ART, SCIENCE, AND THE BODY IN EARLY ROMANTICISM

Can we really trust the things our bodies tell us about the world? This book reveals how deeply intertwined cultural practices of art and science questioned the authority of the human body in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Focusing on Henry Fuseli, Anne-Louis Girodet, and Philippe de Loutherbourg, it argues that Romantic artworks participated in a widespread crisis concerning the body as a source of reliable scientific knowledge. Rarely discussed sources and new archival material illuminate how artists drew upon contemporary sciences and inverted them, undermining their founding empiricist principles. The result is an alternative history of Romantic visual culture that is deeply embroiled in controversies around electricity, mesmerism, physiognomy, and other popular sciences. This volume reorients conventional accounts of Romanticism and some of its most important artworks, while also putting forward a new model for the kinds of questions that we can ask about them.

Stephanie O’Rourke is a senior lecturer in Art History at the University of St Andrews.
This series aims to foster the best new work in one of the most challenging fields within English literary studies. From the early 1780s to the early 1830s, a formidable array of talented men and women took to literary composition, not just in poetry, which some of them famously transformed, but in many modes of writing. The expansion of publishing created new opportunities for writers, and the political stakes of what they wrote were raised again by what Wordsworth called those ‘great national events’ that were ‘almost daily taking place’: the French Revolution, the Napoleonic and American wars, urbanization, industrialization, religious revival, an expanded empire abroad, and the reform movement at home. This was an enormous ambition, even when it pretended otherwise. The relations between science, philosophy, religion, and literature were reworked in texts such as *Frankenstein* and *Biographia Literaria*; gender relations in *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* and *Don Juan*; journalism by Cobbett and Hazlitt; and poetic form, content, and style by the Lake School and the Cockney School. Outside Shakespeare studies, probably no body of writing has produced such a wealth of commentary or done so much to shape the responses of modern criticism. This indeed is the period that saw the emergence of those notions of literature and of literary history, especially national literary history, on which modern scholarship in English has been founded.

The categories produced by Romanticism have also been challenged by recent historicist arguments. The task of the series is to engage both with a challenging corpus of Romantic writings and with the changing field of criticism they have helped to shape. As with other literary series published by Cambridge University Press, this one will represent the work of both younger and more established scholars on either side of the Atlantic and elsewhere.

See the end of the book for a complete list of published titles.
ART, SCIENCE, AND THE BODY IN EARLY ROMANTICISM

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## Contents

**List of Figures**  
*page vi*

**Acknowledgments**  
*x*

**Introduction: Bodies of Knowledge**  
*1*

1. De Loutherbourg’s Mesmeric Effects  
*22*

2. Fuseli’s Physiognomic Impressions  
*60*

3. Girodet’s Electric Shocks  
*104*

4. Self-Evidence on the Scaffold  
*151*

**Notes**  
*182*

**Bibliography**  
*221*

**Index**  
*248*
## Figures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>Anon. [<em>Mesmer Magnetizing a Patient</em>], 1784, engraving.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
List of Figures


2.7 Henry Fuseli, Head of a Damned Soul from Dante’s “Inferno” (recto), 1770–1778, oil on canvas. Art Institute of Chicago.

2.8 Henry Fuseli, Head of a Damned Soul from Dante’s “Inferno” (verso), 1770–1778, oil on canvas. Art Institute of Chicago.


2.10 Henry Fuseli, Satanic Call to Beelzebub in Hell, 1802, oil on canvas. Kunsthau Zürich. Image: Wikimedia Commons.


2.13 Henry Fuseli, Thetis Mourning the Body of Achilles, 1780, wash and graphite on paper. The Art Institute of Chicago.

2.14 Henry Fuseli, The Nightmare, 1781, oil on canvas. Detroit Institute of Arts. USA Founders Society Purchase with funds from Mr. and Mrs. Bert L. Smokler and Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence A. Fleischman/Bridgeman Images.

2.15 Henry Fuseli, Mad Kate, 1806–1807, oil on canvas. Goethemuseum, Frankfurt. Image: Wikimedia Commons.


3.2 Benjamin West, Benjamin Franklin Drawing Electricity from the Sky, c.1816, oil on slate. Image: Wikimedia Commons.
List of Figures


List of Figures


4.1 Henry Fuseli, *Lady Macbeth Seizing the Daggers* (possibly exhibited 1812), oil on canvas. Tate Britain. 154


4.5 Anne-Louis Girodet Trioson, study for *Revolt of Cairo*, 1810, charcoal and pastel on paper. Musée de l’Avallonnais Jean Després, Ville d’Avalon. 161

4.6 Detail from Isidore Helman after Charles Monnet, *Execution of Louis XVI*, 1794, engraving. Image: Wikimedia Commons. 168


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