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Editorial Introduction: Art History Inside and Outside the University

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Like tribute-bearing envoys in Achaemenian reliefs at Persepolis, the realms of antiquarian and amateur scholarship yielded resources in the formation of academic art history. Their domains encompassed the writing of artists' lives by practitioners of art and others acting as amateur historians. Tributary practices included collecting and the recording of collections, often by means of etching; published and privately circulated art criticism; and travel literature introducing a newly formed public to the geographies of art and its discourses. Connoisseurship emerged principally as an avocation of private individuals, or of artists who claimed an authority based on practice that would not be recognized today. Arguments for the centrality of art in human history were underwritten by F.W.J. Schelling, among other theorists of German Romanticism, and substantiated by amateur scholars of Christian iconography like the Abbé Crosnier in France who affirmed in a work of 1848 that "Religious iconography . . . is precisely the complete history of the world."1

Yet, except in the notice given early written sources - most notably passages in Pliny the Elder and Vasari's Lives - these tributary offerings have been seen as an Urgeschichte quite distinct and preliminary to the establishment of art history as an autonomous scholarly discipline. In dismissing explicitly or implicitly activities classed as "amateur", histories of art history have echoed exclusions effected by the discipline in the course of its struggle for legitimacy. But this is to repeat doxa that are a product of historical contention, rather than subject them to critical scrutiny. One dimension of the present collection implies shifting significations of the term "amateur", officially recognized as a category of honorary appointment to the French Academy of Painting and Sculpture from the seventeenth century forward. It roughly corresponded to "Virtuoso" in English usage in the seventeenth century and, subsequently, privileging knowledge over skill, to "connoisseur". All these terms were allied with the gentlemanly pursuit of elective interests, dissociated from gainful employment. In its longer trajectory, "amateur" largely shifted in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries from its initial positive sense of lover, collector and promoter of art to refer to non-professional practitioners; in this development the numbers of women who drew or painted in watercolour as an avocation counted decisively despite the (unacknowledged or contested) presence of many female professionals.2 "Contamination" of the term occurred to produce the meaning of unskilled or superficial dabbler, while it was extended to the uncredentialled in many fields in a development linked with nineteenth-century professionalization generally. Thus, the institutionalization of art history produced the category of amateur scholar - as against the original art lover - to both of whom, however, it was heavily beholden.

Amateur attributes (in the sense of incomplete professional focus) of figures counted as notable in the historiography of art rarely attract comment except in a constative sense. They figure among the parerga of such accounts, incidental rather than intrinsic to treatment of the subject.³ Thus, while it is known, for example, that the Berlin art historian Franz Kugler was also a dramatist, this kind of indication is not integrated into characterization of an epistemological and aesthetic economy in which Kugler's horizon might be seen as representative, rather than as evincing a Romantic waywardness. The question shifts somewhat for independent scholars at a later stage of institutionalization, one characterized by recognition from the 1870s of art history as an autonomous academic discipline in German universities, by adoption of the slide projector and photographic reproduction as integral to institutional practice and, towards the end of the nineteenth century, by exploration of a methodology specific to art history. Against this configuration, the art historian isolated from institutional support was positioned gratuitously, in a sense, faced with changes in the framework of publishing and audience expectation. The productivity of such figures is not to be impugned, though the bearing of their work is likely more difficult to assess. An instance, intersected by issues of gender, occurs in Emilia Dilke's extensive contributions from 1870 to 1903 on French art history of the Renaissance and eighteenth century.⁴ For Aby Warburg, though now the focus of a major scholarly industry, implications of his status as private scholar who never held a university or museum post have attracted comparatively little interest. Certainly, the literature in English has been incurious about Warburg's concerns in establishing his Library (subsequently the Warburg Institute), if not as a kind of counter-academy in Hamburg, as one outside state sponsorship or support.⁵ At issue are historiographic assumptions that foreground the origins and progress of institutionalization while avoiding inquiry into the character of institutional culture, its exclusions and related issues of sensibility, as well as its implications for the production of knowledge.

The literature in English of art history's history has especially privileged the conventions of biography and prosopography (collective biography), accompanied by emphasis on precursors and genealogies with wide discrepancies in identification of the generations in which founding paternities are said to lie. Joined with this framework, the equation of disciplinary history with the achievement of institutional autonomy obscures a long and complex interdependence of art history with other disciplines and practices. In his 1979 study of art history as institution in

the German-speaking world, Heinrich Dilly criticized histories preoccupied with priorities in the establishment of university chairs and with strained affirmations of continuity; in his view the myth of the scholar working alone in an undervalued discipline masks exchanges that took place between art history and various research programmes.⁶ Such exchanges figure prominently in the work presented here. Several essays in this issue of the journal especially address the problematic of beginnings, disjunctions and the diverse forms and practices of art history in earlier periods.

In "George Turnbull and Art History at Scottish Universities in the Eighteenth Century", Carol Gibson-Wood examines a conjuncture linking art history with educational goals of the Enlightenment in Scotland. The Treatise on Ancient Painting (1740) of George Turnbull, a moral philosopher, worked indirectly, she finds, to integrate art history into the newly introduced discipline of history at the University of Glasgow in the 1740s/50s and at the Glasgow Academy of Fine Arts, an associated body. As in other instances of figures who took up art history before its institutionalization, Turnbull drew on his status in a recognized domain of learning, that is, moral philosophy. One might say in Bourdieusian terms that he invoked the biens symboliques deriving from investment in a historically constituted "field", though with reservations as to the extent to which moral philosophy operated as a profession in the eighteenth century. 7 Carol Gibson-Wood shows that in fashioning his account of art history, he brought together a discourse on connoisseurship, circulated through translations of continental writing and English texts, such as a work of William Aglionby (1685), and the earlier thinking of Francis Bacon's partly realized proposal to document the history of trades and mechanical arts, including painting, so as to promote technical progress in all the domains under review. These traditions were aligned by Turnbull with the teaching of history, marshalled towards the educational goal of an integrated "Science of Man", and in this framework contributed to transformation of the curricula in Scottish universities in the eighteenth century.

A universalist concept of "Man" within a definition of history axial to an interrelated "Science of Man" forms the context for emergence of art history as a university discipline in the essay by Anne-Marie Link. In "Art, History and Discipline in the Eighteenth-Century German University," she considers an instance of institutional practices in Protestant universities in Germany, that of Göttingen, where late eighteenth-century shifts in historical consciousness intersected with an art history seen as part of the University's claim to modernity. Her discussion engages the institutional bearing of a five-volume series on the history of art from its "Revival" to the present (1798–1808), the work of J.D. Fiorillo. Anne-Marie Link locates Fiorillo's understanding of art history as a continuing process in contrast

to the finality of perfections achieved in the past as traced, notably, by Vasari and Winckelmann. Fiorillo's "general history" of art looked to sequences discerned through evidence, graphic and textual, in travel accounts that suggested "progress" in the artefacts of "raw" peoples throughout the world towards technical and aesthetic refinement. The weight he attached to social, political and religious conditions as formative in the shaping of schools of European art invites comparison with the ideas of Hippolyte Taine, who may well have known Fiorillo's work; from 1864 Taine was professor of aesthetics and art history at the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris, as Lyne Therrien notes in the succeeding essay.

However, it is the institutional nexus of Fiorillo's work that is underlined by Anne-Marie Link who points out that in aligning his history of art with broader stages of the civilizing process, Fiorillo's contribution was integral, perhaps necessary, to the larger historical project that occupied his Göttingen colleagues. In this connection she recalls a crucial question raised by Hans Robert Jauss in 1973; challenging an assumption of art history's relation of "poor dependent" to general history, he asked whether an art or artefactual history may not essentially have enabled a comprehensive story of humankind and of European culture within it.

A further question arises regarding the possibilities of an artefactual history: that of its relationship to earlier studies of particular monuments or conspectuses of those comprised within a given topography. This was especially the domain of antiquarian scholarship. Though antiquarians in the nineteenth century inherited a view in which material relics of the past were seen as curiosities, antiquarian frameworks, even as they survived, were challenged by a widening historical consciousness and by recognitions of aesthetic value in monuments as inflected by history. The inventory, for example, a form closely identified with antiquarian research - or with national archaeology as understood in France - did not preclude such appreciations as Prosper Mérimée's response to the Church of Ste Madeleine, Vézelay, suggests; surveying the Midi in 1834 as Inspector-General of Historic Monuments, he praised the richness and variety of ornamentation for which he considered the church distinguished.⁸ But antiquarian scholarship, whatever its conjugations, was hugely pertinent to art history in the significance it attached to documenting material artefacts. Antiquarian initiative took hold in the organization of informal networks to share information, publish, and maintain communities of interpretation. Notable in this development was Arcisse de Caumont (1801-73), a founder in 1824 of the Société des antiquaires de Normandie. Regarded under the July Monarchy as a model for societies throughout France in the conservation of provincial antiquities, Caumont's society stipulated that each new member on admission would offer an object "en hommage à la

Société" and would research monuments in the member's arrondissement.9

In "L'Institutionnalisation de l'histoire de l'art en France au XIXe siècle", Lyne Therrien identifies an early institutional recognition of the importance of studying objects, including the material supports of historical texts, in the École des chartes in Paris, founded in 1821. Taught by Jules Quicherat who, as Lyne Therrien notes, had followed the work of Arcisse de Caumont and his public lectures in Caen, a course in archaeology of the Middle Ages offered at the École from 1847 formed a link between its programme and "amateur" documentations of provincial monuments. The École des chartes numbered among institutions with various mandates that provided skills apposite to the practice of art history, or settings in which it was taught long before the Sorbonne established its first chair in the discipline in 1899.10 Other instances included the École des Beauxarts and its provincial counterparts. As in Taine's appointment to the *École* in Paris, aesthetics and art history were coupled in naming of the first such chair at the Collège de France in 1878 where Charles Blanc, founder of the Gazette des Beaux-Arts, became the initial incumbent. At the École du Louvre, courses in art history before the monuments were offered from 1885, while research in Christian antiquities from 1893 at the École pratique des hautes études concerned itself substantially with post-antique material. Art history was, thus, marked by connections with antiquarian research and, also outside the university, a gamut of entities with dissimilar aims and institutional cultures.

The positioning of ancient art under the sign of archaeology operated critically to define the boundaries of art history. Institutionally distinguished from history, ancient - especially classical - archaeology was conceptually grounded in assumptions that archaeological sites formed closed subjects of research. J.J. Winckelmann's very insistence on artists' imitation of ancient Greek art measured an enormity of distance and loss not to be repaired by study of Nature in the eighteenth century. Brigitte Desrochers has recently shown that an understanding of ancient sites as sealed at a single moment in time prevailed at least until the 1860s when, in connection with Pompeii, it was recognized that the site's soil comprised a life in various states: the dust itself was historical.¹¹ Well before this paradigm shift, the study of classical archaeology was institutionalized in, for example, the French Schools of Athens and Rome (1846), as a field ambiguously invoking or displacing aesthetic considerations by propounding neutral observation or functional analysis of a site. As with antiquarian research, archaeology was suggestive and to a degree authorizing for art history in its attention to material remains, yet resistant in treating its subjects as révolus, finished chapters in a chronology of civilization. History, instead, posed questions for the present, problems of value, or national identity, and of possible applications of the idea of progress or decline. Analogously, art history in the nineteenth century (and beyond) has engaged in multiple conversations with the contemporary practice of art, as well as in some resolute silences, significant in themselves.

Ideas of progress as applied to the historiography of art have tended to run in one direction only, and into our own post-modern era at that. The concept criticized by Heinrich Dilly of art history's "triumphal procession" (Triumphzug)¹² towards institutional consecration has particularly served to erase contributions by women from surviving recognition. To be sure, women first set foot in the discipline's institutionalized precincts towards the end of the nineteenth century. At Oberlin College in the U.S., Adelia A. Field Johnston taught art history in the 1890s while Alice Van Vechten Brown, an art historian, headed the Art Department of Wellesley College from 1897.¹³ One of the most imaginative classicists of her generation, Jane Harrison lectured in the sculpture and vase collection galleries of the British Museum between 1880 and 1898, when she became Resident Lecturer at Newnham College, Cambridge. 14 Yet, a larger number by far in the nineteenth century were productive outside any disciplinary framework; the historiography Dilly found wanting allows no measure for evaluation of their work or the kinds of impact it may have had. In "Entering Art History in the Mid-Nineteenth Century: Félicie d'Ayzac, Anna Jameson and the Legacy of Mme de Staël", Adele Ernstrom calls attention to three such figures and to networks of enablement through which their efforts were realized. The essay situates philosophical, political, archaeological and feminist conjunctions of the Enlightenment in Mme de Staël's novel Corinne, ou l'Italie (1807) and its suggestiveness for women without professional or institutional credentials of a vocation in the historical interpretation of art. There follows a circumstantial treatment of the scholarship of Félicie d'Ayzac (1801–1881) and ways in which it was both drawn on, and denied, by Emile Mâle in his position as medievalist at the Sorbonne from 1906. How, the article asks, may the effect of Anna Jameson's extensive writings on art be assessed against what was then the remote horizon of art history's institutionalization in England? Some approaches might index the influence of her historical understanding through diverse channels of cultural dissemination, for example, through evidence of her importance for such figures as George Eliot and Proust; through a lineage of women writers and teachers who in her wake took up the study of Christian iconography; and through the unpublished but recorded acknowledgement of her work by recent scholars such as Millard Meiss.

A science, a hermeneutics, of silences is called for, one that would attend to traces haunting the historical record, residues of amnesia or erasure. Setting aside positivist models, it would be alert to inversions of presence like the indexical vacancies of

Colette Whiten's Untitled (September 1975), life-sized casts of her own and fellow artists' bodies with each side of a case bearing an impression of the model's back and front.¹⁵ Historiographical analogues of her work might locate muteness inhabiting "the place of a difference rather than an identity" of the sovereign subject, as in Gayatri Spivak's formulation on the historiography of subaltern studies. 16 They would be alert to resonances in the hollows of pneumatic claims, like that in a general history of art history in which the Austrian Rudolf von Eitelberger (1817-1885), a "founding father," is said to have "led the Vienna School into maturity and 'middle age'". 17 But so also would such attention be directed to more critical studies that deal only with canonical figures. It would need to premise the agency of "amateur" efforts as constitutive of what can be seen retrodictively as characterizing the relative autonomy of a field, elaborated by Bourdieu as a disjunction between principles of evaluation recognized by the field and those a "general public" would apply to its productions. 18 What was judged to be outside the field's practices by its principles of evaluation might then be seen as negated by the institutionalizing process in the form of denial - initially explicit, then derisive or silent yet sublated in a Hegelian Aufhebung. In this model, contending and enabling elements are at once overcome and preserved in institutional methods and discourse, as may be glimpsed concretely in relation to such an instance of outsider scholarship an that of Félicie d'Ayzac.

Contests of authority in one or another form, variously rude, have accompanied the institutionalization of art history throughout its course. As René Lourau noted in his theory of institutions, one of the first impulsions in the instituting process or dynamic is to break with an existing order so as to create a new one.¹⁹ Whether in nineteenth-century France or Canada of the 1930s, these displacements have altered disciplinary conditions of knowledge; they have also brought new modes of contention, as in women's long struggle for higher education that would include the chance to enter art history in Toronto or participate in its establishment in Montreal in the 1960s. The implications of change so historically recent have yet to be fully worked out, while new difficulties give rise to concern for the support and autonomy of institutions that sustain the practice of art history. Provision for public universities and museums is undercut by corporate pressures that undermine the role of the state and its funding options. Current negotiations pertaining to all countries of the Western hemisphere (but Cuba) under the Free Trade Area of the Americas threaten the maintenance of an independent cultural policy in a framework that, if not checked, would allow no protection from trade priorities. The future of art history, with all the networks on which it depends, is called into question by the ferocity of the drive to globalization.

In this optic, much criticism of the discipline over the past

two decades that has proceeded from assumptions of its institutionally invincible status may seem widely out-of-date. Foucauldian concepts of the convergence of power and knowledge, with attributes of surveillance discerned by Foucault in the prison system, have been applied to undergraduates' election of the art history survey.²⁰ At the same time the theories of deconstruction directed to the understanding of texts have been received in North American contexts as implying the dismantling of institutions. The facile daring of such imagined "subversion" is bound to appear questionable in the beginning of the twenty-first century. Far from proving invulnerable, in many territories of the university, art history, with the humanities generally, seems threatened with attrition as posts vacated by retirement go unfilled and reframing of the institution on a business model continues apace. Meanwhile, equal claims for all sorts of imagery are promoted by a jealous populism, encouraged by views like those of Barbara Herrnstein Smith for whom "there are no functions performed by artworks that may be specified as generically unique". 21 In characterizing any distinction between aesthetic and non-aesthetic (or extra-aesthetic) value as problematic, such a position would deny the rationale of art history departments and of art museums as well. Nicole Dubreuil takes up the long-standing dependence of art history on a museographic paradigm involving the display of objects in what are understood as intrinsically determined series. In "New Art Histories: Severing the Incestuous Relation Between the Discipline and the Museum?", she finds in the university that contextualizing of "art" representations with reference to a wide range of cultural forms tends to flatten out the works' connections with endogenous traditions in which they were produced. The severing of art history's relation to a museographic model also poses questions that are professional and institutional: that of the status or survival of art history faced with territorial manoeuvres of other disciplines within a context of budget cuts.

A challenge of another sort is that of post-colonial art history, recently introduced into programmes for long preponderantly defined in terms of European tradition. The field raises questions largely untouched by Western study of the art of Asian civilizations prior to the dismantling of colonial empires in the previous century, or positively occluded through appropriation of African art as it has been framed by European notions of the "primitive". One of the most dramatic, and latest, post-colonial reassessments is that by which the work of Aboriginal peoples in Australia achieved recognition as art. In "The Academy, the Market and the Art Museums in the Repositioning of Australian Aboriginal Art", David Dolan explores the entry of Aboriginal art, long relegated to ethnographic collections, into the country's art museums beginning in the 1970s, and its related incorporation as a subject in the offerings of university Art History and Fine Arts departments. In interaction with this signal category shift, he traces a "renaissance" in which Aboriginal painters, sculptors and craftspeople experimented with European styles and materials. These developments, in turn, find their wider frames in the belated granting of full citizenship to Aboriginal Australians and the emergence of "reconciliation" between indigenous peoples and the descendants of colonists as a major political issue. David Dolan accounts for a convergence of political agency on the part of Aboriginal Australians and an artistic flowering in a new key that engages indigenous traditions and international modes. Inviting comparison with First Nations' art production and its interface with cultural policy in other colonial or post-colonial settings, his article concludes by noting the relative tardiness (or reactive posture?) of university art history programmes in taking up the challenge.

The subject of David Dolan's essay rotates the problematic of this collection, turning from the practice of art history by outsiders to the catalysing power of post-colonial struggle joined at some level by initiatives of Aboriginal artists that have in turn been promoted by dealers and museums. But in a wider sense, that problematic may be understood as encompassing a continuum of interchanges, with shifting terms, involving a discipline institutionalized after the fact, as it were, and extrainstitutional discourses, the urgencies of contemporary artistic practice, and sea changes within society.

The pertinence of such contingencies seems registered in claims by academic critics to positions of "desirable marginality", the extent of which was remarked by Janet Todd who noted Roland Barthes' contribution to making the margin a productive space.²² Though without extrapolating in a wider sense, Ernst Gombrich nearly half a century ago saw the parerga - marginalia, as it were - that were observed in ancient painting by Pliny the Elder as having been used to justify an independent status for landscape painting.²³ The margins of art history as a discipline have, none the less, been well and truly excluded in histories focused on the rungs of institutionalization, a process and progress - understood as comprehending all that might be worth recording. Without imagining that it could begin to exhaust its subject, the present collection proposes a range of explorations in which art historical institutions can be glimpsed in interaction with histories outside their borders.

Notes

- 1 Abbé Augustin-Joseph Crosnier, Iconographie chrétienne ou étude des sculptures, peintures, etc., qu'on rencontre sur les monuments religieux du Moyen-Age (Paris and Caen, 1848), 13.
- 2 Pejorative use of the term "dabbler", ("dabble" originally meant to become wet by splashing or dipping), is likely to have gained ground in the nineteenth century from the association of women

- with the amateur practice of watercolour. On this occasion and its context, see Greg Smith, *The Emergence of the Professional Watercolourist: Contentions and Alliances in the Artistic Domain, 1760–1824* (Aldershot, 2002), 102–06, 119. See also, for discussion of the terms "amateur" and "virtuoso", Kim Sloan, "*A Noble Art*": *Amateur Artists and Drawing Masters* (London, 2000), 7–18.
- 3 E.H. Gombrich discusses parerga as the hors d'oeuvre of art, a concept derived from Pliny in Paolo Giovio's commentary on Dosso Dossi, in "Renaissance Artistic Theory and the Development of Landscape Painting," Gazette des Beaux-arts, 41 (1953), 335–60. See also Jacques Derrida for his citation from Kant's Critique of Judgment and ensuing discussion of the idea of ornaments as parerga in La Vérité en peinture (Paris, 1978), 62–82.
- 4 A recent discussion which concludes too promptly, in my opinion, that Emilia Dilke's work was without issue, and elides the effect of gender on her reputation, occurs in David Carrier, "Deep Innovation and Mere Eccentricity: Six Case Studies of Innovation in Art History" in Art History and its Institutions: Foundations of a Discipline, ed. Elizabeth Mansfield (London and New York, 2002), 124–25.
- 5 In private correspondence, Professor Nicholas Mann, Director of the Warburg Institute in London, cautioned against an assumption that Warburg intended his Library to be a counter-academy. He observed that the Library long antedated the foundation of Hamburg University, with the creation of which Warburg was himself involved, and that for a time the University's art history seminars were held in the Warburg Library; letter to author, 29 July 1999. Michael Diers, Warburg aus Briefen (Weinheim, 1991), chapter 2 discusses Warburg as Privatgelehrter, concluding that Warburg's specific questions and scientific methods would not have developed as such in the atmosphere of a "normal university"; as related in letter to author, 4 August 1999.
- 6 Heinrich Dilly, Kunstgeschichte als Institution: Studien zur Geschichte einer Disziplin (Frankfurt am Main, 1979), 174-75.
- 7 A "field" in the sense that it framed a recognized "direction of research", but hardly one characterized by "a structure of objective relationships", as in Pierre Bourdieu, "The Genesis of the Concepts of *Habitus* and of *Field*", *Sociocriticism*, 2 (Dec. 1985), 11–24.
- 8 Prosper Mérimée, Notes d'un voyage dans le Midi de la France (Paris, 1989), 62.
- 9 Françoise Bercé, "Arcisse de Caumont et les sociétés savantes" in Les Lieux de Mémoire, ed. Pierre Nora, La Nation, 3 vols (Paris, 1986), II, 538.
- 10 This development is treated circumstantially within a broad study of disciplinary practice in other kinds of institutions in Lyne Therrien's L'Histoire de l'art en France: Genèse d'une discipline universitaire (Paris, 1998). I am greatly indebted to her valuable exploration of this history.
- 11 Brigitte Desrochers, "Images de Pompéi," RACAR (Revue d'art canadienne/Canadian Art Review), XXVII, 1–2 (2000), 59–73.
- 12 Dilly, Kunstgeschichte als Institution, 174.
- 13 Claire R. Sherman and Adele M. Holcomb, eds, Women as Interpreters of the Visual Arts, 1820–1979 (Westport, Ct, 1981), 20, 44.

- 14 See the entry for Harrison by Renate Schlesier in Classical Scholarship: A Biographical Encyclopedia (New York and London, 1990), 127–41
- 15 In the National Gallery of Canada; discussed in Gunda Lambton, Stealing the Show: Seven Women Artists in Canadian Public Art (Montreal and Kingston, 1994), 115–16.
- 16 Gayatri Spivak, "Subaltern Studies: Deconstructing Historiography" in *The Spivak Reader*, eds, Donna Landry and Gerald MacLean (New York and London, 1996), 213.
- 17 Udo Kultermann, *The History of Art History* ([Pleasantville, N.Y.], 1993), 158–59.

- 18 Pierre Bourdieu, *The Field of Cultural Production* (New York, 1993), 116.
- 19 René Lourau, L'Analyse institutionnelle (Paris, 1970), 137.
- 20 Notably by Donald Preziosi in *Rethinking Art History: Meditations on a Coy Science* (New Haven, 1989), 35–36, 54–79.
- 21 Barbara Herrnstein Smith, Contingencies of Value: Alternative Perspectives for Critical Theory (Cambridge, Mass., and London, 1988), 34
- 22 Janet Todd, Feminist Literary History (New York, 1988), 7-8.
- 23 Gombrich, "Renaissance Artistic Theory".