Classicisms

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Bourdon, Bosse, and the Rules of Classicism

THIS IS THE STORY of two artists, two friends, each brilliant in his way: Sébastien Bourdon and Abraham Bosse. Both were active during the reigns of Louis XIII of France and his son Louis XIV, the Sun King: the middle years of the seventeenth century. It was during this period that France emerged from civil war and sectarian conflict to become the most powerful nation in Europe, a hub of learning and art, and a centralized state in which royal power touched nearly every aspect of social life. Classicism was integral to this new order, and Bourdin and Bosse were both adept practitioners of the style. Yet they met very different fates, and the divergence of their paths epitomizes the challenges and opportunities facing artists in what has come to be called the Age of Absolutism.[1]

CLASSICISM AS IMITATION

Classicism is, among other things, a theory of imitation: a way of relating oneself to approved precedents.[2] Anything "classical" is a model to emulate, a paradigm to follow, and "classicism" is the name for the systematic imitation of these models. Yet not all models, not all paradigms, are classical: to imitate Christ, for instance, may be the duty of a Christian, but Christ is not a classic (he transcends the category). The classical model is typically *antique* and typically *secular*: the heritage of pre-Christian—Greco-Roman—Europe. Build like the ancients, says the classicizing architect; carve like the ancients, says the classicizing sculptor; think like the ancients, says the classicizing philosopher.

It sounds straightforward, but in the seventeenth century there was a right way and a wrong way to go about it. Theorists such as Gian Pietro Bellori and André Félibien and such painters as Nicolas Poussin made a sharp distinction between the rational *imitation* of the world in paint and the unthinking *copying* of it.[3] The former was good, the latter bad. So, for example, Poussin was able to define painting as "an Imitation with lines and colors on any surface of all that is to be found under the sun," even as he declared that he "despised those who are only capable of copying nature as they see it."[4] Where imitation involved an intellectually motivated alteration (or elevation) of the object in the act of depiction, copying was a simple reproduction of appearances, a merely natural or mechanical operation. Imitation involved transformation and elevation; copying did not.

Poussin associated copying with realism: precisely detailed scenes of daily life that were

10 Nicolas Poussin, French, 1594–1665, *The Abduction of the Sabine Women*, c. 1633–34. Oil on canvas, 60⅞ x 82⅝ in. (154.6 x 209.9 cm). New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, 46.160 (Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 1946)

11 Roman, *Ludovisi Gaul*, 2nd century CE. Marble, height: 83 in. (211 cm). Rome, Museo Nazionale Romano, Palazzo Altemps, Inv. 8608

becoming popular in Italy and Holland. "A painter is not a great painter," he wrote, "if he does no more than copy what he sees, any more than a poet. Some are born with an instinct like that of animals which leads them to copy easily what they see. They only differ from animals in that they know what they are doing and give some variety to it. But able artists must work with their minds."[5] Realist painters are guided by instinct rather than their minds; they leave the realm of humans to become mere animals, unreasoning elements of the natural order. Poussin abhorred the arch-realist Caravaggio, who portrayed the Virgin Mary as a Roman girl adored by peasants with dirty feet: such an artist, he said, had come into the world "to destroy painting."[6] For his own part, Poussin stocked his pictures with updated versions of exemplary works of classical art: the slashing Roman at lower right in his *Abduction of the Sabine Women*, for instance, is based on a famous Greco-Roman statue known today as the Ludovisi Gaul (figs. 10 and 11). Instead of directly copying the world before his eyes, Poussin imitated prior exemplary works of art.

THE REGULATION OF ARTS

This brings us to the crux, the practical dilemma of classicism: one must follow models, conform to prototypes, but not too closely. *How* closely, then? What were the rules of art?

If classicism was largely a matter of imitation, then *French* classicism in the seventeenth century was an unprecedented regulation of the practice—that is to say, an imposition of formal rules upon it.[7] Models became norms that could be enforced through a variety of more or less subtle means. The promulgation and imposition of these rules was integral to the rise of an absolutist monarchy under the Bourbons, which may be said to have run from the ascension of Henri IV in 1589 to the seizure of power by Louis XIV in 1661. Two powerful cardinals, first

Richelieu and then Mazarin, were largely responsible for this gradual centralization of power. Royalist institutions such as the French Academy (founded in 1635 to monitor literature) and the Royal Academy of Painting and Sculpture (founded in 1648 to do the same for the arts) existed to formulate and adjudicate these rules, punish transgressors and, in so doing, impose central, royal control over literary and artisanal production.

The rules themselves were often arbitrary, if not in formulation then in enforcement. A literary brouhaha in 1637 reveals how Cardinal de Richelieu set about regulating French culture. In essence, Pierre Corneille—one of the greatest of all French dramatists—was censured by the cardinal and the academy for breaking Aristotle's rules of dramatic unity in a genre-bending play. Neither a tragedy nor a comedy but a "tragi-comedy," *The Cid* was a smash, but its very success provoked the question of whether popular taste should have any standing. Both the cardinal and the academy found the idea absurd.[8] Richelieu himself reviewed the text and discovered it to be alarmingly unorthodox. That the cardinal himself had initially loved the play, staging it not once but twice in his own palace; that he had permitted it to be dedicated to his own niece; that the academy had no jurisdiction to pronounce on works by nonmembers such as Corneille—these details were irrelevant compared to the need to impose rules upon a popular sensation. Corneille took the fall, and the academy's verdict, published as *Thoughts of the French Academy Concerning the Tragi-Comedy of "The Cid"* (1637), became something of a rule-book for aspiring dramatists for years to come.[9]

The Royal Academy was an even more naked attempt to break the power of an old guild system that dominated the picture trade. The crown simply established a new credentialing body and co-opted all the top painters into it, culminating in the ascension of Charles Le Brun as a sort of commissar for arts in the latter part of the century. When Poussin,

the great paragon of French classicism, was discovered after his death to have violated Aristotle's strictures no less flagrantly than Corneille; Le Brun invented all sorts of excuses to protect the great man's reputation: if he had violated the letter of the law, he had obeyed the spirit; figures vaguely resembling classical statues were declared to exhibit mathematically identical proportions to their originals; and so on.[10] In effect, the rules themselves mattered less than the power of the academies to decide what was correct and what was not.

"A DANGEROUS COPYIST AND ROGUE"

An enterprising man could thrive in such circumstances, and Sébastien Bourdon was such a man. The son of a Protestant painter from the south of France, Bourdon knocked about as a youth, did some apprentice work that went nowhere, served a spell in the army, and eventually made his way to Rome. There

he fell in with the group of mostly Dutch expatriates known as the Bamboccianti: the very group that Poussin most despised. Bourdon's works from this early period, such as *Travelers amongst Ruins* (fig. 12), are downright anticlassical: they often feature lower-class protagonists in dramatic settings, showcasing (as the painter Salvator Rosa put it) "rogues, cheats, pickpockets, bands of drunks and gluttons, scabby tobacconists, barbers, and other sordid subjects."[11] On the side Bourdon learned his trade—and earned his living—as a forger and *pasticheur*, even faking works by his own friends for a local art dealer. This training gave him amazing facility; like a session musician, Bourdon could play in any style and never developed one of his own. Soon he was supplementing his paintings of low life with grand altarpieces in a Flemish style while working up fakes in the manner of Giorgione, the Carracci, and others.

By 1637, however, Bourdon's Protestantism made Rome inhospitable, and he returned to France, just in time to witness the "Quarrel of *The Cid*" at close quarters. Over the next ten years he reinvented himself as a classicist. Religion was small obstacle to a man of Bourdon's sensibility, and in 1643 he did not scruple to paint a *Crucifixion of St. Peter* for Notre Dame de Paris, a breakthrough commission. By 1648 he was a founding member of the new Royal Academy; by 1655 he was its rector. The low-life forger from the provinces had become a mainstay of the Parisian art world. Later in the century, the connoisseur Louis-Henri de Loménie could single out Bourdon as "a dangerous copyist and rogue," after a duke paid a huge sum for not one but two of his

fakes—but by that time Bourdon had died, well-to-do and thoroughly respectable.[12]

The Art Institute of Chicago's *Christ Receiving the Children* (fig. 13) is typical of this later phase. As the Gospel of Mark has it:

And they brought young children to him, that he should touch them: and *his* disciples rebuked those that brought *them*. But when Jesus saw *it*, he was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God.[13]

The story tells us that Christ accepts even the lowest and least significant members of his flock. It is

as though Bourdon's concern with the humble, the common folk—people, in a word, like himself—had persisted in a new, academic idiom. Instead of literally representing "scabby tobacconists, barbers, and other sordid subjects," the rector of the academy has sanitized and sanctified them: outcasts become adorable children, realism becomes classicism.

The architectural setting is, likewise, a cleaned-up version of the tawdry limekilns and ruins that Bourdon had painted back in Rome. Yet here he takes the geometrical regularity of classicism to a nearly hallucinatory extreme. Massive forms block access to the background and leave the middle distance indeterminate, flattening the scene; severe architecture and slicing shadows combine with angular drapery to produce a tessellated, almost cubist surface.[14] The slashing shadows can suggest volume, as on the cylindrical castle in the distance, or flatness, as on the balcony at left; they align disconcertingly with the receding edges of the slabs and steps in the foreground so that the usual cues by which we navigate pictorial space do not quite work as expected. The perspectival construction is, in truth, rather loose: as the painter Jean-Joseph Taillasson put it, Bourdon has "a sort of grandeur that seems to come more from enthusiasm than from science."[15] He gives the appearance of geometrical rigor, not the real thing.

Color was a particular concern of Bourdon.[16] Bulky, simplified garments enlarge the figures into broad blocks of color across the plane of the picture; the disposition of folds makes little attempt to copy real cloth, but is largely in the service of color effects. A careful orchestration of hues and tones focuses attention on Christ while placing him between the women and children at left and the apostles at right: he is orange and blue like the former, deep and saturated (*vif* and *éclatant*, as Bourdon would say) like the latter, his blue robe making a triad of primary colors with the red and yellow of the nearby apostles. God incarnate

partakes of the nature of both groups, lay and sanctified—a point very much at issue in the Gospel story.

A colorist in the heart of classicism, a "dangerous copyist and rogue" at the head of the academy, Bourdon here produced a picture that lays claim to academic rationality while always threatening to dissolve into a kaleidoscopic array of angles, lines, and colors. Instead of holding a mirror to daily life, as he had done in his early, realist phase, the classicist Bourdon composes symphonies of color and elevated imagery, a simulacrum of rational order. From one perspective he may have seemed a bit of a fraud, nakedly using classicism as a means to social advancement. From another, he was casting off the shackles of the artisan and exercising his native powers of invention in conformity with the rules of art—rules as difficult to state, and as yet inflexible, as those that governed Parisian society writ large. If he was successful in both arenas, the artistic and the social, what was the harm of a little fakery on the side?

"THE ANTICHRIST OF ART"

Bourdon's friend and colleague Abraham Bosse lacked this ability to adapt to circumstance. "It is not in my character," he wrote, "to pronounce on matters of taste or opinion, but only on things that I know by demonstration."[17] Bosse was a printmaker and a Protestant, hence at a disadvantage both professionally and socially in a world dominated by Catholic oil painters. Bourdon was Protestant, too; yet, as we have seen, he succeeded thanks to his remarkable flexibility and his instinct for seizing the main chance. Bosse was the opposite. For him, rules were rules; they were to be followed, not gamed; and the rule of all rules was that of geometry. "The practice of the noble art of painting," he wrote, "should be based for the most part on reasoning that is correct and rule bound, that is to say, geometric and therefore demonstrable."[18] The virtue of geometry was its

availability to open, public demonstration: you could lay out a theorem and prove it conclusively, which was simply not the case in the capricious judgment of taste. Painting should aspire to this condition: like a geometrical diagram, it should make abstract truth visible to the eye. Bosse doggedly followed this reasoning to its logical conclusion—and ruined himself in the process.

Painting and geometry came together in the science of perspective.[19] Although Bosse established himself as an etcher of fashion plates and genre scenes—vignettes of Parisian life that today are precious documents of a city in transition—he set his sights higher. In the 1640s he befriended the mathematician and engineer Girard Desargues, an autodidact genius who worked on everything from projective geometry to stone cutting, corresponded with Descartes, taught math to Pascal, and even contrived ways to make staircases look longer than they really were by cunning tricks of perspective.[20] Desargues had figured out an ingenious theorem to improve the perspectival projection of objects onto a plane surface (fig. 14). The systems in place since the Renaissance had required painters to base their calculations on an imaginary vanishing point located some distance to the side of the picture itself; Desargues's system, by contrast, could be plotted entirely within the confines of the picture itself.[21] No longer would painters have to work up absurdly wide preparatory drawings, or tack rolls of paper to the edges of their canvases to plot the vanishing point.

But the real revolution was conceptual. Since the fifteenth century, perspective had been understood as a system for representing distortion. You took an object and showed how, when seen from a certain angle, it was distorted or, in the parlance of the time, "degraded": a circular dish, for instance, could appear in degraded form as an ellipse.[22] Desargues's innovation was to start with pure geometry: instead of asking what changed with different viewpoints, he asked what stayed the same. At the

heart of his method was a theorem for plotting ratios between multiple points on two converging lines. Armed with this theorem, it was possible to project or map points from one line to the other; the principle, once grasped, could be applied easily to painting. In short, the constant relations between sets of points, not the worldly objects to which those points corresponded, were what mattered. With Desargues, in J. V. Field's words, "perspective is not being seen as a procedure that 'degrades' but merely as one that transforms, leaving certain relationships the same."[23]

Bosse was entranced. He had already published a treatise on how to produce etchings in the Italian manner, using linseed oil and resin, that revolutionized the industry in France; now he put some of Desargues's ideas into practice in a book on stone cutting (which earned him the enmity of certain masons who did not appreciate being instructed in how to produce tidy geometrical solids). Then, in 1648, Bosse set his sights higher. He produced a popular illustrated version of Desargues's treatise, hoping to use his newfound knowledge to effect a reformation of painting itself. He saw himself as elevating art to the dignity of Euclid.

At first everything went well. Bosse was friends with the painter Laurent de La Hyre, a wine merchant's son who, like Bosse himself, was a lifelong Parisian and social climber (fig. 15). (Laurent's son, Philippe, was talented and, with Desargues's help, went on to a successful career as a mathematician and astronomer: the family's rise from the wine shop to the intelligentsia in three generations is emblematic of the period). Although Bosse, as a mere etcher, was barred from the academy on its founding in 1648, La Hyre was not—and he helped his friend get a post as, in effect, an adjunct instructor of perspective. Bourdon surely helped as well: he had named his son Abraham after his older friend and asked Bosse to stand as the boy's godfather.

Knowledgeable to the point of pedantry, Bosse seemed ideally suited to the academy: the whole
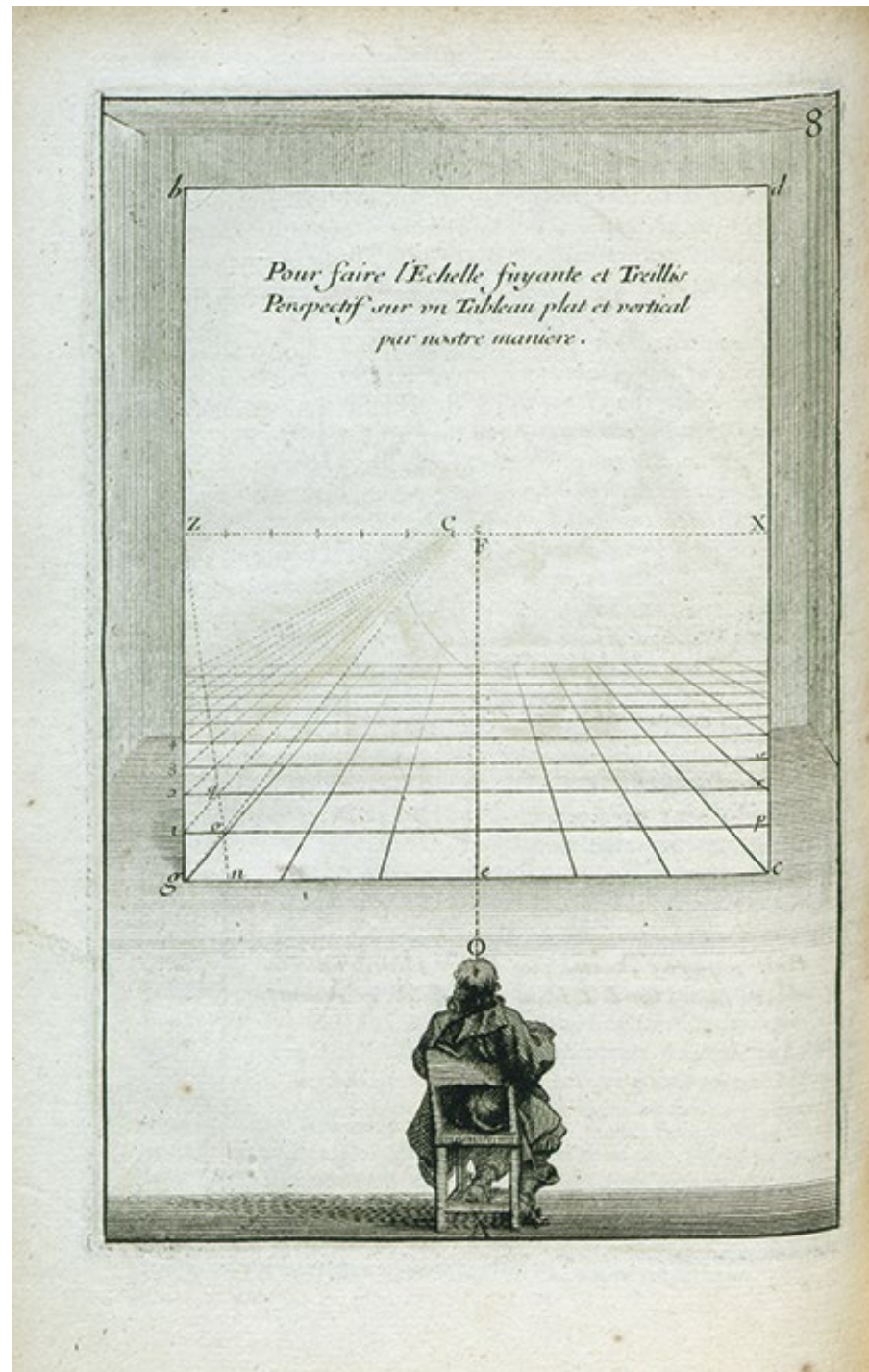
15 Laurent de La Hyre, French, 1606–1656, *Allegory of
Geometry*, 1649. Oil on canvas, 40⅞ in x 86⅛ in. (103.8 x
218.8 cm). Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, Museum
purchase, Roscoe and Margaret Oakes Income Fund, 2014.13

point of that august body, so far as its members were concerned, was to raise the art of painting above the mere mechanical crafts, to dispel the last memories of an older, medieval system of guilds, and to acquire for painters the prestige of mathematics, philosophy, and other gentlemanly pursuits. Bosse, Protestant and etcher though he was, became an honorary member in 1651. The influence of his teaching is apparent in the works not just of La Hyre but other major classicists including Eustache Le Sueur, who constructed their perspectival projections according to the Bosse-Desargues method.[24]

But it did not last. Bourdon, as we have seen, knew how to wear his convictions lightly, to speak airily about color theory when required, and, above all, to agree with Le Brun, a man who, increasingly, could make or break careers. Bosse lacked this skill. A zealot in the cause of his friend Desargues, he could not resist pointing out that Le Brun had failed properly to observe the rules of projective geometry in a *Crucifixion* that he had recently unveiled. Such an attack could only excite gossip, and Bosse's position soon became precarious. Perhaps, some said, geometrical rigor was not the only criterion of good

perspective: did the judgment of the eye count for nothing? Bourdon took his friend aside and tried to warn him, but Bosse took this gesture very badly and launched a furious polemic against "Monsieur Le B.," the most powerful man in the French art world.[25] What Bosse knew, he knew by demonstration: the proof was there for anyone to see. What did the pretensions of the academy amount to, what sort of gentleman was Charles Le Brun, if the plain truths of M. Desargues's projective geometry could be disregarded at will?

To no avail. Le Brun had it in mind to give the instruction in perspective to one of his own creatures, Jacques Le Bicheur by name, who piously cited Leonardo da Vinci's math-free *Treatise on Painting* as the source of all wisdom on this matter. Bosse dug in; rules were rules, and the only rules that counted were demonstrable ones. He appealed to the great Poussin, in Rome, who had once said that everything of merit in Leonardo's book could be written out on a single page in a large hand; but Poussin was old and would do no more than admit to a low opinion of Leonardo's theorizing.[26] An anonymous pamphlet denounced Bosse as the "Antichrist of Art"

and, more worryingly for a Protestant, a "relapsed heretic of painting."[27] A meeting was called at the academy, words were exchanged, Bosse's qualifications called into question; he stormed out. In 1661 he was expelled from the academy, and his books were banned from its library. A year later he was slapped with a restraining order to keep him from spreading "libels" about his former employers.

A sensible man might have surrendered, but Bosse knew he was right and tried to set up a rival academy. This would not do: "Monsieur Le B." saw the upstart project condemned and shuttered. The year was 1661, the very moment that Louis XIV seized power for himself, inaugurating the absolute monarchy that would endure until 1789. Bosse was one of its first casualties: although he would live on for more than a decade, his career never recovered. One by one his friends abandoned him; even, in the end, the pragmatical Bourdon. Bosse turned out the occasional religious print, and polemics of his own authorship, before dying, embittered, in 1676.

With hindsight, the outcome seems inevitable. For Bosse had, without quite realizing it, challenged the very basis of classical art theory. Desargues's conceptual revolution in perspective did away with the principle, so basic to classicism, that a picture was a more or less "degraded" imitation of an original. Instead, it reconceived painting as a mathematical transformation: the eye, Desargues argued, sees a "cone of vision," and perspective is matter of slices or sections of that cone, accessible by projective geometry.[28] Terms such as "Imitation," "Original," and "Copy" were simply irrelevant to this purely formal system. Rule bound and consistent it may have been, but it was doomed. For Bosse's faith in geometry as *demonstrable* truth and in a classical tradition with roots in the *Elements* of Euclid, Le Brun substituted the classical as an inscrutable rule, deployed capriciously for the glorification of king and state. The whole point of such rules, in a way, was that they

could never be demonstrated. Bosse literally could not stand it. Like Bourdon, he had enthusiasm, but he had science as well; yet the rules of classicism were social, not geometrical, and science was Bosse's downfall.

NOTES

1 For a classic treatment of this period, see Orest Ranum, *Paris in the Age of Absolutism: An Essay*, rev. ed. (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2002).

2 The account that follows derives substantially from my previous studies: "Poussin, Titian, and Tradition: *The Birth of Bacchus* and the Genealogy of Images," *Word & Image* 18 (2002): 267–81; "Poussin and the Ethics of Imitation," *Memoirs of the American Academy in Rome* 51–52 (2006–2007): 298–344; and "Poussin's Useless Treasures," in *Judaism and Christian Art*, ed. Herbert Kessler and David Nirenberg (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010), 328–58.

3 For this distinction, see the classic treatment in Erwin Panofsky, *Idea: A Concept in Art Theory*, trans. Joseph J. S. Peake (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1968), chap. 6. See also Jacques Thuillier, "La notion d'imitation dans la pensée artistique du XVIIe siècle," in *Critique et création littéraire en France au XVIIe siècle*, ed. Marc Fumaroli (Paris: CNRS, 1977), 361–74; Donald Posner, "Concerning the 'Mechanical' Parts of Painting and the Artistic Culture of Seventeenth-Century France," *Art Bulletin* 75, no. 4 (December 1993): 583–98; Elizabeth Cropper, *The Domenichino Affair* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2005); and Maria Loh, *Titian Remade: Repetition and the Transformation of Early Modern Italian Art* (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2007). For analogues in French literary culture, see Erica Harth, *Ideology and Culture in Seventeenth-Century France* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1983), 17–33; and Thomas Pavel, *L'Art de l'éloignement: Essai sur l'imagination classique* (Paris: Gallimard, 1996).

4 Nicolas Poussin to Paul Fréart de Chambray, March 1, 1665, quoted and translated in Anthony Blunt, *Nicolas Poussin* (Washington, DC: National Gallery of Art, 1967), 371–72; André Félibien, *Entretiens sur les vies et sur les ouvrages des plus excellents peintres anciens et modernes* (Paris: Imprimerie de SAS, 1725), 4:81; Blunt, *Nicolas Poussin,* 220n9.

5 André Félibien quoted in Jacques Thuillier, *Nicolas Poussin* (Paris: Flammarion, 1994), 163. On the idea of the mechanical in French art theory of the time, see Posner, "Concerning the 'Mechanical' Parts of Painting."

6 Félibien, *Entretiens sur les vies*, 3:194.

7 Cf. Jules Brody, "What Was French Classicism?" in *Rethinking Classicism*, ed. David Lee Rubin (New York: AMS Press, 1989), 52–75.

8 On the quarrel, see Hélène Merlin, *Public et littérature en France au XVIIe siècle* (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1994), 153–93.

9 Jean Chapelain, *Les Sentiments de l'Académie sur la tragi-comédie du Cid* (Paris: Académie Française, 1637).

10 For Le Brun's text, see Jacqueline Lichtenstein and Christian Michel, *Les Conférences au temps d'Henry Testelin, 1648–1681* (Paris: École nationale supérieure des beaux-arts, 2006), 156–74.

11 Quoted and translated in David Levine, "The Roman Limekilns of the Bamboccianti," *Art Bulletin* 70, no. 4 (December 1988): 569.

12 Louis Hourticq, "Un amateur de curiosités sous Louis XIV: Louis-Henri de Loménie, comte de Brienne, d'après un manuscrit inédit (troisième et dernier article)," *Gazette des beaux-arts* 33 (1905): 332.

13 Mark 10:13–16 (King James Version), emphasis in original; see also Matthew 19:13–15 and Luke 18:15–17.

14 Jacques Thuillier, *Sébastien Bourdon 1616–1671: Catalogue critique et chronologique de l'œuvre complet* (Paris: Réunion des musées nationaux, 2000), 338.

15 Taillasson was writing in 1807 of an oil sketch for the Art Institute of Chicago's picture that is now in the Louvre. See Thuillier, *Sébastien Bourdon*, 138. In the Chicago picture, for instance, the slab on which Christ is seated is not aligned with the block and column base between him and the apostle in white.

16 A seminar that Bourdon delivered in 1667, notionally on a picture by Poussin, is largely devoted to this topic; while paying lip service to theory (Bourdon carefully follows Le Brun) it reveals a sensitive eye and a keen pictorial intelligence. For the complete text, see Lichtenstein and Michel, *Les Conférences au temps d'Henry Testelin*, 175–95.

17 Abraham Bosse, *Lettres écrits au Sr. Brosse, graveur, avec ses réponses sur quelques nouveaux traittez concernans la perspective et la peinture* (Paris: self-published, 1668), n. p.; author's translation.

18 Abraham Bosse, *Le Peintre converty aux précises et universelles règles de son art: Avec quelques advertissemens contre les erreurs que de nouveaux écrivains veulent introduire dans la pratique de ces Arts* (Paris: self-published, 1667), n. p.; author's translation.

19 J.-P. Manceau, "Abraham Bosse, un cartésien dans les milieux artistiques et scientifiques du XVIIe siècle," in

Abraham Bosse, savant graveur, Tours, vers 1604–1676, Paris, ed. Sophie Join-Lambert and Maxime Préaud (Paris: Bibliothèque nationale de France; Tours: Musée des Beaux-Arts, 2004), 53–63.

20 The bibliography on Bosse and Desargues is large. In English, see Martin Kemp, *The Science of Art* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press 1990), 120–31; J. V. Field, *The Invention of Infinity: Mathematics and Art in the Renaissance* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 190–229; Sheila McTighe, "Abraham Bosse and the Language of Artisans: Genre and Perspective in the Académie royale de peinture et de sculpture, 1648–1670," *Oxford Art Journal* 21, no. 1 (1998): 3–26; Martin Kemp, "'A Chaos of Intelligence': Leonardo's 'Traité' and the Perspective Wars in the Académie Royale," in *Leonardo's Writings and Theory of Art*, ed. Claire Farago (New York: Garland 1999), 389–400; Hubert Damisch, "A Tale of Two Sides: Poussin between Leonardo and Desargues," in *The Treatise on Perspective: Published and Unpublished*, ed. Lyle Massey (Washington, DC: National Gallery of Art, 2003), 53–61; Kirsti Anderson, *The Geometry of an Art: The History of the Mathematical Theory of Perspective from Alberti to Monge* (New York: Springer, 2007); and Carl Goldstein, *Print Culture in Early Modern France: Abraham Bosse and the Purposes of Print* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012). For a convenient collection of the literature on Bosse, see Thomas Frangenberg, "Abraham Bosse in Context: French Responses to Leonardo's 'Treatise on Painting' in the Seventeenth Century," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 75 (2012): 223–60.

21 Girard Desargues, *Exemple de l'une des manieres universelles du S.G.D.L. touchant la pratique de la perspective sans employer aucun tiers point, de distance ny d'autre nature, qui soit hors du champ de l'ouvrage* (Paris: Jacques Dugast, 1636).

22 Field, *The Invention of Infinity*, 86. The term "degraded" is Piero della Francesca's (*degradare*).

23 Ibid., 202.

24 Kemp, *The Science of Art*, 128.

25 Thuillier, *Sébastien Bourdon*, 119.

26 According to Bosse's own account, in Bosse, *Le Peintre converty*, 95.

27 Quoted in Françoise Siguret, *L'œil surpris: Perception et représentation dans la 1ère moitié du XVIIe siècle* (Paris: Klincksieck, 1993), 74.

28 I borrow the phrase from Field, *The Invention of Infinity*, 86.