Eighteenth-Century Italian Draughtsmen

It is appropriate that the Museum’s exhibition *Drawings from New York Collections, III, The Eighteenth Century in Italy* should be accompanied by a display of contemporary prints, many by the same artists, for the wealth of fine draughtsmen in Italy during the eighteenth century was responsible for raising the art of printmaking to one of its most splendid heights. Long inhibited by the preceding century’s customary mechanical copies of paintings, great artists were once more inspired to set burins and etching needles to the task of creating new forms of printed expression, new techniques, and lively original compositions.

The best Venetian painters of the time resolved to dissolve the problems of depicting vivid detail illumined by the north Italian sun. And as they created brilliant atmospheres with oil paint on canvas, so they stimulated printmakers to equal this achievement. The painters Tiepolo and Canaletto, themselves printmakers, met the challenge magnificently with their own etchings: enchanting caprices and sparkling views that evoke both fantasy and reality.

In Rome, the tremendous talent of Piranesi brought to printmaking the genius of a superb architect, designer, and draughtsman. Piranesi’s Views of Rome and his incredible Prisons are together the first and last word in grandeur, magnitude, and drama combined in etching.

The etchings and engravings that have been chosen to complement the eighteenth-century Italian drawings, some of which are discussed in this Bulletin, demonstrate the extraordinary inventiveness of this period, a radiant moment in the history of prints.

*The Department of Prints and Photographs*
Contents

Twenty-four Picturesque Ideas of the Flight into Egypt
Colta Feller Ives 195

Eighteenth-Century Italian Prints
Victor Wiener 203

Venetian Book Design in the Eighteenth Century
Anne Palms Chalmers 226

Grand Occasions
Mary L. Myers and Suzanne Boorsch 236

Venice as It Was, Is, and Must Be
John McAndrew 244

The Eighteenth Century In Italy 248

The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin

Published monthly from October to June and quarterly from July to September. Copyright © 1971 by The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Fifth Avenue and 82nd Street, New York, N. Y. 10028. Second class postage paid at New York, N. Y. Subscriptions $7.50 a year. Single copies seventy-five cents. Sent free to Museum members. Four weeks’ notice required for change of address. Back issues available on microfilm from University Microfilms, 313 N. First Street, Ann Arbor, Michigan. Volumes I—XXXVII (1905-1942) available as a clothbound reprint set or as individual yearly volumes from Arno Press, 330 Madison Avenue, New York, N. Y. 10017, or from the Museum, Box 255, Gracie Station, New York, N. Y. 10028. Editor of Publications: Leon Wilson. Editor-in-chief of the Bulletin: Katharine H. B. Stoddert; Assistant Editor: Susan Goldsmith; Design Consultant: Peter Oldenburg. Photographs, unless otherwise noted, by the Metropolitan Museum’s Photograph Studio.
Twenty-Four Picturesque Ideas of the Flight into Egypt

COLTA FELLER IVES
Assistant Curator of Prints and Photographs

Piqued by a patron’s accusation of “povertà di fantasia,” Giovanni Domenico Tiepolo created twenty-four variations on one single theme, thereby hoping to vindicate his talent for original and imaginative compositions. This, at any rate, is the anecdote that has been passed on to explain his unique pictorial treatment of the Holy Family’s journey from Judea to Egypt.

Domenico was but twenty-three years old when, in 1750, he began his Picturesque Idea of the Flight into Egypt (see pages 198-199). That year he had accompanied his father, the grandiloquent Venetian painter Giovanni Battista Tiepolo, to Würzburg where the elder artist had accepted a commission to decorate the interior of the palace of the prince-bishop. To this Prince-Bishop Carl Philipp von Griesenklau the young Tiepolo dedicated his series of etchings, which opened with the figure of Fame trumpeting the patron’s name to the ends of the earth while accompanying angels bore the Griesenklau coat of arms through the skies above Würzburg Castle (right).

Intermittently working on his etchings from 1750 to 1753, Giandomenico also aided his father in the painting of frescoes at Würzburg. He was to continue to serve his father thus, as chief assistant and collaborator, for twenty-five years, while the elder Tiepolo’s reputation steadily eclipsed his own. It was at Würzburg, however, that Domenico first felt an opportuni-
Domenico Tiepolo is probably the first artist ever to treat the flight of the Christ child and his family in so extensive a narrative manner. Standard is the scene of Mary and the Child riding on a donkey, Joseph with his staff walking alongside, a palm tree and perhaps a walled town in the distance. And the “rest” or “repose” of the travelers has always been a favorite subject among artists, offering variations on the picture of Mary seated in the shade of a tree with Jesus on her lap and Joseph nearby tending the animal.

Tiepolo does not fail to incorporate these traditional scenes into his interpretation of the story, but far and beyond the two isolated moments he offers a nearly filmlike documentary that traverses both time and space. From the very first “frame” in which Joseph announces to Mary that, in a dream, an angel has advised them to “Arise . . . and flee!” we are invited to join in the journey from day to day, place to place, through desert and forest, across a river, up hill and down until the arrival at last at the gates of Matarea in Egypt.

At each turn Domenico proudly devises a new pictorial pattern, a new relationship of figure to figure. The group is beautifully varied by the introduction of ministering angels, villagers, shepherds, and even God the Father, himself. The scenery is spiced with caprices (some borrowed from father Tiepolo) and snatches of flora and fauna inspired by the revered seventeenth-century printmen Benedetto Castiglione and Stefano della Bella.

Domenico clearly felt unhampered by any necessity to stick to the facts, biblical, archaeological, or otherwise. Ignoring the great variety of marvels that were said to have marked every step of the Holy Family’s way — trees bent in adoration of the Child, lepers healed by his hand, bandits made hospitable, springs commanded to gush forth at the stamp of his baby foot — Giandomenico chose instead to exhibit simple genre scenes of enchanting intimacy and grace: a husband and wife engaged in quiet conversation, a baby raptly watching the vapor steaming from a bowl, the picturesque but hardly awe-inspiring figure of an old woman selling eggs by the side of a road, an old man bent over by the weight of the basket on his back, a donkey contentedly chewing grass.

The resulting pageant is more endearing than it is impressive. In an age when formalized religion was steadily losing ground and tastes turned enthusiastically to the charming rather than the pious, it is not so surprising that Tiepolo’s Picturesque Idea should have more to do with delicate poetry than with religious dogma.
OVERLEAF
The twenty-four illustrations of
Giovanni Domenico Tiepolo's
Picturesque Idea of the Flight into Egypt
Behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph, saying, “Arise, and take the child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and remain there until I tell thee. For Herod will seek the child to destroy him.” So he arose, and took the child and his mother by night, and withdrew into Egypt.

St. Matthew 2:13-14
It was always a favorite convention of Tiepolo to picture his subjects from behind. Here he presents the heavily laden, persevering travelers in the kind of immediate and dramatic perspective that was the special forte of ceiling painters. Guided by heavenly rays, the group trudges on toward a distant town, the faithful beast of burden made every bit a part of the family.
The Venetians’ love of lively detail in the full glow of day led them to create the sort of sunny and light-hearted atmosphere through which a Holy Family might happily travel. Now descending a hill, Mary and her baby are guided around a bend in the road by an angel keeping pace with the energetic Joseph. Their path is cleared of straying sheep who obediently make way for the Child who will one day be called Shepherd.

Departing from his general policy of personal “invenzione,” Tiepolo relied on a literary source for the subject of this plate: “And now he drew near to a great city, in which there was an idol, to which the other idols and gods of Egypt brought their offerings and vows . . . And at the same instant this idol fell down. . . .” (The Apocryphal New Testament IV:6,13)
As the travelers near their final destination the difficulties of their trip become increasingly apparent. On this hilly climb, Mary spares their weary animal the burden of her weight by proceeding on foot, supported by an angel on either side; Joseph anxiously looks back for assurance that she and the Child are still close behind. The scene is simple, poignant, and elicits sympathy for that long and perilous journey of at least four hundred miles, which might have occupied five or six weeks had not time and space been miraculously shortened to preserve so sacred a life.
During Victor Wiener’s two years in the Department of Prints and Photographs, he catalogued much of the material presented in our current exhibition, and helped in the preparation of the show itself. His work was made possible through a Chester Dale Fellowship. Like the other department heads, I am most grateful to the Chester Dale and J. Clawson Mills fellowship program, which supports many young scholars on the Museum’s staff — scholars who supply an important part of the curatorial labor necessary so our holdings can be seen, understood, and enjoyed.

JOHN MCKENDRY

Eighteenth-Century Italian Prints

VICTOR WIENER  Formerly Chester Dale Fellow, Department of Prints and Photographs

As in other areas of the visual arts, the eighteenth century proved extraordinarily important for the development of Italian printmaking. Throughout Italy one saw artists experimenting with new solutions to old problems, expanding both the graphic repertory and range of subjects available to the printmaker. Venice and Rome became the outstanding centers for eighteenth-century Italian prints. Venice, the fantasy city of Europe, encouraged inventive approaches in the depiction of religious and historical narratives. Roman printmakers, surrounded by the ruins of several civilizations, turned with increasing frequency to the representation of ancient monuments. The following illustrations have been selected to suggest the different yet not unrelated concerns of both cities, and the scope of their printmakers’ experiments and innovations.
Eighteenth-century Venice produced no truly great authors; Goldoni, the Venetian who came closest to greatness, permanently left the city in 1762. Paradoxically, despite the additional complication of a labyrinth of tax laws and restrictions on printed matter, the eighteenth century surpassed in quantity the magnificent products of previous centuries, and became the greatest era for Venetian books and independent print projects. The publishing firms of Albrizzi, Pasquali, and Zatta, and the print sellers Wagner and the Remondini (in nearby Bassano) catered to a daily expanding public. Goethe’s father marveled over their accomplishments and wrote, “I must admit that publishing in Venice is more refined than that of any other nation.” Most Venetian painters became involved in some way with printmaking, whether by providing designs or by actually attacking the copper plates themselves, and the greatest Venetian painter, Giovanni Battista (Giambattista) Tiepolo, became the greatest Venetian printmaker.

Tiepolo built his reputation as a painter with a palette brighter than real life, yet grounded by economically controlled draughtsmanship. Unable to duplicate in etching the exquisitely subtle colors of his paintings, Tiepolo chose instead to create a graphic style built on a confluence of consummately etched lines, which converge in compositions charged with an extraordinary feeling for the expressive aspects of chiaroscuro (Figures 1, 2). While Tiepolo relies heavily on subtle variations between line and different tonalities of wash in his drawings, his etchings show very few fine gradations of shading. This style, derived in part from the dramatic Italian etchings of the seventeenth century, was also influenced by the prints of Rembrandt. But Tiepolo’s prints are more than just a reworking of the seventeenth-century baroque manner. One can see this clearly if we contrast one of his
prints from the Scherzi di Fantasia (Figure 2) with The Massacre of the Innocents (Figure 3), an etching after Giuseppe Maria Crespi, which, although of eighteenth-century origin, is very seventeenth century in feeling. The similarities of the two prints are readily noticeable: both are concerned with the dramatic interplay and contrast of black and white. But, while the Crespi is dense, using tightly interlocked figures for explicit rhetoric in a seventeenth-century manner, Giambattista’s scene is more loosely structured, using larger white areas as an active part of the composition, constructing black and white contrasts with fewer lines. One is aware of the bold chiaroscuro in the Tiepolo, executed with great economy of means that makes it even more expressively direct than the Crespi and points the way to the often cited influence of Tiepolo’s prints on Goya.

But what is perhaps the most unusual aspect of the Tiepolo prints is their puzzling subject matter. Noted for iconographic clarity and an ability to satisfy his patrons’ demands in his paintings, Tiepolo chose subjects for his two print series, the Capricci and the Scherzi di Fantasia, that are still open to interpretation.

Not all printmakers had the ingenuity to invent their own subjects, and for the most part the Venetian presses were turning out reproductive etchings and engravings in which the primary concern was fidelity to an original model rather than the spontaneous invention of a new design on the plate. Sophisticated yet mechanical techniques had been developed by a long line of craftsmen of previous centuries whose aim was to reproduce as faithfully as possible the drawings and paintings of famous artists for tourists and collectors unable to buy the original works of art. The majority of book illustrators also chose formulae that mimicked the atmospheric and textural values
of painting, as can be seen, for example, in a plate by Francesco Zucchi after a drawing by Giovanni Battista Piazzetta for an Italian edition of John Milton’s Paradise Lost printed in 1742 (Figure 4). The engraver uses an array of meticulously engraved crosshatchings and dots to distinguish among the textures of skin, fabrics, water, and earth; even the atmospheric space is penetrated and filled with line, as if to make the scene as legible as possible.

A few printmakers rejected the idea that a print after a painting or drawing need be an exact copy, in favor of a more adventuresome tack. Giovanni Domenico (Giandomenico) Tiepolo’s reproductive etchings after his father Giambattista’s paintings serve as a fitting contrast to the Zucchi engraving. While Giandomenico, too, is concerned with describing diverse textured surfaces, all the lines employed in a print such as John the Baptist Preaching (Figure 5), after the Giambattista painting in the Colleoni Chapel in Bergamo, are etched with an impressive freedom. Furthermore, as in his father’s etchings, white space becomes an active and integral part of the composition, heightening its expressive aspects and resulting in a highly dramatic chiaroscuro, where the creative interplay of black and white values leaves the viewer with a feeling of extraordinary freshness. The contrast between these two prints presents an interesting paradox: while Zucchi’s was designed specifically for the edition of Paradise Lost, his choice of technique is very confining and gives the flavor of being a copy after a panel painting, while Giandomenico’s, which indeed is a copy of an existing painting, possesses the honesty, vitality, and spontaneity that characterize a plate in which the etcher’s personality exists alongside that of the original designer’s.

Giandomenico’s freshness and freedom can be ascribed to his choice of etching over the more restrictive technique of engraving. This does not mean to imply that if a reproductive artist were to be inventive it was necessary for him to be an etcher. We can examine the alternatives to etching provided by Marco Alvise Pitteri, Giannantonio Faldoni, and John Baptist Jackson, to name just a few — reproductive artists who were not etchers yet who continued to treat printmaking as an experimental medium.
5. John the Baptist Preaching, by Giovanni Domenico (Giandomenico) Tiepolo (1727-1804), after Giambattista Tiepolo. Etching, 9 7/16 x 11 1/4 inches. Rogers Fund, 22.81.33
Around 1740 Marco Alvise Pitteri devised a new method of engraving using a series of pearshaped flicks arranged in parallel patterns that created a richly textured surface as well as a remarkable range of gray tonalities. This technique was especially suited to reproducing the atmospheric values of the chalk drawings of Piazzetta, with whom Pitteri collaborated until the former’s death in 1754. In his print after Piazzetta’s St. Peter (Figure 6), for example, Pitteri creates a sculpturally modeled head that emerges from an opaque atmosphere with a blurred quality very expressive of the saint’s metaphysical state of mind. The absence of sharp edges and ordinary lines is appropriate to translating Piazzetta’s soft-edged style of drawing in chalk.

Giannantonio Faldoni contributed a new technique based on the style of Claude Mellan (1598-1688), in which the illusion of volume is created by the skilled use of strictly parallel engraved lines, which complement and contrast to one another so as to describe ample objects with rounded contours. Faldoni’s broad parallel lines remind one of the woodcut medium, and undoubtedly this quality is what appealed to Anton Maria Zanetti the elder, who commissioned Faldoni in 1724 to do a series of engravings after Parmigianino’s drawings. Zanetti, a leading patron of the arts as well as a gifted artist, revived the chiaroscuro woodcut, for which two or three blocks were used to render variations of tone in imitation of wash drawings. It is logical that this technique would be brought back in an age concerned with color. Not only did Zanetti adopt the mannerist conceit of varying the colors of the inks in different impressions of the same print, but he experimented with more bizarre color combinations than those used by artists of the sixteenth century.

Zanetti’s most significant protégé was the young Englishman John Baptist Jackson, who arrived in Venice in 1730 and mastered the technique of chiaroscuro woodcut, which he used to interpret famous paintings from the past by artists such as Veronese, Titian, and Rubens. Printed in very limited editions, Jackson’s woodcuts were more than secondary translations of primary objects: they were considered by connoisseurs in the eighteenth century as works of art in their own right, some of which were so convincing that Zanetti is known to have passed them off in Paris as sixteenth-century originals. But Jackson’s talent lay not so much in his ability to imitate dead masters like Ugo da Carpi, as in his ability to blend techniques of the sixteenth century with those of the eighteenth. We can see, for example, Faldoni’s influence on the Englishman when we compare Jackson’s Woman Holding a Jar on Her Head, after Parmigianino, of 1731 (Figure 8) with Faldoni’s print of 1724 of the same subject (Figure 7); rather than return to the original Parmigianino drawing, Jackson freely adapted Faldoni’s composition. Jackson’s use of color, however, and his handling of the chiaroscuro woodcut medium give the print a crude, expressive force, primarily in the dramatic white shadows, which sets it apart from the grace of both the Faldoni and the Parmigianino drawing.

In his prints after Marco Ricci’s landscapes (Figure 9), Jackson extends the possibilities of the woodcut largely by working with a greater number of tones than had ever been used before in Europe, approaching full color by employing seven to ten different blocks. Consistently, throughout his life, in his reproductive woodcuts Jackson does not hesitate to filter the art of others through his unique consciousness to arrive at some of the most novel of eighteenth-century prints.


8. Woman Holding a Jar, 1731, by John Baptist Jackson (1700-1777), English, after Parmigianino. Chiaroscuro woodcut, 6¾ x 3½ inches. The Elisha Whittelsey Fund, 69.669.6

In the eighteenth century a whole new genre, that of vedute, which included both paintings and prints and drew on precursors from the sixteenth century onward, was created to popularize the city’s charm.

Literally, vedute means “view paintings” or “view renderings,” but the genre went beyond strictly topographical studies, for although its practitioners may have paid careful attention to representing existing structures stone by stone, they conceived of their creations as more than architectural renderings because of the freedom with which they executed the motif. While some vedute seem to be depictions of real locales, very often they may be capricious arrangements of many elements.

Even though vedute need not be just strict topographical illustration, its origins are found within that realm, since all the major vedutisti had been given intense training in architectural perspective in preparation for a career as either a practicing architect (like Marieschi) or a theatrical designer (like Canaletto).

The contrast between vedute and simple topography is apparent if we compare two prints, both nominally vedute: one by Marcantonio dal Ré of the gardens of Oreno of Count Giovanni Battista Scotti, published in 1727 (Figure 10), and the other by Luca Carlevaris, the first truly important painter of vedute, of the Scuola di San Marco, published in 1703 (Figure 11). At first glance, there are marked similarities between the two. Both are views of large buildings that enclose little figures. The dal Ré, however, is topographic in spirit because he is less concerned with the view per se than with the villa’s general plan and perspective elevation. Although he includes figures in the landscape, their function is to clarify the architectural scale, very much the same way a contemporary architect might include toy people and trees in the mock-up of a proposed structure. Dal Ré’s skill rests with his creative depiction of the auxiliary details he uses to enliven his composition, such as the assortment of figures drawn from different walks of life, making his print a superior example of its type. Nevertheless, his primary interest is still with the building. His concerns remain with the literal and obvious rather than the sublime and imaginative.

The Carlevaris etching, although superficially similar, is different and more adventurous in its basic assumptions. Carlevaris is interested in distinguishing between the textures of building façades, avoiding the more mechanical solutions dal Ré chose to depict surfaces. In particular, however, we are more aware of the active role—the point of view—of the artist, who is not as preoccupied with the layout of the piazza as he is with the dramatic juxtaposition of the massive structures in it. Consequently, the statue of Colleone obliterates the structural details of the Scuola di San Marco and the church of SS. Giovanni e Paolo, something a true topographic artist would try to avoid by choosing a viewpoint that would best

describe the architecture. There is good reason for Carlevaris’s superiority: since his view paintings were pioneer works, it is logical that he should also use the print medium to create a new and original work rather than simply an elaborate souvenir for a nobleman proudly wishing to immortalize his new villa.

Vedute became more sophisticated during the eighteenth century, and one notices the increasing role fantasy and caprice play in such compositions, a vogue that was promulgated by the paintings and prints of Marco Ricci, who around 1720 pioneered a subdivision of vedute, the ruin caprice. Not pretending to be real views, ruin caprices presented a fantastic arrangement of monuments from all periods drawn together into compositions that were populated by small figures—rustic beings who move freely about architectural fragments.

This relaxed attitude in the depiction of existing structures and monuments can also be seen in the paintings and etchings of Canaletto and Marieschi, which are more often skillful assemblages of fragments from many scenes rather than true views. Marieschi’s prints dramatize this point, for while one is ready, diverted by pretty colors, to accept his painted views containing churches, palazzi, and canals on face value, the dramatic chiaroscuro Marieschi uses in his prints underscores a suspicion that they might be inventive arrangements of black and white masses. A striking example is his view of the Piazza della Scuola di San Marco (Figure 12), which when contrasted with the Carlevaris etching of the same view (Figure 11) shows that both artists did not hesitate to alter the perspective and even structural details for the overall effect of the vedute. And, in Figure 13, one might consider Marieschi’s manipulation of dark and light areas analogous to a stage designer’s manipulation of theatrical coulisses.

Marieschi’s etchings stand out as extraordinary works of art, in contrast to his painted views, which are of secondary importance in a panorama of view painting. For next to Canaletto’s tightly controlled paintings, Marieschi’s appear too brightly colored, too cosmetically rendered. One can only speculate that if Marieschi had lived longer the feeling for subtle dramatic values so apparent in his etchings might have been transferred to canvas.


An even greater disparity in the œuvre of an artist working in two media can be seen if we contrast the prints of Antonio Canal, called Canaletto, with his paintings. Son of a successful stage designer, Canaletto around 1720 became a painter of views, soon surpassing the reputation of Luca Carlevaris. Greatly appreciated by the English, Canaletto worked on commissions from Owen McSwiney and a succession of British patrons that culminated in a nine-year visit to Great Britain starting in 1746. Unfortunately Canaletto’s decision to paint views of English topography while abroad caused consternation among his British patrons. To foreign eyes Canaletto meant Venice, and they were unwilling to settle for anything less.

Despite various phases in Canaletto’s style his paintings always remained highly structured and precise, perhaps because of the mechanical devices, such as the camera oscura, used to execute them. His prints, on the other hand, are very different: flooded with light, their surfaces seem to dissolve and shimmer in the full noon of a serene summer day (Figures 14, 15). Lacking all drama, one can almost feel the blistering stillness in the glaring haze. Like Giambattista Tiepolo, Canaletto shuns tight crosshatching in favor of tremulous parallel strokes of the etching needle. The similarities between the style of Tiepolo’s and Canaletto’s etchings, which were executed during the 1740s, suggest they knew each other’s work, but while the two styles have much in common there are important differences. Both favor strictly linear effects and discount shading, but Tiepolo uses the confrontation of black ink with the white paper to achieve startling chiaroscuro made to underscore narrative considerations. On the other hand, Canaletto has no story to tell, but rather chooses to use a rich, evenly distributed, variegated line to transport the viewer to a land of great serenity. Truly no artist before Canaletto has been able to convey so strongly the magical power of summer light to transform mass to mere shimmering atmosphere.
15. Portico with a lantern, by Canaletto. Plate 10 from Vedute, Altre prese da i Luoghi, altre ideate. Rogers Fund, 18.65.1(10)
ROME

Like Venice, eighteenth-century Rome was also a major tourist center: cultured young noblemen and affluent dilettanti visited for years at a time to study bygone civilizations. They had been drawn to the splendors of Rome by an increasing number of prints after classical monuments. Such prints had long been avidly collected by ecclesiastical and secular amateurs of antiquities, who wished to be kept informed of existing treasures and new excavations, and by the painting academies, which used prints and casts after ancient statuary to instruct the young artists who flocked to the Eternal City. During the fifties, two men who were to alter the course of eighteenth-century art, Johann Joachim Winckelmann from Brandenburg and Anton Raphael Mengs from Bohemia, attracted by the wonders they had seen reproduced, came to settle in Rome, and became part of this international academic community.

In 1755 Winckelmann published a treatise called Gedanken über die Nachamung der griechischen Werke (Reflections on the Imitation of Greek Art), in which he urged painters to eschew the coloristic, painterly aspects of eighteenth-century rococo style, and through careful analysis and self-conscious imitation of ancient Greek works to develop a painting style that stressed the supremacy of line and the importance of design. Mengs was lauded by Winckelmann as the modern painter who was the quintessence of these ideals. Winckelmann’s treatise and Mengs’s realization of it became the cornerstone of the movement to be known as neoclassicism, which was to transform European art during the last decades of the century.

Twelve years later, to help young artists in the systematic study of antique monuments, which until this time had been examined only haphazardly, Winckelmann published Monumenti Antichi Inediti (the Metropolitan’s copy of which belonged to the English painter Joseph Wright of Derby), a catalogue raisonné of previously unpublished classical objects, illustrated with engravings.

Knowing Winckelmann’s preoccupation with design, one cannot help but be bewildered by the variety of styles one encounters on every page. For example, in Figure 16, the bottom left-hand illustration (number 52) crudely anticipates the linear clarity of the English neoclassical artist John Flaxman, but the scene directly above (number 51), although similar in content, is totally dissimilar in style, and employs the best techniques of baroque-rococo engraving to depict the subjects of the frieze. Furthermore, the two top illustrations (numbers 50 and 53) remind one of the sixteenth-century style of the school of Marcan-tonio, while the bottom right-hand illustration (number 54) is a hybrid whose feet are firmly anchored in the eighteenth century.

Obviously Winckelmann’s work is a compendium not only of antique objects but also of graphic styles. The same random mixture of illustrative styles also occurs in the frontispieces, headpieces, and tailpieces of Winckelmann’s 1755 treatise. In his books, Winckelmann was apparently more concerned with having classical monuments illustrated than with the style of their reproduction. Although Roman painters (like Pompeo Batoni) had ventured into classicism in the eighteenth century, their high-keyed palettes and reliance on baroque patterns of visual rhetoric had completely disguised their classical references; Winckelmann could see the need for systematic reform in painting but it remained for younger artists, arriving in Rome in subsequent decades, such as David, Fuseli, and Flaxman, to extend neoclassical principles to draughtsmanship and to develop a rigor-

16. Two pages from Johann Joachim Winckelmann’s Monumenti Antichi Inediti, I (Rome, 1767). Engravings, each page 16 1/8 x 11 1/2 inches. Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 31.67.6(1)
ously austere drawing style, inspired in part by Greek vase painting, that stressed the hard outlines of contours in place of the loose atmospheric illusionism of the rococo; in turn this new, uniformly conceived draughtsmanship was extended to the print medium.

Winckelmann’s double standard and relaxed attitude did not apply to all Italian prints after classical monuments. In 1740 and in 1743, long before Winckelmann’s publication, Anton Maria Zanetti the elder, in collaboration with his younger cousin of the same name, published a most precocious work, two volumes of antique statues found in San Marco and other Venetian collections. Zanetti, whom we have mentioned as responsible for the revival of the chiaroscuro woodcut, was an admirer of the visually attractive results one could get through experimentation with color. However, assuming what would appear to be a contradictory attitude, Zanetti, in this series of prints, has obviously instructed the print-makers in his employ to adopt the uniform and dry graphic style of Faldoni (Figure 17), the major illustrator of these volumes, whose network of parallel lines was obviously considered to be best suited for reproducing the texture and solidity of stone. Consequently, important younger artists such as Pitteri and Cattini were required to work with a graphic system quite different from the individual ones with which one normally associates them in later years.

Prints all’antica were not common in Venice; collections of antiquities were even less common. Zanetti viewed classical statues not as items one encounters every day but as something special, and the style to be used for reproducing them had to be equally special and particularly well suited to the objects.

The situation in Rome was different. Native Roman artists were saturated from birth with antique monuments; prints after the antique, which kept the classical tradition alive throughout the eighteenth century and drew the founders of neoclassicism to Rome, only reinforced this day-to-day exposure. Consequently the Romans were just as imperceptive to the particular nature of neoclassical dogma as Winckelmann had been to fine distinctions in the graphic style of prints after the antique. To respond to the neoclassical theories of Winckelmann and Mengs, it was necessary for an artist to conceive of classical art in a rarefied way, as something out of the ordinary, as Zanetti had done. This was possible only for foreigners (as Winckelmann himself had been) like Jacques-Louis David, Gavin Hamilton, and Benjamin West, or for native Italians, like Canova, who had come from other parts of the country and were therefore almost foreigners to Roman culture. The peculiar atmosphere of eighteenth-century Rome had formed the major artists of the next century, yet Rome produced none of her own.
PIRANESI

For the most part, Roman prints after classical monuments during the eighteenth century were antiquarian objects; artists were not concerned with problems such as surface and light, nor in analyzing the relationship and scale of man to those vestiges of the past. The antiquarians who collected these prints were not interested in such subtle introspection; a clear impression of the monument sufficed for their purposes. Giovanni Battista Piranesi, printmaker and architect, was not satisfied with such straightforward representation. Rome meant more to him than a passing parade of half-realized graphic icons of statuary and architecture, and in his effort to describe the wonders of the Eternal City, Piranesi was to combine, in over nine hundred prints, the concerns of Venice and Rome, to become one of the heroes of the century.

Piranesi was born outside Venice in 1720, and studied primarily with his father, a stonemason, and with his uncle, Matteo Lucchesi, an engraver and architect. In 1740 he went to Rome, where he was taught etching by Giuseppe Vasi. Returning to Venice in 1743, he is thought to have entered the studio of Giambattista Tiepolo. In 1745, Giuseppe Wagner, the print dealer, sent Piranesi back to Rome to be his agent. Piranesi was never to return to Venice.

In his two early series, the Invenzioni Capric. di Carceri (Figures 18, 26) and the Groteschi (Figure 19), both executed about 1743-1745, one begins to see the elements of what will be the major considerations of his mature works. The Carceri, or Prisons, are loosely etched architectural caprices, experiments in fantasy of imaginary prisons. The Groteschi are haphazard arrangements of antique fragments that underscore the transitory nature of life and its accomplishments (often emphasized by the inclusion of human bones). Both series, executed in the years immediately following Piranesi’s return to Venice, display what are basically North Italian concerns. The space in the Carceri reflects theatrical designs seen on the Venetian stage and in designs by Juvarra and the published projects of the Bibiena. The capricious juxtaposition of unrelated fragments in the Groteschi remind us of Tiepolo’s Scherzi and Capricci (see Figures 1, 2). But above all Piranesi’s loose etching style, his reliance exclusively on ragged lines, reflects a preoccupation with technique, quite different from mechanically regular Roman compositions.

18. Interior of a prison, by Giovanni Battista Piranesi (1720-1778). Plate 3 from Invenzioni Capric. di Carceri. Etching, 21½ x 16¾ inches. Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 37.45.3(27)
However, it is in Piranesi's comprehensive study of Roman monuments, the bulk of his life's work, truly manifest in the Vedute di Roma published from the late 1740s until his death, that one can see in him a microcosm of the genius of eighteenth-century Italian printmaking. In the Vedute di Roma, Piranesi ingeniously combines the Venetian feeling for technique, theatrical effects, capricious juxtapositions, and facility with subject matter with the growing Roman concern for the archaeology of classical antiquity. Piranesi takes the sophisticated effects of the Venetian vedute and focuses them on the remnants of classical Rome, which by comparison make Pannini's painted views of the city seem straightforward and limited in vision. In exemplary works such as the view of the Quirinale (Figure 20), The Temple of Vespasian (Figure 21), The Pyramid of Caius Cestius (Figure 22), and the View of the Campidoglio (Figure 23), time is condensed as monuments from different periods of the past stand next to superstructures of the present; and such scenes become the total theater of Roman life as Piranesi peoples them with representatives from every station of society. In such an epic panorama, the remains of Rome's various historical eras confront the ephemeral, ant-like human beings, who heedlessly crawl over an obstacle course of architectural fragments with time-worn surfaces bearing the message that everything in turn shall pass.
22. The Pyramid of Caius Cestius, by G. B. Piranesi. From Vedute di Roma. Etching, 15⅜ x 21¼ inches. Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 37.45.3(57)

23. View of the Campidoglio, by G. B. Piranesi. From Vedute di Roma. Etching, 16 x 21½ inches. Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 37.45.3(50)
Venetian in method, Roman in spirit, Piranesi defies any limited definition. While he appears to be an archaeologist and topographical illustrator, one soon discovers, upon examining the Vedute di Roma, that he does not conform to the definitions of these terms. Too often Piranesi resorts to stock formulae to depict different monuments. Therefore, we notice distinct similarities between his view of Hadrian’s Villa (Figure 25) and his view of the Colosseum (color plate, Figure 24). Even in his more self-consciously archaeological works such as Le Antichità Romane of 1756, one observes similar contradictions. Piranesi employed the methodology of scientific archaeology by piecing together descriptions from ancient authors and the finds of contemporary excavations, but in such attempts at reconstruction, Piranesi invariably falls victim to his sublime sensitivity for abstract design; surely the vision of Roman splendor he presents in these reconstructions and excavation plans surpasses any abstract order the Romans had created, and invites comparison with the Carceri.

Neither is Piranesi simply one of the vedutisti; the latter may have taken some liberties with truthful vision, but none has distorted an existing view to the extent Piranesi has, where the observer feels oppressed by the mass of his landmarks, and irretrievably lost in the infinite space within. Indeed, both Goethe and Flaxman were disappointed to discover that the real monuments were smaller than they had been led to believe by the grandiose scale of Piranesi’s prints.

Nor is Piranesi strictly a neoclassicist, although he is often cited as having been an inspiration for the movement. Although Piranesi maintained an inflexible theoretical position in his famous debates with Winckelmann concerning the superiority of Greek or Roman art (Piranesi favoring Rome and Winckelmann championing Greece), his classicistic scenes are, in practice, too visionary, too free, to be confined by strict categories.

Rather, Piranesi has condensed all these contradictory elements into one broad vision of monumental decay. One finds bits and pieces of architecture literally strewn in the corner of nearly every print. And to underscore this decay, Piranesi practiced a style of etching that eschewed crosshatching and relied almost exclusively on a network of tremulous parallel lines that projected a corroding surface over every object in sight. Ironically, this technique, created to emphasize the decomposition of stone, had the reverse effect on the actual copper plates, since these parallel lines made them especially durable, able in some cases to withstand the production of four thousand impressions.

But perhaps Piranesi’s visionary power was best transmitted through his treatment of light. Not the serene, mystical, surface-dissolving light of Canaletto, Piranesi’s light rakes across the composition, activating the decaying matter, literally bringing the dead to life. It is fiercely projected from behind the Quirinale (Figure 20), nurtures the vegetable growth and casts abstract shadows on the Pyramid of Caius Cestius (Figure 22), guides one up the sweeping paths of the Campidoglio (Figure 23), and provides a dimming spotlight on the ragged Commedia dell’Arte players beneath the crumbling entablature of the Temple of Vespasian (Figure 21). In short, it performs all the miracles one expects from light in romantic painting in the nineteenth century. Such a comparison reflects a true spiritual tie between Piranesi and romanticism that, considering the lapse of time between Piranesi’s


COLOR PLATE
death in 1778 and the beginnings of the romantic movement in the 1810s, may appear to be surprisingly prophetic; but the affinity seems more natural when we remember that Piranesi’s son, Francesco, his chief assistant, was truly what one could consider a “romantic artist.” Far from being the gifted etcher his father was, Francesco in his Prison Scene (Figure 27) combines many components of his father’s etchings and reinterprets them for a more expressionistic effect; an incarcerated soul, no longer in the relatively comfortable space of the Carceri, cowers in front of the overpowering mass of irrational architecture and the rattling bones of previous occupants of the cell.

But one need not turn to Francesco to stress the connection between Piranesi and romantic art. The innumerable impressions pulled from Piranesi’s plates during the first part of the nineteenth century attest to his popularity among the romantics. If a dramatic example were needed of this, we have only to turn to the Metropolitan Museum’s two rare impressions of Piranesi’s View of the Colosseum printed at this time, one on blue-gray paper (Figure 24) and the other on raspberry-colored paper (color plate). The chalk markings on these two impressions point to the unrestrained romantic spirit of a later hand, which, not content with Piranesi’s visionary image of decomposing antiquity, sought to explain the decay with rudimentary indications of a storm-tossed sky. These two prints form a fitting coda to our discussion: not only do they illustrate the kinship between Piranesi and the nineteenth century, but by stressing such a link, they implicate all of eighteenth-century printmaking in the evolution toward the freedom of romantic vision.

Notes and Selective Bibliography

I would like to thank John McKendry, James David Draper, Weston Naef, and Anne Chalmers, who have all offered invaluable suggestions. Of the literature mentioned below, Henri Zerner’s concise catalogue of Venetian prints was especially helpful in the terminology it offered for the first part of the article.


Fabio Mauroner, “Gianfrancesco Costa” in Print Collector’s Quarterly 27(1940), pp. 471-495.

———, Incisioni del Pittero (Bergamo, 1945).


G. Morazzoni, Il Libro Veneziano del Settecento (Milan, 1943).


Rodolfo Pallucchini, Mostra degli Incisori Veneti del Settecento (Venice, 1941).

Alfredo Petrucci, “Il Volto Segreto dell’Incisione Italiane del Settecento” in Bollettino d’Arte (June 1938).


Eduard Sack, Giambattista und Domenico Tiepolo... Ein Betrag zur Kunsgeschichte des achtzehnten Jahrhunderts (Hamburg, 1910).


A. de Vesme, Le Peintre-Graveur Italien (Milan, 1943).
Venetian Book Design in the Eighteenth Century

ANNE PALMS CHALMERS
Chester Dale Fellow,
Department of Prints and Photographs

In the beginning of the eighteenth century, Venice, La Serenissima, found herself in a fallen state. The city of the great condottiere II Colleoni had become so negligible a power in European politics that she was forced to adopt a position of neutrality, a position by which she retained her sovereignty only through the good graces of the powers around her. The great patrician families who had ruled her in splendor and dignity had become conservative to the point of petrifaction and rather short of cash. The scholarship that had flourished in her courts with the encouragement of that nobility’s forebears had degenerated to ignorant provincialism. The magnificent artistic programs with which Titian and Veronese had celebrated the public deeds and personal achievements of Venetian rulers had become inflated accounts of minor private events, invested with significance only by hopeful allegory and analogy. Little wonder that nostalgia was the prevailing emotion and that, as the international position of Venice declined, the heights of fantasy and outward show rose.

There were, of course, exceptions to the intellectual poverty to which the Republic had sunk. Certain well-traveled men in the eighteenth century remained in contact with thought in the rest of Europe, especially France, and reflected these interests in their daily affairs and taste. Of these, no group in Venetian society was more enlightened than those men involved with printing, publishing, and selling books. It was known that one could discuss freely subjects of current interest in the bookshops themselves — indeed, Goethe’s father, Johann Caspar, felt them to be a major center of Venetian cultural life. The press itself was surprisingly free, as long as it did not produce works critical of the government. Encouraged by copyright laws to issue works unobtainable in other countries and to publish beautifully printed luxury editions, publishers were able to develop a thriving, up-to-date international market for the English, French, and German trade. For the domestic market, they produced rich editions of libretti and poems for special events, which embodied in their ornamental fantasy the particular charm of the eternal festival that was Venice.

But, still, in the beginning of the eighteenth century, the state of printing had fallen off greatly from the glorious early days of the Venetian press at the end of the fifteenth century, when Aldus Manutius...
had printed the *Hypnerotomachia Polifili*, the most beautiful book of the Renaissance, and from the sixteenth century, when publishers like Gabriel Giolito de' Ferrarìi had consistently produced books of exquisite design. The quality was especially deplorable in the everyday books for general reading, printed on bad paper with crowded type and the printer's ornament, if any, worn and cramped. By the end of the first quarter of the century, some of the more serious publishers began to notice how decadent their art was growing and resolved to restore to it a beauty worthy of its traditions. One of these reformers, the publisher Giovanni Battista Albrizzi, was a collector and connoisseur whose family was involved in intellectual circles in Venice (his brother, Almorò, in 1724 founded the Accademia Albrizziana, a literary and scientific society). A *letterato*, Albrizzi edited the review *Novelle della Repubblica delle Lettere* in which he wrote, on March 19, 1730, of his desire to revive the art of the book.

Among the growing numbers of publishers in the second quarter of the eighteenth century, Albrizzi and two others, Giovanni Battista Pasquali and Antonio Zatta, were most responsible for the revival of taste in printing. Pasquali was an independent thinker, who published scholarly works as well as fine, but unpretentious, editions for the educated public. Zatta, a sardonic writer and the focus of a certain amount of political controversy, was best known for his illustrated editions of Italian classics and *raccolte,* or collections of poems for special occasions. The three publishers, providing among them a wide enough variety of books to reach the full range of patronage in Venice—ancient and modern authors, histories, guides, almanacs, libretti—were able to completely revitalize the nature of book design and the standards of bibliographical connoisseurship. (Of course, when we speak of Venetian book design, we mean the book as a combination of text and ornament, as opposed to bound albums and series of prints, such as those of Canaletto or the Tiepolos.)

Albrizzi began the revolution in taste not long after his statement of March 1730, with an issue of the works of the French author Jacques Bossuet in 1736, printed in French to ensure the widest possible market. The embellishment, provided by Giambattista Piazzetta, was of a kind entirely new to the Venetian book. Instead of closely contained, illusionistic scenes conceived pictorially, like allegorical easel paintings, the decorations were just that: in Francis Haskell's words, "a series of vignettes and illustrations of delicate fantasy . . . views, landscapes, small genre scenes and frankly irrelevant Chinoiserie and Putti . . ." (For comparable illustrations by Piazzetta, see Figure 4.)

About the same time, Pasquali was experimenting with new forms. In 1738, he published an edition of Guicciardini's *Della Istoria d'Italia* in two huge volumes (Figure 1). Within cartouches of architectural elements and leafy tendrils at the head of each canto are Venetian scenes of great space and lightness etched by Antonio Visentini. The initials present the same kind of airy view, with well-designed white letters superimposed on, but not obstructing, the vista (see the initial in the caption for Figure 13). Initials in such open settings, usually with figures, were to become common by the middle of the century. Pasquali was also involved in a publication that, though not entirely typical of his output, must be mentioned parenthetically: a book of hours that he printed in a private edition commissioned in 1740 with vignettes by Pitteri after Piazzetta (Figure 2). It is one of the loveliest of the useful little books—missals, diaries, almanacs—that were produced in great numbers for both the domestic and foreign market.

---

2. *Beatae Mariae Virginis Officium* (Venice: Giambattista Pasquali, 1740), opened to pages 230 and 231, showing the small vignette engraved by Marco Pitteri (1702-1786) after Giambattista Piazzetta (1682-1754) and the text engraved by Angela Baroni. 3½ x 7 inches. The Elisha Whittelsey Fund, 49.50.104
In 1745, Albrizzi again employed Piazzetta, this time for the decoration of Torquato Tasso’s Gerusalemme Liberata (Figures 4, 5), which was dedicated to the Empress Maria Theresa. Albrizzi and other publishers often sought subscribers before their deluxe books were printed in order to ensure a certain number of sales, and this one carried an international list, including the Comte de Caylus and Pierre Mariette, who ordered five copies. The edition is regarded by many as the most beautiful Venetian book of the eighteenth century. It is conceived as an object of fully unified visual delight. The well-designed type is spaciously set. The frontispieces with their borders, the headpieces, and the initials are composed carefully on facing pages, all in the same delicate mode. At the end of each canto, charming vignettes round off that part of the poem, act as a brief visual caesura between periods of reading, and serve as a link with the beginning of the next canto, which opens with decoration no less inviting.

The importance of Piazzetta’s illustrations in Albrizzi’s Tasso for the history of the Venetian book can hardly be overstated. From these first free fantasies on the pages of Gerusalemme Liberata evolved the special character of eighteenth-century Venetian book ornament, with its capricious, wandering borders, its head- and tailpiece vignettes openly arranged on the white space of the page as if in the clear air of a pastoral breeze, with its large initials finely etched with scenes of the lagoon or of fable (Figures 3, 6-8 and initials for Figures 9-14). Following more than a century of weighty frontispieces engraved after the designs of great or minor painters, heavily printed, and often unrelated to the design of the rest of the book, this unifying lightness of border, vignette, and initial represented a true return to the principles of the Renaissance, translated into eighteenth-century terms (Figures 9-14).
CANTO CXIV.
Tancrcdi, cui dinanzi il cor fospefe
Quell'avviso primiero, udendo or quello;
Penfa: deh forse a me venia cortese,
E'l periglio è per me; nè penfa al refto.
E parte prende fol del grave arnese;
Monta a cavallo, e tacito efe e prefto:
E feguendo gl'indizj e l'orne nove,
Rapidamente a tutto corfo il move.

4. The tailpiece vignette for canto VI of Torquato Tasso's
Gerusalemme Liberata (Venice: Giambattista Albrizzi,
1745). For the end of each canto, Piazzetta designed a
pastoral scene whose open contours move into the white
paper much in the same way as do those of the type,
unifying text and ornament in the space of the page. The
vignettes were etched by Martin Schedl (1677-1748).
11\(\frac{1}{4}\) x 7\(\frac{1}{4}\) inches. Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 37.36.1

5. Frontispiece, headpiece, and initial from canto VII. As
one turns the page from the end of one canto in Tasso's
Gerusalemme Liberata to the beginning of the next, the
unity of design effects a smooth transition. 17\(\frac{1}{2}\) x 23\(\frac{1}{4}\)
inches. Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 37.36.1

CANTO SETTIMO.

NTANTO Erminia infra l'ombrofe
piante
D'antica felva dal cavallo è fcorta:
Nè più governa il fien la man
trémante;
E mezza quafi par tra viva e morta.
Per tante ftrade fi raggrira tante
Il corrido, ch'in fua balia la porta;
Ch'alifa dagli occhi altrui pur fi dilegua,
Ed è foverchio omai ch'altre la fegna.
Figures 9 through 14 show six editions of Orlando Furioso, by Lodovico Ariosto, a Renaissance chivalric romance, full of allegorical reference and veiled allusion, in the same tradition as Torquato Tasso’s Gerusalemme Liberata. In order to indicate some changing aspects of book design during the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries, we have taken illustrations from editions printed between 1542 and 1772. Each treats, more or less completely, canto XI.

In the narrative of this canto, Orlando, a French Paladin, has sailed to Ebuda, the Isle of Tears, in search of his beloved Angelica, the princess of Cathay. He fears she may be one of the young maidens the islanders daily feed to a terrible sea monster called the Orc. (In fact, she had been rescued earlier by Roger, another Paladin, who has carried her off on a hippogriff, a mythical flying beast, half horse, half griffin.) When his ship has almost reached the island, Orlando takes his dinghy and rows to the offshore rock where the Orc devours its prey. He sees a girl, but, before he can recognize her, the Orc comes upon him. Just as the monster is about to swallow him, Orlando thrusts an anchor into its mouth, making it vulnerable to his sword. He drags the Orc to the shore and is about to release the maiden, when the Ebudians attack him; they fear the wrath of Proteus for the death of his monster and wish to mollify him by throwing Orlando into the sea. But Orlando quickly scatters them and returns to the shore, thinking it is Angelica there. He is surprised to find Olympia, daughter of the count of Holland, whom he had restored to her husband, Bireno, only a few days earlier. (Olympia was abandoned by Bireno on an island and captured by pirates, who sold her to the Ebudians.) Orlando releases her and takes her to the king of Ireland, who falls in love with her and champions her cause, leaving Orlando free to seek further for his Angelica.

6-8. Three tailpiece vignettes from Lodovico Ariosto’s Orlando Furioso (Venice: Antonio Zatta, 1772). Figure 6, from the end of canto VII, designed by Bartolomeo Crivellari (1725-1777), is the ever-present figure sitting in a landscape with architectural ruins (1 1/2 x 2 1/2 inches); Figure 7, from the end of canto XIII, is a picturesque farmyard scene (2 3/8 x 4 3/8 inches); Figure 8, designed by Z. Magnani, at the end of canto XXXV, is a seascape, dear to the Venetian heart (2 3/8 x 4 3/8 inches). All Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 42.29.3

The initials at the beginning of the captions for Figures 9-12, 14 are from the Zatta edition of Ariosto’s Orlando Furioso, published in Venice in 1772. All one inch square. Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 42.29.3(1-4). The one for Figure 13 is from book VI of Guicciardini’s Istoria, 2 3/8 inches square. Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 47.44.1
Orlando Furioso as published by Gabriel Giolito de' Ferrari in Venice in 1542 is the earliest edition with an illustration for each canto. (The Metropolitan Museum's copy is the second edition, 1543.) The woodcuts are skillfully executed, with that fluid contour hatching typical of illustrations used by Giolito. In the deep space of the composition, several of the many events of the canto are indicated, but not crowded in as ridiculously as they are in some later editions. The initial is one of a beautifully designed series from the Giolito stock.

Giolito does not concern himself with establishing a consistent format for the beginning of each canto, beyond placing the illustration above the text. Thus, the woodcut can appear anywhere on the page, sometimes even separated by the turn of a leaf from the narrative it illustrates. Giolito's design, however, is always visually pleasing, and his woodcuts, type, and ornament are always harmonious. 9 x 11 inches. Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 37.37.11

From 1542 to 1556, there was little change of format in Venetian Orlando's. In the latter year, the poem was published by Giovanni Andrea Valvassore detto Guadagnino, whose only addition was an ornamental cartouche around each illustration. The initial Q, which is an imitation of Giolito's, was used in Valgrisi's edition of the same year. 8 7/8 x 12 inches. Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 37.37.12
Orlando was first published with full-page illustrations in Venice by Vincenzo Valgrisi in 1556. (The Metropolitan Museum's copy is the second edition, 1558.) The arrangement on the page is the same for each canto: on the left side of the open book is a full illustration, including, rather clumsily, almost every event mentioned in the canto. The woodcut is surrounded by an elaborate ornamental frame in the mannerist taste, with strapwork, masks, fruit, and flowers. At the top of the right-hand page, there is a summary of the action, framed in another ornamental cartouche, and two-thirds down the page is the initial. Thus, for the first time in the printing of the Orlando, the opening of each canto is composed on the page in a consistent way, but still done lightly and harmoniously. 97/8 x 13 inches. Purchase, Bequest of Florance Waterbury, 1970.639

Orlando was illustrated with engravings for the first time in 1584. The edition was printed in Venice by Francesco de' Franceschi Senese e Compagni, with plates by Girolamo Porro (active 1574-1604), as well as engraved cartouches around the summaries of the narrative. The format was generally the same as that established by Valgrisi in 1556, but the effect was not as harmonious: the border around the plate seems puny when juxtaposed to the cartouche, and the woodcut initial upsets the tonal balance of the page. 10 1/2 x 13 1/2 inches. Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 37.37.13
During the seventeenth century, printed editions of Orlando were few, but one published in Venice by Stephano Orlandini in 1730 is retardataire enough to serve as an example of common seventeenth-century book design. Its illustration, engraved by Giuseppe Filosi after Bernardo Castelli, is taken directly from that designed by Porro and printed very heavily. It is framed by an allegorical rather than ornamental border. The facing page is unrelieved by a well-designed initial, a pleasant cartouche, or even nicely formed type — it only has some typographic “printers’ flowers” of that particularly cramped variety that grew out of the beautiful little curling leaves of the mid-sixteenth century. The New York Public Library, Spencer Collection from 1730 to 1772, publishing in Venice had undergone that reassessment of book design we have been describing. The Antonio Zatta edition of Orlando Furioso, 1772-1773, clearly represents the difference between eighteenth-century book design and that of the seventeenth, and, in fact, its similarities to that of the sixteenth. Once again, the format is harmonious in composition, with bordered illustration facing cartouche, initial adding emphasis, and the type nicely set. Once again, the nature of the ornament is unified by style, quality of line, and tone of printing. The difference from the editions of the sixteenth century simply lies in the difference between sixteenth- and eighteenth-century taste, a matter we will not go into here. 11¼ x 15¾ inches. Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 42.29.3 (1-4)
15. Componimenti poetici per l’ingresso solenne alla dignità di procuratore di S. Marco per merito di S. E. il Signor Gian Francesco Pisani (Venice: Giambattista Albrizzi, 1763). The designs for these vignettes are attributed to Piazzetta. 14 1/4 x 19 inches. Rogers Fund, 69.506
Perhaps these reformulated principles are most perfectly embodied in the "occasional" books, or raccolte, those collections of poems cranked out to celebrate weddings, visits, baptisms, and memorials, printed on page after page of the most delightful borders, punctuated with diminutive ornaments and graceful vignettes, often designed by the finest Venetian engravers (Figure 15). In the same category are the best of the libretti for the operas presented by different conservatories of music. Designed as souvenirs of the festival atmosphere in which Venetian society drifted, and destined for the most part to be kept no longer than the events that prompted them, these programs combine, as if paradigms of the life they are chronicling, a perfectly magnificent show with as perfectly ephemeral substance. Even their bindings are stamped with elaborate gilt and colored designs in the same taste as the decoration within them; but they are made of flimsy tinted paper (Figure 16).

By 1797, the Venetian fantasy republic had fallen to the real French one, and her publishing houses, after their brief rebirth, had sunk again into decay. But during a major part of the eighteenth century they had held their own among the other presses of Europe. They might even be said to have regained for the Venetian book some part of the glory it had attained in the Renaissance.

Notes and Bibliography

The first part of this article is indebted to Francis Haskell's discussion of the Venetian publishing world as an aspect of eighteenth-century Italian patronage. My thanks to the staff of the Print Division of The New York Public Library for their thoughtful assistance.


Florence
A Medici Funeral

The funeral of Giovan Gastone de’ Medici, the grand duke of Tuscany, on October 9, 1737, was an especially somber, even tragic, occasion for Florence, because it marked the end of the Medici as rulers of Florence. It was not, however, the last Medici funeral in Florence, since Giovan Gastone’s older sister, Anna Maria Louisa, the widow of the German Elector Palatine Johann Wilhelm of Pfalz-Neuberg, lived on for six years more under the new ruling house of the dukes of Lorraine. But Anna Maria Louisa’s funeral was a simple one, even though much of Florence mourned, and it certainly was not a state affair as her brother’s had been.

The book describing Giovan Gastone’s funeral notes how affected the populace was—the crowd was so immense that cavalry were stationed in the piazza outside San Lorenzo, while troops armed with carbines stood at the entrances to the church and the royal guard surrounded the catafalque itself. Surprising was the great public display of mourning for Giovan Gastone the man, rather than for the last Medici ruler. No one could have seemed less suited to rule than he, and no one could have predicted success for his administration, much less that he would capture the respect and admiration of the Florentines.

Giovan Gastone was the cultivated but extremely dissipated

The catalafque set up in San Lorenzo, Florence, for the funeral of Giovan Gastone de’ Medici, by Vincenzo Franceschini (1680-after 1740), Italian. Etching, 20¼ x 15¼ inches. Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 47.83.1
younger son of Cosimo III de'Medici and Marguerite-Louise d’Orleans, the product of what today would be called a broken marriage — Marguerite-Louise left Cosimo’s court when Giovan Gastone was only four years old, soon to return to her native France and to ignore her “family” back in the much-despised Florence. Cosimo was described in Giovan Gastone’s funeral book as a “prince venerated by all, loved for his good works, sustained by Religion, an example of Prudence, a model of Royal Splendor, a most splendid Conservator of the Peace . . . .” Cosimo was known principally for his great piety, but it was the stifling sort—in his last years he went out into Florence only to visit churches on their feast days. It is said that during the last twenty years of his life he drank nothing but water and his meals were of the plainest fare, consisting of only one dish. He had few other interests besides his extreme religious devotion and the question of the succession to the rule of the Medici in Tuscany. As a ruler Cosimo was well-intentioned, but an extremely bad administrator. Although he preached reform and economics, ecclesiastical abuses drained the Florentine treasury. Cosimo was always maneuvering politically, for Florence in the late seventeenth century was much reduced from the rich and powerful state it had been in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries; it was increasingly poor, ill-governed, and a pawn of the ever-battling great European powers: France, Spain, England, and the Empire.

As is the case with any ruler, Cosimo was almost fanatically determined on the continuation of his dynasty, but unfortunately the failure of his own marriage gave him no insight when arranging those of his sons. Cosimo married off both his sons, Giovan Gastone and the eldest, Ferdinando, to German princesses, but German blood seemed not to mix well with that of the Medici — as badly, indeed, as the personalities of each, and both marriages were unhappy, estranged, and childless.

Giovan Gastone became heir to the throne when Ferdinando died in 1713 of the effects of dissipation in general, and a combination of “manly disorders” contracted in Venice during Carnival, epilepsy and dimentia in particular. Giovan Gastone had become, if anything, more dissolute than Ferdinando and was described as a “degenerate sot.” An intelligent, sensitive, and cultivated man, Giovan Gastone’s deeply undesired marriage in 1697 to Anna Maria Francesca, daughter and heiress of Julius Francis, last Duke of Saxe-Lauenburg, and widow of Philip of Neuberg, was tragic, for he was forced to live in Bohemia, in the small country town of Reichstadt near Prague. There all his weaknesses were intensified. Anna Maria Francesca loved only hunting and, it is said, lived like a “glorified Bohemian peasant,” refusing Giovan Gastone even a visit to Prague. Giovan Gastone abhorred the princess and kept his distance. Although he was a shy man who preferred solitude, the simple village of Reichstadt, not one of those glittering Italianized German towns, bored and depressed him, and in the spring of 1698 he fled. He eventually arrived in Paris where he called upon his mother whom he had not seen in twenty-three years (since the age of four), and it is typical of Marguerite-Louise that it was five days before he was invited to dine with her. Giovan Gastone was presented to the king and made a fine impression on Parisian society. Cosimo and Anna Maria Francesca were outraged, however, and he was finally persuaded to return to Reichstadt. When his boredom became too great he left for Prague, where he surrounded himself with dissolute companions, gambled, and drank profusely. Life continued thus until 1708, when it was obvious the union would produce no offspring. His brother, Ferdinando, was slowly dying, and Cosimo urged Giovan Gastone home. At Florence he lived a retiring life, his rare public appearances being marred by his drunkenness and his entourage of pandering, dissolute ruffians. Ferdinando died in 1713 and Giovan Gastone was officially designated to succeed Cosimo, who lived until October 1723, a reign of fifty-three years.

Giovan Gastone actually began ruling the previous year, in July 1722, when Cosimo became seriously ill with a fever. Many snickered at the thought of such a man as ruler of Florence, especially as successor to the pious Cosimo. Giovan Gastone, however, cared for his people and attacked his duties with attention and devotion, becoming a good administrator and making many reforms. Among them he ended the ecclesiastical abuses of the last fifty years and lowered the onerous taxes on the Florentine citizens, while actually improving the Florentine economy (although his successors, the dukes of Lorraine, were to receive credit for it). As had Cosimo before him, both rulers walked a tightrope
of diplomacy, trying to salvage as much autonomous rule for Florence as possible now that it had become evident the Medici would become extinct. He succeeded well, even during the period when Spanish troops were stationed in Florence, and Don Carlos, at that time his intended "successor," was a visitor to the city (before Florence was "given" to the House of Lorraine, it had been destined for Spain — Carlos happily took the Kingdom of Naples instead).

Although not an outgoing man who appreciated the delights of society, Giovan Gastone's accession brought a lighter and more festive atmosphere to the city. There was a marked increase in the number of balls, theatrical performances, ballets, and concerts, which had languished under Cosimo's dour rule.

Giovan Gastone made his last appearance at a public event in 1729 and not only spent his remaining years virtually cloistered, but in bed the last eight. In June of 1737 his already poor health weakened and by July it was obvious he was dying. Always antireligious in life, he made a sincere and dramatic deathbed conversion, receiving benediction and a papal absolution at the last. He died on July 12 but his funeral did not take place until October 9.

The always severe interior of San Lorenzo — the Medici church — with its hues of gray and white, was made even more somber by the funeral trappings, amongst which were eleven huge medallions, five in the choir and three each on the side aisles, representing Giovan Gastone's virtues (many of which had been little evident during his lifetime): Wisdom, Charity, Constancy, Majesty, Affability, Abundance, Heavenly Aspiration, Clemency, Liberality, Faith in God, and True Doctrine.

The decorations for the obsequies, however, were dominated by the catafalque, the elaborate structure set up to house the remains of the deceased prince during the funeral. It was immense, stretching across the entire width of the nave and extending from the middle of the fourth to the sixth arches. In the form of an octagonal antique temple, the catafalque was decorated with statues, urns, and such numerous candelabra (with what were described as the whitest of candles) that the entire interior of the church was illumined by them. It was designed by a local Florentine architect, Ferdinando Ruggieri (about 1691-1741), called "espertissimo" by the generous author of the funeral book, Bindo Simone Peruzzi. Made of such temporary materials as wood, canvas, and stucco, it was painted to seem — and was described as if it truly were — made of a rich array of marbles, bardiglio (gray veined), Sienese (yellow), and Sicilian (multicolored), and decorated with gilt-bronze and porphyried urns and silver candelabra. The statues on the catafalque, surrounding the funerary urn containing Giovan Gastone's remains, represented more allegorical virtues and each of the four principal cities of his realm: Florence, the capital of his domain, and Siena, capital of a state united under the crown of Tuscany, were placed facing the entrance of the basilica, while statues of Pisa and Pistoia stood at the opposite side, facing the high altar. The funeral urn was decorated brilliantly to resemble lapis lazuli and porphyried with gilt-bronze ornaments. Medallion portraits of Giovan Gastone in gilt bronze were placed in the center of the urn and at its top was the royal crown with the Florentine lily. The catafalque was surmounted by the Tuscan crown and a huge array of candelabra. Above all hung a giant canopy.

The service was long and elaborate, attended by everyone of importance in the realm: Giovan Gastone's remaining relatives, his sister, his sister-in-law, the Princess Violante Beatrice of Bavaria, all the bishops of Tuscany, the Prince de Craon, the minister for Francis Stephen of Lorraine, the new ruler who was otherwise engaged in battling the Turks and was not to enter his new realm for over a year. The mourning was deep and sincere, and few would have disputed the words of Giovan Gastone's eulogist, Giuseppe Buondelmonti, who said, "We do not honor him as a warrior hero, but as a peaceful prince, who knew the honorable arts of conserving peace and increasing public felicity. With an inalterable love of justice and fairness he worked hard for the practical good of his people and the state."

Notes
This account has been based upon the superb book on the later Medici in Florence by Harold Acton: The Last Medici (London, 1932) and upon the contemporary descriptions of the funeral and the published eulogy: Bindo Simone Peruzzi, Esequie dell' Altezza Reale del Serenissimo Giovan Gastone . . . (Florence, 1737) and Giuseppe Buondelmonti, Delle Lodi dell' Altezza Reale . . . Gio. Gastone . . . Orazione Funebre (Florence, 1737).
Rome

Presentation of the Chinea

The Italian word chinea has nothing to do with the Orient; it simply means “mare” or “nag.” In its longer form, acchina, its kinship to the French haquenée, and through that to the English “hackney,” is clear. From the thirteenth to the nineteenth centuries the chinea, a mare, usually white, was presented annually to the pope as tribute from the Spanish king of Naples and the Two Sicilies. The Colonna family held the post of grand constable of Naples, and therefore one of its members made the presentation. The ceremony usually took place on June 29, the Feast of Saints Peter and Paul; occasionally, however, it was on September 9, the day following the Feast of the Nativity of the Virgin.

By the eighteenth century this offering had come to be the occasion for three successive evenings of fireworks, and in his New Observations on Italy, written in 1758, Pierre-Jean Grosley reported, “The presentation of the haquenée is still a special occasion [une grande affaire] for the Romans.” “Each evening,” he went on, “the decoration changes. The last is always the most brilliant, and none resembles those of preceding years.”

These four engravings give some idea of the fireworks “machines” constructed for the occasion. The earliest one here was for the presentation of 1724 (in September, probably because Benedict XIII had been crowned only on June 4 of that year). Representing the Temple of Virtue, it was lit up “for the space of an hour on the evening of September 8.” Virtue, wearing a breastplate of the sun and holding a crown of laurel, is enshrined in a baroque temple atop a rocky grotto; even higher than Virtue is the two-headed eagle, emblem of the Hapsburg dynasty.

During the 1750s the architect Paolo Posi created many of the structures for the fireworks. In 1757, the seventeenth and next-to-last year of the papacy of Benedict XIV, he designed the charming castle at the lower right, with its floral swags, supporting a large boiling kettle.

The First Machine, representing the Temple of Virtue, for the presentation of the chinea, 8 September 1724. Designed and drawn by Alessandro Specchi (1668-1729), engraved by Francesco Aquila (active 1690-1740), Italian. 15 x 18 7/8 inches. The Elisha Whittelsey Fund, 62.600.201(1)

The Second Machine, representing Abundance, ignited on the day of the Glorious Holy Apostles Peter and Paul after the presentation of the chinea, 1757. Designed by Paolo Posi (1708-1776), drawn by Giuseppe Palazzi (about 1740-1810), engraved by Giuseppe Pozzi (died 1765), Italian. 14 7/8 x 20 7/8 inches. The Elisha Whittelsey Fund, 62.600.201(12)
representing Abundance, like that in “the glorious Kingdom of the two Sicilies.”

For the celebration of 1761, Posi again made the design, a theater (left), complete with loggie and an orchestra of sixteen players; a sylvan romance seems to be in progress on the stage. And twenty-four years later Giuseppe Palazzi created this “Place of Delights, decorated with a pleasing ingenuousness, where the Flight of a Balloon is being prepared” (below). Pius VI was then pope; the presentation was by Filippo Colonna; and — whether or not they understood the origin of the ancient ceremony — this generation of Romans, like the preceding ones, turned out to admire the elaborate and festive spectacle.

SUZANNE BOORSCH

The Second Machine, representing a magnificent theater, ignited 29 June 1761 after having presented the chinea. Designed by Paolo Posi, drawn by Giuseppe Palazzi, engraved by Giuseppe Vasi (1710-1782), Italian. 15 7/8 x 21 9/16 inches. The Elisha Whittelsey Fund, 62.600.201(17)

The Second Machine, representing a place of delights, ignited 29 June 1785 after having presented the chinea. Designed by Giuseppe Palazzi, engraved by Francesco Barbazza (active at the end of the XVIII century). Italian. 20 1/2 x 14 9/16 inches. The Elisha Whittelsey Fund, 63.517.1
Venice

The Election of a Doge, and The Marriage of the Sea

Venice, that almost magical dream on the Adriatic, seems a city more festive than others—a casual traveler can forget the twentieth century easily there, and lose himself in the timeless spell of the city. Venetian life to this day is enlivened by such events as regattas, but in the eighteenth century, life seemed one great pageant. Carnival in Venice was renowned throughout Europe and many a royal prince stole away to taste the pleasures it afforded. Hardly a week went by without a spectacle’s taking place, one usually connected with the activities of the doge. Canaletto drew many of these, and twelve of his pictures were engraved by Giovanni Battista Brustoloni. The election and coronation of the doge, his entertainment of foreign ambassadors, his annual visits to churches on their feast days, and Venice’s singular and most important celebration, the Spozalizio del Mare, or Marriage of the Sea, are all represented in the series.

Illustrated here are two of these engravings. The first shows a typical Venetian view, the Piazza with San Marco in the background. Represented is the festivity surrounding a doge’s election. Immediately upon the selection of the doge, the electors officially present him to the people in San Marco where he addresses them and receives their homage. Then he is carried in the special conveyance called a pozzo (meaning literally “well” or “shaft,” for its similarity to a wellhead) out into the city. Here he emerges from San Marco into the vast throng that fills the

The newly elected doge distributing coins in the Piazza San Marco, by Giovanni Battista Brustoloni (1712-1796), Italian. Engraving after Antonio Canaletto, 175/e x 221/2 inches. The Elisha Whittelsey Fund, 61.532.2
Piazza and the windows, roofs, and arcades of all the surrounding buildings — even the exterior gallery of San Marco itself. Special stands have been set up, one around the Campanile for privileged viewers. Officers with long poles are pushing back the crowds so the doge can pass. As the pozzo circles the Piazza, the doge throws coins to the crowd. His subsequent coronation on the steps of the Scala dei Giganti in the courtyard of the Palazzo Ducale is shown in another engraving.

The doge's most important ceremonial act of the entire year is his performance of the Marriage of the Sea. This takes place on Ascension Day, called in Venice La Festa della Sensa, but the entire celebration continued on for fifteen days of regattas and other diversions.

The ceremony symbolized a combination of two great Venetian victories, one naval and the other diplomatic. At the end of the tenth century, Venice defeated pirates from Dalmatia who had threatened her shipping and trade. This event marked the beginning of Venetian domination of the Adriatic and her eventual supremacy over the entire Mediterranean.

In 1177 Venice scored a great diplomatic victory when Doge Sebastiano Ziane effected the reconciliation of the Emperor Frederick Barbarossa and Pope Alexander III in San Marco. The Peace of Venice signified her independence from the three great powers who had formerly dominated her: the Patriarchs of the East, the Papacy, and the Holy Roman Empire. In recognition of this, Pope Alexander granted the indulgence of a gift of a ring to Doge Ziane with the words, “Receive this in token of the sovereignty that you and your successors will perpetually have over the sea.” Thereafter, it is said, Venice weds the sea as a man weds a woman and becomes her lord and master.

The doge goes to sea to perform the Marriage in the great ceremonial boat called by the Venetians the bucintoro, which Canaletto depicted at the end of the Riva degli Schiavoni with the Piazzetta and the Palazzo Ducale on the right. This bucintoro was the last one launched by the Venetian Republic. Thirty-five meters long by seven and a half wide, and costing 70,000 ducats, it was constructed by the excellent naval architect Michele Stefano Conti and decorated with very elaborate sculpture inside and out by the master carver Antonio Corradini. Originally painted red at its launching on January 12, 1728, it was gilded for the participation in its first Ascension Day feast the following year. There were twenty-one oars on each side of the boat (although Canaletto carelessly drew twenty-four), each one needing four men to move it, making a total of 168 oarsmen. In the upper story of the boat, covered by a canopy and hung with rich silks and red velvet, sat important guests of the doge, and toward the stern, on a raised throne decorated with statues of Prudence and Fortitude, sat the doge himself. On the single mast flew the standard of Venice with its five streamers and a lion bearing an open book with the words In hoc signo vinces.

As the oarsmen rowed out to the Lido where the doge cast the ring into the sea, they sang a ballad in ancient Venetian dialect. Dating from the beginning of the ceremony — that is, from about six hundred years before — its meaning had long since been lost, but it was continued for its symbolism.

When the Lido was reached, the doge threw the ring into the water from a small window behind his throne, saying, “We wed thee, O Sea, in token of our eternal power and dominion.” He proceeded to the church of San Nicolo di Lido for mass and then returned to the city.

Venice's power was not eternal. It had already declined drastically when these prints were made in the mid-eighteenth century, and was ended definitively when Napoleon's troops ransacked the Arsenal and destroyed the Venetian fleet on January 9, 1798. This last bucintoro, proud symbol of Venice's power and independence, was stripped of its gilt and then taken to the island of San Giorgio, where its burning illuminated the Venetian skies for three entire days and nights.

MARY L. MYERS.
The doge in the bucintoro departing for the Lido to perform the ceremony of the Marriage of the Sea on Ascension Day, by Brustoloni. Engraving after Antonio Canaletto, 17½ x 22½ inches. The Elisha Whittelsey Fund, 61.532.5
Venice as It Was, Is, and Must Be

JOHN McANDREW  
Professor Emeritus, Wellesley College, and  
Co-Chairman, Venice Committee of the International Fund for Monuments
During the last four or five centuries Venice has changed less than any other great living city. Its spectacular monuments and general picturesqueness have had an attractiveness as a subject for generations of artists rivaled by only one other city—Rome.

Jacopo de’ Barbari’s six-foot woodcut of Venice, issued in 1500 (shown in the detail opposite), was the first big and accurate birds’-eye view of any city in the world. Data for it was gathered by hawk-eyed assistants who spent three years scanning the city from church towers. So authoritative that it was adapted or shamelessly cribbed for over three hundred years, it can still be a useful guide today. Although the city has changed, building by building, and has grown here and there around the edges, its essentials already shown here have not.

Old buildings have had to be remodeled—there were no suburbs to move to—but usually only by updating the style of windows, doors, or cornices rather than by rebuilding. Most Venetian foundations were expensive—Istrian limestone set on submerged rafts over thickets of twenty- or twenty-five-foot oak or larch piles driven into hard clay—sometimes half the cost of the building above, and it was extravagant to alter either them or the location of the stone or brick walls they bore. Since the eighteenth century surprisingly little has been built new or drastically altered: a few canals have been filled to make new streets; a few groups of apartments have been put up on made land.

Although rich in grand buildings, the city is surprisingly unmonumental. There never was a master plan: the one wide avenue, the Grand Canal, runs two miles in a freehand S; the one grand city square, the glorious Piazza San Marco, foils analysis with its nonparallel, nonmatching Renaissance and baroque sides two New York blocks long, its wild Byzantine-Gothic church and Romanesque tower at one end and nineteenth-century pastiche at the other. (Napoleon, not usually a sensitive critic, found it not only the finest drawing room in Europe but the only one with walls beautiful enough to deserve the sky for a ceiling.) Elsewhere in the city buildings usually show only flattish façades, linked in continuous screens along the canals or smaller squares. The
individual fronts may be stylistically disparate but the whole is transcendently concordant nonetheless, thanks to similar materials, scale, height, and window spacing. In such an ensemble individual items can often be altered without causing dissonance.

A good way of finding such changes as there are is by scrutinizing old views of the city. Always conscious of its grandeur, Venice was so often recorded during the eighteenth century that no great building or square was overlooked. The first of the topographical artists was Carlevaris: his Vedute di Venezia of 1703 was the most complete survey since Jacopo de Barbari’s. Among its 103 etchings, what is shown in an astonishing ninety-four is entirely or only negligibly altered today (as, for example, the Rialto bridge, illustrated on the next page). The album was bought so avidly by tourists that new editions were soon needed. Recognizing a good business when they saw one, other publishers brought out rival sets. Lovisa’s Gran Teatro of 1721 was followed by prints after Canaletto, and then by many others, diagrammatic, scenographic, some now famous, some not, but many of them best sellers in their day. Artists began to make special precise drawings quite different from their freer working sketches for paintings, drawings of the city made just to sell to visitors. Interest in the monuments was such that by mid-century sets of measured drawings were being turned out in the shop of the engraver Visentini, who worked closely with the British Consul and picture dealer Joseph Smith, carefully dimensioned in “piedi inglesi” for English Grand Tourists who wanted exemplars of Venetian design as guides for their own building at home. No other city yet had such a specialty.

The fact that so much set down in the eighteenth century can still be seen today might seem to promise artistic security in a world of cities mutilated by building booms in times of wearisome taste, hurt in wars or by many kinds of urban blight. Such reassurance is an illusion, for with its special menaces of rising water level, sudden flooding, and stone-eating vapors, Venice is now threatened with change more drastic than ever before: disintegration and collapse.

Although it is sinking, its stones are crumbling, and it may be drowned in terrible floods, these threats can be stopped and effective work is already under way. Sinking came mainly because so much water and natural gas was being pumped out from below, but gas is no longer extracted and the twenty thousand artesian wells for water to cool machinery in the factories on the mainland will be capped as soon as the new aqueduct from the Alps is finished. The floods, which come when too much water of the Adriatic is blown up to the end, will be held back in four or five years by big gates in the three openings from the Adriatic to the lagoon in which Venice stands. The gases making the sulphuric acid that eats the stone come from the factories on the mainland and from central heating in the city, but the factory stacks are to have filters and the heating fumes made less mephitic by a change in fuel.
The damage already suffered by buildings, sculpture, and pictures is being wonderfully well repaired, mainly by funds from the Italian government, which has more than tripled its annual allotment and has promised yet more. First aid is also coming through the generosity of individuals — one Italian industrialist has just given $100,000 to preserve the church of the Redentore — and special organizations: a "Comitato per Venezia" based in Milan, German, French, and British groups, CRIA, the Kress Foundation, and the Venice Committee in New York (with chapters in Boston, Washington, Cleveland, St. Louis, and Los Angeles) that is transmitting funds for restoring the Tintorettos of the Scuola di San Rocco, the churches of San Pietro di Castello, Santa Maria del Giglio, the Ospedaletto, the scuolas of the Carmini and San Giovanni Evangelista, and yet others as they come onto the danger list. The work is expertly done. Venice will and must be made to remain what Philippe de Commynes called it in 1495: "la plus triomphante cité que j'aye jamais vue."
A Selection from the Exhibition

The Eighteenth Century in Italy

Drawings from New York Collections, III

On January 31, 1971, the Metropolitan Museum will open a spectacular exhibition of Italian drawings of the eighteenth century that has been jointly organized with The Pierpont Morgan Library. Three hundred drawings taken from the incomparable resources of New York collections, public and private, will offer a remarkably comprehensive panorama of Italian draughtsmanship in a century rich in artistic invention and fantasy. The stars of the occasion will be Giovanni Battista Tiepolo and his son Domenico, the view painter Francesco Guardi, and the architect-printmaker Giovanni Battista Piranesi. Venice thus has the place of honor, but other major Italian artistic centers of the time—Rome, Naples, Bologna, Genoa—will all be richly accounted for. A fully illustrated catalogue accompanies the exhibition. The presentation of the drawings, in galleries decorated with furniture and sculpture of the time, will be supplemented by shows of Venetian oil sketches and of Italian eighteenth-century prints and books.

J. B.

The Meeting of Anthony and Cleopatra, by Giovanni Battista Tiepolo (1696-1770), Italian. Pen and brown ink, brown wash, over a little black chalk, 16/4 x 17/4 inches. Rogers Fund, 37.165.10

Giambattista Tiepolo was the most brilliant and productive artist of eighteenth-century Venice, and his extraordinary virtuosity and originality are evident throughout his work as a painter and draughtsman, printmaker and decorator. The Meeting of Anthony and Cleopatra was the subject of three painted works by Giambattista dated in the 1740s: a fresco in the Great Hall of the Palazzo Labia in Venice, an oil sketch in the collection of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Wrightsman, and a painting at Arkhangelskoye near Moscow. The pose of the figures in the present drawing is closest to the oil sketch.
The Stairway of the Giants, by Francesco Guardi (1712-1793), Italian. Pen and brown ink, brown wash, over red chalk, 10\(\frac{3}{4}\) x 7\(\frac{3}{4}\) inches. Rogers Fund, 37.165.85

The great courtyard of the Palazzo Ducale in Venice, dominated by the Stairway of the Giants, was the point of departure for a great many of Guardi’s painted and drawn capricci. Here he has recorded the principal architectural features of the staircase and courtyard, but has transformed Jacopo Sansovino’s monumental statues of Mars and Neptune at the top of the stair into twisting draped figures in a rococo taste.

Prison Interior, by Giovanni Battista Piranesi (1720-1778), Italian. Pen and brown ink, gray and brown wash, over black chalk, 7\(\frac{3}{4}\) x 9\(\frac{3}{4}\) inches. The Pierpont Morgan Library, Bequest of the late Junius S. Morgan and Gift of Henry S. Morgan, 1966.11:16

An early drawing by the Venetian-born Piranesi, this dramatic scheme foreshadows his famous series of etchings of prisons, the Invenzioni capric. di carceri, executed in 1745. The elaborate network of vaults and arches testifies to the artist’s preoccupation with architecture. Although he was briefly active as an architect, most of his architectural drawings were extraordinary imaginary designs that had expression only on paper.
Scene of Contemporary Life: At the Dressmaker's, by Giovanni Domenico Tiepolo (1727-1804), Italian. Pen and brown ink, gray-brown, gray, and ocher wash, over black chalk, 11\(\frac{3}{4}\) x 16\(\frac{3}{4}\) inches. The Pierpont Morgan Library, Gift of the Fellows, 1967.22

In the 1790s Domenico Tiepolo executed a series of highly entertaining scenes of contemporary Venetian life, intended as ends in themselves rather than studies for pictures. Here, with good-natured humor, Domenico shows the dressmaker fitting a dress on a rather bewildered young girl, while the girl's mother and an assistant look on.
The Metropolitan Museum of Art is collaborating with JSTOR to digitize, preserve, and extend access to The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin.