of iron and arms from Sweden, Rihel acquired the business in 1669. Rihel never married, nor did he purchase his own residence during his lifetime, although there are records indicating he rented abodes on the Herengracht and Keizergracht (two of the canals newly built as part of the city's expansion in the seventeenth century, where regents and the most affluent resided).²⁵ Rihel died in 1681 and was buried in the Nieuwe Rond Kerk.²⁶

The inventory of possessions compiled upon Rihel's death has proven useful not only in the identification of the sitter, but also as a means of measuring Rihel's cultural and social interests. The inventory listed sixty paintings, together with one described as "*het conterfijtsel van de overledene te paert door Rembrandt*" (a counterfeit or portrait of the deceased on a horse by Rembrandt).²⁷ Although the inventory is not comprehensive, it does list the clothing and weaponry that can be seen in the portrait, and two horses in the stable of Michiel Hommel, with harnesses, cushions, saddles and stirrups.²⁸

The fact that Rihel owned multiple horses, listed as assets in his inventory, suggests a personal connection and significance to the appearance of the sitter on horseback in his portrait. Rihel may have requested the equestrian portrait model from Rembrandt as a means of signaling his cultivated status as a *paardenliefhebber* (horse lover). Rihel appears to be riding one of the more popular types of horses—a Spanish horse distinguished by its thick, round, broad breast, heavy-thighs, and long flowing mane and tail.²⁹ Such horses were tremendously expensive to purchase and maintain. The average price for a good riding horse ranged from 130–200 guilders, and grander horses cost upwards of 690 guilders. Maintaining the horse incurred even greater expense than its purchase. It cost approximately 200 guilders per year to stable a single horse, a price that was

equal to the average annual earnings of a master craftsman.³⁰ Based on specific mention of horses, the stable owner and the necessary riding accessories in his inventory, and also inclusion of the horse in his portrait, Rihel took great pleasure in owning horses and happily incurred the expense of their upkeep.

For a man of Rihel's wealth, it would not be unusual for him to own horses or to have cultivated an interest in equitation. In fact, interest in horses and riding was part of a larger cultural trend that can be tied to the rising vogue of equitation schools and horseback riding as a popular mode of recreation and sport, as well as the proliferation of country estates after mid-century.³¹ *Haute école* riding had been popular at court since the sixteenth century throughout Europe. In the Dutch Republic, the Princes of Orange and other aristocrats attended such schools. Throughout the course of the seventeenth century, many wealthy regents and other members of the elite joined the growing trend for attending equitation schools, and proficiency in riding soon became an all but required aspect of education for Amsterdam regents and elite.³² Furthermore, regents and wealthy burghers began moving to country estates around mid-century. Linked to the refined status and prestige of owning such an estate was the necessity to ride well. Consequently, skilled riders and the maintenance of stables also became important status symbols of gentility.³³ Although there is no evidence to indicate that Rihel owned a country estate, the inventory of his possessions demonstrates that he did maintain a stable for his two horses, which partially established the cultivated status of the owner. Perhaps demonstration of cultivated status through horsemanship was one of the reasons the equestrian portrait began to appeal to burghers like Rihel.

Rihel as *paardenliefhebber* is not the only personal connection that may explain the unusual iconography of the portrait and aspects of the sitter's identity. The portrait's equestrian theme references familial connections and lineage through its resemblance to an emblematic device used by the Rihel printing firm in Strasbourg. Established in 1535, the firm garnered much prestige during its years of operation, issuing 281 books by 1639.³⁴ Rihel was keenly aware of his family's publishing endeavors and the emblematic printer's mark used to identify books issued by the firm, even though the firm closed when he was fourteen.

Like many printers who often used emblems or devices that acted as trademarks to protect against pirated versions of texts, the Rihel firm had their own insignia—an allegorical figure of Sophrosyne, a winged figure holding a ruler in one hand and a bridle and halter in the other (fig. 2).³⁵ Sophrosyne and the accessories she holds symbolize soundness of mind, moderation, prudence, and self-control.³⁶ This image probably had heraldic significance for Rihel, as he had Rembrandt visually incorporate it into his grand equestrian portrait. Rihel's position on horseback, grasping the reins that control his levading horse offered Rembrandt a convenient and clever way to allude to the emblem, his family lineage, and possibly even personal virtues.³⁷ The references to moderation, prudence and self-control attached to the bridle and halter in the Rihel's printer mark further echo the similar connotations of discipline and control ascribed to the rider's skill in commanding his horse. Beyond the two personal allusions to his cultivated status as *paardenliefhebber* and prestigious family lineage, Rihel's portrait makes broader reference to the sitter's social standing in Amsterdam society and his aspirations to gain entrance into elite circles of Amsterdam magistracy and civic guard.

Rihel was a wealthy and prosperous individual who placed importance on personal signifiers of cultivation and family connection in his portrait. In addition to the horse and halter, Rihel chose specific elements of attire and other accoutrements to indicate his social and economic standing in the community and to connect his public identity with civic and magisterial groups within Amsterdam. Rihel's clothing conforms to contemporary trends for ceremonial attire among professional soldiers and members of the civic militia. Rihel wears a *kolder* or a sleeveless buff coat with a fitted top and full skirt, worn over a doublet with gold embroidered sleeves and a *bandolier* (sash), also lavishly embroidered with gold thread. These elements of Rihel's attire signal his connection to communal

social institutions like the civic militia. In particular, the *kolder* was a protective garment of thick ox hide used by professional soldiers and members of the civic guard.³⁸ For example, Rembrandt also pictures Joris de Caulerij, a lieutenant for the *Arbusquiers* (musketeers) in The Hague, in a golden mustard-colored *kolder* and *bandolier* (1632, Fine Arts Museum of San Francisco).³⁹ Given Rihel's documented participation in the 1660 triumphal procession and the allusion to this procession in the background of the portrait, the appearance of his costume may be expected; however, these elements have more than simply a commemorative function.

More fundamentally, his attire visually associated Rihel with the Amsterdam civic guard and militia, signaling his interests in the city of Amsterdam. Traditionally these guild organizations were responsible for policing and patrolling, maintaining public order and providing military defense, but by the middle of the seventeenth century they performed these duties only nominally. As Maarten Prak has observed, "militias were, first and foremost, an expression of civic solidarity."⁴⁰ Although Rihel wears a costume that is typical of those seen in many civic guard portraits and was part of the procession that welcomed William III and Mary Stuart, he probably only had an honorary or unofficial connection to the Amsterdam militia company in 1660. Citizenship was required for membership, something Rihel purchased only in 1662. Rihel's acquisition is noteworthy since it was more out of status than necessity. Many merchants operated successfully without it, as Rihel had done from the time his apprenticeship with Bartolotti ended in 1648. While citizenship was not necessary, it did carry certain privileges and perhaps the most important privilege for Rihel—one could not enroll in guilds, enter municipal government or hold political office without it.⁴¹ Most likely, Rihel was motivated to acquire citizenship to solidify his relationship with the communal social group, as well as individuals within it.⁴² As Antonella Bucci explains, many immigrant merchants did not become citizens and those who did were motivated by the consolidation of their economic position and entree into the social and political life of the city.⁴³ With his appearance in the garb of civic guardsmen and his purchase of citizenship, Rihel visually demonstrated his vested interest in the social, political and economic vitality of Amsterdam.

Two other accessories of Rihel's attire support the idea that the sitter chose his costume and accoutrements to highlight his social and economic importance and perhaps even his civic aspirations. The sword attached to the gold embroidered *bandolier* and the *klover* (musket) attached to the halter of the horse both complete the militia costume and reference Rihel's business endeavors, wealth and status. The hilt of Rihel's sword is visible, silhouetted against the voluptuous plume of his white sash and the play of light on the glittering sleeve of his doublet draws the viewer's attention to the butt of the musket just beneath his left hand grasping the reigns of the halter. Swords and firearms often appear in portraits of those connected with leadership and the military, and were indicative of martial inclinations. They can also be seen in portraits of individuals who have no connection to the military or political offices, and in those instances symbolize masculine, civic behavior.⁴⁴ Additionally, the weapon alludes to Rihel's mercantile activities as an exporter of iron ore and armaments from Sweden. Rihel and Bartolotti had provided capital and credit to Börje Olofsson Cronberg, a Swedish exporter of similar products in the 1650s. This business contact probably facilitated Rihel's eventual take-over of the Trip monopoly on iron and arms exports from Sweden in 1669.⁴⁵

The deeper significance of the sword and *klover* in Rihel's portrait advances the notion that Rihel chose these accessories to highlight his business endeavors and financial security, which he achieved through commercial success that also contributed to the economic prosperity of the city of Amsterdam. These aspects of commerce and finance may in turn be connected to his desire to reify and even elevate his standing in civic and social circles. As a wealthy merchant Rihel probably knew regents and members of the elite in Amsterdam, but could not claim equal status to these individuals. The broker Joris Crafford, writing in 1696 describes the common understanding of

the social structure:

The first are the men in government, those who are dependent on them and those who are moving up in the government. The second are the numerous very distinguished, impressive, rich merchants. The third are traders or shop owners including many masters and other craftsmen. The fourth are the ranks by which we mean the lowest sort of people, however, we should exclude the numerous wagon drivers, grain porters, lightermen, peat and beer porters all of whom receive alms which does not make them the most discreet and civilized people.⁴⁶

Rihel was in this second tier and it was no small feat to climb into the upper echelons of regent and elite circles. The difficulty lay primarily in contemporary requirements of regents and individuals who held political office. Custom stipulated that they had to be men of good quality and ancestry, had to prove their worthiness by upholding codes of behavior, had to be willing to serve their country in official posts and had to be men of means. Financial security functioned as a safeguard against the abuse of public office, since only those who were free from material want could devote themselves wholeheartedly to the common good.⁴⁷ It is a matter of no small coincidence that the symbolic connotations of the horse, costume, halter and *klover* that reference Rihel's cultivation and wealth, participation in the civic life, lineage, and financial activities and stability can be understood as a strong indication of his capability and worthiness of holding political office. Rihel's appropriation of iconography associated with equestrian portraiture and his family's printer's mark conveys the idea that he not only maintains full control over his own economic state, but also that he possesses soundness of mind, moderation, prudence, and self-control. In this visual statement, he demonstrates his ability to fulfill the requirements for holding political office and by extension, membership in elite and regent spheres. To be clear, I do not mean to suggest that Rihel was effectively campaigning for political office in his portrait, rather, he attempted to convey in no uncertain terms both his social aspirations and his personal and public value to regents and the elite.

Rihel's use of familial iconography and his adaption of the noble equestrian portrait type are not unique in Dutch burgher portraits of the seventeenth century. Two notable examples are Thomas de Keyser's portrait of Pieter Schout and Paulus Potter's portrait of Dirk Tulp. Thomas de Keyser painted *Pieter Schout, High Bailif of Hagestein on Horseback* in 1660 (Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam).⁴⁸ The date and inscription written by Jan Vos (poet and organizer of the triumph) suggest that Schout may have also participated in the procession of 1660. However, Ann Jensen Adams argues that, because there is no reference to the processional cavalcade and the horse is in a *pesade* pose, which traditionally signaled rulership, the portrait commemorates Schout's appointment as High Bailif of Hagestein.⁴⁹ Adams maintains that de Keyser's diminutive portrait (86.1 x 69.6cm) is much different in tenor than the grander equestrian portraits by Rembrandt and Potter. According to Adams, the small scale of the canvas and the size of the figure in relation to the landscape setting, convey a more modest emphasis or 'non-royal flavor'.⁵⁰

The iconography of de Keyser's *Portrait of Pieter Schout* is indeed quite different from that of Rihel's portrait. A closer comparison may be Paulus Potter's *Portrait of Dirk Tulp* (1653; Jan Six Huis, Amsterdam), painted almost a decade before Rihel's portrait. This is one of the few other monumental equestrian portraits painted in the Dutch Republic of an individual who was not a member of the aristocracy or landed gentry (as was Schout). The two paintings are similar both in size and pose of the horse. Tulp's portrait measures 310 x 274 cm and horse and rider are similarly in the *levade* pose, however, the horse heads towards the landscape background, so that Tulp looks over his shoulder at the viewer.⁵¹ The appearance of this and Schout's portrait may suggest a greater acceptability for the depiction of burghers on horseback after mid-century, a notion that may be

linked to the cultural and political milieu of Amsterdam and the Dutch Republic at the time.⁵²

The appropriation of the courtly equestrian portrait type can be related to an event that both established the political authority of the Dutch Republic and undermined the authority of the Princes of Orange: the death of William II in 1650. Occurring only two years after the 1648 Treaty of Münster, which recognized the United Provinces as a member of the European sovereign states, the death of William II was especially fortuitous for Amsterdam regents and elite who aligned themselves with the anti-Orangist factions. Anti-Orangists sought to maintain an army during times of peace, eliminate the expensive and potentially fickle mercenaries who comprised the majority of the standing army, and protect trade interests against foreign competitors.⁵³ Following the death of William II, the General Assembly of the United Provinces convened in 1651 and elected not to replace the position of stadholder, under pressure from Amsterdam (the most powerful city in the most powerful province). This action ushered in the first stadholderless period (1650-1672) as each province affirmed their individual autonomy and agreed to maintain their own military force.⁵⁴ As Joanna Woodall notes, "taken together, these events meant not only that the sovereignty of the Dutch polity was formally secured, but also that this sovereignty was explicitly centered on the citizen elite, rather than the hereditary nobility."⁵⁵

The unfettered power of the Amsterdam regents and elite in the first stadholderless period meant that these individuals were no longer in competition with the stadholder for sovereignty, and the ideals of the court were no longer a foil for *burgherlijk* modes of representation.⁵⁶ Burghers and regents were now free to "consider themselves worthy of the illustriousness and fame previously reserved for the hereditary aristocracy," and this changed self-conception made itself apparent in shifting portraiture trends and conventions.⁵⁷ Indeed, scholars often observe that from 1650 onwards, burghers more frequently present themselves in the courtier mode seen in The Hague.⁵⁸ Alison McNeil Kettering argues that the shift in portraiture conventions during the stadholderless period, especially the adoption of the van Dyckian idiom was a way for the urban elite to separate themselves from their middle class origins and functioned as a means of establishing their privileged status.⁵⁹

While not van Dyckian per se, Rihel's portrait presents a rather courtly and aristocratic image, in which it was both acceptable and appropriate to adopt aristocratic forms and motifs to establish privileged status. Rihel's equestrian portrait should also be understood as part of this trend of fluctuating portraiture conventions at the end of the seventeenth century. Rembrandt's portrait of Rihel forwards the increasingly important notion among both burghers and elites that the sitter encapsulates the ideals of cultivation and worthiness, which it does through the iconography of the equestrian portrait, his costume and accessories. Ultimately, the rich complexity of Frederick Rihel's portrait lies in the way the many facets of his personal and public interests play out within it.

Denise Giannino is a Ph.D. candidate in art history at the University of Kansas. She was the recipient of the Morris Family Scholarship and the Timothy Mitchell Memorial Art History Award for academic excellence from the Kress Foundation Department of Art History. Denise is currently working on a dissertation about seventeenth-century Dutch family portraiture.

Endnotes

1 Rembrandt's other famous figure on horseback is the so-called *Polish Rider*. For a summary of the literature on this painting, its attribution and the struggle to identify the sitter, his ethnicity and the veracity of his costume see, Zdzisław Żygulski, Jr. "Further Battles for the 'Lisowczyk' (Polish Rider) by Rembrandt." *Artibus et Historiae* 21, no. 41 (2000): 197-205.

2 One typical example of an image of the Princes of Orange and their adoption of equestrian portrait types can be seen in *Prince Maurits and Frederick Hendrik on Horseback* by a follower of Pauwels van Hillegaert (Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam). Beyond Rembrandt's own painted corpus, there were a few other painters who depicted individuals on horseback, notably, Albert Cuyp, Thomas de Keyser and Paulus Potter. Albert Cuyp painted several hunting scenes and genre-portraits of figures on horseback, which have little connection to Rihel's portrait. Examples by de Keyser and Potter do have a tangential connection to Rembrandt's portrait of Frederick Rihel, and will be discussed later in this paper. For a discussion of Albert Cuyp and his hunting scenes and genre portraits see Arthur K. Wheelock, Jr., *Albert Cuyp* (Washington, D.C.: National Gallery of Art), 2001.

3 Gary Schwartz, *Rembrandt: His Life, His Paintings: A New Biography with All Accessible Paintings Illustrated in Colour* (NY: Viking, 1985), 340; Isabella H. van Eeghen, "Frederick Rihel een 17de Eeuwse: Zakenman en Paardenliefhebber," *Amstelodamum: Maandblad voor de kennis van Amsterdam, Orgaan van het Genootschap Amstelodamum* (1958): 73.

4 Although there is general agreement that the sitter in this portrait is Frederick Rihel, scholars in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries identified the individual as Jacob de Graeff. Bredius and Van Eeghen were two of the first scholars to argue that the sitter is Frederick Rihel and not Jacob de Graeff. Jacob de Graeff participated in the 1660 triumphal entry of Mary Stuart and William III as well; he was an ensign bearer of the Amsterdam honor guard that escorted William III. Van Eeghen and others rejected this identification because de Graeff was only sixteen or seventeen in 1660 and the sitter, while youthful, appears to be more mature in age. Van Eeghen, 73; David Bomford, *Rembrandt* (London: National Gallery, 2006), 184; Bob Haak, *Rembrandt: His Life, Work and Times* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1969), 304, 307.

5 Haak, 307.

6 A few examples of the portraits Rembrandt painted in the early 1660s are: Jacob Trip (c. 1660-1663, National Gallery of Art, London), two of Marguerite de Geer (1661, both National Gallery of Art, London), Dirck van Os (1660-1665, Joslyn Art Museum, Omaha, Nebraska), Jeremias de Decker (1660; Leningrad, Hermitage), and Gerard de Lairese (1665, Metropolitan Museum of Art). Rembrandt also painted the group portrait *Sampling Officers of the Drapers' Guild* (1661, Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum). Scholars have noted Rembrandt's return to portraiture commissions in the 1660s and explained it in terms of his declaration of bankruptcy and the sale of his possessions in 1652. Schwartz, 282, 301.

7 See Żygulski.

8 Schwartz, 340; Christian Tümpel, *Rembrandt: All Paintings in Colour* (Antwerp: Fonds Mercator, 1993); Walter A. Liedtke, *The Royal Horse and Rider: Painting, Sculpture, and Horsemanship, 1500 - 1800* (New York: Abaris Books in association with the Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1989).

9 The procession for Mary and William III occurred at six o'clock on Thursday June 17, 1660, and included an elaborate program with many allegorical figures. Mary arrived with her son and a retinue of over 125 people, who were greeted as representatives of the House of Stuart. The procession meandered through the city to the Amsterdam Dam and the Town Hall. The regents commissioned the procession to demonstrate that the city was interested in establishing congenial relations with the English government, especially Charles II. Charles II was the brother of Mary, whose hereditary rights to the English throne had just been restored. Jochen Becker, "The Princess

of Orange's Welcome into Amsterdam in 1660," in *Europa Triumphans: Court and Civic Festivals in Early Modern Europe*, J. R. Mulryne, ed., Publications of the Modern Humanities Research Association, v. 15 (Aldershot, Hants, England: Ashgate, 2004), 575-576. Rihel was one of 108 riders in the procession, and he actually led the third group of riders. Van Eeghen, 75.

10 Charles Dumas, *In het zadel: het nederlandse ruitersportret van 1550 tot 1900: Fries Museum, Leeuwarden, 7 december 1979-20 januari 1980, Noordbrabants Museum, 's-Hertogenbosch, 26 januari-16 maart 1980, Provinciaal Museum van Drenthe, Assen, 22 maart-4 mei 1980* (Netherlands: s.n., 1979).

11 Julius Held makes a similar comment in his discussion of Rembrandt's *Polish Rider*: "Although they are comparatively rare in Holland, being of a representational character incongruous with the social conditions in Holland, Rembrandt's *Rihel* is not the only example; almost contemporary with it is a portrait by Paul Potter of D[irk] Tulp, in the Six Collection dated 1653. The paintings belonging to this [classical] type [in the manner of Titian, Rubens, Van Dyck and Velasquez] are, like the *Rihel*, of large dimensions and render the group of horse and rider in life size." These contrast with the smaller cabinet sized paintings of horse and rider by Cuyp. Julius Held, *Rembrandt Studies* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1991), 69.

12 Maarten Prak, *The Dutch Republic in the Seventeenth Century*, trans. Diane Webb (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 178.

13 Michael P. Mezzatesta, "Marcus Aurelius, Fray Antonio de Guevara, and the Ideal of the Perfect Prince in the Sixteenth Century," *Art Bulletin* 66, no. 4 (Dec. 1984): 621.

14 Spears often have symbolic meaning in the context of equestrian portraits and may refer not only to success in battle and world domination, but also to the Holy Lance, the spear of Longinus. John F. Moffitt, "Rubens's 'Duke of Lerma, Equestrian' Amongst 'Imperial Horsemen,'" *Artibus et Historiae* 15, no. 29 (1994): 104.

15 Walter A. Liedtke and John F. Moffitt, "Velázquez, Olivares, and the Baroque Equestrian Portrait," *The Burlington Magazine* 123, no. 942 (September 1981): 531. See also, Ann Jensen Adams, *The Paintings of Thomas de Keyser (1596/7-1667): A Study of Portraiture in Seventeenth-Century Amsterdam* (PhD Diss., Harvard University, 1985), 463.

16 This statement comes from Bernardo de Vargas Machuca, a Spanish soldier who wrote on courtly riding in Spain. Liedtke and Moffitt, 35, note 12. See also, John F. Moffitt, "Le Roi à la crosse": Kings, Christian Knights and Van Dyck's Singular 'Dismounted Equestrian-Portrait' of Charles I," *Artibus et Historiae* 4, no. 7 (1983), 79-80.

17 Moffitt, "Rubens Duke of Lerma, Equestrian Among 'Imperial Horsemen,'" 99.

18 Amy Walsh, *Paulus Potter: His Works and Their Meaning* (PhD Diss., Columbia University, 1985), 231. Liedtke, 19. The levade was the customary way to depict a horse. Dumas, 98.

19 Unlike these examples, Rihel and his horse dramatically engage the viewer, as they are positioned at a foreshortened angle, projecting towards the space of the viewer. Based on the uneven position of the horse's forelegs and the turn of his head, Liedtke suggests that Rihel has turned to acknowledge the viewer before he returns to the procession in the background. Liedtke, 299.

20 W. Roberts. *Printers' Marks: A Chapter in the History of Typography* (London: George Bell & Sons, 1893), 150; Miriam Usher Chrisman, *Lay Culture, Learned Culture: Books and Social Change in Strasbourg, 1480-1599* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982), 18-19; Po-chia R. Hsia, *The German People and the Reformation* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988); Alexandra Kess, *Johann Sleidan and the Protestant Vision of History*, St Andrews studies in Reformation history (Aldershot, England: Ashgate, 2008).

21 Schwartz, 337. While more is desirable to determine the exact nature of the relationship between the Bartolottis and the Rihels prior to Frederick's arrival in the Bartolotti household in 1642, it seems the two families may have formed contacts during the late sixteenth century

in Germany. Guillelmo's father Guillelmo Bartolotti I (1560-1638) was born in Hamburg and established his family's trade endeavors in Amsterdam sometime before his death in that city in 1638. See appendix of Bartolotti dynasty in Gustav Leonhardt, *Het huis Bartolotti en zijn bewoners* (Amsterdam: Meulenhoff, 1979).

22 Jonathan Israel, *The Dutch Republic: Its Rise, Greatness, and Fall, 1477-1806* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 345, 347-348; Jonathan Israel, *Empires and Entrepreneurs: The Dutch, the Spanish Monarchy, and the Jews, 1585-1713* (Ronceverte, WV: Hambledon Press, 1990), 139. Leos Müller, *The Merchant Houses of Stockholm, c. 1640-1800: A Comparative Study of Early-Modern Entrepreneurial Behaviour* (Uppsala: S. Academiae Ubsaliensis, 1998), 111. While Rihel lived with Bartolotti at 171-2 Herengracht, he could claim to be neighbors with many of the most important individuals in Amsterdam in mercantile and political circles. Burgomaster Jacob de Graeff lived at 216 Herengracht, his grandson Pieter de Graeff resided at 573 and Dirck Wuytiers (a Catholic merchant) lived at 214 Herengracht. Bas Dudok van Heel, "Regent Families and Urban Development in Amsterdam," in *Rome-Amsterdam. Two Growing Cities in Seventeenth-Century Europe*, Peter van Kessel and Elisja Schulte, eds. (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1997), 135-142.

23 Leonhardt, 76-77. Van Eeghen provides a more detailed description of the agreement between Bartolotti and Rihel. Rihel paid Bartolotti 100 florins during the first two years, in the third year, Rihel was not obligated to pay Bartolotti, during the fourth year, Rihel could earn up to 150 florins in salary from the Bartolotti firm and after five years Rihel could establish himself independently or gain employment at another Amsterdam firm, 76.

24 Leonhardt, 77, 85. Van Eeghen, 76.

25 Van Eeghen, 76-80; Schwartz, 340. In 1674, Rihel rented 64 Herengracht, Genootschap Amstelodamum, *Vier eeuwen Herengracht: geveltekeningen van alle huizen aan de gracht, twee historische overzichten en de beschrijving van elk pand met zijn eigenaars en bewoners* (Amsterdam: Stadsdrukkerij, 1976), 416.

26 Rihel helped to finance the construction of this church. Leonhardt, 77.

27 Van Eeghen, 80. Rihel's collection of art and artifacts was probably much more extensive than the inventory might suggest. Cosimo III, Duke of Tuscany visited Rihel on January 3, 1668 and during this visit, Cosimo's secretary, Basetti, records that the Duke observed a number of curiosities. These including ivories carved in varying levels of relief, pitchers, basins, cups and candelabras with gold decoration and a number of artificial and natural curiosities. G.J. Hoogewerff, G.J. *De Twee Reizen van Cosimo de'Medici, Prins van Toscane door de Nederlanden (1667-1669)* (Amsterdam: Johannes Müller, 1919), XXX, 77-78.

28 Van Eeghen, 80.

29 B.P.J. Broos, "Rembrandt's Portrait of a Pole and his Horse," *Simiolus* 7, no. 4 (1974): 192-218, p. 202; Walsh, *Paulus Potter: His Works and Meaning*, 231.

30 Marieke de Winkel, *Fashion and Fancy: Dress and Meaning in Rembrandt's Paintings* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2006), 112.

31 Evidence for this can be found in publications on the art of riding and breeding, such as Antonie Pluvinel's book on equitation, *Le Maneige Royal* (1623), and Stradanus's engravings of 12 Emperors from 1580s. Broos, 195; Liedtke, 22, 30.

32 De Winkel, 112.

33 William H. Wilson, *Dutch Seventeenth Century Portraiture, the Golden Age* (Sarasota, FL: The John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art, 1980).

34 Wendelin Rihel established the firm, which issued books from 1535 to 1639. When he died in 1554, the business continued under his sons Theodosius and Josias. After Wendelin's death, the two brothers did not agree on business matters and they split the business, each operating presses independently of each other. Josias's branch of the firm issued 281 books and Theodosius'

108. Under Wendelin and then Josias, the Rihel firm was the exclusive press for the Strasbourg Gymnasium and Academy (the shop was located practically within the door of the school and the two sons attended the school as youths); Theodosius published religious tracts and commentaries by Johann Sleidan, as well as secular works. Another brother, Wendelin II and a sister, Sarah also participated in the family business. Chrisman, 18-19.

35 Roberts, 1.

36 Catherine Soanes and Angus Stevenson, eds., *Concise Oxford English Dictionary* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008).

37 This kind of clever allusion to an identifying emblem can also be seen in Rembrandt's portrait *Frans Banning Cocq Mustering his Company* (1642; Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam). In this earlier group portrait, the chicken dangling from the belt of the girl in the scene makes visual reference to the emblem of the claw used to identify the Amsterdam Arbusquiers. Tümpel, 221.

38 De Winkel, 108. Wheelock, 59. Wheelock claims that both military men and those wishing to appear as military men wore this garment, which had a protective function similar to armor, 59.

39 Rembrandt placed greater emphasis on de Caulerij's military involvement, a participation underscored by the baton and *gorget* (protective neck armor). Rudolf E.O. Ekkart, Beverley Jackson, Quentin Buvelot, and Marieke de Winkel, *Dutch Portraits: The Age of Rembrandt and Frans Hals* (The Hague: Royal Picture Gallery Mauritshuis, 2007), 184.

40 Prak, 157.

41 Members of the Trip family participated in the civic guard and also held political offices in Amsterdam. Prak, 159; Seymour Slive, *Frans Hals* (New York: Phaidon, 1970), 39-40.

42 Prak, 174.

43 Antonella Bicci, "Immigration and Acculturation: Italians in Amsterdam," in *Rome-Amsterdam. Two Growing Cities in Seventeenth-Century Europe*. Peter van Kessel and Elisja Schulte, eds., (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1997), 254.

44 Lisa J. de Boer, *Martial Arts: Military Themes and Images in Dutch Art of the Golden Age* (PhD Diss, University of Michigan, 1996), 81-82.

45 Müller, 111.

46 Klaske Muizelaar and Derek Phillips, *Picturing Men and Women in the Dutch Golden Age: Paintings and People in Historical Perspective* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), 6.

47 Muizelaar and Phillips, 20. Arie Theodorus van Deursen. *Plain Lives in a Golden Age: Popular Culture, Religion, and Society in Seventeenth-century Holland*, trans. Maarten Ultee (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 157-160.

48 Adams, 465.

49 Adams, 466.

50 Adams, 466, 475.

51 Amy Walsh, Edwin Buijsen, Ben Broos, *Paulus Potter: Paintings, Drawings, and Etchings* (Mauritshuis, The Hague, Zwolle: Waanders Publishers, 1995), 16. De Keyser has signed and dated the portrait 1653, but the inscription on the heraldic device affixed to the tree refers to Tulp's death in 1682. This indicates a reworking of part of the painting more than thirty years after Potter died in 1654. Amy Walsh proposes that the portrait is in fact a repainting of an earlier portrait of Johan Maurits (a Prince of Orange), based on x-ray evidence and the background view of Huis ten Cleef (which Maurits occupied in 1647). Walsh asserts that the "The levading horse, as a metaphor for the rider's control of state, and the view of Cleef undoubtedly were retained from the original portrait out of convenience, yet were iconographically inappropriate details for a portrait of a man of Tulp's status," especially since he never held major political office, only minor public positions in Amsterdam (Walsh, 234-236, 238).

52 Or in slightly more emphatic terms, "Paulus Potter's portrait of *Dirck Tulp* and Rembrandt's

Frederick Rihel prove that both in grandeur and painterly qualities a seventeenth-century equestrian portrait of a Dutch burgher could aspire to princely heights," Dumas, 98.

53 Haak, 347-48.

54 Haak, 348.

55 Joanna Woodall, "Sovereign Bodies: The Reality of Status in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Portraiture," in *Portraiture: Facing the Subject*, Joanna Woodall, ed. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997), 93-94. Woodall argues that there is a continuity between portraiture and concepts of nobility not only for the aristocracy, but among burghers as well. She posits that artists and sitters espoused traditional concepts of portraiture that highlighted the noble ideals of birth, virtue (or service to the state) and skill but adapted these concepts to *burgherlijk* forms of self-presentation.

56 The economic and political structure of the Dutch Republic, and especially Amsterdam, became increasingly oligarchic after the Treaty of Münster. The Amsterdam regents and elite only became more powerful after the death of stadholder William II. The stadholder traditionally had the power to appoint the highest offices of the magistracy, particularly that of the burgomaster. The burgomaster, in turn, strongly influenced the appointments of the *schout* (sheriff) and *schepenen* (judges), all of whom were responsible for the daily administration of the city. Haak, 347; Henk van Nierop, "Politics and the People of Amsterdam," in *Rome-Amsterdam. Two Growing Cities in Seventeenth-Century Europe*, Peter van Kessel and Elisja Schulte, eds. (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1997), 158.

57 Woodall, 79, 92.

58 Woodall, 92. Ann Jensen Adams's discussion of three-quarter length portraits would suggest that this trend began even earlier in the century. Adams argues that the format (three-quarter length), pose, and expression of the sitter in a number of portraits by de Keyser, Rembrandt and others from the first half of the century are an indication of the stoic ideal of *tranquillitas* (tranquility). She links this ideal and the repeated conventions of these portraits to earlier aristocratic portraits. Thus, the visual heritage of three-quarter length portraits may have reflected the sitter's desire to be associated with the prestige and social or political power of the aristocracy, "The Three-Quarter Length Life-Sized Portrait in Seventeenth-Century Holland: The Cultural Functions of *Tranquillitas*," in *Looking at Seventeenth-Century Dutch Art: Realism Reconsidered*, ed. Wayne E. Franits (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 158-75.

59 Alison McNeil Kettering, "Gentlemen in Satin: Masculine Ideals in Later Seventeenth-Century Dutch Portraiture," *Art Journal* 56, no. 2 (Summer 1997): 41-47.

Marginalized Music?: Bernardo Strozzi's Peasant Musicians

Charlotte Poulton

Paintings of musicians produced by Bernardo Strozzi (Genoa 1581-Venice 1644) in the 1620s and 1630s depict the unexpected subject matter of peasant performers removed from any overt literary or religious narrative (Figures 1-3).¹ Strozzi's images show bawdy musicians enthusiastically and indecorously playing bagpipes, shawms, and recorders.² Their subject and its treatment are unusual when we consider that these works were produced in both Genoa and Venice where the pastoral traditions in literature, music, and painting had remained particularly strong since the early sixteenth century. We might expect Strozzi's paintings to continue the traditions of pastoral images in which music-making shepherds connote the poetic simplicity, innocence, and harmony of idyllic realms. However, Strozzi eschews shepherd musicians from the imagined realms of pastoral poetry and depicts, instead, figures independent of a setting who represent a stereotypical idea of contemporary peasants. I propose that in doing so, Strozzi uses his musicians and their manners to comment on how his aristocratic patrons in Genoa and Venice negotiated their status within contemporary hierarchies of social class.

Strozzi's secular musician paintings have been neglected in favor of studies of the saints and Biblical narratives that dominate his *oeuvre* and, consequently, the body of scholarship dealing with *Man Playing a Pipe* (Figure 1), *The Pipers* (Figure 2) and *Street Musicians* (Figure 3) is scant at best.³ In the most recent study of Strozzi's artistic career, Andaleeb Banta claims that a combination of social, artistic, and commercial factors motivated Strozzi to paint secular scenes such as *Man Playing a Pipe* after 1615.⁴ In order to compete with Flemish artists who had established successful workshops in Genoa specializing in genre scenes and, consequently, to support his impoverished household, Strozzi turned to painting peasant musicians.⁵ While Strozzi may have initially painted images of secular musicians to compete in the unique Flemish-dominated Genoese artistic community, he continued painting them when he moved to Venice. Therefore, these paintings cannot simply be dismissed as aberrations in Strozzi's *oeuvre* at a time of artistic competition. They should be investigated as products of Strozzi's concentrated efforts to satisfy particular demands of his aristocratic patrons and collectors, such as Giovanni Francesco Brignole-Sale and Giovan Donato Correggio.

Strozzi's Departure from the Pastoral in Painting

Strozzi's music-making shepherds present a sophisticated variant of a century-old pictorial tradition of shepherd musicians. Paintings of musicians created during the sixteenth century that show shepherds making music and tending their flocks, such as Titian's *Fête Champêtre* (c. 1510, Louvre, Paris), conjure up associations with pastoral poetry by ancient authors like Theocritus and Virgil as well as works by contemporary poets, such as Jacopo Sannazaro's *Arcadia* (Venice, 1502).⁶ Rural realms described in pastoral poetry provide a revivifying place for leisure and contemplation in contrast to the pressures of urban life, and their simple pipe music offered physical and emotional benefits.⁷ Idyllic worlds are also symbolic of a world that is "other," an inner world described by Ralph Nash as "a country of the mind, a symbol of dedication to poetry, to pleasure, to love, to contemplation."⁸ Shepherds possessed the privileges of outdoor country living, time, and the leisure that facilitated poetic contemplation. These advantages often were denied to Genoese and Venetian aristocrats, who



Figure 1. Bernardo Strozzi, *Man Playing a Pipe*, c. 1624-25, oil on canvas, 73 x 61 cm, Galleria di Palazzo Rosso, Genoa. Photo courtesy of Alinari Archives, Florence.

spent much of their time engaged in a mixture of political, mercantile, and agricultural responsibilities.⁹

Early sixteenth-century depictions of single-figure musicians evoke such associations with the "other" world of the poet. For example, Giovanni Girolamo Savoldo's *Shepherd with a Flute* (Figure 4) depicts a seated figure in the foreground who leans on a walking stick and casually holds a recorder in his left hand. He gestures toward the right background as though inviting the viewer to consider in the distance, both the ruined ancient buildings and the seated shepherd playing a bagpipe, which appear to be allusions to an Arcadian vision, evoking a sense of nostalgia, solitude, and longing characteristic of the pastoral tradition.¹⁰ Connections to the idea of poet-shepherd are strengthened by Andrea Bayer's interpretation of the figure as the Venetian nobleman



Figure 2. Bernardo Strozzi, *The Pipers*, c. 1620, oil on canvas, 115 x 156 cm, Collezione Basevi, Genoa. Photo courtesy of Fototeca della Fondazione Federico Zeri.



Figure 3. Bernardo Strozzi, *Street Musicians*, c. 1630, oil on canvas, 109.8 x 156.5 cm, The Detroit Institute of Arts, Detroit, Gift of the Italian Americans of Detroit. Photo courtesy of The Bridgeman Art Library.

Pietro Contarini dressed as one of the pilgrim characters from his poem “Crisilogos peregrinorum” who sings praises to the Virgin Mary with his bagpipes on a journey to the Holy Land.¹¹ Similar references to the centrality of the shepherd’s role as musician and poet within the pastoral tradition are evident in Giorgione’s *Young Man with a Recorder* (1510, Royal Collection, Hampton Court, Surrey). Such a male figure attired in humble pastoral garb and holding a recorder recalled for viewers conversant with bucolic poetry the shepherd/poet who plays a simple homemade pipe to console and delight himself while with his flock.¹² Therefore, Giorgione’s solitary figure could offer sufficient allusion to ideas of love, nature, and poetry because of his costume and instrument, even in the absence of obvious visual reference to an Arcadian landscape.

Pastoral poetry propagates an antagonistic relationship between rural and urban life in which the country is perceived as a locus for honesty, harmony, and humility in contrast to the city that breeds deceit, greed, ostentatious show, and moral corruption.¹³ In courtly society, individuals competed continually with one another socially to project a public image that earned them increased respect and admiration and confirmed their status in the eyes of others.¹⁴ They adopted lifestyles based on the dominant tastes of other aristocrats who possessed high levels of economic or cultural capital to distinguish themselves from the merchant classes.¹⁵ It is no wonder that Italian courtiers in the sixteenth century delighted in being transposed temporarily into a pastoral world where they could experience a naturalness that was lacking at court.¹⁶ As Gransden explains, the pastoral provides not only an environmental alternative to the city with its pleasant landscapes but also a moral alternative wherein peace and relaxation replace wars, courtly envy, and other distractions of urban life.¹⁷



Figure 4. Giovanni Girolamo Savoldo, *Shepherd with a Flute*, c. 1525, 84.5 x 78.1 cm, The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles. Photo courtesy of The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles

Bernardo Strozzi blatantly rejects such an idealized view of the pastoral realm and pastoral shepherd types. In *Street Musicians* (Figure 3) he depicts peasant musicians who function—unequivocally—as representative of lower class. Their complexions are ruddy from working outdoors in the sun, their clothing is plain and worn, the elbow of the musician at the left denotes a sort of roughness in the way it is shoved out at the viewer, and our view into the gaping bell of the shawm thrust toward us at the right makes a vulgar suggestion. Strozzi's depiction of a group of uneducated poor musicians, rather than a solitary figure, is disturbing. Organized groups of peasants, vagrants, and members of other social marginalized groups were viewed as potentially threatening, particularly during the first half of the seventeenth century when peasant unrest and incidents of banditry were on the rise.¹⁸ Far from the early sixteenth-century paintings of shepherd-musicians who hold their instruments unplayed and avoid any

unseemly gestures, Strozzi presents the viewer with figures who play their instruments with a vigor that is uncouth.

The musicians' supposedly unrefined manners are articulated in the central woman and the man at the right, whose faces contort and cheeks puff out as they play on their recorder and shawm. Their bodies lean sideways to the right and left as though swaying to the music. These hearty musicians thrust themselves and their music at the viewer through the projecting elbow of the figure squeezing his bagpipe at the left and the shawm's open bell angled toward us at the right. Such offensive invasions of pointy, fleshy elbows and gaping instrument holes into the viewer's space exaggerate the uninhibited vulgarity of the lower-class figures. Since the figures lack social sophistication in their dress and demeanor, their energetic music-making, by implication, assumes connotations of crudeness. Their musical performance is seemingly governed by passions untempered by the higher faculty of reason that shapes musical contests in pastoral poetry.

With the depiction of bagpipes in *Street Musicians* and the use of a shawm in *Man Playing a Pipe* (Figure 1) Strozzi introduces wind instruments that are conducive to boisterous, festive occasions rather than to personal, poetic contemplation. Rustic musicians who played loud instruments were a familiar feature during *carnevale* and other celebrations in Genoa in the early seventeenth century and may have influenced Strozzi's representations.¹⁹ Bagpipes, whose sound musicologist Emmanuel Winternitz describes as a "reedy, bleating, guttural tone," are linked to the folk music of peasants and herdsmen.²⁰ Since bagpipes are an instrument primarily of the peasantry rather than nobility, they are, in the words of Richard Leppert, "a sonoric simulacrum of and for difference."²¹

They function as a marker of the “other” and of a class of people whose presumed unrestraint and indecorum was potentially dangerous to the carefully maintained propriety of the upper classes. The loud volume and shrill sound of bagpipes and shawms correspond with the supposed public bawdiness of the lower classes and contrast with the more refined private music and domains of the upper classes. This demarcation of social difference—of distinctions between peasantry and aristocracy, crudeness and politeness—is central to a reading of Strozzi’s paintings.

Strozzi’s departure from religious conventions

Strozzi’s treatment of peasant musicians recalls musical shepherds represented earlier in Domenichino’s *The Adoration of the Shepherds* (Figure 5) and later in Giovanni Benedetto Castiglione’s *Adoration of the Shepherds* (c. 1645, Church of

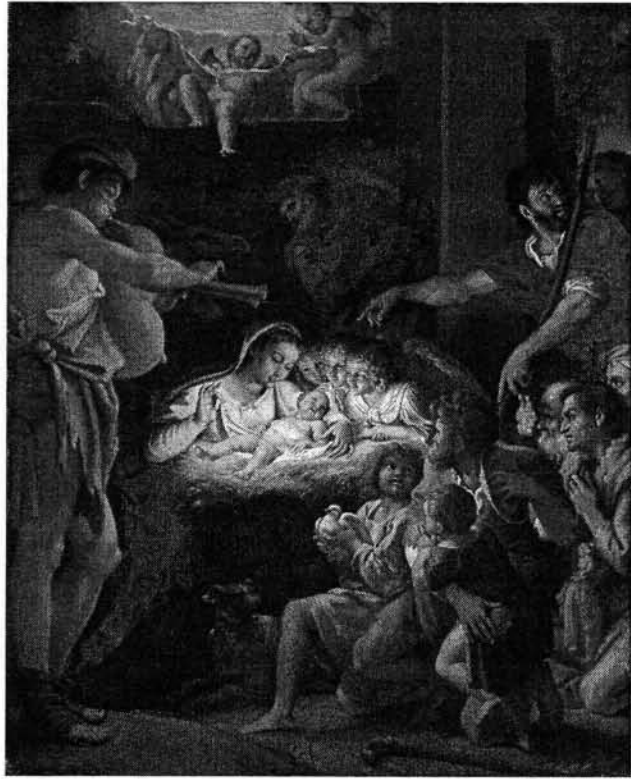


Figure 5. Domenichino (Domenico Zampieri), *The Adoration of the Shepherds*, 1607-10, oil on canvas, 143 x 115 cm, Scottish National Gallery, Edinburgh. Photo courtesy of Scottish National Gallery

San Luca, Genoa). At the left of Domenichino’s composition, a shepherd stands and plays his bagpipe to welcome the Lord. The diagonal line created by the man’s arm and the chanter of the bagpipe reaches out toward the head of Mary, then leads our eye down to her ear and then to Jesus, suggesting visually that the sound of the pipes is directed to Mary and her child. Castiglione’s painting includes a similar bucolic figure seated in the right foreground playing a tenor-sized flared recorder. As he leans forward with his instrument, he directs his music and the viewer’s eye to Mary and her newborn babe. The energetic music-making of the shepherd contrasts the stillness of Mary and Christ, thus accentuating the quiet dignity and divinity of the Holy Family.

The visual parallels between Strozzi’s musicians and the shepherds in Adoration scenes suggest that Strozzi drew upon established conventions for his figure types and the intensity of the music-making, but deliberately eschewed the associated narrative. Strozzi sets his figures in an indefinite setting and turns them away from a pictured audience to confront the invisible viewer. By removing devotional connotations, Strozzi situates his musicians in a secular context wherein tensions of social class relationships occur more directly in the interplay between subject and viewer. Aristocratic patrons familiar with conventional representations of the Adoration of the Shepherds would have recognized that they had replaced the Holy Family as spectator and listener.²² Consequently, instead of objectively witnessing peasants juxtaposed with holy figures within the

confines of a painted composition, the viewer interacts with the peasants spatially in a relationship conjured up in a continuous present.

Social Class and Strozzi's Musicians

Strozzi's paintings were commissioned and purchased by noblemen including Giovanni Francesco Brignole-Sale in Genoa and Giovan Donato Correggio in Venice. That paintings of rustic musicians were featured in their collections merits closer examination in light of anxieties about defining nobility that affected established and aspiring noble patrons in Genoa and Venice, as elsewhere in Italy. To maintain their status and political control, traditional nobilities in Northern Italy, including Genoa in 1528, severely curtailed potential for social mobility among the new mercantile elites by effecting a *chiusura*, or closure of noble ranks, that prohibited the bestowal of nobility on anyone who could not provide credentials of a noble ancestry.²³ This precipitated a decline in the number of nobles in Genoa, Venice, and other centers and made the process of acquiring or validating noble status more difficult.²⁴ Although the diversity of social and political structures throughout Italy meant there was no homogeneous nobility, the values of *virtù* (virtue), *cortesía* (courtesy), *onore* (sense of honour), and *dignità* (dignity or rank) were considered essential qualities of the cultural identity of all nobilities.²⁵ What remained a complex question, however, was the precise meaning in different cities and environments of each of these terms and particularly whether nobility was more appropriately derived from blood or behavior.

Claudio Donati and Richard Ferraro argue that definitions of noble status by the seventeenth century seem to have privileged tangible evidence of lifestyle and ancestry over virtue and other intangible qualities.²⁶ Between 1558 and 1591, members of the old nobility in Genoa had legitimated their authority in a grand manner by creating a space of urban magnificence, the Strada Nuova, along which they built residential palaces richly decorated with the finest ornaments and furnishings.²⁷ During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, in order to compete with old Genoese nobility (the *Vecchi*) and to establish themselves among the social elite, new members of the new urban nobility (the *Nuovi*) spent their wealth lavishly on building and furnishing elaborate residences.²⁸

Strozzi painted his *Man Playing a Pipe* for Giovanni Francesco Brignole, a member of a prominent family of silk merchants turned bankers.²⁹ During the sixteenth century, the Brignole family was situated socially among the merchant class, but their social status rose in 1603 when Giovanni Francesco Brignole married Geronima Sale and inherited additional land, residences, and money from the noble Sale family.³⁰ As a prominent member of the new nobility, Giovanni Francesco established himself as an avid and discerning collector.³¹ Although the Brignole family did not share the rich genealogical heritage of the Doria, Spinola, and other established members of the old landed nobility, Francesco effectively used his wealth, like members of the *Vecchi*, to purchase paintings and build a collection that attested to his aristocratic status.

Similarly, Giovan Donato Correggio and his brother Agostino, who were the principal collectors of Strozzi's works in Venice, also depended on economic and cultural capital to acquire noble status. These brothers, who had inherited a profitable leather business from their father, elevated their social status beyond wealthy merchants by purchasing a noble title for 100,000 ducats in 1646.³² Citizens who purchased aristocratic status were not treated as equal to the established nobility.³³ In a letter written in 1685 to his son Pietro, Antonio Ottobon describes despondently the social position one acquires when purchasing a title of nobility, as he had done nearly 40 years before: "therefore your status will be neither great, nor mediocre, nor lower class, but of a type without name."³⁴ Giovan Donato Correggio's shrewd business sense and keen eye in judging artworks allowed him to solidify and advertise his social status in Venice by amassing a remarkable collection of paintings.³⁵

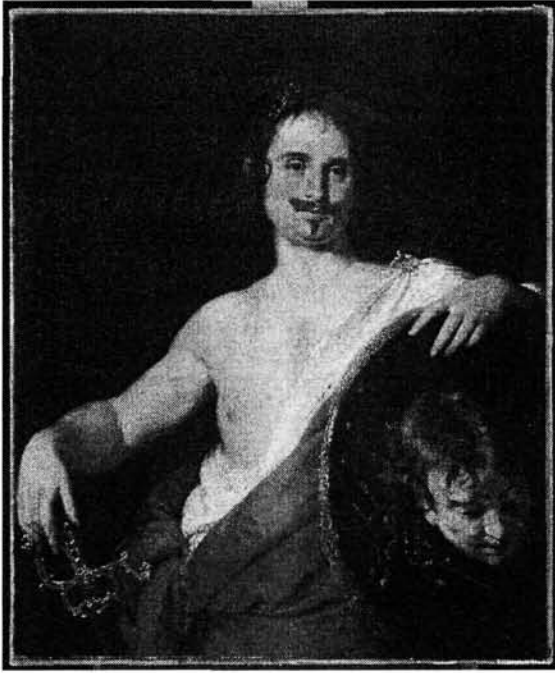


Figure 6. Bernardo Strozzi, *Portrait of Giovan Donato Correggio as Perseus*, c. 1630, oil on canvas, 104 x 86 cm, Musée Magnin, Dijon. Photo courtesy of Réunion des Musées Nationaux/Art Resource, NY

In the 1630s he commissioned Strozzi to paint an important allegorical portrait of him in the guise of Perseus (Figure 6) as a means to assert his rising status as a member of the Venetian new nobility.³⁶

In addition to this portrait, Donato acquired nineteen other paintings attributed to Strozzi, eight of which were scenes of figures playing a flute, bagpipes, lute, violin, or guitar.³⁷ Of these paintings, three in Luisa Mortari's catalog raisonné of known Strozzi paintings match specific descriptions in Donato's inventory: "un huomo vechio che suona di zampogna" could be *Bagpipe Player (Il Pifferaio)* (c. 1615, Genoa, Nino Ferrari Collection); "un giovine nudo mentre che sona pur di piva" could be *Shawm Player (Il Pifferaio)* (c. 1615, Collezione Mazzucchelli, Milan); and "un altro quadro con doi sonatori con liuto et violino" could be one of the three versions of *Concerto* housed at the Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts, Moscow; the Galleria Lorenzelli, Bergamo; or Hampton Court Palace.³⁸ In each case these paintings feature

caricatured, lower-class figures whose musical performances represent the antithesis of sophisticated, aristocratic musical entertainments.

The quantity of paintings by Strozzi in Donato's collection attests to his predilection for the artist's style, and the percentage of musical subjects (nearly half) implies that it was the musical subject matter of these paintings, not just Strozzi's reputation, that may have determined their place in the collection. While over three hundred of the approximately four hundred and fifty paintings in Donato's collection were portraits and religious figures or narratives, the display of fourteen musician paintings, thirteen paintings of soldiers and battles, and ten paintings of philosophers is suggestive.³⁹ Musical knowledge and experience, military prowess, and intellectual acuity were core aspects of male nobility.⁴⁰ Perhaps Donato acquired paintings with subjects of civil and scholarly virtues to suggest that he possessed these qualities, or at least was aware of how participating in discourses on these subjects helped to legitimize one's status as a member of the nobility. However, Strozzi's musician paintings feature loud, rustic, public musical performances by peasants rather than refined, private musical concerts enjoyed by a cultured elite. Consequently, these paintings invite investigations into additional issues of social class, particularly if and how the patron's nobility can be secured by comparison with the appearance and manners of lower-class musicians. In the case of Donato's collection, like that of Giovanni Francesco Brignole-Sale, Strozzi's paintings were carefully selected as part of a trend toward collecting paintings to showcase the patrons' taste and, as we shall see below, to assuage any doubts about their aristocratic status. Strozzi's paintings, therefore, can be examined as key participants in this display of status and power.

Attitudes to Peasants in Agrarian Treatises and their Influence on Strozzi's Peasant Musicians

Aristocratic attitudes to the peasantry were not uniform and suggest that an acknowledgement of simultaneously condescending and envious attitudes to peasants might help us to better understand the social implications of displaying Strozzi's musical peasants.⁴¹ Strozzi's apparently non-idealized portrayal of figures in *The Pipers* and *Street Musicians* draws upon the cultural construct of the peasant class as coarse and comic as perpetuated in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century literature. On one hand, Tomaso Garzoni provides in his *La piazza universale di tutte le professioni del mondo* (Venice 1585) a particularly caustic characterization of peasants: "Nowadays the peasants are as astute as wolves, malicious as an evil thing, ... as cursed as demons ... an ox in speech, an ass in judgment, a mare in intellect."⁴² On the other hand, agrarian treatises that extolled the delights and practical benefits of villa life often acknowledged peasants as undesirable yet basically harmless and they included descriptions of peasants as boorish, dishonest, and lazy.⁴³ While authors acknowledged certain vices among peasants and expressed suspicion toward peasants, they increasingly advocated that landowners treat peasants fairly and with kindness. For example, Agostino Gallo recognizes in *Le venti giornate dell'agricoltura e de' piaceri della villa* (Venice 1570) that landowners and peasants are mutually dependent upon one another. Speaking of his workers, the interlocutor Giovanni Battista Avogadro tells his pupil Vincenzo Maggi, "but know that I am loved by them, and they serve me with diligence because still they have good treatment from me, both in their provisions and in their liberal pay."⁴⁴ Gallo represents those who believed that by adopting a paternalistic attitude and providing peasants with adequate kindness and material necessities, villa owners could motivate workers to be more loyal and productive.⁴⁵

Although landowners dealt with a *fattore*, or land agent, rather than with peasants directly, they did encounter shepherds and ploughmen at their villa estates.⁴⁶ Estates in Sampierdarena, Pegli, and Albaro, including the Brignole-Sale's, included working gardens, orchards, lawns, and vineyards.⁴⁷ The idea of shepherds as idealized characters who inhabited pastoral realms removed in time and place from urban centers was complemented by the presence of actual workers on whom proprietors relied for making the land fruitful and profitable. James Ackerman notes how hardworking peasants could be viewed at the Villa Barbaro at Maser through a large central window in the south front facing the estate orchards.⁴⁸ These figures were part of the pleasure of the view. Looking out over the estate, villa owners and their visitors would have perceived peasant workers in the distance as an integral and indispensable part of villa life and its agricultural production.

Villa owners and their guests did not observe peasants dispassionately. Peasants and their labors could be a source of condescending amusement as recounted in Agostino Gallo's *Le dieci giornate della vera agricoltura e piaceri della villa* (Venice 1565).⁴⁹ Through his interlocutor Giovanni Battista Avogadro, Gallo describes how the recreational pleasure at a villa is made more delightful by watching peasants drain a pond and then scramble about and scoop up the fish:

You know that there is nothing in the world that brings greater joy than the sight of men and women, young and old, large and small, coming from all directions, all barefoot, and carrying nets and long sticks, with hoes, shovels, spades, gourds, buckets, conches and other gadgets to help them fish better. ... Then I don't know any man so melancholy that he would not burst out laughing, seeing the endless antics that these good folk use in fishing.⁵⁰

While Gallo focuses on the supposed humor and energy of peasants' exploits, Anton Francesco Doni draws attention in *Le Ville* (Florence 1566) to the masculinity and athleticism of peasants who participate in fights, races, jousting, soccer matches, stage comedies, music, and dancing.⁵¹ These

occasions provided peasants with relief from their daily hardships and allowed aristocratic spectators, especially Doni, to admire their physical strength: "It is certainly a beautiful thing to witness the boldness and dexterity of those sturdy men."⁵² Doni betrays a somewhat envious regard for the peasants' masculinity and muscularity here, which perhaps marks a degree of envy or insecurity in relation to their assured masculinity in contrast with the effeminate graces of the nobility.

Much like the bodies of nineteenth-century working class women were viewed by the male bourgeoisie, as analyzed by Griselda Pollock, bodies of peasant labourers in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries can be seen "as an effect of discipline and surveillance. . . as the site of bourgeois discipline, the contested places of bourgeois male class power and the sign of a conflicted sexuality."⁵³ Pollock clarifies her use of "sexuality" in a Foucauldian sense as "not referring to sexual appetites and pleasures but to the social regimes that organize and subordinate women's [or, in Doni's and Strozzi's cases, peasants'] sexual body to the institutions of the family, to class power, and to social regulation."⁵⁴ Aristocratic attitudes to masculine sexuality, therefore, are related directly to the social and political formulations of their upper-class identity. By adopting a condescending attitude of taking pleasure in watching the peasants and finding their antics humorous, Doni maintains an appropriate social distance and offers a sort of upper-class censorship of the peasants' sexuality and an implied suppression of their potential political and class power.

Strozzi adopts an attitude that evokes both the sympathy of Gallo and the patronization of Doni. Strozzi was likely aware of the value of peasant labor for the success of landowners' agricultural enterprises because he owned nine properties in the small coastal farming area in Framura, south of Genoa.⁵⁵ However, because Strozzi did not live on any of these country properties, he maintained a physical and social distance from the peasant class.⁵⁶ Strozzi presents his bagpipe and shawm players in *The Pipers* as hearty figures toughened by physical labor. Both musicians have their sleeves rolled up, which reveals the muscular strength of their arms and draws attention to the strong physical movements required to play the instruments. The front of the shawm player's shirt sags low revealing a bare chest, perhaps as an indicator of the exertion required by both agrarian and musical activities, but here it creates a disheveled appearance—this is no muscular god. Strozzi paints the musicians' ruddy faces and dirtied arms with a vigorous painterly quality to give the impression of continual exposure to the sun and the elements. In spite of their humble appearance, they convey a sense of confidence in their musical abilities through their intense concentration, and the grinning figure at the left conveys the group's contentment in their situation. Strozzi surprisingly dispenses with the pastoral tradition, as well as religious narrative, and any visual reference to a definite setting. He emphasizes, instead, close-up half-length views of musical peasants who confront the viewer with their loud instruments. Since Strozzi hones in on these figures, we might expect more sympathy toward them. However, Strozzi's assertion of the rough physical appearance and indecorous manners of the rural poor serves instead to bolster claims to social and moral superiority by the implied aristocratic audience.

Masculinity and Spontaneity of Peasants

For aristocratic viewers like Giovanni Brignole-Sale and Giovan Donato Correggio and their circles, the muscularity and masculinity of the male musicians' bodies in *The Pipers* and *Street Musicians* may have been envied, and perhaps even seen as potentially threatening for nobles who feared the effeminizing of their own courtly bodies. Courtiers were faced with a dilemma regarding their masculinity. Wayne Rebhorn claims that if they invested more in the genteel pursuits of arts and letters rather than physical activities, such as swordsmanship or horsemanship, their virility and vitality were undermined.⁵⁷ On the other hand, if they participated in swordsmanship or horsemanship they risked displaying vigorous physical actions that conjured up behavior of baser members of the

lower classes.⁵⁸ Writing in the early sixteenth century, Baldassare Castiglione criticized the many contemporary gentlemen who adopted overly effeminate manners in their attempts to project a certain intellectual or cultural prowess. A courtier's effete appearance and movements, according to Castiglione, were not only signs of physical weakness but also, in a sense, of social insecurity because they were deployed and emphasized when a courtier attempted to ingratiate himself with those of elevated status.⁵⁹ The contrast between robust masculinized lower-class bodies and more effeminate courtly bodies is apparent when comparing the shawm player in *Street Musicians* (Fig. 3) with Strozzi's *Portrait of Giovan Donato Correggio as Perseus*. Although Donato is similarly draped in clothing that reveals half of his chest and his entire right arm, his body is soft and lacks the vigor and movement of the peasant musician. His build is slight and he sits foppishly posed with his arm draped over the chair. His long, slender fingers of his right hand rest languidly on the sword hilt, which signifies the nobility of soldiering, and he gently handles the shield with his left hand. Donato betrays a self-consciousness and self-awareness that is completely lacking in Strozzi's musicians, who are immune to the social pressures and requisite decorum of the upper classes. While Strozzi's portrait of Donato is a representation of nobility, his peasant musicians represent unmediated truth and provide access to the essence of the poor.

The physical exertion displayed by Strozzi's musicians marks them as lower class. They demonstrate exaggerated bodily movements that, while seen as liberated and perhaps enviable, should be avoided by gentlemen and gentlewomen in polite society. Their manners are similar to those censured by Giovanni della Casa:

There are some who have the habit of twisting their mouths or their eyes or of inflating their cheeks and puffing and blowing, or of making other similar indecent actions with their faces; they should not let any such manners remain. For the goddess Pallas, as I have been told by certain learned men, used to amuse herself playing on the bagpipes, and she was an expert on this instrument. It happened one day that while she was playing for her own amusement near a fountain she looked into the water and observing the strange motions she was obliged to make with her face, she was embarrassed and immediately threw away her pipes; . . . What I say about offensive facial contortions is applicable to every other part of the human body.⁶⁰

Not only do the figures in Strozzi's *Street Musicians* feature undesirable facial expressions similar to those described by Della Casa but the female recorder player in the center makes a reference to the myth of Athena and the impropriety of playing a wind instrument that causes her face to distort. The woman is an unidealized, possibly caricatured peasant woman who confronts the viewer's gaze directly as she plays her recorder with concentrated effort. Her semi-naked appearance adds a sense of unadorned apparent truth, suggesting that she is part of the representation of an apparently unidealized image of rural poor at play.⁶¹ Given the vulgarity of the performers and possible sexual connotations of a woman holding a phallic recorder, this painting becomes almost shocking, as though Strozzi is contesting deliberately more polite conventions of pastoral poetry.⁶²

Strozzi is no longer dependent upon a poetic narrative in which musical instruments function as the poet-shepherd's accessory and help to signify themes of contemplation and rejuvenation. He turns, instead, to emphasize the exuberance and implied sound of peasants engaged in music-making. In *The Pipers* Strozzi cuts his figures off at half-length, pushes them and their instruments up close to the picture plane, and paints the bagpipe player looking out toward the viewer to accentuate the energy of the musical performances that are apparent visually and implied aurally. Consequently, it is difficult to view this painting without mentally hearing its loud, lively music as well; an



Figure 7. Anthony van Dyck, *Portrait of Giovanni Francesco Brignole-Sale*, c. 1635, oil on canvas, 241.3 x 147.3 cm, Private collection, New York. Reproduced in Jacob Reder, *The portraits of the Brignole-Sale family in the Palazzo Rosso in Genoa by Sir Anthony Van Dyck* (Art Press: New York), 1941.

effect that contrasts strikingly with the seemingly silent scenes of pastoral shepherds. The corporeal effects of music are emphasized in *Street Musicians*, especially by the musician at the right. His intense concentration on playing his instrument is accentuated by his furrowed brow, puffed cheeks, and the unnatural exaggeration of his fingers as they rise and lower to cover the holes of the shawm that projects dramatically into the viewer's space. He looks out toward the viewer, along with his companions, unconcerned about his posture as he is caught up with his music-making.

The apparent spontaneity of Strozzi's musicians would have been an envied quality for aristocratic patrons and audiences whose urban lives and manners were supposedly governed by propriety and self-restraint.⁶³ For Brignole-Sale, adherence to acceptable urban social codes were requisite in his highly public positions as Ambassador to the Duke of Mantua in 1612, Ambassador to Pope Urban VIII in 1621, Senator from 1617-1634, and Doge of Genoa from 1635-1637.⁶⁴ The patron's formal bearing in Anthony van Dyck's *Portrait of Giovanni Francesco Brignole-Sale* (Fig. 7) contrasts strikingly with the freer postures of the musicians in Strozzi's *Street Musicians* and *Man Playing a Pipe*. Van Dyck presents Brignole-Sale dressed in his Senator's

attire, appearing as elegant and assured as the classical architectural setting in which he is situated. While the setting defines Brignole-Sale's status, it also confines him spatially. The arcade, table, and wall serve both to push Brignole-Sale toward the viewer and to block access to the landscape and sky glimpsed through the archways in the background. These physical barriers within the composition mirror the restrictive urban codes of social conduct that both confined and defined him as one of Genoa's political elite.

Perhaps Strozzi's musicians were created to comment on the more carefree, earthy existence supposedly unavailable to nobles. In Agostino Gallo's *Le dieci giornate della vera agricoltura e piaceri*

della villa (Venice 1565), his interlocutor Giovanni Battista Avogadro relishes the peace, freedom, and contentment of country living that he laments are absent in city life:

We can linger as long as we like, and no one is going to lock us out, as they invariably do in the city, as soon as it strikes ten o'clock. . . . In the city you are expected to go about well-dressed and attended by servants, and to be full of a thousand courtesies, showing deference to all sorts of people whom you do not respect at all. . . . Here, on the other hand, I can go out or stay at home, without servants, without a hat, without a cloak, dressed in any way I choose. . . . People here are no ambitious, envious, proud or underhanded; they are not disloyal, hot-tempered, vindictive or murderous; they are not cuckolded by their wives; still less will you find them acting as false witnesses, dishonest notaries, lying officials, false lawyers, unjust judges or devious legal clerks.⁶⁵

Here Avogadro boasts of the idyllic villa life where a noble man can dress in whatever manner he likes, can live unhindered by urban rules, curfews, and everyday hassles, and can greet or ignore those of his choosing. Through him Gallo perpetuates an appealing, albeit inflated, idea of the country as a place inhabited by honest, humble people unhindered by urban vices of greed and corruption who work together for the good of their community.⁶⁶

Conclusion

Bernardo Strozzi's compositions featuring music-making peasants provide him with a venue for engaging critically with social manners and expectations. The masculinity of the performers, their awkwardly energetic postures, and the spontaneity of their performances contrast dramatically with the effeminacy and restraint traditionally required of Genoese and Venetian aristocrats. Strozzi's musicians reassure aristocratic and gentlemanly viewers that the assured masculinity and freedom of the peasantry held no real threats; these were buffoons and caricatures, rather than real people to be taken too seriously. By presenting musicians who eschew politeness, manners, and civility, Strozzi sharpens the distinction between their lower class and the aristocratic status of the paintings' audiences in ways to flatter the latter at the cost of the former. His images of peasants can be seen less in terms of delivering knowledge about peasants, than in terms of securing the dominant position, mores and habitus of the upper classes. For Giovanni Francesco Brignole-Sale, Giovan Donato Correggio, and other Genoese and Venetian citizens of the new nobility, the rustic musical performances and unseemly bodily gestures of Strozzi's musicians affirmed their own aristocratic refinement and helped to legitimize their claims to superiority over such people.

Charlotte Poulton is an adjunct professor at Brigham Young University where she teaches courses in Italian Renaissance art and the History of Western Civilization 1500-present. She received her Ph.D. in the history of art from The University of York in 2010. Research for this paper derives from her dissertation titled 'The Sight of Sound: Resonances between Music and Painting in Seventeenth-Century Italy.'

Endnotes

1 Strozzi introduces his peasant musicians into the tradition of genre paintings developed in the Netherlands and Northern Italy by artists such as Pieter Bruegel, Jacopo Bassano, Bartolomeo Passarotti, and Vincenzo Campi. Since Genoa was distanced geographically and politically from artistic traditions developed in Rome, Genoese patrons and artists were exposed to and eagerly acquired genre scenes by northern artists working in Genoa. Anna Orlando, "I fiamminghi e la nascita della natura morta a Genova. O del trionfo dell'abbondanza," in *Pittura fiamminga in Liguria: secoli XIV-XVII*, Piero Boccardo and Clario Di Fabio, eds. (Genoa: Banca Carige, 1997), 268. However, while Strozzi was clearly influenced by the rich coloring and loose brushwork of Flemish artists working in Genoa such as Pieter Paul Rubens, Antony Van Dyck, Jan Roos, and Cornelis De Wael, these artists were noted for their developments primarily in portraiture, landscapes, battle scenes, animal scenes, and still lifes. Paintings of crude peasant musicians that were popularized in the North by Jacob Jordaens and David Teniers were not created until the years after Strozzi painted his musicians. Comparisons between Strozzi's crude figures and those of Northern Italian artists also can be made in the context of genre scenes generally, but not the specific subject of peasant musicians. Bassano painted naturalistic representations of peasants but primarily in the context of rural labor and not music making. Campi's genre scenes concentrate on peasants in market settings. On how Campi's and Bartolomeo Passarotti's paintings comment on class distinctions as determined by diet and food, see Sheila McTighe, "Foods and the Body in Italian Genre Paintings, about 1580: Campi, Passarotti, Carracci," *Art Bulletin* 86 (June 2004): 301-23.

2 Although musical peasants appear in the genre scenes of the *Bambocciate* in Rome beginning in the 1630s, they are always joined by other figures as part of a narrative related to peasant life or the *commedia dell'arte* enacted in a landscape or urban setting. On the functions of music in these paintings, see Febo Guizzi, "The sounds of *povertà contenta*: cityscape, landscape, soundscape and musical portraiture in Italian genre painting of the 17th and 18th centuries," *Imago musicae* 7 (1990): 115-47.

3 On Strozzi's oeuvre, particularly his religious paintings, see Luisa Mortari, "Su Bernardo Strozzi," *Bollettino d'Arte* 4th ser. 40 (1955): 311-33; Anna Maria Matteucci, "L'attività veneziana di Bernardo Strozzi," *Arte veneta* 9 (1955): 138-54; Luisa Mortari, *Bernardo Strozzi* (Rome: De Luca, 1995).

4 Andaleeb Badiee Banta, "Bernardo Strozzi: Defining an Artistic Identity in Early Seventeenth-Century Genoa" (Ph.D. Diss., Institute of Fine Arts, New York University, 2007), 227-29. Banta refers to this painting as *The Fifer*.

5 Banta, 235.

6 Ross S. Kilpatrick, "Horatian Landscape in the Louvre 'Concert Champêtre,'" *Artibus et Historiae* 21, no. 41 (2000): 123-31; Paul Joannides, *Titian to 1518: The Assumption of Genius* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), 178. Singing contests between herdsmen are described in Theocritus' *Idylls* 5-10, in Virgil's *Eclogues* 3, 7, and in Sannazaro's *Arcadia*, Eclogue 2, prosa 4. See Theocritus, *Idylls*, translated by Anthony Verity with introduction by Richard Hunter (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2002); Virgil, *The Eclogues and Georgics*, translated by C. Day Lewis (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 1983); Jacopo Sannazaro, *Arcadia*, ed. Francesco Erspamer (Milan: Gruppo Ego Mursia, 1990).

7 Ralph Nash, *Jacopo Sannazaro: Arcadia and Piscatorial Eclogues* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1966), 59.

8 Nash, 23.

9 Christopher F. Black, *Early Modern Italy: A Social History* (London: Routledge, 2001), 141-43.

On the urban and rural business activities of the Genoese aristocracy, see Claudio Costantini, *Le Repubblica di Genova nell'età moderna* (Turin: Unione Tipografico-Editrice, 1978), 147-164.

10 Keith Christiansen, "Giovanni Girolamo Savoldo," in *The Age of Caravaggio*, ed. Mina Gregori and Keith Christiansen, ex. cat. (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1985), 81-83.

11 Contarini was a humanist and one of Savoldo's patrons. Andrea Bayer, ed., *Painters of Reality: The Legacy of Leonardo and Caravaggio in Lombardy*, catalog of exhibition held at the Museo Civico, Cremona February 14 - May 2, 2004; The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, May 27 - August 15, 2004 (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2004): 139-40.

12 Augusto Genili, "Savoldo, il ritratto e l'allegoria musicale," in *Giovanni Girolamo Savoldo: tra Foppa, Giorgione, e Caravaggio*, Bruno Passamani, Elena Lucchesi-Ragni, and Renati Stradiotti, eds., exhibition catalog, Brescia, Monastero di S. Giulia, 3 marzo - 31 maggio 1990 (Milan: Electa, 1990): 68-70.

13 Raymond Williams, *The Country and the City* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973), 46.

14 Norbert Elias, *The Court Society*, trans. Edmund Jephcott (New York: Pantheon Books, 1983), 74-7.

15 Aristocratic tastes and lifestyles, however, are not always the most discriminating. In his analysis of dominant taste among those of various economic and educational levels, Bourdieu demonstrates that taste is determined by social class. Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*, trans. Richard Nice (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1984), 260.

16 K.W. Gransden, "The Pastoral Alternative, Part 2" *Arethusa* 3, no. 2 (1970): 177-78. On the convention of contrasting rural and urban realms in classical Latin poetry by Virgil, Horace, and Quintilian and its continuation in the works of Milton, Wordsworth, and Spenser, see K.W. Gransden, "The Pastoral Alternative, Part 1" *Arethusa* 3, no. 1 (1970): 103-21.

17 Gransden, "The Pastoral Alternative, Part 2," 180-81. On the city contrasted with Arcadia as the ideal pastoral realm in ancient works by Hesiod, Virgil and in Renaissance poetry by Edmund Spenser and Ben Jonson, see Thomas G. Rosenmeyer, *The Green Cabinet: Theocritus and the European Pastoral Lyric* (Berkeley & Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1969), 42-4.

18 S.R. Epstein, "The Peasantries of Italy, 1350-1750," in *The Peasantries of Europe from the Fourteenth to the Eighteenth Centuries*, ed. Tom Scott (London and New York: Longman, 1998), 85-7; Robert Jütte, *Poverty and Deviance in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 178-90.

19 Luigi Augusto Cervetto, "Il carnevale genovese attraverso i secoli," *Rivista ligure di scienze, lettere e arti* (1908), 54-55.

20 Emmanuel Winternitz, "Bagpipes and Hurdy-Gurdies in their Social Setting," *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin* 2 (Summer 1943): 62, 68; Emanuel Winternitz, "Bagpipes for the Lord," *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin* 16, no. 10 (June 1958): 278.

21 Richard Leppert, *The Sight of Sound: Music, Representation, and the History of the Body*, (Berkeley: The University of California Press, 1993), 38.

22 Since Donato Correggio owned Castiglione's *Adoration of the Shepherds*, the similarities between the bagpipe player in this painting and Strozzi's bagpipe and shawm players, which were displayed as part of the same collection, would not have gone unnoticed by Correggio or his guests. For a list of paintings in Correggio's collection, see *Inventari de quadri, gioie e mobili della casa Correggio esistenti in Venezia e fuori*. Nota fatta l'anno 1653 adi primo [...] Archivio di Stato, Venezia, Fraterna grande di Sant'Antonin, Commissaria, b. 6, fol. 26r., in Linda Borean, *La quadreria di Agostino e Giovan donato Correggio nel collezionismo veneziano del Seicento*, (Udine: Forum 2000), 171-93.

23 Other cities that declared closures include Lucca (enacted in early fifteenth century but formally declared in 1628), Brescia (1488), Vicenza (1567), Venice (1297-1323) and Padua (1623). Black, 136.

- 24 Claudio Donati, "The Italian Nobilities in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries," in *The European Nobilities in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries*, vol. 1 (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 291.
- 25 Ibid., 289.
- 26 Claudio Donati, *L'idea di nobiltà in Italia: secoli xiv-xviii* (Rome, 1988); Claudio Donati, "The Italian Nobilities in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries," 286-321; Richard Ferraro, "The Nobility of Rome, 1560-1700: A Study of its Composition, Wealth, and Investment," 2 vols. (Ph.D. Diss., The University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1994).
- 27 George L. Gorse, "A Classical Stage for the Old Nobility: The Strada Nuova and Sixteenth-Century Genoa," *Art Bulletin* 79 (June 1997): 301.
- 28 On the social and economic contrasts and conflicts between the old nobility (Vecchi) and the new nobility (Nuovi) in sixteenth-century Genoa, see Costantini, 80-99.
- 29 Laura Tagliaferro, *La magnificenza privata, "Argenti, gioie, quadri e altri mobili" della famiglia Brignole Sale secoli XVI-XIX* (Genoa: Marietti, 1995), 15-18.
- 30 The Brignole-Sale acquired and lavishly decorated palaces in Genoa, two villas in Albaro, and a castle in Gropoli to promote their status as members of Genoa's new nobility. Ibid., 20-2.
- 31 Ibid., 130-37.
- 32 Linda Borean, "Bernardo Strozzi's Portrait of a Collector as Perseus in Dijon," *The Burlington Magazine* 142, no. 1168 (July 2000): 430-31. On the law of 1646 that allowed new families to pay 100,000 ducats and be admitted into the ranks of the Venetian patriciate, see Alexander Cowan, "New Families in the Venetian Patriciate, 1646-1718," *Ateneo veneto* 23 (1985), 57-8.
- 33 In addition to judgments about their manner of living, the Correggio and other members of the new nobility were subject to criticism from the old nobility about the way they dressed and spoke. Robert Sabbadini, *L'acquisto della tradizione: Tradizione aristocratica e nuova nobiltà a Venezia (sec. XVII-XVIII)* (Udine: Istituto Editoriale Veneto Friulano, 1995), 50.
- 34 "Tu dunque non sarai nè grande, nè mediocre, nè infimo ma d'una qualità senza nome." Ibid., 50, 69.
- 35 Linda Borean, *La quadreria di Agostino e Giovan Donato Correggio nel collezionismo veneziano del Seicento* (Udine: Forum, 2000), 58. Correggio's collection of paintings at the Palazzo di San Cassiano is described with unrestrained admiration by Marco Boschini in his *Carta del navegar pitoresco* (1660), ed. Anna Pallucchini (Venice: Istituto per la collaborazione culturale, 1966), 599-602.
- 36 Borean, "Bernardo Strozzi's Portrait," 430-31.
- 37 Correggio owned more paintings by Strozzi than any other artist except for Girolamo Forabosco (b. Venice, 1605; d. Padua 1679). *Inventari de quadri, gioie e mobili della casa Correggio esistenti in Venezia e fuori*. Nota fatta l'anno 1653 adi primo [...] Archivio di Stato, Venezia, Fraterna grande di Sant'Antonin, Commissaria, b. 6, fols. 3v-33r.
- 38 Mortari, *Bernardo Strozzi*, 124-25. The translations of these titles follow: "an old man playing a bagpipe" (un uomo vecchio che suona di zampogna); "a young nude man playing a shawm" (un giovine nudo mentre che sona pur di piva); and "another painting of two musicians with lute and violin" (un altro quadro con doi sonatori con liuto et violino). The provenance of these four paintings prior to the twentieth century is unknown, making it impossible to know for certain which, if any, of them were in Donato Correggio's collection.
- 39 Homer, Horace, and Pythagoras are identified specifically as the subjects of four of the philosopher paintings. *Inventari de quadri, gioie, e mobili della casa Correggio*, fols. 3v-33r.
- 40 Anthony L. Cardoza, *Aristocrats in Bourgeois Italy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 67.
- 41 Comparable ambivalent attitudes to peasants in the Low Countries, particularly in relation

to paintings by Pieter Bruegel and his wealthy patrons, are a significant topic of study among scholars of Netherlandish art. See Margaret A. Sullivan, *Bruegel's Peasants: Art and Audience in the Northern Renaissance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 5-46; Walter S. Gibson, *Pieter Bruegel and the Art of Laughter* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2006), 77-105. On the debate about whether Netherlandish peasant scenes should be viewed as satires, moral exempla, or as humorous entertainment, see Svetlana Alpers, "Realism as a Comic Mode: Low-Life Painting Seen Through Bredero's Eyes," *Simiolus* 8, no. 3 (1975-76): 115-44, and Hessel Miedema's response, "Realism and Comic Mode: the Peasant," *Simiolus* 9, no. 4 (1977): 205-19. In both Netherlandish and Italian societies, patrician perceptions of peasants (and pictorial representations of them) derived from a variety of sources including classical texts, contemporary literature, proverbs, and personal encounters in rural settings.

42 "Oggidi sono i villani astuti come volpi, maliziosi come la mala cosa, . . . maladetti come i demoni, . . . un bue nel discorso, un asino nel giudizio, un cavallaccio nell'intelletto." Tomaso Garzoni, *La piazza universale di tutte le professioni del mondo* (Turin: Giulio Einaudi editore, 1996), 821. For examples of the vilification of peasants in sixteenth-century satirical poetry and prose see Domenico Merlini, *Saggio de ricerche sulla satira contro il villano* (Torino: Loescher, 1894).

43 Paula Lanaro Sartori, "Gli scritti veneti d'agraria del Cinquecento e del primo Seicento tra realtà e utopia," *Atti del convegno "Venezia e la Terraferma" attraverso le relazioni dei Rettori (1980)* (Milan 1981), 261-310. The negative characterization of Italian peasants during the early modern period is based on second-hand observations in the writings of upper-class, literate men. Jane K. Laurent, "The Peasant in Italian Agrarian Treatises," *Agricultural History* 58 (October 1984): 567

44 "Ma sappiate che io sono amato da loro, e mi servono con diligenza, perchè ancor essi veggono che hanno buona compagnia da me, così nel vivere, come nel pagarli liberamente." Agostino Gallo, *Le venti giornate dell'agricoltura e de' piaceri della villa* (Brescia: G. Bossini, 1775), 20.

45 Laurent, 575-78.

46 On the duties of the *fattore*, see Roberto Finzi, *Monsignore al suo fattore, La Istruzione di agricoltura di Innocenzo Malvasia* (1609) (Bologna: Istituto per la storia di Bologna: 1979), 46. On amicable relationships between *fattore*, landlord, and *lavoratori* on Strozzi family estates outside of Florence in the fifteenth century, see Amanda Lillie, *Florentine Villas in the Fifteenth Century: An Architectural and Social History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 24-9.

47 Massimiliano Spinola, ed., *Descrizione di Genova e del genovesato ossia nuova guida de Genova* (Genoa: Tipografia Ferrando, 1846), 2: 76-7.

48 James Ackerman, *The Villa: Form and Ideology of Country Houses* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990), 99. On the close physical proximity of a landowner's *casa da signore* to the *casa da lavoratore* and outbuildings, see Lillie, 32-8, 58-79.

49 Agostino Gallo, *Le dieci giornate della vera agricoltura, e piaceri della villa* (Venice, 1565). L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah. Gallo's treatise was expanded later and reprinted as *Le venti giornate della vera agricoltura e piaceri della villa* in 1570.

50 "Sappiate che non è al mondo maggior contento, che il veder venire da ogni lato, huomini e donne, vecchi e giovani, grandi e piccioli, e tutti scalzi, conguade, con stambucchine; con zapponi, badili, vanghe, pale, zucche, secchie, conche, & altre gnaccare simili, per poter meglio pescare. . . . Poi non so qual'huomo si malinconico che nò scoppiasse di ridere, vedendo gl'infiniti atti che fanno queste buone genti nel pescare." Gallo, *Le dieci giornate*, 163.

51 Anton Francesco Doni, *Le Ville*, ed. Ugo Bellocchi (Modena: Aedes Muratoriana, 1969), 42-4.

52 "bella cosa certo a vedere la fieraezza & la destrezza di quegli huomini robusti." *Ibid.*, 42.

53 Griselda Pollock, "Feminism/Foucault--Surveillance/Sexuality," in *Visual Culture: Images and Interpretations*, ed. Norman Bryson, Michael Ann Holly, and Keith Moxey (Hanover, NH: Wesleyan

University Press, 1994), 35-6.

54 Ibid., 23

55 The properties were purchased between 1617 and 1618 in locations designated as "Lo Carenale," "Il Piano," "Al Monte," "Cha da Mar," "La Foce del Prato," "Cha Narino," "Lagomarsino," "Gracelli," and "La Valle." Rita Dugoni and Anna Orlando, *Regesto*, in *Bernardo Strozzi: Genova 1581/82-Venezia 1644*, catalog of exhibition held in Genoa, Palazzo Ducale, May 6 - August 6, 1995, ed. Ezia Gavazza, Giovanna Nepi Sciré, and Giovanna Rotondi Terminiello (Milan: Electa, 1995), 379.

56 Banta, 71, claims that Strozzi purchased properties primarily as an investment because each one was subsequently rented back to its owner. For example, Strozzi purchased a piece of land in Acquafredda designated as "Il Piano" on April 12, 1617, and on that same date he rented it on a three-year renewable contract to Giovanni Battista Giannotto. Dugoni, 379.

57 Wayne A. Rebhorn, "Baldesar Castiglione, Thomas Wilson, and the Courtly Body of Renaissance Rhetoric," *Rhetorica* 11 (1993): 243-44.

58 Ibid.

59 Baldassare Castiglione, *Il libro del cortegiano* (Venice, 1528). L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah.

60 "Sono alcuni che hanno per vezzo di torcer tratto tratto la bocca o gli occhi o di gonfiar le gote e di soffiare o di fare col viso simili diversi atti sconci; costoro conviene del tutto che se ne rimanghino, perciocché la dea Pallade - secondamente che già mi fu detto da certi letterati - si diletto un tempo di sonare la cornamusa, et era di ciò solenne maestra. Avenne che, sonando ella un giorno a suo diletto sopra una fonte, si specchiò nell'acqua e, avedutasi de' nuovi atti che sonando le conveniva fare col viso, se ne vergognò e gittò via quella cornamusa; . . . E quello che io dico degli sconci atti del viso, ha similmente luogo in tutte le membra." Giovanni della Casa, *Galateo, ovvero de' costumi* (Florence: Felice le Monnier, 1949), 181

61 Although an investigation into gender issues is beyond the scope of this article, it is important to acknowledge the unexpected inclusion of a female woodwind player in *Street Musicians*, along with the representation of peasant types, as remarkable innovations in the genre of Italian secular musician scenes.

62 Strozzi's inclusion of a woman with a recorder is unusual in seventeenth-century Italian painting. While Titian includes a woman with a recorder in *Fête Champêtre*, his woman, significantly, does not play her instrument but rather holds it as an indicator of pastoral ideas or, perhaps, as the attribute of the muse of music and lyric poetry, Euterpe. Female recorder players do appear frequently in Dutch paintings by artists such as Jan Miense Molenaer, David Teniers, Adriaen van Ostade, Dirk Hals, Frans Hals, Jan Steen, and Gerrit van Honthorst to allude to familial or conjugal harmony, symbolize base worldly pleasures, or function as a phallic symbol with sexual overtones. On representations and iconography of the recorder in Dutch paintings, see Edwin Buijsen and Louis Peter Grijp, ed. *Music and Painting in the Golden Age* (The Hague: Hoogsteder & Hoogsteder, 1993).

63 On self-restraint as a marker of prestige in the civilizing process, see Norbert Elias, *On Civilization, Power, and Knowledge*, ed. Stephen Mennell and Johan Goudsblom (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 72.

64 Giovanni Francesco Brignole-Sale's political career is detailed in Teofilo Ossian De Negri, *Storia di Genova*, (Milan: Aldo Martello, 1968), 705-11.

65 "... possiamo tardare di sera quanto ci piace, che per questo non ci vengono serrate le porte, come di continuo vien fatto alla nostra città, passiate che sieno poco piu divintidue hore. . . . Poiche nella città ci convien andare ben vestiti, con servatori, e pieni di mille rispetti, sberrettando questo, e quello assair volte constra al voler vostro. . . . Onde qui ci è lecito andare, e stare senza servitori, senza cappa, e senza saio, vestendoci come piu, e meno ci gradisce. . . . Poi qui non son

ambitiosi, invidiosi, o orgogliosi, insidiosi, ne che siano disleali, iracondi, vendicativi, assassini, e becarì d'huomini, e meno vi sono falsi testimoni, perfidi notari, bugiardi procuratori, infideli avvocati, ingiusti giudici, ne ingarbugliosi causidici." Gallo, *Le dieci giornate*, 167-69. Translated in Ackerman, 128-29.

66 Ibid.

A Pan-American Art Exhibit for the *World of Tomorrow*: The 1939 and 1940 Latin American Art Exhibitions at the Riverside Museum

Susanna Temkin

On June 2, 1939, the first large-scale museum survey of contemporary Latin American art held in the United States debuted at the Riverside Museum in New York City. Entitled the *Latin American Exhibition of Fine and Applied Art*, the show was hailed by the *New York Times* as “the largest single display ever held in this country of contemporary art from republics to the south.”¹ One year later, the Riverside Museum hosted a second Latin American art exhibition in the summer of 1940. These two shows collectively featured a staggering number of over five hundred and seventy five paintings, sculptures, prints, and textiles from ten nations, thereby providing U.S. audiences with their first opportunities to view a wide variety of contemporary art from Latin America.²

Yet, despite their historical precedence as pioneering U.S. exhibitions of Latin American art, the 1939 and 1940 Riverside Museum shows have yet to receive focused scholarly consideration.³ Such neglect may be attributed to the fact that the Riverside Museum shut its doors in 1971 and since then has largely been forgotten. Thus, by focusing on the 1939 and 1940 Latin American art exhibitions, this paper recovers one chapter of the Riverside Museum’s history and its contribution to the presentation of Latin American art in the United States.

In particular, this paper considers how Pan-American politics influenced the production, display, and critical reception of the Riverside Museum’s Latin American art exhibitions. Indeed, although scholars have long recognized the impact that political and commercial interests had on the display of Latin American art in the United States, the Riverside Museum shows are unique because they were directly sponsored by the U.S. government in conjunction with the 1939-1940 New York World’s Fair.⁴ Exploring this context, this paper proposes that the Riverside Museum exhibitions functioned as an extension of the New York World’s Fair *World of Tomorrow*. Thus, just as the government and corporate pavilions at the World’s Fair functioned as sites of display for new technologies, utopian ideals, and potential capital, as politically-conceived art exhibitions, the Riverside Museum’s Latin American shows were intended to serve as models for future cultural exchanges aimed at promoting Pan-American cooperation.

Museum Politics: The History of the Riverside Museum and the U.S. Government

In existence for over forty years, the Riverside Museum was located in New York’s Upper West Side. Occupying the lower floors of the historical Art Deco Master Apartments building at 103rd Street and Riverside Drive, the museum represented a unit of the Master Institute of United Arts, a larger organization that also sponsored lectures, performances, and fine and performing arts classes (Figure 1).⁵ Upon the opening of the museum in 1938, Louis Horch, founder and funder of both the Master Institute and the apartment building in which it was housed, declared that gallery space would be dedicated to “the exhibition of contemporary American and foreign artists, with special emphasis on the encouragement of American art.”⁶

The Riverside Museum held its 1939 Latin American Exhibition of Fine and Applied Art just over a year after its inauguration. Hosted by the museum and sponsored by the United States New York World’s Fair Commission, the exhibition was a collaboration between the U.S. Government and the recently founded private institution. Yet, although the Riverside Museum had only opened one year prior, its links to the U.S. government actually extended further back in its institutional



Figure 1. Master Institute of United Arts Building, School of Fine Arts - Riverside Museum, Master Apartment Hotel, Negative #84510d, Collection of The New-York Historical Society.

history, through the enigmatic figure of Nicholas Roerich, a Russian émigré, philosopher, and artist. In 1921, Roerich had founded the Corona Mundi International Art Center in a New York City brownstone, with the goal of “foster[ing] mutual understanding among all peoples through the international language – art.”⁷ With a guru-like personality and as an advocate for world peace, Roerich attracted recognition and loyal followers, including Horch and U.S. Secretary of Agriculture, Henry Wallace.⁸ Financially supported by Horch, Roerich’s Corona Mundi eventually evolved into the Roerich Museum, and ultimately became part of Horch’s Master Institute of United Arts.

In 1929, Roerich became the first artist/scientist nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize in recognition for his writings, lectures, paintings, research, and other “propaganda for peace” through the medium of art.⁹ An example of such “propaganda” included Roerich’s promotion of the Pact and Banner of Peace, a program intended to protect and preserve artistic and scientific institutions and historical monuments during moments of war or violence.¹⁰ In celebration of Pan American Day, on April 15, 1935, this pact was signed into effect by Wallace before an audience consisting of President Franklin D. Roosevelt and representatives from all twenty Latin American countries.¹¹ This event thus establishes a link between figures associated with the Riverside Museum and the U.S. federal government.

Soon after the signing of the pact into law, Roerich fell out of grace with the U.S. government under allegations of tax fraud.¹² Consequently, Horch, who held power of attorney over Roerich’s financial matters, controversially took over the Roerich Museum and established the Riverside Museum in its stead.¹³ That same year, Horch secured a position within Wallace’s Department of Agriculture, where his expertise on export transactions ensured his understanding

of the economic implications at stake in establishing Pan-American relations.¹⁴ Such personal and political relationships among Horch, Roerich, Wallace, and even President Roosevelt, provide a compelling explanation for why the Riverside Museum was selected to play host to the federally-sponsored Latin American art exhibitions in 1939 and 1940.

The New York World's Fair: Pan-Americanism and *The World of Tomorrow*

Though likely drawing upon the connections between the U.S. government and Riverside Museum officials, it was specifically the New York World's Fair which precipitated the production and sponsorship by the U.S. New York World's Fair Commission of the 1939 and 1940 Latin American art exhibitions. Thus, despite the geographical distance separating the Manhattan museum from the fairgrounds in Flushing Meadows, Queens, the Latin American art exhibitions and the international exposition remained inextricably linked. Accordingly, analysis of the Riverside Museum shows must be considered in terms of the context and rhetoric of the New York World's Fair.

Originally proposed by a group of New York community and business leaders, the idea to host a World's Fair in New York City emerged in 1935. Encouraged by public enthusiasm for the idea, the New York World's Fair Corporation formed, and by February 1936 a proposal to create a "Fair of the Future" had been put forth.¹⁵ The corporation's proposal advocated against a traditional exposition, in which themes of industry and development were treated separately, and instead proposed an integrated approach that would celebrate culture, technology, and commerce as interrelated aspects of modern life. Calling for sectors dedicated to housing, food and drink, health, education, work, recreation, art, government, and religion, the "Fair of the Future" proposal was accepted as the underlying blueprint for the New York World's Fair.

In October 1936, organizers officially announced *Building the World of Tomorrow* as the theme selected for the upcoming New York World's Fair. However, as escalating international tensions led closer to the outbreak of World War II, by the time of the Fair's opening on April 30, 1939, this theme no longer stood for progress and technology only, but also for the peaceful future that could be attained in the *World of Tomorrow*. Promoting international participation as a symbol of collective cooperation, the organizers' *Official Guide Book* proclaimed that "the Fair is a force for peace in the world; for without peace a dream of a better 'World of Tomorrow' is but a cruel and mocking illusion."¹⁶ As a result, despite being poised on the brink of international conflict, the 1939 New York World's Fair boasted the participation of almost sixty nations, the greatest number in international exposition history.

Among the countries with foreign pavilions at the New York World's Fair were Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Mexico, Peru, and Venezuela. These countries, along with Bolivia, Colombia, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, El Salvador, Uruguay, and the United States, were also represented at the pavilion of the Pan American Union.¹⁷ Such widespread participation by Latin American nations was largely the result of efforts by the "Sub-Committee on Latin America," a special group formed by the Fair's Corporation to ensure Latin American participation at the Fair.¹⁸ The committee also worked to convince U.S. public and private industry of the importance of Latin America in the *World of Tomorrow*, and was responsible for obtaining the Pan American Union's pavilion location next to that of the United States.¹⁹ Such side-by-side placement on the Fair's central "Court of Peace" literally demonstrated President Franklin Delano Roosevelt's "Good Neighbor Policy," the strategic proximity of the two buildings conveying the host-nation's solidarity and central involvement in Pan-American politics.²⁰

Art at the Fair

In addition to securing Latin American participation through the foreign pavilions, an interest in featuring Latin American art at the World's Fair had been expressed since the Fair's inception. According to the original accepted proposal, the Fair's art sector was envisioned as featuring:

American art, in all its variety, will be the theme of this sector. It will include the entire history of Central and South American art as well as that of North America. This history will include the great pre-conquest civilizations of Peru and Mexico; the arts of the North American Indian, of Colonial Spain, England, France, Holland and Portugal, all of which have enriched this hemisphere. This is the first time in the history of the world that such an important concentration of source material will have been assembled.²¹

Yet, as plans for the international exposition developed, not only was the presence of Latin American art at the Fair reduced, but the art sector itself was also drastically diminished.

While art had initially been advocated as one of the principal sectors of the New York World's Fair, the organizers' integrated approach for the Fair's plan prompted officials to determine that art would "be in every part of the Fair as part of its making, but there will be no separate exhibit."²² Thus, in addition to artworks displayed within the Fair's private industry and foreign pavilions, over two hundred murals and sculptures were commissioned to seamlessly incorporate art throughout the fairgrounds. This approach corresponded with contemporary New Deal attitudes which viewed art as an integral part of life. Indeed, such concepts were undoubtedly endorsed by the Fair's appointed heads of arts projects, Josiah Marvel and Holger Cahill, both of whom had experience with the Works Progress Administration.²³

Despite the extensive presence of murals and sculptures planned for the site of the New York World's Fair, news that a separate arts exhibition would not be organized prompted public outcry. An article from *The New York Times* described the World's Fair as a "Snub to Artists," while others intimated that Fair organizers had sacrificed art for commerce.²⁴ Reacting to such criticism, Robert D. Kohn, head of the World's Fair Theme Committee, cited the proximity of the Fair to Manhattan and suggested that New York City museums not only provided alternative sites for those visitors interested in art, but represented actual extensions of the World's Fair itself. In fact, in addition to the Riverside Museum, a number of museums and private galleries remained open during the summers of 1939 and 1940, catering to World's Fair audiences with specially conceived exhibitions.²⁵

Despite such efforts, Fair organizers faced continued public protest and eventually determined to erect two pavilions dedicated to the exhibition of art. The first, called the Masterpieces of Art Building, presented European paintings and sculptures dating from the Middle Ages to 1800. The second art pavilion was the Contemporary Art Building, which featured an exhibition called *American Art Today*. Organized by Cahill as a counterpoint to the works on view in the Masterpieces display, *American Art Today* was intended to demonstrate the recent divergence from European tradition in contemporary American art, highlighting the new "emergency of native traits," according to Cahill's exhibition catalog.²⁶ In emphasizing a break from European cultural inheritance, Cahill's show deliberately distanced American art from that of Europe, where claims to civilization were being undermined by the threat of a second international conflict. However, beyond merely featuring works by American artists, *American Art Today* purported to be entirely "American" in spirit as a result of its experimental jury process rooted in the concepts of democratic representation.²⁷ Despite such lofty claims, heated debate about the show's selection process circulated

throughout the U.S. art world, causing several critics to politely emphasize the show's ideals, rather than the actual works displayed.²⁸

Adding to the controversy surrounding *American Art Today* was the fact that Latin American artists were excluded from the jury process. In particular, a *Time* magazine article made note of this omission, explaining that "huge as it is, this exhibition does not live up to its title. To do so, it would have to represent not the artists of the U.S. alone but those of all the far-flung Americas."²⁹ Such recognition reveals that although *American Art Today* approached the theme of American art as originally conceived for the Fair's art sector, Cahill's interpretation of what constituted as "American" deviated from that of the initial proposal. Thus, while the European and "American" (U.S.) art from this early proposal was exhibited at the Masterpieces of Art and Contemporary Art Building, Latin American art remained absent.³⁰ Though held off-site in Manhattan rather than at the fairgrounds, the Riverside Museum's Latin American art exhibitions therefore helped fulfill the Pan-American artistic vision originally advocated by World's Fair organizers.

The 1939 Latin American Exhibition of Fine and Applied Arts

Sponsored by the U.S. New York World's Fair Commission, the first *Latin American Exhibition of Fine and Applied Arts* opened at the Riverside Museum on June 2, 1939, with over three hundred and thirty works from Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Guatemala, Mexico, and Paraguay (Figure 2).³¹ The exhibition featured an extensive range of paintings, drawings, and sculpture, as well as costumes, examples of "Spider Web" lace, and documentary photographs. Works by artists already recognized by U.S. audiences such as Diego Rivera and José Clemente Orozco hung alongside pieces by unfamiliar names, some of which remain unknown today, while some countries enjoyed more extensive representation than others: Argentina, for instance, was represented by as many as eighty works, in comparison to only four paintings from Ecuador. Such variety in quantity and quality resulted from the exhibition's unconventional method of production.³² Exceptionally, the show appears to have been arranged by the chair of the U.S. New York World's Fair Commission, Secretary of Agriculture Henry Wallace, rather than by a museum curator. Regarded as "the New Deal's foremost theoretician of Latin American relations"³³ and recognized as a "somewhat anomalous front man" for an art exhibition by *Time* magazine,

Wallace invited all Latin American nations to participate in the show by mail.³⁴ Time constraints appear to have been an issue, as indicated by Wallace's introduction to the show, in which he explicitly thanked "those nine Latin American nations who have so graciously, so promptly and so beautifully responded in the short time at their disposal."³⁵

This introduction was published in the show's exhibition catalog, which also included a note from President Roosevelt, a foreword by L.S. Rowe, Director General of the Pan American Union, and a list of the government representatives from the federal World's Fair Commission. Printed in the President's personal script, the catalog opened with Roosevelt's brief



Figure 2. Exhibition of Contemporary Latin American Fine and Applied Art, 1939, Negative #84509d, Collection of The New-York Historical Society.

message, which declared "All cultural efforts to promote the mutual understanding of the Americas have my interest and hearty support."³⁶ Direct and succinct, Roosevelt's note conveys the significant foreign policy implications of the Riverside Museum exhibition, his presidential authority underscored by the aura of his own hand. Akin to Roosevelt's message, Rowe's foreword cast the exhibition in terms of an "important service" in line with the "intellectual interchange" policies adopted by the Pan American Union.³⁷ Similarly, in his introduction, Wallace expressed a desire for continued artistic and cultural exchanges between the Americas.

Roosevelt, Wallace, and Rowe's contributions to the exhibition catalog definitively cast the government sponsorship of the 1939 Latin American exhibition within the realm of U.S. politics. However, it should be noted that political concerns also motivated the participating Latin American nations to contribute to this exhibition. Just as the United States was interested in capitalizing on cultural relations with its southern neighbors, so were Latin American countries eager to establish their position in world politics. Accordingly, both the artworks selected and the accompanying catalog descriptions reflected the contemporary political and cultural policies of each nation. To illustrate, Ecuador's Indigenist policies from the period were evident in the Riverside Museum's display of paintings by artists Pedro Leon D. and Atahualpa Villacrés, who depicted scenes of idyllic Indian domestic life and ceremonies. Such strategic perspectives support art historian Diana Fane's observation that "exhibitions could 'represent' a country much as a diplomat did...in the process of getting to know one another, each country also defined itself through the selection of objects and images sent as emissaries."³⁸

Since the art displayed at the 1939 Latin American exhibition was solicited by Wallace and selected abroad, a question concerning the involvement of the Riverside Museum must

be posed. While lacking specific documentation, it seems that the role of Vernon Porter, the Riverside Museum's director and sole employee, should not be underestimated. In addition to assisting Wallace with the execution of the show, Porter was specifically praised in a *New York Times* review for his "excellent job" installing the works.³⁹ Though information related to the show's installation is scant, an article published in the *Pan American Bulletin* about the exhibition includes a photograph which reveals that the art was organized according to nation.⁴⁰ In the photo, José Fioravanti's *Shepherdess* sculpture and three unidentifiable canvases are pictured in a room designated the "Argentina" gallery

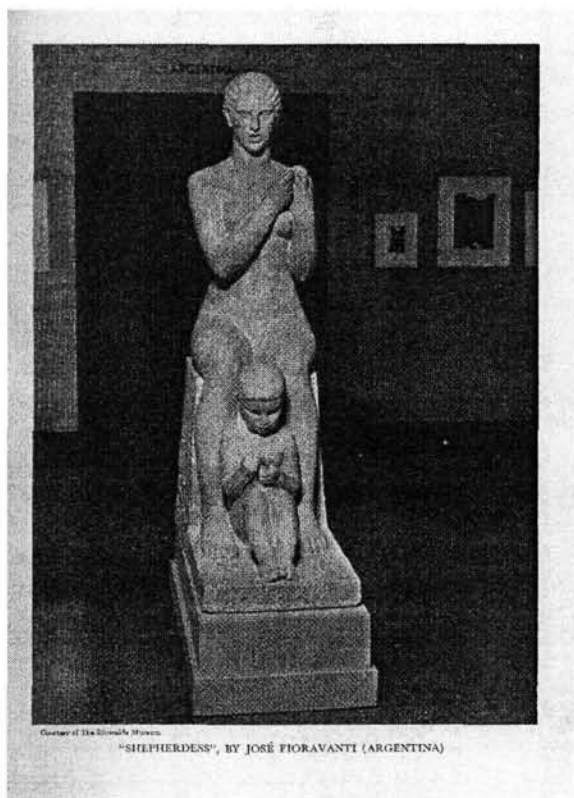


Figure 3. Jose Fioravanti, *Shepherdess*, reproduced in "Latin American Exhibition of Fine and Applied Art" *Bulletin of the Pan American Union* 74, no 1. (Jan. 1940).



Figure 4. Francisco Narváez, *Creole*, ebony. Reproduced in United States New York World's Fair Commission Latin American Exhibition of Fine Art (New York: Riverside Museum, 1940). Credit of the Fundación Francisco Narváez.

Museum exhibition demonstrates how context could inform the interpretation of art.⁴⁵ While the museum exhibition catalog cited Narváez as one of the “foremost exponents” of Venezuela’s modern art movement, the artist’s modernity was elided at the World’s Fair (Figure 4).⁴⁶ There, a guide to the Venezuelan pavilion stated that Narváez’s sculptures “display at once the fine mahogany of Venezuela and the talent of her sons,” thus lauding the work’s commercially acquirable material as much as its artistic merit.⁴⁷ Moreover, an image from the Venezuelan pavilion illustrates how the Narváez sculptures – fittingly entitled *Cocoa* and *Pearl*, both resources being presented at the pavilion – were treated as decoration, placed in the courtyard behind potted plants (Figure 5).⁴⁸ Though unencumbered by the touristic and commercial emphasis of the World’s Fair, it is interesting to note that much of the artwork exhibited at the Riverside Museum was available for purchase.⁴⁹ Nevertheless, the nature of the museum setting reinforced the fact that the commodity for sale was art, rather than a nation or its products.

As the first comprehensive survey of contemporary Latin American art, the Riverside Museum’s 1939 show represented an important early step in U.S. museum exhibitions dedicated

(Figure 3). Reminiscent of the sans-serif lettering used on World’s Fair pavilions, the gallery’s sign suggests a carry-over from the international exposition.⁴¹ Indeed, the same article notes that, like visiting the fair’s foreign pavilions, “a tour of each nation might almost have been taken through [the exhibition’s] pictures.”⁴²

While World’s Fair rhetoric informed the exhibition in both concept and organization, it is nonetheless critical to understand that the Riverside Museum offered an alternative, if not necessarily neutral setting, for the display of contemporary Latin American art beyond the fairgrounds. Seeking a place in the economy of the *World of Tomorrow*, the Latin American nations participating in the World’s Fair emphasized their nations’ economic value through showcases of natural resources and tourist potential.⁴³ While fine art was also included in some of the foreign pavilions, when displayed in such a context, the art became conflated with the commercial or exotic. Further, since some countries were represented solely at the Pan American Union pavilion, the Riverside Museum provided the only space for them to present their art.⁴⁴

The galleries at the Riverside Museum therefore provided a venue where Latin American art could be understood on its own terms, the museum setting prompting acknowledgement of the objects as art, and not as artifacts or souvenirs. The inclusion of works by the artist Francisco Narváez at both the Venezuelan foreign pavilion and the Riverside

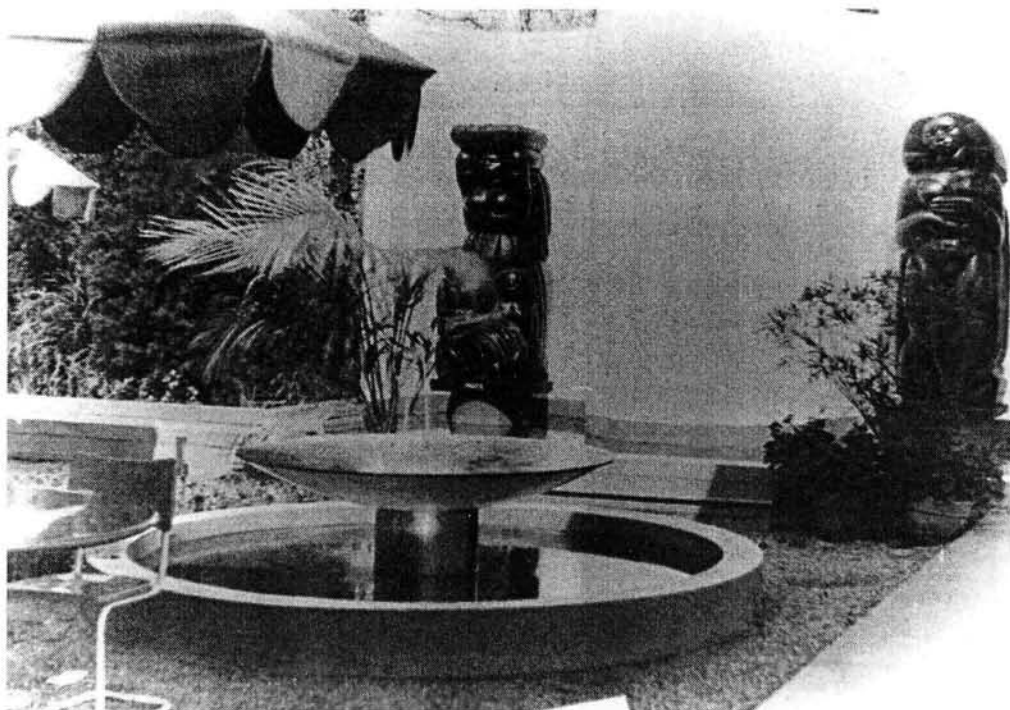


Figure 5. Francisco Narváez, *Perlas and Frutas*, 1939, wood. Documentary photography from the salon of the Venezuelan pavilion at the 1939-1940 New York World's Fair. Credit of the Fundación Francisco Narváez.

to works from Latin America. However, a summary of contemporary reviews reveals that a number of critics did not find the show compelling, their words "savor[ing] more of polite news coverage than penetrating art criticism."⁵⁰ Similar to the reviews of the Fair's *American Art Today*, critics of the Riverside exhibition mostly touted the show's didactic importance for "acquainting" Americans with the "republics to the south of the Rio Grande," rather than for the art on display.⁵¹ Focusing on the show's value as an introduction to Latin American art, some critics lamented that the exhibition did not provide a more complete picture of the continent, with Howard Devree of the *New York Times* expressing his "disappointment" that only nine countries were represented.⁵²

In spite of such criticism, the variety of artistic styles and mediums featured at the 1939 Latin American exhibition was deemed "surprising to those who think of Latin America as a unified whole instead of twenty very individual republics."⁵³ Indeed, for much of the exhibition's audience, the Riverside Museum show provided their first exposure to Latin American art, with many of the featured artists on exhibition in the U.S. for the first time. Yet, while the *Pan American Bulletin's* review of the show mentioned the full range of nationalistic, universal, academic, and abstract works on display at the Riverside Museum, in the exhibition catalog, Rowe promoted a single nationalistic framework for the show, writing that

the present marked tendency among painters in the Americas to choose national themes is especially helpful in promoting international understanding... Although expressed in aspects strange to citizens of other countries, these preoccupations take on universality when transmuted by genius.⁵⁴

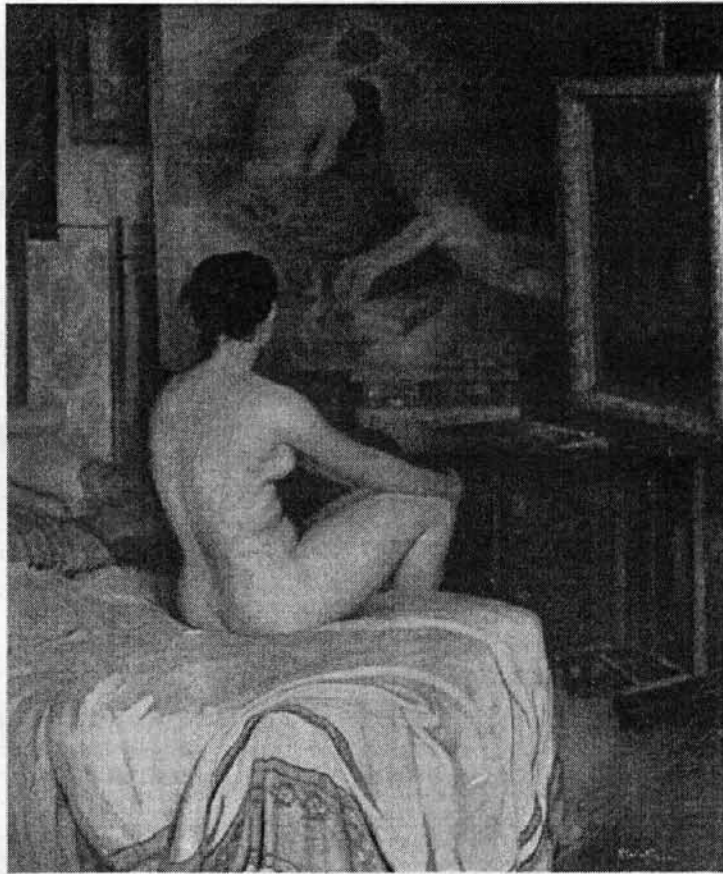


Figure 6. Carlos Enríquez, *El rapto de las mulatas*, 1938, oil on canvas, 162.4 x 114.5 cm, La Habana, Cuba. Colección Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes de la Habana, Cuba.

As Michele Greet points out, in suggesting the ability of local themes to “take on universality,” Rowe aligned the art featured at the Riverside Museum with the works on display in *American Art Today*. Accordingly, just as regional art on view in Cahill’s exhibit was subsumed within the overall context of the United States, art from the many nations exhibited at the Riverside Museum was incorporated under the general rubric of “Latin America.”⁵⁵

Rather than accepting the diversity of each nation’s art, critics and officials mostly praised works with stereotypically “Latin American” colors and themes, condemning pieces considered derivative of either contemporary or academic European models. As a *World-Telegram* review harshly notes:

It doesn’t seem possible that the Argentineans should turn out bold, simple paintings with a strongly indigenous flavor, while the pictures by Brazilians should all of them be devoid of any imagination, any freshness, anything at all



Courtesy of The Riverside Museum

"IN A PAINTER'S STUDIO", BY MANOEL CONSTANTINO (BRAZIL)

Figure 7. Manoel Constantino, *In a Painter's Studio*. Reproduced in "Latin American Exhibition of Fine and Applied Art" Bulletin of the Pan American Union 74, no 1 (Jan. 1940).

but awful, picturesque, illustrative banalities not even distinguished by good craftsmanship. Nor does it seem likely that the Chileans should all look to Paris for inspiration, while the Cubans turn out pieces of genuine strength and character, and particularly fine, expressionistic sculpture.⁵⁶

As suggested by this review, the Riverside Museum's display of works by Brazilian and Cuban artists garnered particularly heated evaluation (Figures 6 and 7). Criticism of the Brazilian art stemmed from the absence of works by Candido Portinari, whose murals at the Brazilian foreign pavilion were enthusiastically received and favorably compared to Mexican mural painting. The fact that Portinari's omission caused such a stir, while the absence of other contemporary Brazilian artists was not mentioned, illustrates how American expectations, familiarity with the Mexican mural movement, and the experience of the World's Fair affected the reception of the Riverside Museum show, and Latin American art in general, at this time.

In a review included in a special edition of *Art Digest* dedicated to the New York World's Fair, Porter reflects on the works displayed in the 1939 Riverside Museum show by explaining that:

The artists of the pan-American countries stem from an old world culture. They have rewrought and added to their heritage, welding it in the fires of New World experience. Whether a new era in the annals of art, separated from European influences, will burst from this incandescence remains to be seen. Enough that an ageless Esperanto of art expression exists; and that these sponsoring governments have seen the need and have undertaken to stimulate an exchange of contemporary art accomplishment.⁵⁷

Referencing the universal language of Esperanto, the Riverside Museum director borrowed from the idea promoted by Wallace and the Pan American Union that art could transcend language barriers between the two Americas. Indeed, at this time, U.S. politicians involved with Pan-American policies lamented the lack of Spanish language skills possessed by U.S. citizens. Art, music, and dance exchanges were thus endorsed as alternate types of programming that could be held until communication between the Americas improved. Above all, however, Porter's pointed acknowledgement of the "achievement" of the 1939 Latin American art show alludes to the Riverside Museum's continued interest in hosting similar exhibitions in the future.

The 1940 *Latin American Exhibition of Fine Arts*

The Riverside Museum's *Latin American Exhibition of Fine and Applied Art* closed on September 17, 1939, just sixteen days after Germany's invasion of Poland and the start of World War II. This event bore significant consequences for the New York World's Fair, which closed in October. Though the second season of the Fair was temporarily in jeopardy, it was ultimately determined that the gates at Flushing Meadows would reopen in 1940 in a gesture of international solidarity for, as Wallace explained, "the World of Tomorrow has significance in 1940 which it did not have in 1939."⁵⁸ Since some foreign pavilions were either unable or unwilling to participate in the new political climate (notably, the Soviet Union Pavilion), it was in all seriousness that *Life* magazine tritely projected that the "withdrawal of frightened and discouraged European exhibitors may be counterbalanced by heavy emphasis on Latin America, perhaps with troupes of lively dancing girls from south of Panama."⁵⁹

Pan-American politics thus took on an even more pronounced significance at this time, the outbreak of war reiterating the importance of political and economic cooperation among the countries of the Western Hemisphere. Accordingly, another installment of the Latin American art exhibition sponsored by the United States' World's Fair Commission was announced, and letters of participation were again circulated by Wallace. On July 23, 1940, the Riverside Museum hosted an opening reception attended by U.S. and Latin American dignitaries to kick off the second *Latin American Exhibition of Fine Arts*.⁶⁰ Despite such fanfare, participation in this second exhibition was reduced to just five countries: Brazil, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Mexico, and Venezuela. Nevertheless, the 1940 Latin American exhibition remained a large affair, with over 250 paintings and sculptures on display.

Though the reduced participation of the 1940 Riverside Museum exhibition may have been caused by a number of factors, World War II undoubtedly played a significant role. In his introduction to the 1940 exhibit catalog, Wallace, the newly announced Vice Presidential nominee, thanked the five contributing nations, who, "in spite of world turmoil have found it possible to give us in the United States an opportunity to see what their modern artists are doing."⁶¹ Since Roosevelt's

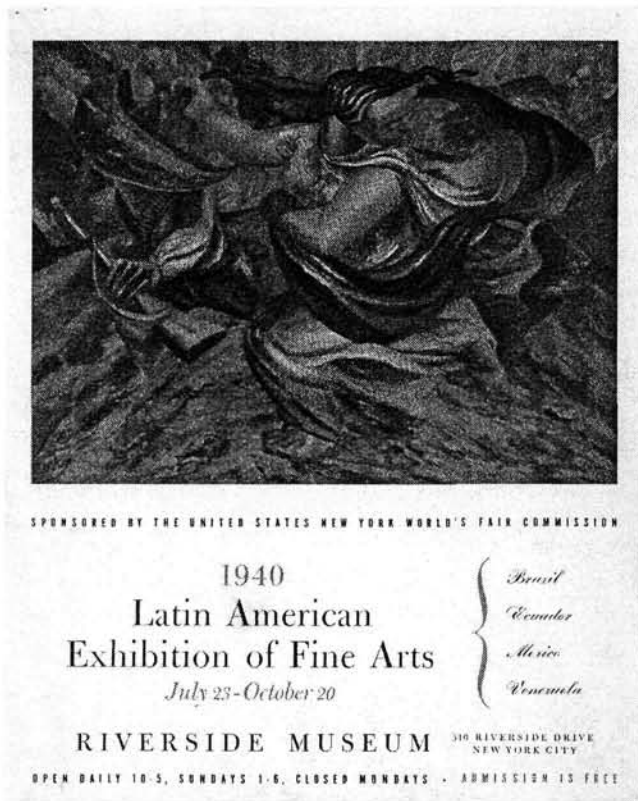


Figure 8. 1940 Latin American Exhibition of Fine Arts, July 23 - October 20 Negative #84511d. Collection of The New-York Historical Society.

of art as an essential element of civilization and a solution toward peace, Wallace's comments recall Roerich's earlier cultural crusades.

The art displayed in the 1940 *Latin American Exhibition of Fine Art* seemed to confirm Wallace's belief in the emergence of a Pan American art, the works showing "less evidence of contemporary European influence" and a heightened "Latin American" quality in comparison to the previous year, according to the *New York Times*.⁶⁴ Reflecting this shift were the printed announcements and exhibition catalog for the 1940 show, which were emblazoned with a color reproduction of the lacquer painting, *Earthquake*, by Mexican artist Conrado Vazquez (Figure 8).⁶⁵ With its vibrant color, voluptuous dancing woman, and anonymous *guerrillero*, Vazquez's painting embodied the art that might be expected of Latin American artists by U.S. audiences. As the advertised image for the exhibition, *Earthquake* established the overall tone for the *1940 Latin American Exhibition of Fine Arts*.

While Wallace and other critics claimed the more robustly "Latin American" work in the 1940 show as proof of the development of a Pan-American aesthetic, the inclusion of such works is less likely the result of stylistic progression, than a response to the demands of U.S. audiences. This was undeniably the situation in the case of Brazil, which reacted to criticism from the 1939 Riverside exhibition by submitting twenty-seven paintings and drawings by Portinari for the second exhibition.⁶⁶ However, though such substantial inclusion of Portinari's work quieted complaints

message and Rowe's foreword were merely reprinted from the 1939 exhibition catalog, the impact of world events on the 1940 exhibit can only be evaluated through Wallace's introduction. Thus, whereas his 1939 introduction conveyed an idealistic and utopian tone ("The Latin-speaking and the English-speaking peoples of the New World *love this hemisphere* for the *opportunities* it has given them" - emphasis added), Wallace's second introduction revealed a more somber sense of duty to the global community.⁶² While never explicitly using the word "war," Wallace elliptically referenced the conflict in declaring "that both the Latin and English-speaking Americas have for the future a tremendously enhanced world importance. The *responsibility for democratic civilization is in our hands*. This means that on this hemisphere will be developed a distinct Pan American art" (emphasis added).⁶³ Invoking the concept

over his previous absence, the increased tendency to champion the artist as Brazil's "Good Neighbor Emissary," led Milton Brown of New York University to caution:

Before we consider Portinari as an artist, it should be noted that he is without doubt the evidence of a trend. With the United States evincing a growing interest, predatory or not, in Latin America, we will be hearing a great deal about our southern neighbors. A good many of us will be surprised to find that down in South America they take time out to paint pictures when they are supposed to be fully occupied with the assassination of whatever unlucky character happens to be president at the time. We may be further shocked into the realization that not only do they paint, but they do it well.⁶⁷

While Brown concluded his review by expressing hope in continued cultural exchanges with Latin America, his words articulated the problematic influence of politics in the United States' engagement with Latin American art. Though particularly the case for the Riverside Museum's two Latin American exhibitions because of their direct government sponsorship, questions concerning the politics behind Latin American art displays in the United States continue to plague the field in the twenty-first century.

Conclusion

The Riverside Museum's *Latin American Exhibition of Fine Arts* ended on October 20, 1940. After the show's close, *Art Digest* published a review that expressed hope for a future exhibition showcasing works from all American nations – including the United States.⁶⁸ Significantly, the article insinuated that the Riverside Museum might function as a venue for such an event, reporting that the director expressed that a contemporary Latin American art show could become an annual feature in the exhibition season. Such comments not only indicate the Riverside Museum's continued interest in displaying Latin American art, but also demonstrate that the federal sponsorship of the 1939 and 1940 shows was successful in promoting interest in Latin American art, and by extension, Pan-American activities.

Though Porter's aspirations for an annual Latin American exhibition never came to fruition, the 1939 and 1940 shows influenced subsequent exhibition and programming strategies at the Riverside Museum. While a full elucidation of this continued engagement is beyond the scope of this paper, it is interesting to note that although the Riverside Museum's focus on Latin American art in the 1940s was propelled by Pan American politics at the national level, the museum's exhibitions and later acquisitions of Latin American art in the late 1950s and 1960s reflected the cultural politics of its immediate neighborhood. As increasing numbers of Hispanic immigrants settled in New York City, presentations of Latin American art, and in particular, Puerto Rican art, were viewed as a means of attracting new audiences. Yet, whereas the Riverside Museum's exhibitions in the 1940s were successful in drawing crowds, those of the 1960s did not achieve their intended goals. Unable to draw sufficient visitors, the Riverside Museum closed in February 1971, gifting its permanent collection of some 750 works to Brandeis University's Rose Art Museum.⁶⁹

In the museum's final press release, attention was called to the institution's "numerous exhibitions [which] included contemporary American, European, and South American artists and [which] introduced the fine arts of many foreign countries to American museum visitors."⁷⁰ The extent of this legacy is especially clear in the case of the Riverside's Latin American art exhibitions, which, as examined in this paper, included the first survey shows of contemporary Latin American art in the United States in 1939 and 1940.

Although the Riverside's Latin American art exhibitions are often overlooked by scholars in favor of exhibitions hosted by larger (and still extant) institutions like the Museum of Modern Art and the Philadelphia Museum of Art, the inclusion of over five hundred artworks from ten countries demonstrates the broad scope provided by the Riverside Museum exhibitions of Latin American art. In fact, a review of the 1940 Riverside Museum show specifically praised the breadth of the exhibition as a particular strength. Noting that although the Museum of Modern Art's 1940 art exhibition "helped to extend [the] acquaintance" of U.S. viewers with Mexican art, the review lamented that "the art of the great Latin nations of the southern continent is virtually unknown to us," and concluded by citing the Riverside Museum as a place where art from nations throughout Latin America could be viewed.⁷¹

The extensive range of countries and artists represented at the 1939 and 1940 Riverside Museum's Latin American art exhibitions reflected the widespread Pan-American interests of the shows' sponsor, the United States government. Further, by displaying the wide variety of art being produced in Latin America, the shows both stimulated public interest and revealed the possibilities for future Latin American art exhibitions. In fact, this seems to have been part of Wallace's strategy, who published an article soon after the opening of the 1939 exhibition in which he cited the Riverside Museum show as a model of the type of cultural exchanges that could be used to promote Pan-American cooperation.⁷² Thus, by examining the Pan American politics which influenced the Riverside Museum's 1939 and 1940 Latin American shows, this paper has sought to not only reconstruct overlooked, yet critical exhibitions, but to also suggest how these foundational events have shaped the history of the display of Latin American art in the United States.

Susanna Temkin is a Ph.D. Candidate at the Institute of Fine Arts at New York University, where her research focuses on modern art in the Americas. This paper represents a shortened version of a work that Ms. Temkin produced while pursuing her Master's degree, which she earned from the Institute in 2010. Ms. Temkin is currently working on her doctoral dissertation, which focuses on the career of the Cuban artist Marcelo Pogolotti, a key figure in both the Cuban vanguardia and international avant-garde. In addition to her scholarship, Ms. Temkin is currently working as an adjunct professor at New York University and is also a research assistant at Cecilia de Torres, Ltd., where she is helping to produce the catalog raisonné of Uruguayan artist, Joaquín Torres-García. Prior to these experiences, Ms. Temkin worked in various positions at The Guggenheim, El Museo del Barrio, and The Wolfsonian-Florida International University.

Endnotes

- 1 Thomas C. Linn, "New Artists Will Make Bow Here in Latin-American Show," *New York Times*, May 28, 1939.
- 2 Although a number of museums and galleries preceded the two Riverside Museum shows in exhibiting Latin American art, such shows tended to feature works by a particular artist or a specific country, such as the Museum of Modern Art's 1931 Diego Rivera retrospective or the Metropolitan Museum's 1930 *Mexican Arts* show. Further, as such examples attest, the majority of these early exhibitions focused on Mexican art, reflecting what Helen Delpar has described as a "vogue for all things Mexican" in the United States. Thus, in displaying contemporary art from countries throughout Latin America and the Caribbean, the Riverside Museum exhibitions served to introduce audiences to a broader diversity of art from this part of the world.
- 3 Art historian Michele Greet provides the most comprehensive treatment of the Riverside Museum to date in her recently published book, *Beyond National Identity*. Greet's book addresses the Latin American art exhibitions in relation to the New York World's Fair, as part of her larger discussion of the artist Camilo Egas' mural production for the Ecuadorian pavilion. The Riverside Museum exhibitions are also briefly addressed in the introductory text and biographical section of the exhibition, *Nexus New York*, held at El Museo del Barrio. Michele Greet, *Beyond National Identity: pictorial indigenism as a modernist strategy in Andean art 1920-1960* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2009); Deborah Cullen ed., *Nexus New York: Latin/American Artists in the Modern Metropolis* (New York: El Museo del Barrio in association with Yale University Press, 2009), an exhibition catalog.
- 4 Perhaps the most infamous example of such overlapping political, commercial, and artistic interests is Nelson Rockefeller, whose links to the federal Office of International Affairs are now widely recognized.
- 5 Still standing today, the Master Apartments building is an architectural landmark, as New York City's first skyscraper built with corner windows and designed to function as a mixed-use building.
- 6 *New York Times*, "Roerich Museum to Change Identity," May 14, 1938.
- 7 Jacqueline Decter and the Nicholas Roerich Museum, *Nicholas Roerich: The Life and Art of a Russian Master* (Rochester, Vermont: Park Street Press, 1989), 121.
- 8 Wallace's correspondence with Roerich, spanning a period between 1933 and 1934 are known as the "guru letters" because of Wallace's salutation to the artist/philosopher. These letters became a source of controversy during Wallace's campaign as Franklin Delano Roosevelt's third term Vice President. Decter, 133, 136.
- 9 *New York Times*, "Roerich Nominated for Peace Award," March 3, 1929.
- 10 As conceived by Roerich, this Pact functioned by requiring neutrality towards all cultural treasures which bore the Banner of Peace – a symbol designed by Roerich with ancient and mystic origins. Today, this symbol, which consists of a circle and three points, can be found engraved in a marble slab on the southwest corner of the Master Apartments building. For the full text of the Roerich treaty, see "Pact and Banner of Peace Through Culture," Nicholas Roerich Museum, <http://www.roerich.org/nr.html?mid=pact>.
- 11 *Ibid.*
- 12 Roerich failed to file taxes in 1926 and 1927, failed to report income in 1934, and was negligent in paying taxes on the sale of Russian art. Decter, 134.
- 13 Following Horch's takeover, some of Roerich's passionate followers moved the Roerich Museum to a new location, where it is still in operation at 319 West 107th Street in New York City.
- 14 *New York Times*, "Louis L. Horch, 90, Founder of Museum," April 16, 1979.
- 15 The New York World's Fair Corporation was a private, business enterprise, and must be

understood as separate from the government-sponsored U.S. New York World's Fair Commission. A Proposal Submitted by the Committee formed at the Dinner at the City Club December 11, 1935: The Fair of the Future 1939 (Amended Feb. 10, 1936), New York World's Fair 1939; miscellaneous uncatalogued material, Museum of Modern Art Archives, Queens, New York.

16 New York World's Fair, *Official guide book of the New York World's Fair, 1939*, 2 vols. (New York: Exposition Publications, Inc., 1939), quoted in Zim, 143.

17 An international organization composed of representatives from throughout Latin America and the United States, the Pan American Union was officially founded in 1889, although its ideals date back to the early 19th century. Headquartered in Washington D.C., the goal of the Pan American Union was to mediate international disputes and promote collaboration (particularly economic collaboration) between its members; today, this organization continues to exist as the Organization of American States (OAS). Organization of American States, "OAS: Our History," http://www.oas.org/en/about/our_history.asp

Across the country, the San Francisco Golden Gate International Exposition was also held in 1939 and 1940. These events witnessed the greatest Latin American participation of any previous international expositions. Germán Arciniegas, "Latin America at the San Francisco Exposition," *Bulletin of the Pan American Union* 73, no. 10 (Oct. 1939): 549.

18 The committee was composed of representatives from U.S. companies with vested economic interests in Latin America, including Pan American Airlines, the United Fruit Company, and the NY & Honduras Rosario Mining Company. Various meeting minutes and letters from the Sub-Committee on Latin America, box 1053, PR2.01, file 17, Latin America (1939), New York World's Fair 1939-1940 Archive, New York Public Library, New York.

19 The sub-committee was in fact responsible for raising funds from private U.S. industries to support displays held in the Pan American Union pavilion, including the construction of a monumental animated map that highlighted trade, communication, and commerce routes between the Americas. Various meeting minutes from the Sub-Committee on Latin America.

20 Such a strategy was explicitly stated during a meeting of the Sub-Committee on Latin America held in 1938: "... what they planned was an exhibit which would show to the world the solidarity of the Americas- that was the concept of the Fair. He said the big Federal Building was at the top, then the Hall of Nations, then the Court of Peace in the middle, then extending to the left on either side of the Federal Building would be two extensions supposed to house Central and South American countries showing the 'good neighbor idea.'" Minutes from meeting of Incorporated Advisory Committee on Foreign Participation Sub-Committee on Latin America, Oct. 21, 1938, box 1053, PR2.01, file 17, Latin America (1939), New York World's Fair 1939-1940 Archive, New York Public Library, New York.

21 A Proposal..., 13.

22 "New York World's Fair Solemnizes the Nuptials of Art and Commerce," New York World's Fair Art Number, *Art Digest* 13, no. 17 (June 1, 1939): 17.

23 Marvel, the originally appointed head of arts projects at the fair, had previous experience as director of the WPA Design Projects, Design Laboratory, and as head of the Community Center in Easthampton, Long Island; Cahill, who took over the position from Marvel, had been director of the Federal Writer's Project. Joseph P. Cusker, *The World of Tomorrow: The 1939 New York World's Fair* (PhD diss. Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, 1990), 40.

24 Alice Graeme, "World's 'Fair's' Snub to Artists Sets Off Debate," *Washington Post*, March 27, 1938.

25 At this period in time, the majority of New York City's museums and gallery spaces closed during the summer season. Howard Devree, "Round-Up: Notable Attractions During the Fair," *New York Times*, July 2, 1939; Edward Alden Jewell, "Museums and Galleries Set a Feast," *New*

York Times, May 21, 1939; "New York World's Fair Solemnizes," 18.

26 New York World's Fair, *American Art Today*, (New York: National Art Society, 1939), 20, an exhibition catalog.

27 For a brief description of this jury system, see Edward Alden Jewell, "The Contemporary American Show," *New York Times*, May 7, 1939. New York World's Fair, *Official Guide Book*, 89-90.

28 The main topic of debate was the omission of premier U.S. artists who either did not submit to the jury or had their works rejected. "Critics Bless and Damn the Fair's Contemporary Art Exhibition," *New York World's Fair Art Number*, *Art Digest* 13, no. 17 (June 1, 1939): 29.

29 "Art of the Americans," *Time*, June 12, 1939.

30 It should be noted that, though absent from the art sector, Latin American art works were included in other areas of the Fair, including in some of the Latin American foreign pavilions (discussed below) as well as in the International Business Machines pavilion as part of the exhibit, *Contemporary Art of 79 Countries*. International Business Machines Corporation. *Contemporary Art of 79 Countries*. New York: The International Business Machines Corporation, 1939, an exhibition catalog.

31 United States New York World's Fair Commission, *Latin American Exhibition of Fine and Applied Arts* (New York: Riverside Museum, 1939), an exhibition catalog.

32 The earliest mention of a show held at the Riverside Museum during the World's Fair is in a letter by Vernon Porter dated October 19, 1938, in which he wrote, "plans under way to put on a special exhibition for the period concurrent with the Fair." However, it is unclear whether the "special exhibition" that Porter was referencing had been determined as the Latin American Exhibition. Vernon C. Porter to New York World's Fair, October 19, 1938, box 32, Contemporary Art Department, New York World's Fair 1939-1940 Archive, New York Public Library, New York.

33 "Wallace to Mexico," *Time*, Nov. 25, 1940.

34 "Art of the Americans."

35 In addition to Wallace's statement, another indication of the scarcity of time is the fact that, in order to accommodate the work of Argentina and Ecuador, the original opening date was moved from May to June. Further, even with this delay, the museum was unable to include artists' biographies or photographs of the Mexican contribution in its exhibition catalog. United States New York World's Fair Commission, introduction; *New York Times*, "Art Notes," May 6, 1939.

36 United States New York World's Fair Commission.

37 According to the Declaration of American Principles, adopted by the Pan American Union during the 1936 Pan American Conference in Lima, the organization promoted intellectual interchanges as a goal that was of equal importance as the settling of disputes and treaties, cooperative economic enterprises, and other matters of foreign policy between the Americas. *Ibid.*, foreword.

38 Diana Fane, "From Precolombian to Modern: Latin American Art at The Brooklyn Museum, 1930-50," *Converging Cultures: Art & Identity in Spanish America* (New York: The Brooklyn Museum in association with H.N. Abrams, 1996), 15, published in conjunction with the exhibition "Converging Cultures: Art & Identity in Spanish America" shown at the Brooklyn Museum, the Phoenix Art Museum, and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art.

39 Porter's role at the Riverside Museum is described in a letter written by Porter to the Museum of Modern Art's director, Alfred H. Barr. Vernon Porter to Alfred H. Barr, Nov. 23, 1942, Alfred H. Barr, Jr. Papers (AAA: 2164:229), The Museum of Modern Art Archives, New York; *New York Times*, "A Latin-American Show," July 28, 1940.

40 "Latin American Exhibition of Fine and Applied Art," *Bulletin of the Pan American Union* 74, no. 1 (Jan., 1940): 19-31.

41 Rosemarie Bletter ed., *Remembering the Future: The New York World's Fair from 1939-1964* (New York: Queens Museum, 1989), an exhibition catalog, 140.

42 "Latin American Exhibition of Fine and Applied Art," 19.

43 Among the highlights of these pavilions were an exhibit on fiber and wood in the Brazilian pavilion, dioramas of resorts and hotels at the Chilean pavilion, and a monumental animated map in the Pan American Union Building which highlighted trade, communication, and commerce routes between North and South America. This map was paid for by and featured only private North American firms. Various meeting minutes from the Sub-Committee on Latin America.

44 Though Chile had its own pavilion at the New York World's Fair, a lack of space for art in the Chilean pavilion was mentioned in multiple sources as the reason prompting the Riverside Museum's exhibition, though, as already explained, Pan-American policies seems to have provided more general motivation for holding the show. *New York Times*, "Art of 21 Nations Amassed for Fair," April 2, 1939.

45 The author recognizes that the example of Narváez extends beyond the chronology of this section of the paper, since Venezuela only participated in the 1940 version of the Riverside Museum show. Nevertheless, it is felt that the case of Narváez's sculptures best expresses the diverging contexts of the museum and international exposition, and that the slight temporal shift does not affect the argument as it is here addressed.

46 United States New York World's Fair Commission, 43-44.

47 "All Aboard!," 405.

48 Narváez was specially commissioned to execute five sculptures for the pavilion by the Venezuelan government. Made out of "madera de pais" the other sculptures included Fruit and Coffee, the subject of the fifth sculpture now unknown. Narváez was present in New York during the installation of the Venezuelan pavilion, and was therefore likely aware of the placement of his sculptures. http://www.fundacionnarvaez.com/francisco_narvaez2.htm; Telegraph, box 320, file 10, Venezuela (1939), New York World's Fair 1939-1940 Archive, New York Public Library, New York.

49 Documents regarding sales of works at the exhibitions have not been identified.

50 "Cuba Takes Honors at Latin American Show," *Art Digest* 13, no. 18 (July 1, 1939): 13.

51 Ibid.

52 Howard Devree, "Two Group Shows of Art Open Today: Latin American Countries are Represented by Works in Riverside Museum," *New York Times*, June 1, 1939.

53 "Latin American Exhibition of Fine and Applied Art," 19.

54 United States New York World's Fair Commission, foreword.

55 Greet, 239.

56 "Cuba Takes Honors," 13.

57 "Latin American," New York World's Fair Art Number, *Art Digest* 13, no. 17 (June 1, 1939): 43.

58 United States New York World's Fair Commission, introduction.

59 "New York & San Francisco Fairs Close Gates on 1939 Season," *Life*, Nov. 13, 1939.

60 A second reception attended by Brazilian dignitaries was later held upon the arrival of the Brazilian and Dominican works, which had been delayed in transit. *New York Times*, "Art is Shown Here of Latin-America," July 24, 1940. Edward Alden Jewell, "2 Brazilians Put Art on View Today," *New York Times*, Aug. 6, 1940.

61 United States New York World's Fair Commission, introduction.

62 Ibid.

63 United States New York World's Fair Commission, *Latin American Exhibition of Fine Arts* (New York: Riverside Museum, 1940), an exhibition catalog.

64 *New York Times*, "A Latin-American Show."

65 A mural assistant to David Alfaro Siqueiros, Vazquez's use of lacquer recalls the Mexican

muralist's technical experimentations.

66 The only works by another artist to be submitted by Brazil in 1940 were three sculptures by Maria Martins. Though today accepted as an important 20th century Brazilian artist, the inclusion of Martins' work carried political connotations, since Martins was the Brazilian ambassador's wife. However, Martins was not the only artist featured in the exhibition with political connections: Nicolas Veloz, the honorary vice consul from the Venezuelan Consulate in New York, had three sculptures in the show, two of which were large sculptures of Abraham Lincoln and a life size figure of Will Rogers. Thomas C. Linn, "Latin-Americans To Display Art: Second Exhibition Under the World's Fair Commission Opens Here Tuesday," *New York Times*, July 21, 1940.

67 Milton Brown, "Exhibitions – New York," *Parnassus* 12, no. 6 (Nov. 1940): 37-39.

68 "Latin America's Art Seen in the U.S.," *Art Digest* 14, no. 19 (Aug. 1, 1940): 6.

69 Today, the uncertainty surrounding the Rose Art Museum's future threatens to further bury the Riverside Museum's history in a second institution's fate. Oriole Farb and Master Institute of United Art, Inc, Riverside Museum, press release, 24 May 1971 (Museum of Modern Art Queens Subject Files), "Riverside Museum (New York, NY); miscellaneous, uncatalogued material."

70 Ibid.

71 *New York Times*, "Latin-American Art."

72 Henry A. Wallace, "Toward an Inter-American Culture," *New York Times*, July 9, 1939.