

Genius, Inspiration, and Hands: Pre-Romantic Image of Artists and Fantasy Figures by Fragonard

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Admiring Chardin's *Still Life with Jar of Olives* (fig. 1) shown in an academy exhibition, the Salon of 1763, Diderot expresses the irresistible magic produced by the painter's perfect mastery of illusionism:

Oh Chardin! The colours crushed on your palette are not white, red or black pigment; they are the very substance of the objects. They are the air and the light that you take up with the tip of your brush and apply to the canvas. [...] Approach the painting and everything blurs, flattens out and vanishes; step back and everything comes together again and reappears.¹

If we set the two extremes in the functions of the touch, or brushstrokes, as imitative and expressive, Chardin's is a maximum perfection of imitative touch.² His magical handling contributes to the realistic representation of objects while keeping its materiality.

At the other extremity of expressive brushstroke, we have Fragonard's *Bathers* (fig. 2). Here, female nudes and foliage seem to be mere excuses to show his bravura technique for managing a paintbrush. A skillful painter, Fragonard had a good command of various styles ranging from smooth, enamel-like facture to this free execution, but here the touches of the painter are purely expressive. The fact that this almost sketch-like painting entered the collection of Madame du Barry, mistress of King Louis XV, shows that subtle connoisseurs esteemed rapid execution.



Fig. 1 Jean Siméon Chardin, *Still Life with Jar of Olives*, 1760, oil on canvas, 71 x 98 cm, Musée du Louvre, Paris.



Fig. 2 Jean-Honoré Fragonard, *Bathers*, 1763–1764, oil on canvas, 64 x 80 cm, Musée du Louvre, Paris.

Such sketchy works and *esquisses* (rough sketch or studies) were widely appreciated in the eighteenth century, and considerable research has been made on this phenomenon.³ What is interesting is that the period when people took the strong interest in touch techniques in painting as traces of an artist's hand corresponds to the period when the romantic subjects was also put forward in paintings and writings. Fragonard, educated as a history painter, made many compositions appealing strongly to the viewer's imagination. Among them, dramatic themes of passionate love, like *The Fountain of Love* (fig. 3) from his later years, attest to the painter's will to express raw emotion by inventing a new visual language—a new sensibility that we could call *pre-Romantic*.⁴ It must also be noted that the almost romantic self-consciousness of artists already existed. As early as 1739, in a letter to the director general of buildings, Philibert Orry, Charles Antoine Coyppel insists that he works only when his imagination drives him and that he loves paintings as an avocation (the activity of which is purely intellectual), not as a profession to earn money.⁵

In this complex period, the famous fantasy figures were executed by Fragonard. This group of paintings is interesting in that many of them are a combination of the romantic image of an inspired artist and the use of bold brushstrokes, as one example (fig. 4) shows. Standing before the painting, we are tempted to suppose that these bold brushstrokes were admired at that time as manifestations of genius from the hands of a brilliant painter. However, we need to be cautious not to judge the eighteenth century with modern prejudices. Aiming at understanding this extraordinary work in its eighteenth-century context, we would like to analyze the two important points: the image of the artist and the significance of touch.



Fig. 3 Jean-Honoré Fragonard, *The Fountain of Love*, ca.1785, oil on canvas, 64 x 56 cm, Wallace Collection, London.



Fig. 4 Jean-Honoré Fragonard, *Portrait of Charles-Pauls-Jérôme Bréa*, oil on canvas, 81.5 x 65 cm, Musée du Louvre, Paris.

Inspiration and Image of Artists

In the eighteenth century, many geniuses whose fame spread all over the Europe came to Paris from various countries. Their presence should have increased the interest in the genius and talent in general, and inspired people to have their likenesses painted. This phenomenon must have stimulated the painters who executed portraits of these celebrities to develop their own self-consciousness.

Benjamin Franklin is a typical case. When the American statesman visited Europe in 1777 to solicit reinforcements in the war for independence, he attracted attention of the Paris Salons. Among his likenesses painted by many artistes, the allegorical composition (fig. 5) conceived by Fragonard and etched by his sister-in-law Marguerite Gérard is quite interesting; Franklin is represented like Zeus, whose attribute is the thunderbolt. We know Franklin was a scientist and that he invented a lightning rod to avoid lightning damage. Thus, we see that in this depiction of a contemporary genius, Fragonard fully utilized visual tradition.⁶

In the second half of the century, there appeared many portraits of musicians, philosophers, painters, and other people engaged in intellectual activities. What is interesting is that they are often depicted as having been captured mid-inspiration. In the previous century, numerous paintings of inspired saints experiencing ecstasy and revelation were executed. In *The Inspiration of Saint Matthew* (1602) by Caravaggio in the San Luigi dei Francesi church in Rome (fig. 6), a beautiful angel appears before Matthew to give him an inspiration, and the eyes of the Saint are fixed upward in the air. This facial expression and pose is repeated in the portraits of artists.



Fig. 5 Marguerite Gerard and Jean-Honoré Fragonard, *Au Génie de Franklin*, 1778, etching, 53.7 x 40 cm, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris.



Fig. 6 Caravaggio, *The Inspiration of Saint Matthew*, 1602, oil on canvas, 292 x 186 cm, San Luigi dei Francesi, Rome.

Portraits of musicians were well suited to this inspiration pose. German Composer Christoph Willibald Gluck established an international reputation in Vienna. After moving to Paris in 1773, he was portrayed by Joseph Duplessis (fig. 7), posed before the keyboard and looking up as if struck by sudden inspiration. The portrait of operatic tenor Pierre Jélyotte as Apollo by Louis Toqué (fig. 8) is curious as it skillfully combines the inspiration pose and traditional attributes of a musician.⁷ Since Jélyotte was a popular opera singer, he had opportunities to interpret roles of Apollo, god of the sun and protector of music. However, Toqué's painting does not intend to show Jélyotte playing a role in a particular musical work; rather, it is a kind of mythological portrait reminiscent of the portraits of princesses as goddesses by Jean-Marc Nattier. Apollo is usually depicted beside musicians or poets, blessing their talent, as in Nicolas Poussin's *Inspiration of the Poet* in Louvre, but here Jelyotte himself is Apollo playing a harp and, once again, looking upward as searching for musical inspiration.

Men of letters were depicted in this inspired state, too. The portrait of philosopher Denis Diderot by Louis-Michel van Loo (fig. 9) seems to capture him poised for inspiration, with the pen in his hand pressed to a clean sheet of paper. In Jacques-Louis David's portrait of famous aristocrat-scientist Antoine-Laurent Lavoisier and his wife, Marie-Anne Pierrette Paulze (fig. 10), the inspiration theme is given a twist: the painting seems to be simple double portrait of harmonious union, where the husband looks up at his wife, who is also a scientist, but in fact, the composition is based on the tradition of muse and poet.⁸



Fig. 7 Joseph Duplessis, *Portrait of Christoph Willibald Gluck*, 1775, oil on canvas, 99.5 x 80.5 cm, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna.

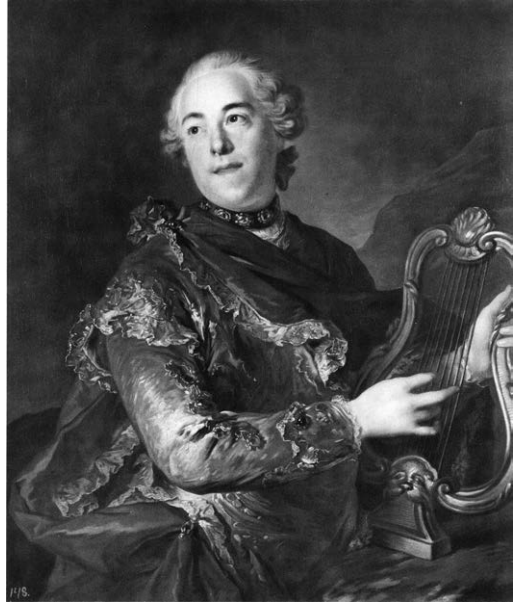


Fig. 8 Louis Tocqué, *Portrait of Pierre Jélyotte as Apollon*, after 1755, oil on canvas, 82 x 72 cm, The State Ermitage Museum, Sankt-Peterburg.



Fig. 9 Louis Michel van Loo, *Portrait of Denis Diderot*, 1767, oil on canvas, 81 x 65 cm, Musée du Louvre, Paris.



Fig. 10 Jacques-Louis David, *Portrait of Antoine-Laurent Lavoisier and his Wife, Chemist Marie-Anne Pierrette Paulze*, 1788, oil on canvas, 259.7 x 194.6 cm, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.



Fig. 11 Nicolas de Largillière, *Portrait of Charles le Brun*, 1686, oil on canvas, 232 x 187 cm, Musée du Louvre, Paris.

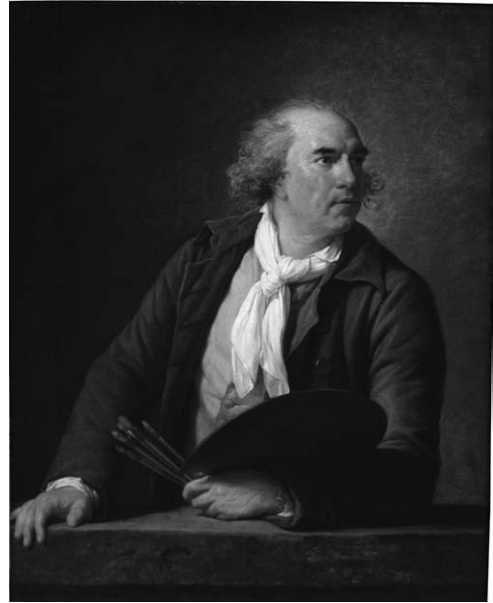


Fig. 12 Elisabeth Vigée Le Brun, *Portrait of Hubert Robert*, 1788, oil on canvas, 105 x 84 cm, Musée du Louvre, Paris.

As for representations of painters, they changed drastically from the seventeenth century to the eighteenth century. In the seventeenth century, primary importance was given to elevating the status of painter. It was necessary to demonstrate the intellectual side of act of painting. Charles le Brun (fig. 11), the director of the Royal Academy of Painting and Sculpture, is portrayed by fellow painter Nicolas de Largillière with dignity in heavy gown and huge wig, pointing to his own work, placing emphasis on the social status of the painter.

This changed in the second half of the eighteenth century, when the situation was totally different.⁹ First, the number of painters creating self-portraits and portraits of other painters had considerably increased.¹⁰ In addition to this, it was during this period that the inspiration pose was introduced to painters' portraits. In her famous portrait of Hubert Robert (fig. 12), Élisabeth Vigée-Lebrun painted her friend, a landscape painter, in his work clothes. Hair untidy, eyes transfixed, Robert appears deeply absorbed in imagination. This is a very heroic image of an artist, and a testament to the self-awareness of both painters—the sitter and the portrait painter.

Awareness that painting is a profession that requires special mental power is evident from the comments on artists' portraits. The phrase *le feu* (the fire) is often used to describe the vitality of the expression and the personality of the model.¹¹ As we shall see in the following section, *le feu* is a keyword in discussion on the execution of painting.

The Status of Painting and the Status of Touches

Almost a century after the foundation of the Royal Academy of Painting and Sculpture in 1648, painters were no longer considered to be only artisans engaged in manual labor but



Fig. 13 Jean-Baptiste Greuze, *La Live de Jully Playing a Harp*, 1759, oil on canvas, 117 x 88.5 cm, National Gallery of Art, Samuel H. Kress Collection, Washington.

intellectuals as well.¹² We can see the unshakable status of painting through the tree diagram created by the editors of the *Encyclopédie ou Dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers* (1751), Diderot and d'Alembert, which shows the structure of intellectual activity up to the date of publication.¹³ They classified all human knowledge under three main faculties: memory, reason, and imagination. The plastic arts, including painting, were grouped under imagination, along with poetry and music.

Though grouped together in *The Tree of Diderot and d'Alembert*, there is a distinction between music and plastic art. In portraits of aristocrats and bourgeois, music is a common subject. Playing music was a much-preferred pastime, and portrait subjects were often depicted playing musical instruments or holding musical scores. In the portrait of Ange Laurent de La Live de Jully by Jean-Baptiste Greuze (fig. 13), the son of a super-rich *fermier-général* (tax collector) and famous art collector proudly plucks the strings of a harp.¹⁴ As an avocation, drawing was also popular among aristocrats and bourgeois. Madame de Pompadour, the mistress of King Louis XV, even learned printmaking from François Boucher. Queen Marie Leszczyńska made large chinoiserie paintings in collaboration with several artists. However, those subjects are not portrayed with pen or brush in hand, a difference that might suggest that painting cannot escape the association with manual labor.

The manual character of painting is adroitly hinted at in Jean-Baptiste Boudard's iconology book (1766), in which painting is categorized as among the liberal arts.¹⁵ The personification of liberal arts (fig. 14) holds a painter's brush, a sculptor's chisel, and an architect's square. The required manual labor is not itself evident in the illustration, but the accompanying text gives ample account.¹⁶ On the figure's head is a flame or fire,



Fig. 14 "Art Liberal" from Jean-Baptiste Boudard, *Iconologie tirée de divers auteurs*, 1766.



Fig. 15 "Art Mécanique" from Jean-Baptiste Boudard, *Iconologie tirée de divers auteurs*, 1766.

suggesting that imagination is required in liberal arts. On the following entry, there appears a personification of mechanical arts (fig. 15). This figure appears with a lever in hand and there is a vase full of bees, which symbolize diligence and industriousness. In that image, the fire is placed on the figure's hand, suggesting that a skillful manipulation must respond to the intelligence.¹⁷

Fire is used to represent the energy for both activities, but the difference in its placement is crucial. The fire on the head of the figure demonstrates that the status of painting as part of liberal arts was accepted on condition that it was an intellectual activity. Since the seventeenth century, the French academy and its members had endeavored to raise their status from manual laborers by promoting the idea that painting is a noble, intellectual activity. It can be said that they reached their goal. However, what became of the mechanical part of painting? We cannot make images without using our hands.

In regard to this point, it is interesting that amateurs of the eighteenth century enjoyed the execution, the mechanical part, of painting. One example of this interest in materiality of the paintings is the development of printing techniques.¹⁸ In the reproduction of *dessins* (drawings), the "crayon-manner" technique was developed (fig. 16) to copy the rough marks made by chalk and charcoal. For drawings by pen and wash, printmakers combined aquatint and etching to reproduce the original tones (fig. 17).

Reflection on the mechanical process of painting was abundant in the eighteenth century, too. Mary Sheriff (1990) points out that writers of the previous century did not stress the execution, which had a low value.¹⁹ Now attention was paid to the process of picture making and the importance of skillful and lively handling.²⁰ There are two important points about the appreciation of facile execution: disguised artificial facility and enthusiastic facility.



Fig. 16 Jean-Charles François, after Charles Parrocel, *Horsemen Halting*, 1766, Crayon manner, 56 x 41 cm, Institut national d'histoire de l'art, Paris.



Fig. 17 François-Philippe Charpenrier, after Jean-Honoré Fragonard, *The Tumble*, 1766, etching and aquatint, 27 x 39.2 cm, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris.

According to Sheriff, a concept of Italian origin, *sprezzatura* (nonchalance), or overcoming difficulty with apparent ease, influenced French painting theory during the first half of the eighteenth century.²¹ The elegant final touches that hid the labor were admired.

Sprezzatura touch is highly artificial, however natural it might seem to be. A contrasting concept emerged by 1750. The new ideology honored nature and rejected artificial salon culture as corrupt.²² Lively execution was esteemed as evidence of the sincere enthusiasm of the painter.

The appreciation of *esquisse*, mentioned earlier, can be understood in the latter context. The merit of the *esquisse* was expressed using the phrase "*le feu*" (the fire). In his article on Greuze's work exhibited in the Salon of 1765, Diderot describes the advantage of studies:

A Sketch ordinarily has a fire that a painting does not. It is the heated moment for the artist, the purest verve, without any admixture of the artifice that reflection puts on everything; it is the soul of the painter spreading itself freely on the canvas.²³

In a word, *esquisse*, sketch was thought to have *le feu*, the pure enthusiasm of the artist. As *esquisse* is characterized by rough brushstrokes, this might lead to the conclusion that the free brushwork itself was understood as mark of that fire. However, the situation is not so simple. *The fire* was not used only for sketchy works in the eighteenth century. The example of Joseph Vernet is noteworthy on this point. He was conscious about the importance of *le feu* in artistic production. In refusing to send a sketch to a client who wanted to verify a composition in advance, he explained that he never made sketches as he was afraid that, by making a preliminary study, he would lose the fire in the final painting.²⁴ As he was popular for catastrophic themes like shipwrecks (fig. 18), often cited as typical *sublime* landscape painting in the second half of the century, we might assume that he applied his paintbrush with strong passion. However, the painting style of Vernet is not



Fig. 18 Joseph Vernet, *Shipwreck in a Thunderstorm*, 1770, oil on canvas, 114.5 x 163 cm, Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen, Alte Pinakothek, Munich.

characterized by free execution. His paintings are thematically romantic, but the handling is rather smooth. In addition to that, his composition is almost a repetition of an established formula. He seems to use the word *fire* to describe some tension of the overall composition.

Be that as it may, the phrase *le feu* seems to connect the issues discussed thus far. The personality of the painter, the imagination of the artists, and a certain quality that facile execution produces have all been described using the metaphor of fire. This image of fire is elusive, and we must remember that the fire of a painter exists in the painter's mind, not in the hand, as seen in Boudard's iconography (fig. 14). Even if the brushstrokes are admired, it is because they transmit the painter's ideas, the power of the imagination. Plastic art, including painting, was thought to be inferior to other types of art, such as poetry and music, because it required manual labor and its products were material and three-dimensional existence. Painting was admitted to the status of liberal arts only once it was accepted as an intellectual activity.

Fantasy Figures Reexamined

Fantasy Figures refers to a group of half-length portraits by Jean-Honoré Fragonard of identical dimensions and painted in bold brushworks. Since they were grouped together for the first time by George Wildenstein in 1960, a considerable number of studies have focused on these mysterious paintings.²⁵ Original source information about these paintings is scarce, but one of these paintings is signed and dated 1769, and from the similarity of style, we estimate that the works were painted around the same time. The dated one also has a label on the reverse that says that the painting was made in one hour.²⁶ Since we do not know when the label was affixed, it is not certain if the work was really done in one hour, but no one denies that the speedy, rapid brushwork is the strongest charm of these works.

Along with bold touches, what is important about these works is the fictional costume and theatrical gesture of the figures. The figures are variously dressed as actress, singer, musician, writer, and perhaps draughtsman, with a large sketchbook and a pen in his hand (fig. 4). Many of them are caught mid-inspiration, like the portraits of artists discussed earlier. How do we interpret this extraordinary combination of the inspiration pose and bold brushstroke?

It is critical to consider who was the client for these paintings. These works were never exhibited publicly in the painter's lifetime. It is certain that they were not made for the open market, but intended to be appreciated within a narrow private circle. However, for long time, the identities of the most of the sitters were obscure, though some of them were given identification, such as Saint-Non, who was the great patron of Fragonard. Recently, a new drawing has been discovered, and it is almost certain that some of the works are in fact portraits of aristocrats or wealthy bourgeois.²⁷ For example, the well-known painting that was formally said to be of Mademoiselle Guimard (fig. 19), a famous dancer and one of the patrons of Fragonard, was in fact the Countess Marie Anne Eleonore de Grave. Accordingly, the Fantasy Figures are composed of disguised portraits of members of the upper class and professional artists such as famous harpsichordist and composer Anne-Louis Brillon de Jouy or pastellist Charles-Paul-Jérôme Bréa (fig. 4).²⁸

This identification has had a deep impact on the interpretation. As I have pointed out, aristocrats and high bourgeoisies were not normally portrayed as painters. The inclusion of the portrait of a painter seems to show the open-mindedness of the audience for which



Fig. 19 Jean-Honoré Fragonard, *Portrait of La comtesse Marie-Anne-Eléonore de Grave*, ca. 1769, 81.5 x 65 cm, Musée du Louvre, Paris.

these paintings were executed. The circumstance seems to allow Fragonard to fully develop free execution. The fire of imagination, symbolized in the inspiration pose, and the fire in hand, embodied in the bold touch, are miraculously connected here.

In a public sphere in France, painting was charged with heavy intellectual discussion. It is one of the consequences of the long struggle of the Royal Academy and its advocates to raise the status of painting by stressing its intellectual character. Though the second half of the eighteenth century saw the appreciation of the expression of artistic spontaneity and enthusiasm, it did not always mean bold touches like those of Fragonard. He was exceptional. However, the important point is that there were amateurs who accepted his expressions of artistic freedom and paid for his works, even if they did not know to articulate why they appreciated them.

Notes

1 Pierre Rosenberg(ed.), exh. cat. *Chardin*, Galeries Nationales du Grand Palais, Paris and Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 2000, p. 288.

2 This division might seem arbitrary, but Watelet already wrote in 1792 that touch is an imitative and communicative sign. Claude-Henri Watelet and Pierre Charles Lévèsque, "Touche,"

in *Dictionnaire des art de peinture, sculpture et gravure, Tome Cinquieme*, Paris, 1792, pp. 783–788. See especially p. 786.

3 On the appreciation of *esquisses* in the eighteenth century, see Christian Michel, “Imagination et feu: L’esquisse dans la pensée du XVIIIe siècle,” exh. cat. *L’apothéose du geste: L’esquisse peinte au siècle de Boucher et Fragonard*, Musée des beaux-arts, Strasbourg and Musée des beaux-arts de Tours, Tours, 2003–2004, pp. 39–47; and Uwe Fleckner, “Pourquoi une belle esquisse nous plaît-elle plus qu’un beau tableau?: Fragonard, Diderot et l’éloquence du pinceau dans quelques portraits du XVIIIe siècle,” Thomas W. Gaehtgens et al.(ed.), *L’Art et les Normes Sociales au XVIIIe Siècle*, Paris, 2001, pp. 509–533.

4 On the application of the concept “Preromanticism” which was originally used in French literary history, to the works of Fragonard, see Andrei Molotiu, *Fragonard’s Allegories of Love*, Los Angeles, 2007, pp. 18–21.

5 “[...] *je ne travaille qu’autant que je seray entraîné par la force de l’imagination; je ne puis traiter la peinture autrement. [...] Enfin, Monseigneur, si vous me permettez de dire ce que je pense de la peinture, je l’adore comme occupation, je la déteste comme profession.*[...]” From a letter from Coypel on 8 February 1739, cited in Antoine Louis Lacordaire, *Notice historique sur les Manufactures impériales de tapisseries des Gobelins et de tapis de la Savonnerie, suivie du catalogue des tapisseries exposées et en cours d’exécution*, Paris, 1853, pp. 89–90.

6 On this etching, see Yann Fauchois et al. (ed.), exh.cat. *Lumières! Un héritage pour demain, Bibliothèque nationale de France*, Paris, 2006, p. 143; and Colin B. Bailey, *Patriotic Taste: Collecting Modern Art in Pre-Revolutionary Paris*, New Haven and London, 2002, p. 109.

7 On the portrait of Jélyotte, see Nicole Lallement, “Iconographie d’un chanteur au XVIIIe siècle: Pierre Jélyotte (1713–1797),” *Musique. Images. Instruments*, 10, 2008, pp. 109–119.

8 For an interpretation of this painting, see Joachim von Gaus, “Ingenium und Ars: Das Ehepaarbildnis Lavoisier von David und die Ikonographie der Museninspiration,” *Wallraf-Richartz-Jahrbuch*, 36, 1974, pp. 199–228.

9 On portraits of artists in the eighteenth century, see Sylvie Martin, “Le Portrait d’artiste au XVIIIe siècle et la critique de son temps,” *Histoire de l’Art*, 5/6, 1989, pp. 63–74.

10 Marianne Roland Michel, “Ressemblance, imitation ou illusion? Le portrait en France au XVIIIe siècle,” exh.cat. *Portrait: le portrait dans les collections des Musées Rhône-Alpes*, Musée de Brou, Bourg-en-Bresse et al., 2001, pp. 119–128.

11 Martin, *op. cit.* (note 9), p. 68.

12 On the change of status of the image-making professions, including painting, see Natalie Heinrich, *Du peintre à l’artiste: Artisans et académiciens à l’âge classique*, Paris, 1993. Of special interest is Chapter VII, “Artiste,” pp. 198–208.

13 “Système Figuré des Connoissances Humaines,” in *Encyclopédie ou Dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers*, vol. 1, 1751, n.p.

14 On La Live de July, Bailey, *op. cit.* (note 6), pp. 33–69.

15 Jean-Baptiste Boudard, *Iconologie tirée de divers auteurs: ouvrage utile aux gens de lettres, aux poètes, aux artistes, & généralement à tous les Amateurs des Beaux-Arts*, Vienna, 1766, vol. 1, pp. 44–45.

16 *Ibid.*, p. 44, "Art Liberal." The accompanying text: "*L'exercice des arts exige de la force et de l'expérience. La Jeunesse manque d'expérience, et la vieillesse de force, c'est pour cela que cette figure se représente dans l'âge viril. Ses bras nus et son vêtement retroussé expriment l'activité nécessaire au travail. La flamme qui est sur sa tête symbolise le feu de l'imagination. D'une main elle tient un pinceau, un ciseau et une équerre, qui sont les attributs de la Peinture, de la Sculpture et de l'Architecture: et de l'autre un piquet où s'appuie une plante; l'Agriculture est aussi un art liberal. Le miroir est le symbole de l'imitation.*"

17 *Ibid.*, p. 45, "Art Mécanique." The accompanying text: "*Il se caractérise par un homme fort et robuste, appuyé sur un cabestan; d'une main il tient un levier, et il a dans l'autre une flamme, qui signifie que l'adresse de la main doit répondre à l'intelligence de la tête. On l'habille plus simplement que le précédent. Proche de lui est un vase rempli d'abeilles; ces animaux selon Virgile, sont le symbole de l'industrie et de la diligence.[...]*"

18 On this problem, see exh.cat. Emmanuelle Delapierre and Sophie Raux (ed.), *Quand la gravure fait Illusion: Autour de Watteau et Boucher, Le dessin gravé au XVIIIe Siècle*, Musée des Beaux Arts, Valenciennes, 2007.

19 Mary Sheriff, *Fragonard: Art and Eroticism*, Chicago, 1990, p. 124.

20 On the discussion in the eighteenth century by writers Roger de Piles, Antoine Coypel, de Caylus, Charles-Nicolas Cochin, Abbe Laugier, Etienne Liotard, Watelet, and Levêsqe, see *ibid.*, pp. 117–152.

21 *Ibid.*, p. 127; on *sprezzatura* in eighteenth-century France, see also Fleckner, *op. cit.* (note 3) pp. 509–533.

22 *Ibid.*, p. 138.

23 *Ibid.*, p. 142.

24 Léon Lagrange, *Joseph Vernet et la Peinture au XVIIIe Siècle: Les Vernet*, Paris, 1864, pp. 178–179.

25 Charles Sterling, *An Unknown Masterpiece by Fragonard: Portrait of a Man (The Warrior)*, Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute, Williamstown, MA, 1964; Mary D. Sheriff, "Invention, Resemblance, and Fragonard's Portraits de Fantaisie," *Art Bulletin*, 69, no. 1, 1987, pp. 77–87; and Melissa Percival, *Fragonard and the Fantasy Figure: Painting the Imagination*, Surrey, 2012.

26 Pierre Rosenberg (ed.), exh.cat. *Fragonard*, Galeries Nationales du Grand Palais, Paris and Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 1988, pp. 274–278. *Portrait of M. de La Bretèche* in the Musée du Louvre is signed and dated at the lower right: "*frago 1769.*" A label states the following: "*Portrait de Mr. de La Bretèche, peint par fragonard, en 1769, en une heure de temps.*" A similar label appears on the back of *Portrait of the Abbé de Saint-Non* in the Musée du Louvre.

27 Marie-Anne Dupuy-Vachey, "Review. Fragonard and the Fantasy Figure. Painting the Imagination by Melissa Percival," *La Tribune de l'Art*, 20 July 2012, (<http://www.latribunedelart.com/fragonard-and-the-fantasy-figure-painting-the-imagination>. Access: 10/12/2016); Carole Blumenfeld, *Une Facétie de Fragonard: Les Révélations d'un Dessin Retrouvé*, Montreuil, 2013; Marie-Anne Dupuy-Vachey, "Fragonard's 'Fantasy Figures': Prelude to a New Understanding," *Burlington Magazine*, 157, no. 4, 2015, pp. 241–247.

28 Dupuy-Vashy, 2015, *op. cit.* (note 27), p. 242.

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