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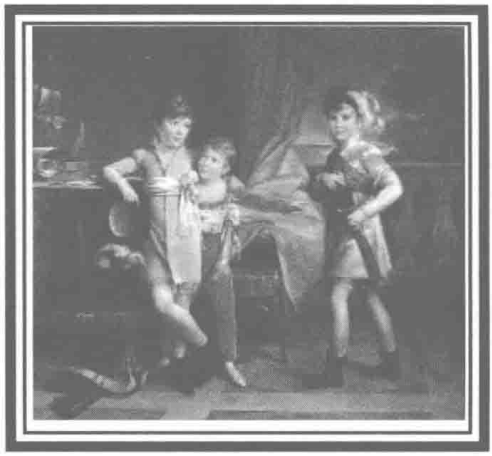

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Editor's Note

Absence and Presence and Categories Between

What is in or not in a text or a visual experience? And what is the relationship between what is present and what is absent? These questions may seem more productive for the self-reflexive and theoretical projects of the twentieth- and twenty-first centuries than the eighteenth. Yet, in fact, a range of questions about what is present, what is absent, what exists between the text and its context, what appears and disappears through movement, what is inside the frame and outside it, and what audiences make of the apparent, the absent, and the implied are among the themes that serendipitously and subtly link the eleven essays in this forty-first volume of *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture*. While some of the authors in this collection explicitly employ theoretical models that address presence/absence, all of the contributors rely on and strongly enrich the historical, the material, the contextual, and the concrete. This is a collection that engages significant and sophisticated interpretive questions, but each essay does so, first and foremost, by examining texts, objects, other material phenomena, and historical conditions on their own terms.

This volume's subjects are far-ranging, stretching from the Habsburg and Celtic fringes to London, Paris, and the early American Republic, representing work in art and architectural history, intellectual and cultural history, literature, media studies, gender studies, and more. Each essay of course offers fresh insights into its particular topic, whether Jonathan Swift or the German rococo, and each will naturally appeal to its respective specialist audience. But, perhaps by chance or by the power of the zeitgeist, these eleven essays, selected from a competitive pool of contenders, have become a coherent whole that is ultimately interconnected by shared methodological and thematic concerns that speak to a broad audience of eighteenth-century scholars.

Volume 41 is particularly fortunate to include three essays in visual studies. In her examination of the under-studied French female painter Marie-Éléonore Godefroid, whose group portrait of the Ney brothers illustrates this volume's frontispiece, Jennifer Germann argues that

visual cues and biographical clues can provide information that has the power to complicate or even subvert the overt subject matter of an image. Godefroid's depiction of the Ney boys—presumably an obvious example of nascent male bonding through strictly masculine pursuits of militarism and political life—is, according to Germann, not simply or only a record of male homosocial relations. It is, surprisingly and paradoxically, evidence of *female homosocial* relations. By tracing familial, social, and institutional relationships in Revolutionary and Napoleonic France, Germann uncovers the pivotal role that women played together when they forged alliances as artists and patrons, assistants and hostesses. Though visually absent from this portrait of men, women are pivotal in the construction of this painting and many others through their own homosocial ties, according to Germann.

Michael Yonan's analysis of the Wieskirche, a pilgrimage church in southern Bavaria (constructed, 1745-1754), examines absence and presence as essential experiences in an intertwined architectural and theological strategy. Typically written off as gaudy and derivative of finer French examples, central European rococo churches, argues Yonan, were innovative and creative. The Wieskirche, for one, used the ornate, elaborate rococo as an essential, dynamic component in worship, spiritual renewal, and theological argument. While the Wieskirche's seemingly derivative rococo may initially appear an overwhelming and meaningless display of everything all at once, Yonan reveals how everything is not entirely visible. Rather, components appear and recede in relation to one another as humans move through architectural spaces and view paintings, friezes, sculptures, and decorations framed, revealed, and occluded by one another. As one example, when worshipers walk through the ambulatories of the Wieskirche, paintings of miracles appear and disappear in relation to the rococo framing devices and architectural structures. The process of "walking and looking" that allows imagery to present itself and then disappear, Yonan argues, visually and experientially complements and embodies the Christian message and Catholic liturgical practices.

Sandro Jung's work on the English illustrator, Thomas Stothard, explores a greatly over-looked textual form—the pricey illustrated pocket-diary of the late eighteenth- and nineteenth-centuries—that offered large empty spaces of blank paper to its well-heeled owner to be filled with memoranda, schedules, or sketches. Framing the pages are series of elaborate, original pictorial vignettes. As Jung demonstrates, the imagery, though pleasing and beautiful in its own right, made word-less reference to great English literature and contemporary poems and novels. Knowing what the image might point to, whether Chaucer or William Cowper, heightened the enjoyment for the sophisticated owner. But these depictions sometimes distorted or reinvented

the original work by removing or softening its original critical intent. Though, for example, George Crabbe's poems critiqued socio-economic conditions, Thomas Stothard transformed scenes from *The Seasons* into bucolic and sentimental representations of romanticized laboring classes. The educated consumer of the expensive, illustrated diaries could take pleasure in recognizing the reference to an important poetic critique of contemporary society, but Stothard's depictions effaced the original criticism and ultimately facilitated a less jarring relationship between image and the memoranda to eventually be written on the blank spaces.

Sandro Jung illuminates how the pleasure in Thomas Stothard's exquisite work relied on its affluent consumers' sophisticated knowledge about reading and their ability to understand based on their ability to invoke unnamed literary references. Catherine Keohane takes up this issue of "reading" and reading between the lines as signs of class and status in her exploration of the laboring-class poet Anne Yearsley and her one-time patron Hannah More. In her own close reading of Yearsley's "Clifton Hill" and More's "Prefatory Letter" that served to introduce and frame Yearsley's volume, Keohane argues that the poet was better read and critically far more sophisticated than More portrayed her in the letter. Rather than simply expand the list of literary texts that Yearsley was actually familiar with compared to More's list, Keohane shows that the poet's subtle references to and transformations of contemporary authors' works provided a powerful critique of the limited understanding possessed by didactic, condescending elites. More's portrayal of Yearsley's reading, riddled with absences, helped to simplify the poet; Yearsley's subtle references to additional, but unnamed works, helped to reveal how poorly her former patron (and elites in general) could see, read, and understand others.

As Keohane provides fresh insights into the relationship between texts and social relations, so too does David Brewer in his analysis of George Colman the elder's 1760 play, *Polly Honeycombe*. Reading the farce as a source to challenge a series of widely presumed binary relations and theoretical frameworks in modern scholarship, Brewer proposes that print and/or theater versus personhood are not oppositional categories, but in an endless play of reciprocal creation. He also challenges the position that before the rise of the novel "people were supposedly externally oriented and 'theatrical' up to 1740, and then they turned inward, and the modern subject was born." Brewer uses *Polly Honeycombe* itself—a farce about reading, romance, acting, and identity—to argue for the continuing presence and vitality of the theater in the age of the novel, the dynamic relationship between stage and print, the paradoxical relationship between the quixotic and self understanding, and the unexpected theoretical utility of farce.

Dorothee Birke challenges another literary opposition articulated by Gérard Genette between the text and the "paratext." Birke explores whether the paratextual—titles, chapter headings, illustrations, notes, preface, the material features of books, etc.—is actually separated from and primarily supplementary to the text itself in her examination of the chapter titles in three mid-century novels. Genette argued that the paratextual element of chapter-titles fell increasingly out of fashion in nineteenth-century novels because they drew attention away from the text and reminded readers they were reading books. Birke argues that "in the eighteenth century they had an important function: namely, they contributed to the reflection of the function and purpose of an emerging form of writing," and she shows three different evolving paratextual strategies of Henry Fielding, Sarah Fielding, and Charlotte Lennox. Chapter titles provided numerous functions central to the reader's understanding of and enjoyment of the novel, including their ability to impart different layers of meaning to readers of varying levels of sophistication and wit. She proposes that a more naïve reader can read Charlotte Lennox's *The Female Quixote* earnestly as "a didactic novel," but the sophisticated reader grasps the ironic and critical narrative stance of the work through the alternating "modes" of the novel's chapter titles—some descriptive, some silly, and some self-reflexive—which create "frictions" between text, paratext, and meaning.

As Dorothee Birke views the relationship between text and paratext as "playfully set up," so too does Zeina Hakim emphasize the playful game between author and reader in such texts as *Mémoires et aventures d'un homme de qualité qui s'est retiré du monde* (1728-1731) by Antoine François and *La Vie de Marianne* (1731-1742) by Pierre de Marivaux. Hakim meticulously examines how these two fictional works played with claims to "true" stories. Many eighteenth-century fictional works proclaimed themselves to be "real" by presenting themselves as a collection of authentic letters recovered and presented by an editor; in some works, as in the case of Rousseau's *La Nouvelle Héloïse*, readers were encouraged to believe the fiction was really true. Hakim argues that Prévost and Marivaux had different intentions with their invocations of authenticity. She proposes that in their works the claim to truthfulness was not actually designed to convince readers that the texts were verifiably true. Instead, Marivaux and Prévost structured their works' claims to authenticity in ways that deliberately played with their readers' expectations and reading practices. The more they asserted their status as authentic renderings of real life, the more these texts reminded their readers that they were in fact reading fiction.

Marc Lerner's study of the William Tell legend, its many eighteenth-century rewritings, and its invocation in moments of political action also

challenges the status of fiction and reality in an eighteenth-century world that embraced historical change. Tracing the tale from its earliest Swiss incarnation in fifteenth-century sources through its multiple eighteenth-century appearances to its many and varied early nineteenth-century staging throughout Europe and the Americas, Lerner illuminates this to have been an unusually potent transnational, political symbol. The William Tell story's survival and utility, Lerner shows, reflected its flexibility as it could serve political ideologies across the spectrum, from radical democracy to conservative patriotism, from individual liberty to the general will, and so forth. As Lerner shows, versions changed in meaning largely because certain features and details were variously highlighted or made absent. Most strikingly, "William Tell" served as political shorthand for numerous causes, so much so that rebels and revolutionaries would occasionally dress as or name themselves after the Swiss hero, blending legend and life. When staged in its multiple versions, the story rarely served as a purely historical tale, but rather reflected its audiences' contemporary political desires, thus perpetually renewing itself for living needs.

Katrina Berndt reads Sir Walter Scott's historically fictional *Redgauntlet* in light of Adam Ferguson's theories of civilization and progress to examine the reinvention of the past for the needs of the present. Contrary to the received view of Scott, Berndt argues that he did not embrace a wholly nostalgic view of Scotland's history, including its Jacobite past, nor did he fully accept David Hume's and Adam Smith's models of commerce and progress that would carry Scotland, as part of Great Britain, to ever civilized heights. Rather, Berndt argues that Scott was influenced by Ferguson's more tumultuous model of historical change in which conflict rather than harmony served as the necessary motor to invigorate society and social relations. The absence of conflict, whether militaristic or political, softened the polity and prevented its citizens from realizing their potential. For Scott, then, the Jacobite rebellion of 1745 was neither a romantic tragedy nor evidence of Scottish backwardness. Instead, it was, as realized through *Redgauntlet*'s characters—including a fictionalized Bonnie Prince Charlie who ultimately renounces Jacobitism—a dynamic opportunity that invigorated both Scotland and England as parts of a larger British polity.

Danielle Spratt similarly employs political economic theory in her reading of Jonathan Swift's *The Travels*, *A Modest Proposal*, and other writings. Here, she examines Gulliver as an over-zealous economic projector whose "narration depicts the creation, control, and circulation of commodities between both colonized and colonizing peoples and nations." As he energetically foists his "political anatomy" on the bodies of the people and creatures he meets as he travels, his body—monstrously large or small or

strange—becomes in turn an object of curiosity and commerce and soon an uncategorized "freak of nature." Objectified and put in the service of various Brobdignagian and other schemes, Gulliver's body can be read as the dehumanized status of the Irish people as so many bodies to be bred, transported, and indentured in contemporary political economy and English colonial policy.

Julie Henigan explores the relationship between the English and the Irish, elites and plebeians, and print and oral culture in her detailed study of the Irish ballad. Challenging assumptions that the Irish ruling class and the poor "inhabited two wholly discrete cultural worlds, one literate and the other oral," Henigan illuminates a dynamic relationship between printed ballads—largely English in origin—and oral culture in eighteenth-century Ireland. Newspaper advertisements, ballad collection prefaces, the songs themselves, as well as social relations between elites and the peasantry at festivals, sporting events, and in the household as masters and servants all collectively revealed a fluid impact of oral and popular culture on print and the ultimate dominance of the Irish on the ballad form throughout the British Isles and North America by the late eighteenth century.

Clearly many themes, methodological concerns, and research problems link these eleven essays beyond what can be highlighted here, but it is worth noting that they each offer insights to readers beyond their particular fields and disciplines. The interdisciplinary and transnational power of this volume's essays reflects the spirit of the American Society for Eighteenth Century Studies and the incisive reports offered by dozens of outside scholars and an energetic and engaged editorial board. I am grateful to the members of the *SECC* board and dozens of outside readers who provided extensive, precise, sometimes creative, and often very challenging reports to the large pool of authors who submitted work for consideration. I thank both the authors and members of the board for their dedication to this project, most especially David Macey for his exceptional work with individual authors. I am also grateful to all the editors of *SECC* reaching back to the 1990s, especially Jeff Ravel and Tim Erwin, for their advice and suggestions in strengthening this collection. Ultimately, thanks to the very hard work of all involved in volume 41 of *SECC*, this has become a work that responds to and greatly animates vital problems in the long eighteenth century.

Contents

The Wieskirche: Movement, Perception, and Salvation in the Bavarian Rococo

MICHAEL YONAN

Despite the recent widespread scholarly reassessment of eighteenth-century rococo art, Bavarian rococo churches remain architectural ugly stepsisters. Widely known and unfailingly referenced in every art-historical survey text, rococo religious architecture nonetheless remains virtually unstudied within current Anglo-American scholarship, a situation that persists despite significant advancements in methodological and interpretive schemas helpful for confronting secular rococo design. Perhaps modern viewers continue to perceive these churches' abundantly ornamented interiors as little more than hysterical adaptations of an originally refined, visually seductive decorative mode characterized by the French elite *hôtel*. Raising its head as well is the possibility, implicit in some statements about the Bavarian rococo I have encountered, that to many observers these buildings confirm German bad taste, that they reveal a Teutonic obsessiveness with detail and a tiresome fascination with irrelevant complexity, qualities that obliterate the restrained gracefulness of their Gallic counterparts.

It was not always this way. The 1960s in particular saw a sustained scholarly interest in eighteenth-century German religious architecture among Anglo-American scholars, and during that time a number of

prominent architectural historians directed serious scholarly attention to these buildings. The most surprising among them is Henry-Russell Hitchcock, well known as the documenter of the International Style and a high priest of architectural modernism. Mostly forgotten today is that Hitchcock published two substantial books on eighteenth-century Bavarian churches, one a collection of miscellaneous essays and the other a monographic treatment of the Zimmermann brothers.[1] Hitchcock's legacy in this area has not been great, however, and few modern studies of the rococo even mention his work, let alone build on it. Casting a long shadow over English-language understanding about the religious rococo is Karsten Harries's 1983 study, *The Bavarian Rococo Church: Between Faith and Aestheticism*.[2] Written by a prominent philosopher of art and architecture, Harries's book is a multivalent thematic analysis, with chapters devoted to individual spiritual and aesthetic qualities typical of the German rococo as a whole. Harries concerns himself less with the outfitting of any single church than with establishing the Bavarian rococo church typologically. It is an important and rich contribution to the scholarly literature, one filled with insights into the interrelationship between meaning, ornament, and space. That said, Harries's book shows its age as well as its philosophical genealogy. It relies on stylistic categories that today feel dated and its integration of aesthetic and historical observations seems insufficient in light of current knowledge about eighteenth-century culture. Nonetheless, Harries's book remains the best-developed investigation of this material in English and my debt to it in this essay shall soon become clear. In German-language scholarship, one finds a multitude of local and regional studies and several classic surveys, but few serious attempts to rethink or recategorize these buildings in new ways, and to my knowledge no scholarship that tries to revisit these churches in light of the many scholarly insights on French rococo art and architecture that have appeared recently.[3]

Whatever the underlying reasons for this neglect, its consequences are clear: there is no other corner of eighteenth-century European art in which so much important material remains unknown or understudied. I offer this essay as a preliminary contribution to a reengagement with rococo religious architecture, one that seeks to demonstrate its potential for enriching our broadening picture of eighteenth-century art. I shall do so by directing my analysis through perhaps the best known of these buildings, the Wieskirche or "Church in the Meadow." (fig.1) Located in a rural area of southern Bavaria, the Wieskirche was erected as a pilgrimage church between 1745 and 1754; it owes its strikingly beautiful design to the combined efforts of the architect Dominikus Zimmermann (1685–1766) and his elder brother, the painter and stucco carver Johann Baptist Zimmermann

Figure 1. Dominikus Zimmermann, Wieskirche, 1745–1754. Exterior view. (Photo: Marburg/Art Resource, NY)

(1680–1758).[4] Scholarly writing about the Wieskirche has emphasized its sophisticated treatment of interior space, in particular the way its masses and voids create a sense of aerated permeability that critics of architecture term "lightness."[5] (fig. 2) Indeed, the church's manipulation of light effects to produce gradations of brightness and shadow, its suffusion of light with spiritual values, and the apparent dematerialization of substance that results, are certainly among the building's most sophisticated design characteristics. Rather than understand this phenomenon as a purely formalist achievement, as the scholarship has often done, I shall argue that spatial permeability advances an eschatological theology related both to the church's function as a pilgrimage destination and as a modification of Enlightenment conceptions of sensation and knowledge. For rather than present Catholic doctrine as universal dogma, which one would expect an

Figure 2. Dominikus and Johann Baptist Zimmermann, Wieskirche. Interior. (Photo: Erich Lessing/Art Resource, NY)

early modern church to do, the Wieskirche instead presents salvation as a process, one that unfolds metaphorically through the experience of moving through its interior. Movement is more than just a stylistic quality enacted in the church's rocaille ornamentation; the rococo ornament's incitement of movement stages a particular human relationship to the divine.[6] In showing this, I shall suggest something more fundamental about Germanic