

THE UNIVERSAL SURVEY MUSEUM

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For over a century the museum has been the most prestigious and authoritative place for seeing original works of art. Today, for most people in Western society, the very notion of art itself is inconceivable without the museum. No other institution claims greater importance as a treasure house of material and spiritual wealth.

The museum experience is usually described in terms of aesthetic contemplation. Yet studies show that the average visitor comes to the museum with no fixed purpose or perspective and usually looks over the entire collection rather than focusing on individual works. (One curator estimated that the average visitor devotes 1.6 seconds to each of the works he or she looks at.)¹ Clearly, museums offer an experience that cannot be described simply in terms of contemplation. Yet very little is known about the museum experience as a totality. Peter Kyron, Deputy Chairman of the United States National Council on the Arts, recently observed that although museums have demonstrated their ability to draw millions of visitors, they have yet to say 'what they are about [and to] analyse the core experience of going to a museum'.² Our primary aim is to understand the way the museum's ensemble of art, architecture and installations shapes the average visitor's experience.

Our approach draws upon the methods of traditional art and architectural history as well as anthropology. We begin with a close examination of the immediate visual and spatial experience of the museum. From this evidence, we attempt to deduce the beliefs and values museums communicate. These values and beliefs refer not only to aesthetic experience but also to the visitor's social experience. We believe this approach allows for an examination of the dialectic between the museum experience and the forces and conditions that gave rise to and sustain the museum as a social institution.

MUSEUMS AS CEREMONIAL ARCHITECTURE

Museums belong to the same architectural and art-historical category as temples,

churches, shrines and certain types of palaces. This comparison is not simply a convenient metaphor: museums share fundamental characteristics with traditional ceremonial monuments.

The museum's primary function is ideological. It is meant to impress upon those who use or pass through it society's most revered beliefs and values. Past societies devoted substantial wealth to constructing and decorating temples and cathedrals. Similarly, our society lavishes enormous resources on creating and maintaining museums of art. The museum's physical prominence and monumental appearance signal its importance. Absorbing more manual and imaginative labour than any other type of architecture, the museum affirms the power and social authority of a patron class.

Museums built during the first great age of museum building deliberately recalled past ceremonial architecture (plates 46, 61, 62, 66, 67). The forms that were chosen evoked temples, palaces, treasuries and tombs.³ This eclectic and often pedantic architecture drew upon the complex of interconnected meanings associated with the ceremonial architecture of the ancient world. Museums were simultaneously temples, palaces, treasuries and tombs – buildings filled with echoes of ancient ceremonial practices of accumulation and display. The use of traditional forms represents not only a revival of architectural styles, but also a modern adaptation of those ancient practices. The museum thus recalls what might be termed the museum functions of earlier architecture – the ceremonial display of votive offerings in temple treasuries or of relics in cathedral chapels and crypts.⁴ These displays of revered objects were arranged as deliberately as any museum installation.

Today's universal survey museum might be compared to Roman displays of war trophies. The loot that was paraded through Rome in triumphal procession was often donated to the Roman public by wealthy benefactors and placed on public exhibition.⁵ The early Louvre deliberately evoked the Roman tradition of triumphal display: captured enemy arms were exhibited along with works of art, and cartloads of art pillaged from conquered nations arrived at the Louvre in triumphal processions designed to recall those of ancient Rome.⁶ The visitor entering Napoleon's Louvre passed through triumphal arches decorated with trophies and victories.⁷ In today's European and American museums, exhibitions of Oriental, African, Pre-Columbian and Native American art function as permanent triumphal processions, testifying to Western supremacy and world domination.

Museum architecture often recalls the architectural tradition of mausoleums and royal temples. For example, the Metropolitan Museum's Robert Lehman wing (plates 63, 64) has about it the spirit of an ancient royal tomb. Its windowless, subterranean chambers contain precise reconstructions of the ornately furnished rooms in which Lehman spent his days. The architecture echoes funereal and religious building types: the circular mausoleum or palace chapel. A glass, pyramid-shaped roof is the structure's most striking external feature. All that is lacking is a sarcophagus.⁸

In common with ancient ceremonial monuments, museums embody and make visible the idea of the state. They do so in part through the use of a Roman-derived

architectural rhetoric. This rhetoric has been used in public buildings since the Renaissance to symbolize state authority.⁹ By employing such forms as the Greco-Roman temple front, the dome of the Pantheon, or coffered ceilings, the museum, along with other public buildings, asserts its descent from the ideological, historical and political reality of imperial Rome. Located at the centre of the modern city like a temple facing an open forum or, in the United States, as part of a municipal park complex, the museum stands as a symbol of the state, and those who pass through its doors enact a ritual that equates state authority with the idea of civilization.

We use the word ritual deliberately. The museum, like other ceremonial monuments, is a complex architectural phenomenon that selects and arranges works of art within a sequence of spaces. This totality of art and architectural form organizes the visitor's experience as a script organizes a performance. Individuals respond in different ways according to their education, culture and class.¹⁰ But the architecture is a given and imposes the same underlying structure on everyone. By following the architectural script, the visitor engages in an activity most accurately described as a ritual. Indeed, the museum experience bears a striking resemblance to religious rituals in both form and content. According to the anthropologist Victor Turner, such art forms as theatre, the novel and art exhibitions provide scripts or 'doing codes' to be performed by individuals. The reader or viewer enacts a ritual whose structure may be compared to those found in simpler societies.¹¹ The architectural historian Frank Brown developed the idea of architecture as ritual form. In his *Roman Architecture*, Brown argued that Roman ceremonial buildings not only originated in ritual activity, but 'required it, prompted it, [and] enforced it'.¹²

Of course, the ritual nature of the museum experience may not be self-evident. Although writers often describe museums as 'temples' and 'palaces', they use these terms metaphorically. We live in a secular age and museums are deemed secular institutions. But the separation between the secular and the religious is itself a part of bourgeois thought and has effectively masked the survival in our society of older religious practices and beliefs. From the beginning bourgeois society appropriated religious symbols and traditions to its own ends. The legacy of religious patterns of thought and feeling especially shaped the experience of art. While Winckelmann and other eighteenth-century thinkers were discovering in art all the characteristics of the sacred, a new kind of cultural institution, the public art museum – 'Temples of Art', as the age styled them – was evolving a corresponding ritual. When, in 1768, Goethe visited the Dresden Gallery, he described it as a 'sanctuary'. Its splendour and richness, he recalled, 'imparted a feeling of solemnity' which 'resembled the sensation with which one treads a church', but was here 'set up only for the sacred purposes of art'.¹³

We are not suggesting that museum visitors think of their experience as a ritual process. Rather the museum itself – the installations, the layout of rooms, the sequence of collections – creates an experience that resembles traditional religious experiences. By performing the ritual of walking through the museum, the visitor is prompted to enact and thereby to internalize the values and beliefs written into the

architectural script. Here, works of art play the same role as in traditional ceremonial monuments.

In a church, temple, or palace, paintings, statues and reliefs affixed to or embedded in the walls constitute an integral part of the monument; they are, in a sense, its voice. These architectural decorations articulate and enlarge the meaning of the ritual activities that take place on the site. In most traditional architecture, the various decorative elements, taken together, form a coherent iconographic programme. Such programmes usually rest upon authoritative literary sources – written or orally-transmitted myths, litanies, sacred texts, epics – and they frequently evoke a mythic or historical past that informs and justifies the values celebrated in the ceremonial space. As visual commentaries, they elucidate the purpose of the consecrated ground and often provide a scenario for ritual.¹⁴ Thus images of John the Baptist on the walls of baptistries gave meaning to the ritual of baptism; the Last Supper related the monastery or convent dinner to Christ's sacrifice. Similarly, medieval choir screens, illustrating the life of a martyr, gave meaning to the pilgrim's walk round the choir.

The museum's space and collection form an ensemble that functions as an iconographic programme. However, art historians have ignored the role art plays in the museum context. Museums almost everywhere sanction the idea that works of art should, above all, be viewed one-by-one in an apparently ahistorical environment. According to prevailing beliefs, the museum space, apart from the objects it shelters, is empty. What in our approach appears as a structured ritual space – an ideologically active environment – usually remains invisible and is experienced only as a transparent medium through which art can be viewed objectively and without distraction.

Architectural historians classify ceremonial monuments according to type. For example, in the field of Medieval art, they distinguish between abbey churches, palace chapels and cathedrals. We have found that there is also a typology for museums. The most important museum types are the large municipal or national museum devoted to surveys of old masters and monumental art through the ages, and the museum devoted primarily to modern art. Other types include specialized regional collections and the robber-baron mansion. The universal survey museum may also incorporate other museum types housed in special wings or sections. Each of these museum types has its own characteristic iconographic programme. Indeed, the programme of any particular museum is as predictable as that of a mediaval church and is equally dependent upon authoritative doctrine. The art history found in encyclopedic textbooks – in the United States, Gardner, Janson and Arnason – supplies the doctrine that makes these modern ceremonial structures coherent.

These different museum types reflect changing historical circumstances and needs. Universal survey museums such as the Metropolitan claim the heritage of the classical tradition for contemporary society and equate that tradition with the very notion of civilization itself. In this type of museum, the visitor moves through a programmed experience that casts him in the role of an ideal citizen – a member of an

idealized 'public' and heir to an ideal, civilized past. Smaller museums belonging to this type, for example the New Orleans Museum of Fine Arts, may lack collections of classical art, but they none the less communicate the classical ideal through their architecture and décor. The prototype for this kind of museum is the Louvre, the first and still the fullest statement of the ideal of civilization.¹⁵

THE ORIGINS OF THE UNIVERSAL SURVEY MUSEUM

The Louvre, the National Galleries in London and Washington, and the Metropolitan Museum of New York exemplify the universal survey museum. Such museums present a broad range of art history. They are the indispensable ornaments of any great city, and even smaller cities with claims to civic and cultural importance must have their versions of a universal survey museum. When people use the term art museum, it is this type of museum they usually have in mind. The universal survey museum is not only the first in importance, it is also the first museum type to emerge historically, and from the beginning it was identified with the idea of the public art museum. In what follows, then, we shall often use the term public museum to mean the universal survey type.

The public art museum evolved in the eighteenth century from another kind of collection that resembled it in many ways, the princely art gallery. It is in this period that royal collections all over Europe were being turned into public collections. In France, the Revolution would declare the Louvre a museum, but even before the Revolution, plans for the new museum were well underway. In several other countries, royal collections had been turned into public museums by royalty itself. Outstanding examples are the Viennese Royal Collection, handsomely installed and opened to the public in the 1770s; the Dresden Gallery, so much admired by Goethe; and the Uffizi donated to the state in 1743 by the last princess of the Medici house.¹⁶

The conversion of royal and princely art collections into public museums should be seen as part of a larger historical process. The new institution – the public art museum – would inherit some of the basic ceremonial functions of the princely collection from which it arose. But under the pressure of new historical forces, those ceremonial functions would be reshaped and redefined, and eventually the public art museum would develop its own distinctive forms and its own characteristic look. Certainly a sharp line cannot always be drawn between the two kinds of state collections; as we shall see, lurking behind the façade of the public art museum, there are often memories and sometimes even the reality of royal ceremony. Some museums, especially those established very early by monarchs, seem poised between the two identities. Later universal survey museums do not suffer from such confusion of identity.

Typical princely art collections were those of the Emperor Rudolf II, the Archduke Leopold-William of Brussels, Phillip II of Spain, Cardinal Mazarin and Cardinal Geronimo Colonna.¹⁷ From the Renaissance through the eighteenth century, such collections were often housed in magnificent galleries that served as

official reception rooms – state ceremonial spaces that were meant to impress both foreign visitors and local dignitaries with the ruler's magnificence. Collections of this kind that were famous for their richness often attracted foreign travellers much as museums today attract tourists. Yet even for the curious art lover of the seventeenth or eighteenth centuries, a visit to such a gallery was a visit to the prince, whether or not the prince was there to receive him. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, many of these collections were opened to the public as 'museums', and some were even given their own buildings. Nevertheless, they retained their character as royal reception halls.

The Glyptothek in Munich (plate 46), for example, built by Ludwig of Bavaria in the early nineteenth century, looks like a typical museum building of the modern era – indeed, its Neo-classical forms were a prototype for later museums.¹⁸ It was opened to the public free by the Crown Prince himself. Yet, as Neils von Holst points out in his study of museums, the splendid liveries of the museum guards made clear that the visitor was, in fact, the prince's guest. The same was true of the Hermitage later in the century. Although opened as a public museum in 1853, it kept much of the character of a princely art gallery. As Germain Bazin describes it,

The [Hermitage] museum was completely integrated with the palace, being used for evening receptions and after-theatre suppers. . . . The Czar permitted the public but on conditions recalling those of the *Ancien Régime*. One visited the emperor, not the museum; full dress was de rigueur and visitors were announced.¹⁹

In Russia as in Munich, the collection very clearly belonged to the monarch and identified the state with his person.

In France, in the mid-eighteenth century, the royal collection was hidden away in inaccessible storage rooms. Enlightened opinion began calling for the creation of a royal gallery in the old Louvre palace. Although abandoned as a residence, the Louvre was still a powerful symbol of the state, and critics saw its potential as a museum.²⁰ In a pamphlet of 1747, Lafont de Saint-Yenne proposed that the Louvre be restored and transformed into a royal art gallery.²¹ It is a disgrace, he said, that this building, 'the first of the royal buildings', had fallen into neglect and disrepair. As a gallery, it would be a monument to the king and a 'sanctuary' for art that would augment 'the glory of our nation'. It would impress foreigners by its display of wealth and inspire modern artists to create noble works.

Lafont, and after him Diderot, Voltaire and other *philosophes* were calling for something like a traditional royal art gallery – a ceremonial royal reception hall. It would receive not only foreign visitors but also the French public. And it would speak not only of the King's glory but of the nation. In effect, Lafont and the *philosophes* were beginning to think of the royal art gallery as a ceremonial space belonging collectively to the people – a gallery with the function of a public museum, but still clothed in royal robes. Of course, the 'public' Lafont and the others envisioned represented only a small segment of the population – the aristocracy and the educated bourgeoisie. In

demanding a state reception hall for this public and by insisting that the royal collection symbolized the 'nation', the *philosophes* were in effect demanding acknowledgement for the bourgeoisie and its claims to a share of the official state.

Under Louis XVI, the monarchy also concluded that it had something to gain from a royal art gallery accessible to the public. Under attack from all sides, the government was anxious to legitimize itself by identifying its special interests with those of the French nation as a whole. To this end, the foundation of a royal museum became official policy. The Comte d'Angiviller, the King's Director General of Buildings, intent upon shaping public opinion, was already involved in centralizing and controlling art production and exhibitions. In 1777, he formed a committee to plan for the transformation of the Louvre's Grand Gallery into a royal art gallery. Meanwhile, through his agents, he enlarged the royal collection, especially strengthening its holdings in Italian Renaissance art, but also – like a modern museum curator – filling in art-historical gaps (for example, Dutch and Flemish art). Despite his efforts, the transformation of the Louvre into a museum was still in the planning stage at the time of the Revolution.²²

With the Revolution, the transformation of the Louvre became urgent. In a series of decrees of 1792 and 1793, the new state nationalized the King's property, confiscated his art collections and declared the Louvre a museum.²³ This declaration dramatically made visible the reality of the new Republican state. What had been the King's by right was now decreed the property of the nation. In a letter to David of 17 October, 1792 Minister of the Interior Roland spelled out the meaning of the new museum:

As I conceive of it, it should attract and impress foreigners. It should nourish a taste for the fine arts, please art lovers and serve as a school to artists. It should be open to everyone. This will be a national monument. There will not be a single individual who does not have the right to enjoy it. It will have such an influence on the mind, it will so elevate the soul, it will so excite the heart that it will be one of the most powerful ways of proclaiming the illustriousness of the French Republic.²⁴

On 27 July 1793 the convention designated the Louvre The Museum of the French Republic and set its opening for 10 August, 'the anniversary of the fall of the Monarchy'.²⁵ The meaning that the Revolution gave to the ancient palace is still commemorated in the heart of the Louvre in the Apollo Gallery (plate 47), a magnificently decorated reception hall dating from the reign of Louis XIV. In its centre a glass case displays three royal crowns: a medieval one, the coronation crown of Louis XV, and the coronation crown of Napoleon. All now belong to the French people.

In principle, the public art museum and the royal art gallery imply sharp political differences. Both institutions make the nation a visible reality. The royal gallery identifies the nation as the king's realm, while the public art museum identifies the nation as the state – an abstract entity in theory belonging to the people. For this

reason, public art museums could serve the needs of enlightened or modernizing monarchs as well as the new republican state. The sudden flowering of art museums all over Europe in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries testifies to the bourgeoisie's growing social and political power. In order to grasp more fully what the public art museum does and why it is a necessity to the modern state, we must understand the ways in which the art museum reorganizes the experience of art.

Princely collections celebrated the power and wisdom of the prince.²⁶ Visitors to the court were meant to be dazzled and impressed by the display of richness and splendour. Works of art were used decoratively, often as elements in complex architectural ensembles.²⁷ Paintings were sometimes put in narrow, unobtrusive frames and made to cover the entire wall in order to produce a tapestry-like effect. Leopold-William's collection, frequently depicted by Teniers, was installed in this manner, as was the famous Colonna Gallery, which inspired Pannini's many fantasy paintings of art collections. In these decorative schemes, size, colour and subject matter determined the arrangement, and paintings were often cut down or enlarged to fit into the ensemble. Studies have shown that princely collections were sometimes carefully selected and arranged as iconographic programmes that glorified the ruler and his realm. For example, the seventeenth-century collection of the Hapsburg Emperor Rudolf II formed an iconographic programme portraying the emperor as the centre of a harmonious microcosm and illustrating the beneficent effects of his rule.²⁸ The Antiquarium of Albert V of Bavaria featured portraits of emperors and illustrious men of the past whose virtues the prince claimed as his legacy.²⁹

The creation of the public art museum did not merely involve opening up a royal ceremonial space to a newly constituted public. To serve the new needs of the state, the collection had to be presented in a new way. One of the earliest examples was the Viennese Royal Collection.³⁰ In 1776 it was moved out of the Stallburg, where it had hung since the 1720s, to the Belvedere Palace. Despite protests from those favouring traditional installation practices, the works were now arranged according to Enlightenment ideas. The paintings were divided into national schools and art-historical periods, put into simple, uniform frames, and clearly labelled. A guide to the museum directed the visitor's tour of the collection. A walk through the gallery was an organized walk through the history of art. In other words, the royal collection was organized into a new iconographic programme. In the guide, Christian von Mechel, the art expert in charge of the Belvedere, proclaimed his pedagogical aims: the new museum, he wrote, was to be 'a repository where the history of art is made visible'.³¹ The Royal Collection in Düsseldorf had been given an art-historical programme in 1756, and a similar programme had been in place in the Uffizi since 1770. In 1810, Vivant Denon imposed the new programme at the Louvre. Thereafter, almost all museums would adopt some version of the new scheme.

The museum not only reorganized the collection but also transformed the experience of art. In 1785, an aristocratic connoisseur, von Rittershausen, complained about the organization of the Belvedere: 'One who desires an art history can enter [the museum] but the sensitive man is kept away.'³² In the museum, the work

of art now represented a moment of art history. It exemplified a particular category within the new system of art-historical classification. From now on museums would feel obliged to possess works illustrating key moments of that history. Hence the competition to own a painting by Raphael or a classical Greek statue. The new art-historical programme partially democratized artistic experience since in theory anyone could learn the system of classification and the unique characteristics attributed to each school and each master. Without the museum, the discipline of art history, as it has evolved over the last two hundred years, would be inconceivable. Viewed historically, art history appears as a necessary and inevitable component of the public museum.

Germain Bazin and Neils von Holst have described the invention of art history and the role it plays in structuring the museum experience as a product of Enlightenment thought.³³ To be sure, art history rationalizes the experience of art. But it signals more than a new intellectual style. With art history, the middle class could appropriate the experience of art and put it to its own ideological uses. In the museum, whatever meaning a work of art owed to its original context was lost. Now a part of the museum's programme, it could only appear as a moment of art history. For the middle class, cultural achievement and individual genius were the essence of human history. The history of art – primarily understood as the history of artists – demonstrated the claim that history was the history of great men. The museum, organized as an art-historical monument, not only made this claim visible, it also enforced it as a universal truth: as defined by art history, art could speak *only* of individual genius and achievement. The museum thus institutionalized the bourgeois claim to speak for the interests of all mankind. In theory, the spiritual wealth it contained belonged to everyone. The museum gave substance to the theory by making that wealth accessible to anyone who cared to see it. Even though not everyone went to the museum, and, of those who did go, not everyone could grasp the spiritual meanings of the art, it could be said that the *values* celebrated in the museum's programme 'belonged' to everyone. Finally, art history could justify in the name of humanity the appropriation and exhibition of art by the state: since art appeared as art history only in the museum, and since only art history made visible the spiritual truths of art, the museum was its only proper repository.³⁴

The public art collection also implies a new set of social relations. A visitor to a princely collection might have admired the beauty of individual works, but his relationship to the collection was essentially an extension of his social relationship to the palace and its lord. The princely gallery spoke for and about the prince. The visitor was meant to be impressed by the prince's virtue, taste and wealth. The gallery's iconographic programme and the splendour of the collection worked to validate the prince and his rule. In the museum, the wealth of the collection is still a display of national wealth and is still meant to impress. But now the state, as an abstract entity, replaces the king as host. This change redefines the visitor. He is no longer the subordinate of a prince or lord. Now he is addressed as a citizen and therefore a shareholder in the state. The museum does this not in an explicit fashion

but symbolically. It displays spiritual wealth that in theory belongs to everyone – or rather spiritual wealth that is publicly owned through the medium of the state. Because the state is abstract and anonymous, it is especially in need of potent and tangible symbols of its powers and attributes. Art can be used to realize the transcendent values the state claims to embody. It can make good the state's claim to be the guardian of civilization. It lends credibility to the belief that the state exists at the summit of mankind's highest attainments. In the museum, the visitor is not called upon to identify with the state *per se* but with its highest values. The visitor inherits this spiritual wealth but only on the condition that he lay claim to it in the museum. Thus the museum is the site of a symbolic transaction between the visitor and the state. In exchange for the state's spiritual wealth, the individual intensifies his attachment to the state. Hence the museum's hegemonic function, the crucial role it can play in the experience of citizenship.

From the beginning, the museum's role in securing state power was well understood. In response to the ideological threat of the French Revolution, states throughout continental Europe quickly moved to establish their own national museums. For example, in Prussia the foundation of a museum was considered at the highest levels of government. In the 'Riga Memorandum' of 1807, the Prussian minister von Altenstein advised the king that 'the fine arts are the expression of the highest condition of mankind' and that the state has the duty to make them accessible to everyone.³⁵

Because it belongs to the nation and therefore to all citizens, the museum helps foster the illusion of a classless society. Of course, there is almost always a contradiction between the ideal visitor as defined by the museum and the actual visitor. While in theory the visitor possesses a share in the spiritual wealth of the nation, in practice his possession of that wealth is dependent upon his class, sex and cultural background.³⁶ To lay hold of that wealth requires the education and leisure available only to a narrow elite. The museum prompts the visitor to identify with an elite culture at the same time it spells out his place in the social hierarchy. As the sociologists Pierre Bordieu and Alain Darbel have observed,

Even in their smallest details . . . museums reveal their real function, which is to reinforce among some people the feeling of belonging and among others the feeling of exclusion.³⁷

THE LOUVRE

The Louvre is the largest and most influential of the universal survey museums, the prototype for scores of national galleries and municipal art museums. Despite its rivals in both Europe and America, it is still the biggest and the best of its type. Even though it has been altered, expanded and reorganized many times, it still embodies most fully the values and beliefs that inspired the first universal survey type. As it stands today, the Louvre not only preserves that early moment of bourgeois ideology,

it also testifies to its continuing relevance in contemporary society. This part of our paper traces the experience of an ideal visitor to the Louvre – the visitor as defined by the museum's ritual script.³⁸

The Denon Pavilion – the museum's main entrance – begins the ritual. From the outset the visitor faces impressive spaces and grand vistas. The architecture with its allusions to classical antiquity and the Italian and French Renaissance provides the historical framework for the museum's iconographic programme. The visitor enters the vestibule and proceeds to the Daru Gallery, which is lined with Roman sculpture including a statue of Augustus to the left of the entrance.

This gallery is the prologue. It performs several functions. The classical sculpture and the classicizing architecture address visitors and simultaneously define them as members of a larger community – the nation – which has inherited and maintained the legacy of Western civilization. The idea of community is inherent in the architecture. In the Louvre, visitors are drawn along marked axes and through monumental halls and corridors designed for the reception of crowds. In other words, the architecture prompts one to join, along with everyone else, a ceremonial procession through the museum.

The Daru Gallery ends in a grand staircase (plate 48). This staircase is perhaps the most critical and ideologically-laden moment in the entire museum ritual. Under Napoleon, the architects Percier and Fontaine constructed an ornate monumental staircase, reluctantly torn down when the Louvre was enlarged under Napoleon III. The architect Lefuel submitted eight plans to the Emperor before the present staircase was approved. He was aware, as he later said, that the rejected plans were not impressive enough and did not fulfil the complicated set of tasks the stairway had to perform.³⁹

Before the visitors reach the foot of the staircase, they see the *Victory of Samothrace* magnificently framed in an archway. The statue marks the end of the prologue and the first major moment in the ritual walk. After this, one may go in one of several directions, but everyone is first confronted with the *Winged Victory*.

At the staircase's first landing, visitors face a number of possible routes (plate 49). Here they may descend back to the ground floor collection of ancient Greek and Roman art, where a long corridor leads to the *Venus de Milo*, another culminating moment in the iconographic programme. If they climb the grand staircase to the *Victory*, as most people do, they must again choose their route. The stairs to the left of the *Victory* lead to the Rotunda of Apollo where they can either go on to the collection of Greco-Roman and Egyptian antiquities in the Old Louvre or enter the Apollo Gallery with its crown jewels. The stairs to the right of the *Victory* take them to the Percier, Fontaine and Duchâtel rooms which connect with the Salon Carré, where French Renaissance painting is displayed. These rooms, built as part of the Musée Napoléon, are mainly devoted to Italian Renaissance art and form a connecting link between classical antiquity and French painting. As visitors pass through them, they can look down at examples of Roman sculpture and mosaics in the Court of the Sphinx below. These loggia-like rooms constitute one of several north-south bridges

linking the Grand Gallery, on the river side, to the Louvre of Napoleon II. Like the Daru staircase, these bridges are connecting points in more than a physical sense. The Salle des États, the largest and most central, holds the Louvre's most important Italian old masters – Raphael, Titian, Veronese, Correggio and, above all, Leonardo, whose *Mona Lisa*, enshrined in a bullet-proof case, is the focus of the room if not of the entire museum (plate 50). Our point is that no matter which route visitors take, within a few minutes they experience an iconographic programme in which the heritage of antiquity and the Renaissance leads to French art.

French painting is organized chronologically. It begins in the Salon Carré, which contains fifteenth- and sixteenth-century works, and continues into the Grand Gallery (plate 51). This impressive space, its niches embellished with Roman statues, begins with French painting from the seventeenth century – Poussin, Le Brun, Le Nain – and continues through the eighteenth century up to the time of the Revolution. A final section of the Grand Gallery contains Italian primitives; but at that point visitors must choose between going on through the Grand Gallery and following the French school, which makes a right turn. A series of rooms devoted to eighteenth-century French painting takes one around to the third side of the rectangle and to the beginning of an axis that runs through three enormous rooms and ends with the *Winged Victory* (plate 52). In these rooms one walks through the history of monumental French painting from the Revolution to the mid-nineteenth century – David, Gros, Géricault, Ingres, Delacroix, Courbet – the last paintings in the grand tradition, the tradition that began in the Italian Renaissance.

Looking back as one exits these galleries, the view from the *Winged Victory* sums up the circuit (plate 53). This is the heart of the iconographic programme. There are other important ceremonial statements elsewhere in the Louvre, for example the Hall of the Caryatids or the cycle of history paintings Rubens created for Marie de' Medici, displayed in a monumental space beyond the Grand Gallery. But the great classical moments of the past – Greece, Rome and the Renaissance – take priority and will be seen in parallel and linked relationships to each other and to France even by the visitor who comes only for a brief tour. No one can miss the point of the iconographic programme: France is the true heir of classical civilization. The visitor may not be prepared to articulate this idea; but this is the meaning written into the museum's iconographical programme and lived in the visitor's ritual walk. From the central landing at the base of the *Winged Victory*, the programmatic juxtaposition of the French grand tradition of painting and the Greco-Roman sculptural tradition provide the ritual's grand finale.

The Louvre's iconographic programme thus dramatizes the triumph of French civilization. In the context of the museum, the *Winged Victory* symbolizes that triumph. She stands for France Victorious – the everlasting triumph of the nation and the state, presented in the guise of the triumph of culture.

So far, we have confined our observations to the general character of the architectural spaces and the way in which the collections unfold around the museum's main entrance. But the Louvre's iconographic programme involves more than the

collections and their arrangement. Because of the ideological importance of the site, every regime, beginning with the First Republic, lay claim to the museum, first by renaming it – the Musée de la République, the Musée Royale, etc. – and then by inscribing its signature on the museum's walls and ceilings. With the Republic, all marks of royalty were removed and, when possible, replaced with ears of wheat, rosettes and other republican symbols.⁴⁰ Under Napoleon, Percier and Fontaine created sumptuous decorative schemes overflowing with imperial insignia. In the Grand Gallery, newly decorated for Napoleon's marriage to Marie-Louise, imperial eagles decorated the arches. The Hall of the Caryatids, left unfinished by the *Ancien Régime*, was now completed with the addition of an elaborate marble fireplace incorporating figures attributed to the sixteenth-century sculptor Jean Goujon. The fireplace also displayed Napoleon's initial, sets of trophies and, above, a portrait of the Emperor with the imperial eagle. With the Restoration, the Bourbons immediately set to work removing the more obvious reminders of Napoleon's reign. Fleurs de Lys reappeared, for example in the former apartments of Anne of Austria, and Percier and Fontaine obligingly changed certain features of Napoleon's fireplace (plate 54): the N turned into an H (for Henri II), and the head of Napoleon became a Jupiter (later removed). The tradition of signing walls and ceilings continued. The Second Republic left its mark, among other places, on the new ceilings of the Hall of Seven Chimneys (plate 55). Under Napoleon III, Ns once again proliferated (plate 56). The Third Republic was not very zealous about removing the Ns but it did remove an 1862 tapestry of Napoleon III as builder of the Louvre from the Apollo gallery.⁴¹

Aside from the insignia, the Louvre has always deliberately preserved and perpetuated older practices of architectural decoration. As in traditional ritual structures, ceiling decorations play a major role. In older monuments, the roof or ceiling was often reserved for the representation of the powers that presided over the building – the gods in the pediment of a Greek temple, the figure of the Pantocrator looming out of the dome of a Byzantine church, or an allegory of the prince's virtue, wisdom and generosity on the ceiling of a Renaissance or Baroque palace. In the ceremonial space, the presiding earthly power is translated into heavenly power; hence the frequency of sky imagery in pediments and on roofs and ceilings.

Since the Louvre's transformation from palace to museum, an enormous amount of attention has been given to the ceilings. Old decorations have been restored or adapted to new programmatic uses (most notably in Napoleon's Museum of Antiquities);⁴² new ceiling decorations have been created and, in some cases, later suppressed. These ceiling campaigns were, in their different ways, dedicated to the same end: they made visible the state power presiding over the museum's ceremonial space.

In traditional princely iconography, the ruler claimed, among other things, the special favour of the gods and the legacy of illustrious predecessors; he had himself portrayed as benefactor of the arts and protector of civilization. Such imagery was a common feature of the Old Louvre, for example, Michel-Ange Challe's allegorical ceiling representing *Louis XV as Protector of the Arts*, now in Fontainebleau.⁴³ With Louis

XVI's downfall, the new state inherited the monarchy's need for ideological self-justification, but it also had to distinguish itself from the monarchy. In other words, it occupied the place of the monarch while trying not to look like the monarch. Thus on the ceilings of the Louvre the old forms reappear wearing new costumes. The prince's heritage is now the heritage of Western civilization, while the state, formerly identified with the person of the king, now appears as La France, as in Meynier's ceiling, *France in the Guise of Minerva Protecting the Arts* (plate 57). This painting embellished the ceiling above the grand staircase of the Musée Napoléon. Although the staircase was demolished, the painting still occupies its original ceiling (now in the Fontaine room). An especially telling example of La France is Gros' ceiling, *The Genius of France Giving Life to the Arts and Protecting Humanity*, in the Musée Charles X. This painting was commissioned to replace an earlier work by the same artist which celebrated Charles X's princely generosity. The earlier work was entitled *The King Bestowing upon the Arts the Musée Charles X*.⁴⁴

Whoever claimed state power also claimed the ceilings. After 1830, Gros' first effort would no longer do, not only because Charles X had been forced to flee France but also because this type of princely iconography was now outmoded – at least for the moment. Louis-Phillipe, the new monarch, wanted to be known as the citizen king. Gros' old ceiling had reclaimed the Louvre as an extension of the royal palace. The new work reinstated it as a public museum, the collective property of the nation. The question of who owned the Louvre – the people or the ruler – would not be clearly settled politically or on the museum ceilings for some time to come. Later in the century, in the Louvre of Napoleon III, palace functions would once again be emphasized. In the newly built Salle des États, where the Emperor convened the Legislative Assembly with great pomp and ceremony, the ghosts of Charlemagne and Napoleon I, together with the figure of La France, would watch over the proceedings from the ceiling and walls. When the Emperor fell, his ceiling came down with him. The Salle des États was taken over by the museum in the '80s and given elaborate new decorations honouring the French school (plate 58).⁴⁵

The imagery of the Old Louvre palace could also serve the ideological needs of the Republican state. In 1848, the Second Republic voted funds to restore and complete the decoration of the Apollo Gallery – the gallery had been only partially decorated by Le Brun in the seventeenth century.⁴⁶ The decoration of the monumental rotunda next to the gallery was finished in the eighteenth century and was also dedicated to Apollo, the god with whom Louis XIV was identified. The Second Republic commissioned from Delacroix a new ceiling, *The Triumph of Apollo*, and the two rooms became a sumptuous memorial to the Sun King. By appropriating the image of Apollo, the Republic appropriated French history and proclaimed itself as the guardian of the nation and its heritage. The Republic, in the guise of Louis-Apollo, now occupied the ceilings as a bringer of light, order and civilization. The prince's civilizing mission now became the mission of the French state.

This theme unifies the museum's entire iconographic programme. While many

ceilings emphasize the state's role with insignia or allegories of monarchs or the figure of France encouraging and protecting the arts, others focus on the arts themselves and their historical development. In the nineteenth century, the history of art increasingly came to stand for humanity's highest achievements. The idea of civilization became identified with the history of high culture, and high culture was taken as tangible evidence of virtuous government. In the museum, art history began to supplant the history of the state.

An early example of this kind of iconography is the ceiling of the Rotunda of Mars, formerly the main entrance of the Musée Napoléon. The theme chosen was the history of sculpture. The museum commissioned *The Origins of Sculpture, or Man Modelled by Prometheus and Given Life by Minerva* for the centre of the ceiling. Lower down, four medallions were dedicated to the principal schools: Egypt, Greece, Italy and France (plate 59). In 1884, a similar programme was created for the Daru staircase (plate 60). The two central cupolas were devoted to antiquity and the Renaissance. Allegorical figures of the schools filled the pendentives while the medallions were dedicated to representative great masters: Phidias, Vitruvius, Raphael, Poussin and others. Smaller cupolas celebrated other schools – the Dutch, the English, Post-Renaissance France and so on.

The Second Republic commissioned two even more conspicuous ceilings devoted to the history of art. The Salon Carré, which had been used to exhibit modern French art was turned into a gallery of masterpieces from different schools. An elaborate programme with allegorical figures executed in gilded stucco celebrated great masters whose names were inscribed on the supporting frieze. Nearby, the Hall of Seven Chimneys was being turned into a 'Salon Carré' of the modern French school with an equally elaborate Neo-baroque ceiling that included fourteen winged figures holding crowns set between hexagons containing the profiles of such artists as Gros, David and Géricault as well as the architect Percier (plate 55). In 1886, the theme of French art appeared with even more ostentation on the ceiling of the Salle des États (plate 58).⁴⁷

The Salle des États' ceiling and the Daru staircase mosaics bring us to the modern museum. In the twentieth century, both programmes were suppressed and the ceilings left bare.⁴⁸ This final development is consistent with the evolving ideology of the earlier ceilings. As we have seen, the ceilings portrayed a state whose benevolence was demonstrated by the patronage and protection it offered the arts (plate 57). The ceilings proposed an equation between the goodness of the state and the cultivation of the arts. In the nineteenth century, the first term of the proposition – the state – began to disappear from the ceilings, and the second term, elaborated as art history, was then used to imply the missing first term. As familiarity with art history became increasingly widespread, the ceilings' allegorical lessons in art history became superfluous. Consequently, the second term of the proposition could also be suppressed. Now both terms of the original proposition – the state and what it gives – are implied. The modern visitor touring the museum thus enacts the state ceremony subliminally.

Today's visitor to the Louvre seldom looks up to read the messages inscribed on the ceilings. The ceilings are now of interest only to the extent that they belong to the history of art. Ingres' *Apotheosis of Homer* exemplifies this change. Originally painted for the Musée Charles X, in 1855 it was removed from its ceiling and added to the museum's collection of modern French masters.⁴⁹ Of course a visitor might make a point of looking at Delacroix's *Triumph of Apollo*, not as an emblem of the state but as a moment in the history of art.⁵⁰

The Louvre collection now does its work unaided by commentary from above. What the visitor sees is the idea of civilization spelled out in terms of national schools and individual artists. In these terms, the history of art boils down to a celebration of national and individual genius. The idea of artistic genius has a long history but only becomes a dominant idea in the middle-class societies of the nineteenth century. It is nineteenth-century individualism that inscribes the names and images of artist-geniuses on the Louvre's ceilings. And it is the nineteenth century that writes art history in almost purely biographical terms. Individual genius is celebrated at the Louvre as perhaps nowhere else, epitomized by the way Leonardo's *Mona Lisa* is enshrined, and demonstrated, again and again, by the world-famous masterpieces that line the museum's walls – or rather, masterpieces made world-famous by the Louvre and by art history.

Indeed, as art history still insists, works of art are little more than evidence of individual genius mediated by national spirit. The museum environment forces the experience of art into its art-historical mould and generally excludes other meanings. Stripped of all references to their original function, portraits, altarpieces, allegorical statues and other artefacts become individual cultural triumphs, each labelled with special attention to the artist, his dates and nationality. Even when the artist's name has been forgotten, his 'hand' is carefully distinguished, and he enters art history and the museum as a recognizable 'master'. The museum thus certifies individualism as a primary and universal value. Having idealized history as the history of high culture, it further defines the nation's cultural heritage as a record of unique and individual achievement.

In summary, the Louvre embodies the state and the ideology of the state. It presents the state not directly but, as it were, disguised in the spiritual forms of artistic genius. Artistic genius attests to the state's highest values – individualism and nationalism. It demonstrates the nation's historical destiny and the state's benevolence. As a ritual structure the Louvre is complex because it must reconcile the reality of the state's varying historical fortunes with an ideal history. On the one hand, it is a monument to imperial claims that portray France as principal heir to civilization's highest achievements. On the other hand, it extolls a republican nationalism that acknowledges other nations. The museum glorifies France and it transcends France in its celebration of universal genius. Its final claim, however, is that the universal is embodied in the state.

THE UNIVERSAL SURVEY MUSEUM IN AMERICA

In the nineteenth century, when other nations began to feel that a public art museum was a pressing ideological need, they naturally turned to the example of the Louvre. The Louvre's architecture was imitated in one of America's earliest museum buildings, Washington's Renwick Gallery, begun in 1859.⁵¹ But because the new museums were usually built from scratch, it was not the Louvre's architectural style (so closely associated with French history) but rather its ceremonial programme that they emulated. The architects who designed the new museums used a variety of architectural styles to evoke the theme of civilization.⁵² Greek, Roman and Italian Renaissance forms proved almost equally serviceable. In 1815, Leo von Klenze presented Ludwig of Bavaria with a choice of these three styles for the Munich Glyptothek.⁵³

Besides the problem of finding appropriate styles, nineteenth-century museum architects also faced the problem of organizing the museum's interior as a new type of ritual space. Often, museum spaces were arranged around a central Pantheon-like rotunda, an atrium, or some other monumental space recalling a classical prototype. This central space was the beginning and end of the ritual walk through the galleries to the right and left. Such architectural practices, originating in Europe and later common on both sides of the Atlantic, would dominate museum design until World War II.

The idea for a universal survey museum for New York was first proposed by John Jay, an eminent lawyer, at a Fourth of July party held in Paris in 1866.⁵⁴ The date as well as the place are significant. With the triumph of industrial capital in the Civil War and the consolidation of the United States as a modern nation-state, the Americans, talking in the shadow of the Louvre, felt the United States could now put in its claim to the heritage of Western civilization. Three years later, at a meeting of three hundred prominent New Yorkers, William Cullen Bryant, president of the museum's organizing committee, set forth the reasons for founding a museum in New York.

Our city [he said] is the third greatest city in the civilized world. Our republic has already taken its place among the great powers of the earth; it is great in extent, great in population, great in the activity and enterprise of her people. It is the richest nation in the world. [With a museum of art] we might have, repositied in spacious and stately buildings, collections formed of works left by the world's greatest artists which would be the pride of our country.⁵⁵

National pride was a critical issue. Even small and weak European nations, like Saxony, had museums, Bryant noted. Spain, he said, 'a third-rate power of Europe and poor besides [has] a Museum of Fine Arts at her capital, the opulence and extent of which absolutely bewilder the visitor. [Belgium and Holland] have their public collections of art, the resort of admiring visitors from all parts of the civilized world.'⁵⁶

Bryant spoke for some of America's wealthiest and most powerful industrialists. By proposing to establish a museum that would compete with the Louvre and the

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other great museums of Europe, they were not simply asserting national pride. They were also calling for the creation of a monument that would equate their interests with those of the public and symbolize their class's domination of the state. The relationship between this group of citizens and the state was implied in the way the museum was to be owned and administered. Public would mask private – or try to. The museum building would be located on city land and owned by the city. However, the museum collection would be owned and controlled by the concerned citizens who made up its board of trustees.⁵⁷

The first museum building, designed in an Italian Gothic style and opened in 1880, was expanded and then finally hidden behind a monumental Roman revival structure designed in the 1890s. With millionaire backers, the building of the museum edifice was easily accomplished. Acquiring an impressive collection proved more difficult. In its early years, an assortment of American Neo-classical sculpture filled the museum's monumental entry hall, supplementing the meagre holdings of Greek and Roman works. It was not until the 1920s that the museum became, through numerous gifts and benefactions, a world contender. Only then did it realize the ceremonial programme implicit in its grandiose façade (plate 61).⁵⁸

Visitors to the museum reach the entrance by climbing a monumental staircase. The Neo-imperial façade proclaims the importance of the Greco-Roman tradition. This theme continues in the interior. Entering the Great Hall, the visitor stands at the intersection of the museum's principal axes. To the left is the collection of Greek and Roman art; to the right, the Egyptian collection. Directly ahead, at the summit of a grand staircase that continues the axis of the entranceway, is the collection of European painting beginning with the High Renaissance. Canova's statue of *Perseus*, based on the *Apollo Belvedere*, provides the classical accent (plate 65). The Metropolitan's iconographic programme establishes at the outset the overriding importance of the Western tradition, starting with Egypt, continuing with Greece and Rome, and climaxing with the High Renaissance. The collections of Oriental and other types of non-Western art, as well as the Medieval collection, are invisible from the Great Hall.

The Metropolitan was built in the epoch of the Spanish-American war – a time when the United States was embarking upon a course of overseas conquests. Like other public monuments of the period – for example, Penn Station in New York, designed as a replica of the Baths of Caracalla – the museum symbolized the new imperialist ideology. Like the Louvre, the Metropolitan was a monument to the state, but it attested to a different national history. There was no need for the state to sign the ceilings since the building's official architectural style already stamped them with the seal of the state. In effect, the ceilings were signed by the invisible hand of the state. But if the state is now anonymous, the wealthy citizens whose gifts the museum houses, are not. Plaques and doorway inscriptions serve as reminders of their donations (plate 63).

On the Metropolitan's façade, as in the Louvre, art history replaces the actual history of the state. Caryatids symbolize painting, sculpture, architecture and music,

while medallions celebrate artistic genius: Bramante, Dürer, Michelangelo, Raphael, Velazquez and Rembrandt.

The Metropolitan was America's first great universal survey museum. The National Gallery in Washington, D.C., completed in 1941, was the last. It represents perhaps the most complete realization of the universal survey museum idea in America. Earlier public art museums began with impressive buildings and little more. The National Gallery began with magnificent collections of painting. The museum was the creation of Andrew W. Mellon, a former Secretary of the Treasury and an avid art collector. Mellon persuaded fellow millionaires Chester Dale, Joseph E. Widener and Samuel H. Kress to donate hundreds of outstanding works. He also chose the architect and paid for the building. When Mellon promised the museum to a grateful U.S. government, an act of Congress stipulated that a self-perpetuating board of trustees would run it.⁵⁹

If the Washington National Gallery is the last important universal survey museum, it also recalls, in the purity of its design, the first museums of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (plates 66, 67). John Russell Pope's cool, utterly impersonal Neo-classical design, in combination with the logical arrangement of the collection, epitomizes the idea of the universal survey museum. The building, reminiscent of von Klenze's and Schinkel's designs, is a Pantheon flanked by two windowless wings. Everywhere, clean marble surfaces emphasize the structure's heavy, abstract shapes and enforce a mood of ritual solemnity. Compared to the older, gaudier temple fronts along the Washington Mall, the National Gallery communicates the idea of the state as a pure, almost frozen abstraction outside of time and beyond the accidents of history. This museum, which could be anywhere in the Western world, claims the heritage of Greco-Roman civilization as an abstract and universal value.⁶⁰ All this is so blatantly written into the architecture itself that a collection of Renaissance and post-Renaissance art is all that is needed to complete the building's ritual meaning. The absence of Greek and Roman art goes unnoticed.

The iconographic programme follows a relatively strict historical sequence, beginning with Renaissance Italy in Room One and ending with nineteenth-century France in Room Ninety-three. Visitors are given maps and guidebooks which reinforce the architectural programme. Inevitably, visitors begin in Room One, right off the Rotunda, and make their way along the historical mainstream. The installation asserts the importance of the entire collection. Only a small number of works are allowed in each room (plate 68). They appear in the midst of rich but highly restrained decorative schemes. Every work is presented as a masterpiece, but some works, framed by doorways or hung along major axes, are given greater emphasis within the overall scheme. One work in particular is proclaimed supremely important. Leonardo da Vinci's *Portrait of Ginevra de' Benci* appears in isolation on a free-standing, velvet covered wall located on an axis that runs through two doorways and terminates in a large niche directly behind the painting (plate 69). Visitors experience this work as a culminating moment in the history of Renaissance art and – despite the inevitable comparison with the *Mona Lisa* – as a high point in the history of Western

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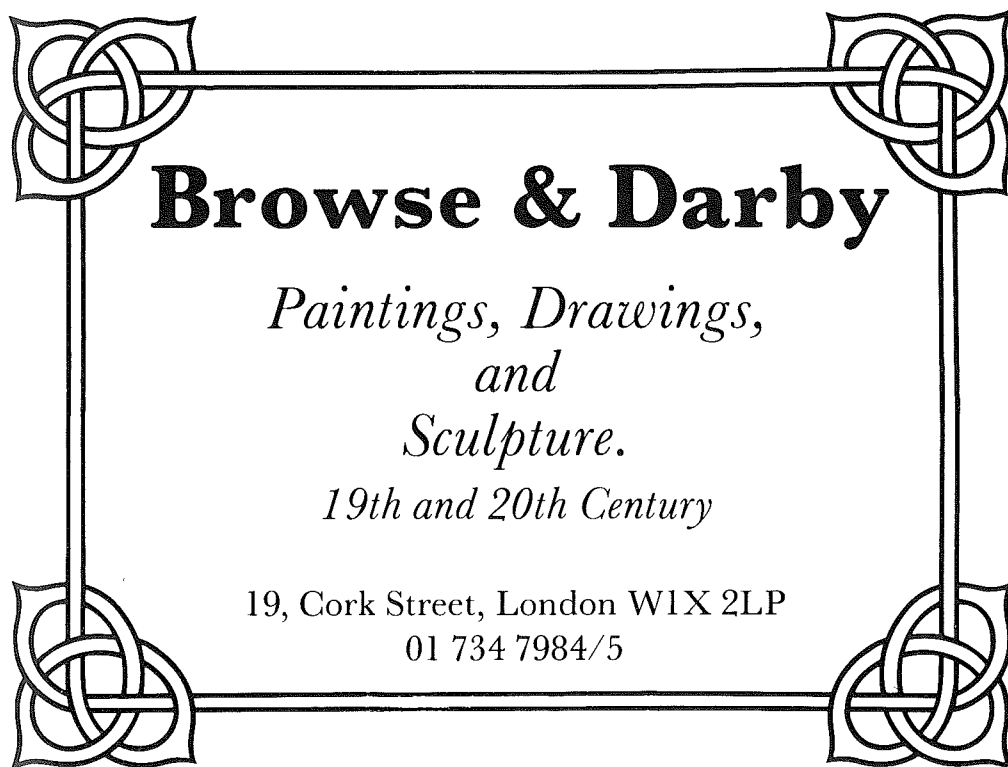
art. According to the guidebook, 'this early work is the only painting in the Western hemisphere accepted by scholars as indisputably by Leonardo, one of the true geniuses of the Renaissance'.⁶¹ As the Louvre and the London National Gallery attest, nothing better than the genius of Leonardo certifies the claim to civilization and universality.

NOTES

- 1 Michael Compton speaking at a symposium of museum curators in 'Validating Modern Art', *Artforum*, January 1977, p. 52.
- 2 *New York Times*, 5 June 1979.
- 3 See Nikolaus Pevsner, *A History of Building Types*, Princeton, 1976, pp. 111–38.
- 4 Ranuccio B. Bandinelli, *Rome, the Center of Power, 500 B.C. to A.D. 200*, trans. Peter Green, New York, 1970, *passim*; Germain Bazin, *The Museum Age*, trans. Jane van Nuis Cahill, New York, 1967, pp. 12–34; and William L. McDonald, *The Pantheon*, Cambridge, Mass., 1976, pp. 125 f.
- 5 Bandinelli, *op. cit.*, pp. 36–8.
- 6 Christiane Aulanier, *Histoire du Palais et du Musée du Louvre*, Paris 1945–64, II, p. 42, and VII, p. 87; Cecil Gould, *Trophy of Conquest, The Musée Napoléon and the Creation of the Louvre*, London, 1965, pp. 30–9; and André Blum, *Le Louvre, du Palais au Musée*, Geneva, Paris and London, 1946, pp. 160 f.
- 7 Aulanier, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 55–6.
- 8 The symbolism went unnoticed when the wing opened in May 1975. However, critics were almost unanimous in their condemnation of what one of the museum's own trustees called 'a monument to human vanity'. See Grace Glueck, 'Lehman Collection Opens for Private Viewing', *New York Times*, 13 May 1975.
- 9 Giulio C. Argan, *The Renaissance City*, New York, 1969, pp. 22–9; and McDonald, *op. cit.*, pp. 87–132.
- 10 For a critical sociological study of the museum public, see Pierre Bordieu and Alain Darbel, *L'Amour de l'art: les musées d'art européens et leur public*, Paris, 1969.
- 11 Victor Turner, 'Frame, flow and reflection: ritual drama in public liminality', in Michael Benamou and Charles Carmello (Eds), *Performance in Post-Modern Culture*, Milwaukee, 1977, pp. 333–55, and *The Ritual Process*, Ithaca, 1977, pp. 94 ff.; and Arnold van Gennep, *The Rites of Passage*, trans. Monika B. Vizedom and Gabrielle L. Caffee, Chicago, 1960.
- 12 Frank E. Brown, *Roman Architecture*, New York, 1961, p. 10.
- 13 *The Autobiography of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe*, trans. John Oxenford, New York, 1969, pp. 346 f. Bazin, *op. cit.*, p. 160, noting this new religious attitude towards art, writes: 'No longer existing solely for the delectation of refined amateurs, the museum, as it evolved into a public institution, simultaneously metamorphosized into a temple of human genius.' See also Niels von Holst, *Creators, Collectors and Connoisseurs*, trans. Brian Battershaw, New York, 1967, pp. 215 f.
- 14 For examples, see Thomas W. Lyman, 'Theophanic iconography and the Easter liturgy: the Romanesque painted program at Saint-Sernin at Toulouse', in Lucius Grisebach and Konrad Renger (Eds), *Festschrift für Otto von Simson zum 65 Geburtstag*, Frankfurt, 1977, pp. 72–93; O. K. Werckmeister, 'The lintel fragment representing Eve from Saint-Lazare, Autun', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, XXXV, 1972, pp. 1–30; and Andrée Hayum, 'The meaning and function of the Isenheim altarpiece: the hospital context revisited', *Art Bulletin*, LIX, 1977, pp. 501–17.
- 15 The museum devoted to modern art is the latest museum type. Modern art museums reflect the ideological needs of a later phase of Western society and have developed ritual forms that differ sharply from the older, more common universal survey museum. The older type celebrates an ideal of civilization based upon belief in an objective external world and a tradition of humanistic values. The newer museum negates traditional values and the importance of external reality. With its more intense ritual, it celebrates subjectivity and alienated experience. See Carol Duncan and Alan Wallach, 'The museum of modern art as

- late capitalist ritual: an iconographic analysis', *Marxist Perspectives*, I, Winter, 1978, pp. 28–51.
- 16 Bazin, *op. cit.*, pp. 158 f., 162 f.; von Holst, *op. cit.*, pp. 171, 205–7.
 - 17 Bazin, *op. cit.*, pp. 129 ff.; von Holst, *op. cit.*, pp. 95–139 and *passim*; and Hugh Trevor-Roper, *Princes and Artists, Patronage and Ideology at Four Hapsburg Courts, 1517–1633*, London, 1976.
 - 18 Bazin, *op. cit.*, pp. 198 f.; von Holst, *op. cit.*, pp. 228 f.; and Pevsner, *op. cit.*, pp. 124 f.
 - 19 Bazin, *op. cit.*, p. 215.
 - 20 *Ibid.*, pp. 150 f.; Blum, *op. cit.*, pp. 115 f.
 - 21 De la Font de Saint-Yenne, *Réflexions sur quelques causes de l'état présent de la peinture en France*, The Hague, 1747 (Collection Deloynes, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris), II, pp. 69–83.
 - 22 Jean Locquin, *La Peinture d'histoire en France de 1747 à 1785*, Paris, 1912, pp. 41–68; Blum, *op. cit.*, pp. 133 ff. For the ideological needs of the crown see Albert Boime, 'Marmontel's *Belisaire* and the Pre-Revolutionary Progressivism of David', *Art History*, III, March 1980, pp. 81–101.
 - 23 Blum, *op. cit.*, pp. 147 ff.; Alexander Tuetey and Jean Guiffrey (Eds), *La Commission de Muséum et la Création du Louvre (1792–1793)*, Paris, 1909 (Archives de l'Art français, III), *passim*.
 - 24 Blum, *op. cit.*, pp. 151 f. See also Tuetey and Guiffrey (Eds), *op. cit.*, for numerous statements by government and museum officials about the symbolic and political importance of the new museum.
 - 25 Blum, *op. cit.*, p. 153.
 - 26 Trevor-Roper, *op. cit.*; Thomas da Costa Kaufmann, 'Remarks on the collections of Rudolf II: the Kunstkammer as a form of representation', *Art Journal*, XXXVIII, Fall 1978, pp. 22–8; and Kurt W. Foster, 'Giulio Romano's 'Museum' of sculpture in the Palazzo Ducale at Mantua', paper delivered at the Annual Meeting of the College Art Association of America, 1978, New York City.
 - 27 von Holst, *op. cit.*, pp. 111–68; and Bazin, *op. cit.*, pp. 129–39.
 - 28 Kaufmann, *op. cit.*
 - 29 Bazin, *op. cit.*, pp. 72–4; von Holst, *op. cit.*, pp. 96–8.
 - 30 Bazin, *op. cit.*, pp. 157–9; von Holst, *op. cit.*, pp. 205–7.
 - 31 In Bazin, *op. cit.*, p. 159.
 - 32 In *ibid.*
 - 33 Bazin, *op. cit.*, pp. 141–67; and von Holst, *op. cit.*, pp. 204–14.
 - 34 In the twentieth century, this highly political use of art is often rationalized in the name of pure, disinterested aesthetics. See, for example, Jean Cassou, 'Art museums and social life', *Museum*, II, no. 3, 1949, pp. 155–8. Cassou argues that art is most 'free' and therefore most itself in the museum precisely because it is liberated from all but its purely 'artistic' meaning. Still, politics slips back into the argument since art can reveal its essential neutrality only in modern liberal states that create museums. André Malraux, *Museum Without Walls*, trans. Stuart Gilbert and Francis Price, Garden City, 1967, pp. 9–10, also observes that museums strip art of its previous functions and, like Cassou, fails to see the new social and political meaning art acquires in the museum. However, Malraux regrets the apparent neutrality of the museum context.
 - 35 In von Holst, *op. cit.*, p. 230.
 - 36 Bordieu and Darbel, *op. cit.*, *passim*.
 - 37 *Ibid.*, p. 62.
 - 38 The Louvre's iconographic programme has varied little in essentials since World War II. However, the museum is constantly in the process of renovating its galleries and reshuffling its collection. This results in slight changes of emphasis in the programme. Our analysis assumes the installation that was in place in the spring of 1980.
 - 39 Aulanier, *op. cit.*, IV, p. 35.
 - 40 *Nouvelles Archives de l'Art française*, Ser. 3, XVII, 1901 (Procès-Verbaux de la Commission des Monuments, I, 8 November 1790–27 August 1793), pp. xviii–xx, 349–50; Tuetey and Guiffrey (Eds), *op. cit.*, p. 332.
 - 41 Aulanier, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 20, 22, plate 36; IV, plates 4 and 5; VI, pp. 62 f., 69.
 - 42 *Ibid.*, V, p. 70.
 - 43 *Ibid.*, VII, p. 75 and plate 30.
 - 44 *Ibid.*, VIII, pp. 36, 50 and plate 24.
 - 45 *Ibid.*, III, pp. 81 ff.
 - 46 *Ibid.*, VII, pp. 96 ff.
 - 47 *Ibid.*, II, pp. 66 (for the Salon Carré); VII, p. 98 (for the Hall of the Seven Chimneys); III, pp. 88–9 (for the Salle des États). The new programme of 1886 consisted of medallions with portraits of Claude Lorrain, Lesueur, Rigaud, Boucher, Poussin, etc. The figure of *France ancienne*, flanked by Jean Cousin and François Clouet presided over one end of the Salle; at the other end, *France nouvelle* flanked by Delacroix and Ingres. See wood engravings by E. A. Tilly and A. Normand, and Ch. M. [sic], 'La Nouvelle Salle de l'École Française au Louvre', *L'Illustration*, LXXXVIII, 30 October, 1886, pp. 288 f., 292, 296.
 - 48 Aulanier, *op. cit.*, IV, p. 38; and Germain

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- Bazin, 'Musée du Louvre: La Salle des États',
Museum, V, no. 4, 1952, p. 204.
- 49 Aulanier, *op. cit.*, VIII, p. 51.
- 50 The official guidebook directs the visitor's
attention to Delacroix's ceiling (*Le Louvre*
[Petits Guides], Paris, 1978, p. 14).
- 51 See Nathaniel Burt, *Palaces for the People, A*
Social History of the American Museum, Boston,
1977, pp. 58–9.
- 52 Pevsner, *op. cit.*, pp. 111–38.
- 53 *Ibid.*, pp. 124–6; and von Holst, *op. cit.*, pp.
228 f.
- 54 See Winifred E. Howe, *A History of the*
Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 1913, I,
pp. 99 f.; Burt, *op. cit.*, pp. 86 f.; and Calvin
Tomkins, *Merchants and Masterpieces*, New
York, 1973, pp. 28 f.
- 55 In Howe, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 104 f.
- 56 *Ibid.*, p. 105.
- 57 See Howe, *op. cit.*, pp. 175–81; Tomkins, *op.*
cit., pp. 38–41; Daniel M. Fox, *Engines of*
Culture, Philanthropy and Art Museums, Madison,
1963, pp. 40–2.
- 58 Tomkins, *op. cit.* pp. 121–5, details the history
of the museum's acquisitions. See also Howe,
op. cit., II, *passim*.
- 59 See David Edward Finley, *A Standard of*
Excellence, Andrew W. Mellon Founds the National
Gallery of Art at Washington, Washington, 1973,
pp. 53–5.
- 60 Otto R. Eggers and Daniel Paul Higgins, the
architects who executed Pope's design,
claimed, somewhat defensively, that the
National Gallery was 'built in the thought that
it may serve its purpose for many centuries'
(cited in 'Marble Marvel', *The Architects' Journal*,
LXIII, 5 June 1941, p. 370). Most
contemporary critics believed the design
represented the Beaux Arts tradition's swan-
song. Many thought the building 'lifeless'. See,
for example, Lorimer Rich, 'A Study in
Contrasts', *Pencil Points*, XXII, August 1941, p.
499.
- 61 *Brief Guide: National Gallery of Art*, Washington,
1979, p. 6.



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