

THE INTELLECTUAL EDUCATION OF THE ITALIAN RENAISSANCE ARTIST

Scholars have traditionally viewed the Italian Renaissance artist as a gifted but poorly educated craftsman whose complex and demanding works were created with the assistance of a more educated advisor. These assumptions are, in part, based on research that has focused primarily on the artist's social rank and workshop training. In this volume, Angela Dressen explores the range of educational opportunities that were available to the Italian Renaissance artist. Considering artistic formation within the history of education, Dressen focuses on the training of highly skilled, average artists, revealing a general level of learning that was much more substantial than has been assumed. She emphasizes the role of mediators who had a particular interest in augmenting artists' knowledge, and highlights how artists used Latin and vernacular texts to gain additional knowledge that they avidly sought. Dressen's volume brings new insights into a topic at the intersection of early modern intellectual, educational and art history.

Angela Dressen is the Andrew W. Mellon Librarian at I Tatti – The Harvard University Center for Renaissance Studies in Florence, Italy, and faculty member at the University of Dresden. She is the author of *Pavimenti decorati del Quattrocento in Italia* (2008) and *The Library of the Badia Fiesolana: Intellectual History and Education under the Medici* (2013).

THE INTELLECTUAL
EDUCATION OF THE
ITALIAN RENAISSANCE
ARTIST

ANGELA DRESSEN

I Tatti, The Harvard University Center for Renaissance Studies



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

University Printing House, Cambridge CB2 8BS, United Kingdom
One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA
477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia
314–321, 3rd Floor, Plot 3, Splendor Forum, Jasola District Centre, New Delhi – 110025, India
103 Penang Road, #05–06/07, Visioncrest Commercial, Singapore 238467

Cambridge University Press is part of the University of Cambridge.

It furthers the University's mission by disseminating knowledge in the pursuit of education, learning, and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

www.cambridge.org

Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781108831321

DOI: 10.1017/9781108916899

© Cambridge University Press 2021

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements, no reproduction of any part may take place without the written permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 2021

Printed in the United Kingdom by TJ Books Limited, Padstow Cornwall

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

NAMES: Dressen, Angela, author.

TITLE: The intellectual education of the Italian Renaissance artist / Angela Dressen.

DESCRIPTION: Cambridge ; New York : Cambridge University Press, 2021. |

Includes bibliographical references and index.

IDENTIFIERS: LCCN 2021024956 (print) | LCCN 2021024957 (ebook) |

ISBN 9781108831321 (hardback) | ISBN 9781108932738 (paperback) |

ISBN 9781108916899 (epub)

SUBJECTS: LCSH: Education, Humanistic–Italy–History. | Artists–Education–Italy–History. |

Artists–Italy–Intellectual life–History. | Books and reading–Italy–History. | Italy–Intellectual

life–1268–1559. | BISAC: ART / General | ART / General

CLASSIFICATION: LCC LA106 .D74 2021 (print) | LCC LA106 (ebook) | DDC 370.11/2–dc23

LC record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2021024956>

LC ebook record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2021024957>

ISBN 978-1-108-83132-1 Hardback

Cambridge University Press has no responsibility for the persistence or accuracy of URLs for external or third-party internet websites referred to in this publication and does not guarantee that any content on such websites is, or will remain, accurate or appropriate.

CONTENTS

<i>List of Illustrations</i>	page vii
<i>Preface</i>	ix
INTRODUCTION	I
1 MECHANICAL ARTS VERSUS LIBERAL ARTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE ARTIST'S EDUCATION	26
2 EDUCATIONAL PLACES AND OPPORTUNITIES	70
3 THE MEDIATING TEXTS	133
4 VITRUVIUS AND PLINY AS SOURCEBOOKS, EDUCATIONAL LANDMARKS, AND INTELLECTUAL CHALLENGE	283
CONCLUSION	322
<i>Appendix A: Printed Editions as Editio Princeps and Shortly after, Divided by Editions, Translations and Commentaries</i>	341
<i>Appendix B: Oral Lessons in Private and Public Environments</i>	355
<i>Selected Bibliography</i>	365
<i>Index</i>	379

ILLUSTRATIONS

1	Botticelli, <i>Calumny</i> , ca. 1482	page 9
2	Cristoforo Landino, <i>Formulario di epistole</i> , 1490	23
3	Nicola Pisano, <i>Liberal Arts at the Fontana Maggiore in Perugia</i> (Geometry and Music), 1275–1277	30
4	Luca della Robbia, <i>Orpheus</i> , 1437–1439	153
5	School of Andrea Mantegna, <i>Hercules and Antaeus</i> , ca. 1497	155
6	Antonio del Pollaiuolo, <i>Hercules</i> , ca. 1490	156
7	Andrea Pisano, <i>Daedalus</i> , 1340s	159
8	Andrea Pisano, <i>Hercules</i> , 1340s	160
9	Andrea Pisano, <i>Architecture</i> , 1340s	161
10	Bartolomeo di Giovanni, <i>Peleus and Thetis</i> (The Arrival and Procession), ca. 1490–1500	166
11	Bartolomeo di Giovanni, <i>Peleus and Thetis</i> (The Wedding), ca. 1490–1500	170
12	Luca Signorelli, <i>Ovid and Vergil</i> , 1499–1502	175
13	Luca Signorelli, <i>Ovid</i> , 1499–1502	177
14	Luca Signorelli, <i>Lucan</i> , 1499–1502	180
15	Bachiacca, Eve (and Adam) with Cain and Abel, 1520s	185
16	Artist from Pesaro, <i>Bowl with the Virgin and the Unicorn and Arms of Matthias Corvinus and Beatrice of Aragon</i> , ca. 1486–1488	191
17	Artist from Castel Durante, <i>Tazza with Ganymede and the Eagle</i> , ca. 1535–1540	199
18	Vittore Carpaccio, <i>Christ Showing the Instruments of Passion</i> , 1496	202
19	Vittore Carpaccio, <i>The Meditation on the Passion</i> , ca. 1490	203
20	Piero di Cosimo, <i>Perseus and Andromeda</i> , ca. 1510–1513	208
21	Piero di Cosimo, <i>Procris and Cephalus</i> (also called <i>Satyr Mourning over a Nymph</i>), ca. 1495	214
22	Piero di Cosimo, <i>Forest Fire</i> , 1497–1501	216
23	Piero di Cosimo, <i>Fight between the Lapiths and the Centaurs</i> , ca. 1500–1515	218
24	Giulio Romano, <i>Sala dei Giganti</i> , 1532–1535	222
25	Piero di Cosimo, <i>The Misfortune of Silenus</i> , ca. 1500	226
26	Francesco di Giorgio, <i>The Story of Oenone and Paris</i> , 1460s	230
27	Paolo Uccello, <i>Battle of Greeks and Amazons before the Walls of Troy</i> , ca. 1460	232
28	Antonio del Pollaiuolo, <i>Hercules and Deianira</i> , ca. 1475–1498	232

viii LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

29	Pinturicchio, <i>Odyssey of Penelope and Odysseus</i> , 1509	233
30	Apollonio di Giovanni, <i>Shipwreck of Aeneas</i> , ca. 1450–1460	238
31	Apollonio di Giovanni, <i>Aeneas at Carthage</i> , ca. 1450	240
32	Giulio Romano and workshop, <i>Sala di Troia</i> , 1538–1539	243
33	Apollonio di Giovanni and Marco del Buono di Marco, <i>Battle of Pharsalus and the Beheading of Pompey</i> , ca. 1456–1465	248
34	Domenico Ghirlandaio, <i>Julius Caesar and the Crossing of the Rubicon</i> , ca. 1470	250
35	Jacopo del Sellaio, <i>Story of Psyche</i> , ca. 1490	260
36	Raphael, <i>Council of the Gods</i> , 1517–1518	263
37	Raphael, <i>Wedding Banquet of Amor and Psyche</i> , 1517–1518	264
38	Giulio Romano, <i>Story of Psyche</i> , 1526–1528	266
39	Giorgione, <i>Tempesta</i> , ca. 1510	270
40	Piero di Cosimo, <i>Venus, Mars and Cupid</i> , 1511 (formerly ca. 1505)	273
41	Botticelli, <i>Primavera</i> , ca. 1482	276
42	Giovanni Battista Caporali, <i>Architettura</i> , 1536	312
43	Luca Signorelli and his workshop, <i>Libreria Albèri</i> , 1501–1503	324

PREFACE

Lifelong learning is a question now as much as it was in the Renaissance. At that time, it was the introduction of print and the availability of free and open lectures which changed a society. Today this is guided by the digital transformation and open educational resources, which are aiming at the same, providing a stimulus for the society as a whole, and the intellectually curious individual in particular. Both foster guided and autodidactic learning alike. The artists belonged to both groups and the intellectually curious artists took advantage of the possibilities of the time.

I feel grateful too, to participate in lifelong learning myself, and to help others to do so. This book manuscript has been accepted as a Habilitation thesis at the TU Dresden in 2019, and I would like to express my esteemed gratitude to my committee Jürgen Müller, Lina Bolzoni, and Alexander Nagel, as well as to Bruno Klein for the oral exams. I would like to thank them all for their support, readiness, and appreciative comments. The University of Dresden has accepted me as a faculty member (Privatdozentin) the same year. Collegial warm thanks go also to Darrel Rutkin, who helped getting the manuscript into style. Many stimulating evenings spend with Thomas Leinkauf discussing on the little terrace in Viale Petrarca helped to shape some arguments, especially as the book manuscript was taking its first shape. My mother has looked after my mental health with many care boxes, or all kinds of “Nervennahrung.” I would like to thank both my parents for the intellectual curiosity they passed down to me, a curiosity that is able to strive in many directions and does not know boundaries. May this book be a stimulus for many curious minds too!