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# MUSÉE DU LOUVRE, PARIS: PALACE OF THE PEOPLE, ART FOR ALL

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The Musée du Louvre is arguably the world's most famous art museum—indeed, the Louvre, which opened to the public in 1793, is virtually synonymous with the word *museum*, familiar even to those who know little about art. Located in the heart of Paris and home to the *Mona Lisa* and the *Venus de Milo*, the Louvre has long been a chief tourist attraction in one of the world's most popular travel destinations. Annual attendance tops eight million people, significantly outpacing that of rival institutions in London and New York. Beyond its splendid setting and iconic masterpieces, to what does the Louvre owe its standing among art museums? The list of distinctive features would include a collection of universal scope and supreme quality; a majestic building that blends palatial splendor and modern cool; and a venerable history dating back to the origins of modern France (the building dates from the twelfth century). Long before tourism provided an economic incentive, France promoted its cultural preeminence and the Louvre earned a reputation as the biggest and best of its kind. In the context of museum history, it is important as a model for the public art museums that have become a necessary ornament of nation-states and self-respecting cities the world over. This brief account of the early formation of the Louvre—variously referred to from 1793 to 1797 as the *Muséum français*, the *Muséum national des arts*, the *Muséum des arts*, or simply the *Muséum*, and officially called the *Musée central des arts* from 1797 to 1803, and the *Musée Napoléon* from 1803 to 1815—explores how and why it gained its stature and influenced the subsequent development of art museums in Europe and beyond.

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By the mid-eighteenth century the French crown possessed one of the largest collections of art in Europe. Amassed by fits and starts since the reign of Francis I, in the sixteenth century, it numbered some eighteen hundred paintings and included sizable collections of drawings and sculpture, ancient and modern. The most important paintings and sculptures decorated the rooms at Versailles and other royal residences around Paris, in a manner consistent

**FIGURE 8-1.**

After Joseph-Siffred Duplessis (French, 1725–1802), *Charles-Claude de Flahaut, comte de la Billarderie d'Angiviller*, 1779. Oil on canvas, 144 × 106 cm (56<sup>5</sup>/<sub>8</sub> × 41<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> in.). Musée national du château de Versailles

with that of princely palaces throughout Europe, but an equal number were kept in storage, out of visitors' sight. Although great in extent and quality, the king's collection was relatively invisible owing to constraints on public viewing imposed by palace protocols and Versailles's location some thirteen miles from the center of Paris. The absence of royal pictures in Paris itself fueled growing frustration in the early decades of the eighteenth century, with the emergence of a middle-class public for art and the rise of cultural tourism (the Grand Tour). Paris had numerous fine private art collections open to selected visitors (led by the magnificent Orléans collection, at the Palais Royal), but compared to other European cities, such as Rome, Florence, Düsseldorf, or Dresden, each of which boasted splendid art galleries, the French capital seemed wanting. The inauguration of regular exhibitions of contemporary art at the Salon of the Palais du Louvre in 1737 merely whetted the public's appetite for more.

It is, in fact, in a review of an early Salon exhibition that we find the first public call for a permanent museum. Writing in 1747, the critic (and former royal courtier) Étienne La Font de Saint-Yenne (1688–1771) called attention to the large number of pictures languishing unseen at Versailles and suggested they be brought to the capital and shared with an eager and deserving public.<sup>1</sup> For La Font, the lack of a well-appointed public gallery signaled indifference to the fate of the arts and the nation's patrimony, which in turn was taken as a sign of irresponsible rule. The Crown sponsored exhibitions of contemporary art at the Salon, so why not also display the royal picture collection? The two were more than casually related because, following central tenets of early modern art theory and practice, exposure to the great art of the past would inspire higher standards of production in contemporary art. As his review of the 1747 Salon made clear, La Font believed there was much room for improvement in contemporary French art; by not displaying the royal collection, the government was doing less than it could to promote excellence among the artists it otherwise supported through patronage and the privileges accompanying membership in the Royal Academy of Painting and Sculpture. Quite apart from the state of contemporary art, he implied that it was beneath a great nation to care so little for its artistic heritage.

Evidently stung by La Font's critique, and fearing the spread of negative public opinion, the government sprang into action and three years later inaugurated the first public art gallery in France at the Palais du Luxembourg, a royal residence located on the other side of the Seine from the Palais du Louvre. The Luxembourg Gallery was a relatively modest affair: a hundred paintings and a handful of drawings spread through four rooms on the second floor of the palace. Major paintings by the old masters were exhibited (including works by Raphael, Correggio, Titian, Veronese, Rubens, Anthony van Dyke, Nicolas Poussin, and Charles Le Brun), though many others remained in the apartments at Versailles. The paintings were arranged on the walls in a

symmetrical pattern without regard to an artist's nationality or to chronology. Instead, they were strategically juxtaposed to offer provocative and illuminating stylistic comparisons between different artists across national schools and history (Veronese next to Poussin, Titian between Paul Bril and Guido Reni, and so on). Whereas later hanging norms sought to demonstrate historical development within national and regional schools, the Luxembourg Gallery's installation encouraged visitors to engage in ahistorical comparative analysis. Visual comparison of different artists allowed their distinctive traits, and their strengths and weaknesses, to be apprehended. A lively dialogue between pictures on the wall was meant to be echoed by spirited conversation between visitors as they shared observations and engaged in rational argument about the pictures' relative merits. Art appreciation was a social performance, modeled on the dialogic format of leading art criticism of the early modern period, notably André Félibien's *Entretiens sur les vies et sur les ouvrages des plus excellens peintres anciens et modernes* (Discussions concerning the life and work of the most excellent painters), of 1666, and Roger de Piles's *Conversations sur la connaissance de la peinture et sur le jugement qu'on doit faire des tableaux* (Conversations on the knowledge of painting and on the judgment that should be made of pictures), of 1677.

### Enlightenment Ideals and the Beginnings of the Louvre

Notwithstanding the Luxembourg Gallery's success, critics believed the proper home for the king's collection was the Palais du Louvre. An architectural monument in its own right and seat of the various royal academies, including the academies of art and architecture, the Louvre offered a setting for a public art museum that was at once accessible, dignified, and pedagogically relevant. La Font had suggested the Louvre in his Salon review (and in other critical tracts lamented the palace's deteriorated condition), and others followed suit. Writing in Denis Diderot and Jean Le Rond d'Alembert's great *Encyclopédie* (1751–72), the chevalier Louis de Jaucourt (1704–1779) had visions of the Louvre's becoming a vast hub of learning, uniting artists, scholars, and myriad collections to form a modern version of the Mouseion of ancient Alexandria, the fabled intellectual center that had drawn the learned from distant shores with the promise of universal knowledge.<sup>2</sup> One Maille Dussausoy embraced similar ideas in a book entitled *Le citoyen désintéressé; ou, Diverses idées patriotiques concernant quelques établissemens et embellissemens utiles à la ville de Paris* (The disinterested citizen; or, Various patriotic ideas concerning some useful establishments and embellishments for the town of Paris; 1767–68).<sup>3</sup> And Louis-Sébastien Mercier (1740–1814) embellished those utopian fantasies of the Louvre in his popular futuristic novel of 1786, *L'an 2440* (The year 2440). Influenced by the Enlightenment notion of the ideal museum as put forth in

those texts, successive government ministers—the marquis de Marigny (Abel-François Poisson de Vandières, 1727–1781), the abbé Terray (Joseph-Marie Terray, 1715–1778), and most of all the comte d'Angiviller (Charles-Claude de Flahaut de la Billarderie, 1730–1809)—began the conversion of the Palais du Louvre into a museum.

Significantly, however, while Jaucourt, Dussausoy, and Mercier all called for an encyclopedic institution designed for multidisciplinary learning, government interests never went beyond creating a museum of *art* at the Louvre. What explains this radical narrowing of scope? Space constraints were no doubt a factor, and it should be noted that the royal library and botanical, print, and medal collections all developed along parallel tracks at other sites in eighteenth-century Paris. The chief consideration, however, was that the government's investment in the museum was not merely a response to Enlightenment priorities. By the late eighteenth century, art collecting had emerged as a competitive field in which European monarchies and principalities vied for recognition and superiority. In short, politics as much as pedagogy motivated the founding of the Louvre.

Soon after the ascension of King Louis XVI in 1774, the comte d'Angiviller initiated a bold scheme to stimulate contemporary French art through sustained patronage of living artists, and an equally audacious plan to turn the Grand Gallery of the Palais du Louvre into an art museum of unrivaled splendor. Ultimately the two initiatives were linked, for the museum would showcase the strength of the royal collection, and through the contemporary paintings and sculptures d'Angiviller commissioned for the gallery, which included famous works by Jacques-Louis David (1748–1825)—*The Oath of the Horatii* (1784) and *The Lictors Bringing to Brutus the Bodies of His Sons* (1789)—and statues of inspirational French heroes (so-called Great Men), it would demonstrate the superiority of modern French art under Bourbon rule. The moralizing and commemorative content of those paintings and sculptures signaled a desire to make the museum a “useful” public institution in keeping with Enlightenment ideology. Notable among paintings bought on the market for the Grand Gallery was *The Village Betrothal (Marriage Contract)*, of 1761, by Jean-Baptiste Greuze (1725–1805), arguably the best-known work by an artist famous in his day for producing socially useful art. It is also significant that d'Angiviller alternately referred to the Louvre gallery as a national and a royal monument, conflating the interests of the Crown and those of the larger body politic. In scale, concept, and political ambition, the Grand Gallery would dwarf the Luxembourg Gallery. As a public statement of d'Angiviller's commitment to the project, the floor plan of the Grand Gallery appeared draped across his lap in the portrait by Joseph-Siffred Duplessis (1725–1802) exhibited at the Salon of 1779 (fig. 8-1). The architectural drawing, furlled at one end and tumbling beyond the picture's edge at the other, suggested an enterprise of almost limitless promise.

The Duplessis portrait signaled d'Angiviller's eagerness to convert the Grand Gallery into a space appropriate for the exhibition of the king's collection (up to that time the gallery had housed scale-relief models of French ports and fortifications valued for strategic military purposes). In an early meeting with the architects of the Royal Academy, d'Angiviller encouraged them to produce "a monument unique in Europe."<sup>4</sup> His ambition to create an unparalleled museum drove architects to consider what constituted ideal conditions for the public display of art. In particular, they set about deliberating the following questions: How should works of art be framed and arranged? What color should the walls be? How should the gallery be decorated and lighted? Certain details were easily settled. As in the Luxembourg Gallery, many private collections, and the Salon exhibition space adjoining the Grand Gallery, the walls were to be painted olive green, considered a compatible ground for the rich tonalities of early modern paintings and their gilded frames. In the interests of easy viewing, and in contrast to sumptuous Parisian interiors, d'Angiviller called for only minimal architectural decoration (restricted to the cornice and doors) and ordered the fabrication of unifying Neoclassical picture frames. In a departure from the Luxembourg Gallery, but in conformity with other newly constituted art galleries in Europe, the paintings were to be arranged by the nationality, or school, of the artists.

The daunting length of the Grand Gallery (some thirteen hundred feet), with its many windows on either side, presented the biggest challenge. On paper, the cavernous hall seemed overwhelming and ill proportioned for an art gallery. At first, some of the architects assigned to the project suggested dividing the space into smaller compartments in order to create a sequence of modestly scaled picture cabinets. After visiting the palace together, however, they had a radical change of heart: "Once we had seen the gallery with our own eyes, a unanimous cry went up against altering in any way the spectacle of immensity that first meets the eye."<sup>5</sup> It is tempting to think that the huge tunnel-like perspective of the gallery bore an irresistible resemblance to the visionary designs for public institutions so popular with French eighteenth-century architects, especially Étienne-Louis Boullée (1728–1799), who in fact served on d'Angiviller's panel. In architectural design as well as conceptual form, the Grand Gallery aspired to be a monument worthy of Enlightenment dreams.

The problem of lighting remained. The many windows facing in both directions were less than ideal; they presented a distracting rhythm of openings on either side of the gallery, created moving pockets of glare and shadow, and took valuable wall space away from the pictures. After careful inspection of alternative lighting systems employed in Parisian buildings (conventional side windows, glazed lanterns, and clerestory fenestration), the architects determined that natural light admitted from running skylights along the coved

vault of the ceiling would provide the best illumination while enhancing the overall appearance of the museum. The painter Hubert Robert (1733–1808), a witness to the planning process as one of the gallery’s designated curators, has left us a seductive vision of the museum as it would appear when completed to d’Angiviller’s specifications (fig. 8-2). Here, the skylights not only afford good lighting for the art but transform a claustrophobic, underlit corridor into an airy and impressive public promenade. Unfortunately, the cost of installing the skylights greatly slowed the project (they were eventually installed between 1805 and 1810). Owing to French involvement in the American War of Independence, spending on public works radically declined in the early 1780s, and following the war, economic conditions improved only slightly before worsening again in the buildup to the Revolution. Just two years before the fall of the Bastille, in 1789, d’Angiviller was publicly accused of contributing to the financial ruin of the state through his expenditure on the arts.

**FIGURE 8-2.**

Hubert Robert (French, 1733–1808), *Proposed Arrangement of the Grand Gallery of the Louvre*, ca. 1785. Oil on canvas, 46 × 55 cm (18 × 21½ in.). Paris, Musée du Louvre

Although doomed by forces beyond d’Angiviller’s control, the Grand Gallery scheme is remarkable in meeting, in a unified vision, several now-prevailing museological imperatives. Notwithstanding great technological



changes over the past two centuries, architects and curators still favor natural light from above, colored wall surfaces for old-master pictures, and the suppression of architectural embellishment to enhance focus on works of art. What is also clear from the planning process of the gallery is that the architecture—the conception of the museum as impressive public spectacle that is so important (and controversial) today—has always mattered. From the start, in other words, there has been tension between ideal viewing conditions inside the museum and the need to build an architectural monument worthy of the museum's purpose and sponsors.

As the architects pondered the gallery's physical limitations and potential, d'Angiviller and his advisers turned their attention to the collection. They were concerned about presenting a representative sampling of desired artists, the quality of the art earmarked for exhibition, and the sheer quantity of art needed to fill the daunting space overlooking the Seine.

The desiderata, easily surmised in the formation of the royal collection before the late eighteenth century, were two: first, demonstrating the taste and power of the Crown through ownership of canonical old-master (Renaissance and Baroque Italian, Flemish, and Dutch) paintings; and second, manifesting the superiority of native artistic production. Besides these inherited goals, Enlightenment criteria for a public museum included a pedagogical commitment to instruction in the history of art that demanded a level of systematic representation lacking in the royal collection. An exemplary museum needed both quality and depth; in other words, it required showpieces by Raphael and Rubens, *and* a sampling of works by less well known though still respected artists. The political value of the museum depended upon impressing the cosmopolitan elites who defined taste and guided public opinion in early modern Europe. At the same time, the pedagogical value of the museum necessitated inclusion of historical artists who exercised beneficial influence on aspiring academicians. Since the French aspired to incorporate their own tradition of painting into the canon, an additional function of the Grand Gallery was to define and promote the legitimacy of the French school in a comparative and public context.

With the museum's public and patriotic purpose in mind, beginning in the late 1770s agents and dealers working for the Crown spent a decade and roughly one million livres buying new paintings, drawings, and decorative art destined for the Grand Gallery. Total expenditure was higher still when we factor in the sums paid to living artists every two years, beginning in 1777, for the history paintings and Great Men statues mentioned earlier. In little more than ten years some two hundred old-master paintings were added to the collection, including masterpieces that still occupy pride of place in the Musée du Louvre.

Then as now the most desirable acquisitions were first-rate paintings in excellent condition by artists not already well represented in the collection. A

distinguished provenance made strong pictures even more attractive. These criteria guided those empowered by d'Angiviller to collect for the Crown at public auctions and on buying trips in Europe. Among the highlights bought for the Louvre gallery at the 1784 sale of the comte de Vaudreuil (1740–1817), for example, were Rembrandt's *Hendrickje Stoffels in a Velvet Beret* (ca. 1652), Rubens's *Helena Fourment and Two of Her Children* (ca. 1636), Pietro da Cortona's *Reconciliation of Jacob and Laban* (ca. 1635; bought for the staggering sum of thirty-five thousand livres), and Bartolomé Esteban Murillo's *The Young Beggar* (ca. 1645–50). The royal collection was thin in the work of the first three artists (Rubens's famous series of twenty-four paintings, of 1622 to 1625, celebrating the life of Marie de' Medici remained in situ, at the Palais du Luxembourg, until the Revolution), and it possessed next to nothing of Spanish painting beyond a court portrait by Velázquez. Signaling a precocious interest in developing a Spanish school at the Grand Gallery, d'Angiviller bought a few Murillos at auction in the 1780s besides *The Young Beggar*, and through an agent in Spain he tried (unsuccessfully) to find other works by both Murillo and Velázquez. In 1779 he wrote to a French artist resident in Madrid: "I know there must be paintings by the great masters lost and forgotten in the attics of Spain, which the dealers have yet to explore. It occurred to me that one ought to be able to find inexpensive Titians, Velázquezs, Murillos, etc., which would enhance the king's magnificent collection at little cost."<sup>6</sup> Although the French royal collection was among the biggest in Europe, it was also lacking in works of the so-called Golden Age of Dutch painting, which had become very popular with private collectors and leading painters (Jean-Siméon Chardin, Jean-Honoré Fragonard, Greuze, and Jean-Baptiste Oudry, among others) in eighteenth-century France. In addition to acquiring works by artists of the first rank, d'Angiviller assiduously filled gaps in the museum's holdings through the purchase of works by secondary figures, such as Carlo Cignani, Filippo Lauri, Louis de Boulogne, Gaspard de Crayer, and others.

Where supply at auction fell short, d'Angiviller was not above buying or cajoling premium works from churches or private collectors, in some cases transferring decorative paintings from walls and ceilings to canvas to obtain examples of a master's oeuvre. In 1776, for example, he persuaded the Carthusians of Paris to part with a cycle of twenty-two paintings, of 1645 to 1648, on the life of Saint Bruno by Eustache Le Sueur (1616–1655), the best-known works by an artist then viewed as second only to Poussin in the pantheon of French artists.<sup>7</sup> A year later the dealer Alexandre Paillet (1743–1814), sent to the Netherlands on a buying expedition, secured Rubens's *Adoration of the Magi* (1626–29) from the Church of the Annunciation in Brussels for 27,770 livres and the cost of a replacement copy for the altar.<sup>8</sup>

The ascendance of the Neoclassical style in the visual arts meant that the Crown had little interest in buying paintings by the great Rococo artists of the

early eighteenth century. Representative works by popular precursors of Neoclassicism, Joseph-Marie Vien (1716–1809) and Greuze, were acquired, whereas Antoine Watteau, Nicolas Lancret, François Boucher, and Fragonard were all ignored. A more liberal taste was in evidence, however, when it came to the thousand or so drawings acquired for the Grand Gallery. At the posthumous sale of the great collector Pierre-Jean Mariette (1694–1774) in 1775, the museum bought studies by many modern French artists, including Poussin, Le Sueur, Pierre Puget, Watteau, Edme Bouchardon, and Pierre Peyron. Prior to the sale, the artist Jean-Baptiste Pierre (1714–1789) advised d'Angiviller that the king's drawings cabinet (thanks to earlier acquisitions from the collections formed by Eberhard Jabach, Charles Le Brun, and Charles-Antoine Coypel) was “rich in rare masters” but weak in the French school: “As for the moderns, *nothing*, except Lebrun. *A collection should be formed.*”<sup>9</sup>

Correspondence between d'Angiviller, his agents, and private collectors looking to sell works to the Crown reveals that the guiding criteria for new acquisitions were—as they are still—quality, rarity, and condition. Securing paintings that documented the history of art was important, but the pursuit of quality mattered above all. Anticipating standards still current today (and, no doubt, routine correspondence between curators and hopeful sellers), d'Angiviller responded to the owner of an anonymous painting of a dog dating from the time of Henry IV (r. 1589–1610): “The goal in establishing a royal picture gallery is not to assemble every painting that might be relevant to French history but, rather, to collect only works by the great masters.”<sup>10</sup> And even works attributed to those masters required careful evaluation, as he explained to another correspondent who had sent a list of pictures for sale: “Certainly there are several entries that indicate paintings of great merit, but that is not enough. Paintings by great masters are sometimes from their weakest periods, or they might be damaged or repainted, so that only a careful examination can determine if they have sufficient merit to enter the king's picture gallery.”<sup>11</sup> More often than not, paintings submitted for inspection were found to be “[neither] precious enough nor sufficiently well preserved to enter His Majesty's collection, which admits only works of rare beauty and in excellent condition.”<sup>12</sup>

The surest way to acquire quality paintings was through public auctions, which emerged in the eighteenth century as the chief site of exchange in a burgeoning international art market. Buying through auctions involved risk of fakes and of being outmaneuvered by experienced dealers; that risk had forced d'Angiviller to establish a relationship with the expert Paillet, mentioned earlier, in order to work the system from the inside and secure chosen paintings. Although out of the public eye, dealers remain essential to the formation of any museum collection. The turmoil of the Revolution led to the dissolution and sale of numerous private collections in France, none more celebrated than the Orléans collection, sold in 1791 and 1792, in two installments, both of

which eventually reached London. As late as 1790 Paillet implored the Crown to acquire, at the very least, “20 or 30 of the best works” to “add to the magnificence of France,” but to no avail.<sup>13</sup> France’s loss was Britain’s gain. In 1798 a consortium of British aristocrats snapped up the cream of the Orléans collection (its French and Italian paintings), which over the past two centuries has entered the collections of public museums in the United Kingdom.

### **The Revolution and the Opening of the Louvre**

Notwithstanding d’Angiviller’s considerable efforts and vision, the Grand Gallery project ground to a halt with the rise of financial and political troubles in the late 1780s. Following the fall of the Bastille in 1789, d’Angiviller, fearing for his safety, joined many other aristocrats in exile abroad and left the fate of the museum to the Revolution. Soon after it came to power in 1792, the Republican government, aware of the museum’s political potential, declared its interest in completing the Louvre gallery. Revolutionaries chose not to acknowledge all that d’Angiviller had done, and claimed the museum as their own. As one enthusiast put it, speedy completion of the museum would demonstrate “the superiority of the new regime over the regime of old” by “[accomplishing] in several years what ten kings and fifty prodigal ministers had failed to do in several centuries.”<sup>14</sup> The virtues of the new Revolutionary order would be on display as much as works of art. In the words of the painter and early Republican convert Jacques-Louis David: “The national museum will embrace knowledge in all its manifold beauty and will be the admiration of the universe. By embodying these grand ideas, worthy of a free people, . . . the museum . . . will become among the most powerful illustrations of the French Republic.”<sup>15</sup>

Political pressure to open the museum left little time to catalogue the newly acquired art or prepare the museum. The museum would have to open with the Grand Gallery more or less as it was—with the existing side windows, bare floorboards, and only the simplest wooden frames for pictures recently confiscated by Revolutionary authorities from religious institutions and aristocrats’ collections. Linking the Louvre to the momentum of the Revolution, the opening of the museum was set for August 10, 1793, the first anniversary of the monarchy’s abolition and the birth of an elected National Convention. The museum’s inauguration contributed to a nationwide celebration of Republican values. In Paris the key event was a daylong parade that wound its way through the streets of the city from the site of the Bastille prison (occupied by an allegorical “fountain of regeneration”) to the open Champ de Mars, where the president of the Convention read the constitution and led a pledge of allegiance. Music and dancing followed into the night. As envisaged by the event’s organizer, the painter David, the festival would demonstrate Republican unity—“you will see the president . . . marching in step with the blacksmith,

the mayor with his sash beside the butcher or mason, the black African, who differs only in color, next to the white European”—even as it baptized key Parisian landmarks as sites of Revolutionary memory.

The museum added to the themes of unity and regeneration in palpable ways. On display in a liberated royal palace were works of art that had been taken from their pre-Revolutionary settings in churches and noble residences and returned to their “rightful” owners, the people. According to the abbé Grégoire (Henri Grégoire, 1750–1831), a deputy to the National Convention, “[those treasures] which were previously visible to only a privileged few... will henceforth afford pleasure to all: statues, paintings, and books are charged with the sweat of the people: the property of the people will be returned to them.”<sup>16</sup> Free access to and enjoyment of a nationalized collection of fine art in the former residence of kings underscored the triumph of enlightenment over despotism, of the people over the privileged elite, and of public education over private pleasure. In the museum’s early days, the paintings bore labels indicating from whose collections they had been taken. As the Revolution intensified and the first flush of idealism gave way to the paranoia, war, and violence of the period known as the Terror, the museum took on an added symbolic role as a tangible sign of Republican stability and culture. In July 1793 the minister of the interior promoted the museum as a means of impressing on friend and foe, foreigner and Frenchman that “our present political problems have in no way diminished the cultivation of the arts among us.”<sup>17</sup>

So much for symbolism. Shortly after the museum opened to Revolutionary fanfare in August 1793 it closed again, for just over a year, to allow for building improvements and a more carefully considered installation. The 1793 display, comprising 537 paintings and 124 marble and bronze sculptures, polished marble tables, clocks, and pieces of porcelain, had been quickly assembled for political show and needed to be reworked for two reasons. First, the paintings on view had been chosen in haste and arranged without method. Insufficient scrutiny had been given to the vast quantity of objects appropriated by the state and still arriving at the museum’s door in the days and weeks preceding August 10. Only a patient evaluation of the nation’s rapidly expanding assets would yield the best possible selection of art. The paintings in the initial display had also been installed without regard to history or the nationality of artists, which had come to be viewed as the proper and progressive determinants of arrangement in Enlightenment circles throughout Europe.<sup>18</sup> Another argument in favor of a methodical order was that it helped mask the original function of confiscated works of art. In a society that had only recently done away with religion and the monarchy, there was risk in displaying images that could rekindle nostalgia or enthusiasm for church and Crown. Blatantly royalist icons were kept in storage (or destroyed), but a strict arrangement by school and chronology neutralized the spiritual content of religious icons by

reidentifying them as masterpieces of art history; so, for example, Rubens's *Descent from the Cross* (1611–14), created for Antwerp Cathedral, was confiscated by the French in 1794 and displayed in the museum as a key early work by the genius of seventeenth-century Flemish painting and teacher of Anthony van Dyck, a selection of whose own masterworks hung nearby. Connoisseurs had long traveled to churches to appreciate the “art” of works created for a religious purpose; the museum now proposed to inculcate a habit of aesthetic, art-historical consumption in the broad public.

A second reason to reinstall the exhibition was that the rich assortment of fine decorative arts—so patently inspired, as one critic put it, by the “luxurious apartments, . . . voluptuous boudoirs, . . . [and] cabinets of self-styled art lovers”—was deemed inappropriate for a public museum sponsored by a progressive republic.<sup>19</sup> Paintings possessed transcendent value as vehicles of noble ideas, formative historical events, and aesthetic principles, but marble tables, clocks, and porcelain were irredeemably marked as private commodities whose presence undermined the museum's identity as a public and pedagogical institution. As David declared in 1794, “the museum is not supposed to be a vain assemblage of luxury goods that serve only to satisfy idle curiosity. What it must be is an imposing school.”<sup>20</sup> And a school it was: following the dissolution in 1793 of the Royal Academy of Painting and Sculpture, which had provided the framework for formal instruction in the arts since the mid-seventeenth century, the Louvre became the official training ground for



**FIGURE 8-3.**

Hubert Robert (French, 1733–1808), *The Grand Gallery of the Louvre*, about 1795, ca. 1795. Oil on canvas, 37 × 41 cm (14½ × 16 in.). Paris, Musée du Louvre

aspiring artists. Henceforth young painters and sculptors were to learn directly from the old masters through copying in the Grand Gallery (copyists can be seen in Robert's views of the gallery, including figure 8-3, which shows the installation after the museum's 1794 reopening). Days were set aside each week for the exclusive study of artists. Through the nineteenth century, long after the return of studio apprenticeships and the academy system, copying remained a staple of artistic education at the Louvre (and at other museums).

With so many paintings to manage in an inflexible space, a rigorous reinstallation of the gallery hang proved difficult to achieve. Pressure to make the nation's art readily available conflicted with the desire to make the museum worthy of its calling. Frustrations on both sides are revealed in a newspaper editorial that appeared in January 1795:

For a long time we have wanted to give our readers an account of this superb museum, . . . but we have been waiting until the paintings were placed in a permanent, rational order. Yet those in charge seem to take pleasure in constantly rearranging them. A given picture that could be seen near the entrance to the gallery one week will be found at the far end a week later. Or will have disappeared altogether. It is hard to imagine that the only goal in rearranging these many paintings was to place them in *schools*.<sup>21</sup>

Complicating the task of arrangement was the sudden influx of new art sent back to France from the Netherlands as the booty of war. Following successful offensives in the war against a coalition of anti-Revolutionary forces, the French government authorized, beginning in 1794, the confiscation of art in occupied territory for the Louvre. French experts armed with guidebooks and detailed lists followed behind conquering armies, appropriating art and other materials for the museums of Paris as they went. Their efforts inundated the Louvre with many more masterpieces worthy of inclusion in the Grand Gallery.

A good number of paintings sent from the Low Countries needed to be cleaned and restored before they were displayed. In part, the French justified their confiscation of foreign art on grounds of preservation: just as the Revolution had delivered mankind from ideological darkness and superstition to freedom and light, so the Louvre's restorers would rescue paintings from centuries of neglect, return them to pristine condition, and make them available for public consumption. A detailed condition report on the first shipment of paintings from Belgium concluded with the following: "These scrupulous observations will prove to posterity that we were worthy of such conquests, and that the degradations these pictures have suffered must be attributed to the idle monks who possessed them before us."<sup>22</sup> In effect, the French viewed the confiscation of art for the Louvre as a salvage operation, much in the way that later museums justified their acquisition of art and artifacts from the dead or dying

civilizations of ancient Egypt, Greece, and Mesopotamia, and from indigenous peoples, including Native Americans.

From the Netherlands the French army pushed south into Germany and Italy, capturing more art and causing further delays in the definitive arrangement of the museum. After the Louvre closed once more, in 1796, for refurbishment and reorganization, it was not to reopen for another three years. No sooner had the consignments from Belgium and Holland been assimilated than new convoys arrived from Italy containing even more famous masterpieces. Beginning with his first victories in northern Italy in 1796 and culminating with the surrender of papal territories a year later, Napoléon Bonaparte, commanding general of the Italian campaign, stipulated the inclusion of a specific number of works of art in each of the treaty agreements he signed. In all, one hundred sculptures and just under two hundred paintings were claimed by the French. As in the Low Countries, French commissioners followed the army with “wish lists” drawn up in Paris. In most cases, the choices were straightforward: the French helped themselves to canonical paintings and ancient sculptures that any connoisseur could have named off the top of his head. In the case of sculptures, the highlights included the Apollo Belvedere, Laocoön, Belvedere Torso, Cleopatra, and Antinous (all today Vatican City, Museo Pio-Clementino, Musei Vaticani), as well as the Dying Gaul (today Rome, Palazzo Nuovo, Musei Capitolini). As Francis Haskell and Nicholas Penny have noted, the selection “implied a tribute to consecrated taste.”<sup>23</sup> The same can be said for the paintings. Famous works by Titian, Veronese, Caravaggio, Domenichino, Guercino, and Raphael, including his *Transfiguration* (1516–20; today Vatican City, Pinacoteca Vaticana, Musei Vaticani), then considered the greatest of masterpieces, were all packed and sent to Paris. At the same time, pictures by less obvious artists were also chosen, works by the likes of Simone Cantarini, Dosso Dossi, Elisabetta Sirani, Ercole Gennari, and Carlo Bononi. The purpose here, once again, was to fill gaps in the collection and present a comprehensive overview of the national (and in this case, regional Italian) schools.

The French public eagerly awaited the convoys of art from Italy. The press reported in gripping detail the complex task of packing delicate paintings and statues, the slow and arduous journeys by boat and barge through bad weather and threats from English frigates. In the summer of 1798 the arrival of booty from Rome and Venice occasioned a festive pageant in the capital. On the morning of July 27 a long procession of cases containing books and manuscripts, animals and natural-history specimens, and famous works of art made its way from the quays of the Seine to the Champ de Mars, accompanied by cavalry, foot soldiers, and musical bands. The packing of precious objects made the procession visually disappointing (engravings show only the bronze horses from San Marco and some caged animals visible), but rhetorical banners and music gave cause for celebration. A placard identifying the equine sculptures

from Venice read: "Horses transported from Corinth to Rome, and from Rome to Constantinople to Venice, and from Venice to France. They are finally on free soil."<sup>24</sup> The refrain of a song declared: "Rome is no more in Rome. / Every Hero, every Great Man / Has changed country: / Rome is no more in Rome, / It is all in Paris."<sup>25</sup>

The spirit of conquest pervaded the museum. Successive shipments from Italy immediately went on display in the Salon adjoining the Grand Gallery to satisfy public curiosity before being removed for inspection and cleaning. Those temporary exhibitions revealed a shift in the way the museum and its contents were presented to the public. As a result of Napoléon's Italian campaign, the Louvre took on an increasingly military air. The symbolism of war and military might succeeded that of popular triumph over despotism. Artists and the public now had the army as much as the Revolution to thank for the museum. As one patriot put it: "The National Museum and its precious contents are recompense for the lives and blood of our fellow citizens spilled on the field of honor. French artists are worthy of this prize; they fully recognize its importance."<sup>26</sup> Reporting on one of the Italian exhibitions at the Salon, the journal *La décade philosophique* revealed that the French *tricolore* that hung in the museum had been joined by an arrangement of captured arms and battle standards:

A trophy of arms and flags taken from the enemy decorate the door of the Salon. In the middle an inscription reads: "To the Army of Italy." The sight of this trophy warmed my blood, the words brought tears to my eyes.... One day we will raise monuments of marble and bronze to our warriors. Unnecessary efforts! The true and lasting monuments to their glory will be in our museums.<sup>27</sup>

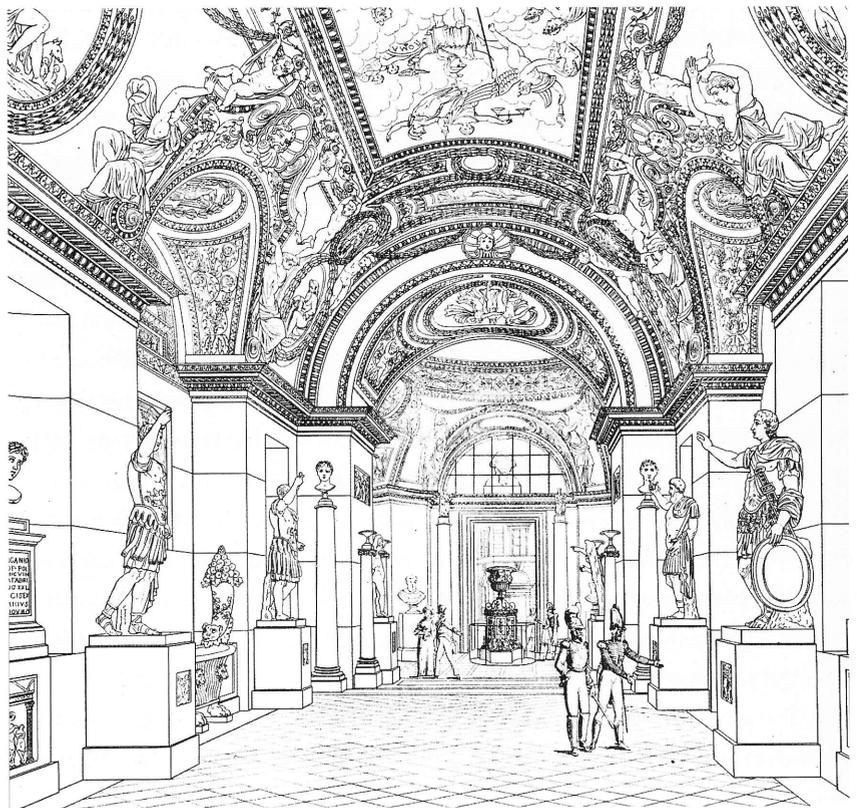
Needless to say, it took time to permanently install the new Italian pictures and ancient sculptures. The majority of the former required varying degrees of restoration, while the latter needed to be arranged in the new sculpture galleries laid out on the floor below the Grand Gallery. The sculpture galleries opened toward the end of 1800, followed by the Grand Gallery, complete with the Italian schools, on Bastille Day of the following year. The paintings were arranged by school and in chronological order, though the need to please the eye through a symmetrical arrangement, and to accommodate the structural obstacles of windows and columns, compromised the historical sequence in places. An effort was made to focus attention on the most celebrated pieces through placement in the center of walls.

The sculptures were exhibited in a suite of rooms, some of which had been decorated with ceiling paintings of allegorical or mythological themes in the mid-seventeenth century. Contemporary ceiling paintings were added

in the other rooms, the subjects of which served to extol French patronage of the arts or the country's role in their modern development. Following Roman tradition, the statuary was grouped thematically in each room, coordinated—to the extent possible—with the subject of the vault decoration. This is hardly surprising, as the Louvre's new curator of antiquities, the renowned antiquarian Ennio Quirino Visconti (1751–1818), had catalogued the ancient sculpture collection in the Museo Pio-Clementino, at the Vatican.<sup>28</sup> The decorative themes included the Seasons, Illustrious Men, and the Muses. The political and cultural potential of this scheme was perhaps most fully exploited in the *Salle des empereurs romains* (Room of the Roman Emperors; fig. 8-4), where statues of Roman emperors lined the walls, and the ceiling was decorated with Charles Meynier's painting of Earth receiving the code of Roman law, as dictated by Nature, Wisdom, and Justice, from the emperors Hadrian and Justinian.<sup>29</sup> Bas-reliefs of river-gods—the Po, Tiber, Nile, and Rhine—in the corners of the vault symbolized the territories conquered by the French Republic, the new Rome. Like the finest pictures in the Grand Gallery, the most prized of the Louvre's statues were showcased. They stood in individual niches, as they had in the Cortile delle Statue at the Museo Pio-Clementino, from which they were taken (see chap. 4, fig. 4-3). The Laocoön was placed at the end of one of the two principal galleries, and the Apollo Belvedere at the end of the other.

**FIGURE 8-4.**

Auguste Hibon (French, 1780–1857) (after Christophe Civeton), *Salle des empereurs romains*. Engraving, 24.6 × 32.3 cm (9<sup>5</sup>/<sub>8</sub> × 12<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> in.). From Comte Frédéric de Clarac, *Musée de sculpture antique et moderne; ou, Description historique et graphique du Louvre et de toutes ses parties...* (Paris, 1826–27), vol. 1 of plates, pl. 70. Berkeley, Doe Library, University of California



The final component of the mighty Louvre was a drawings gallery, opened with little fanfare in the Galerie d'Apollon next to the Salon in 1797. Although a handful of drawings had been displayed at the Luxembourg Gallery, and a similar arrangement may well have been planned for d'Angiviller's Grand Gallery, the 1797 exhibition was the first of its kind in a French museum (and perhaps the first at any museum). Four hundred and fifteen drawings from the three major schools were chosen from a collection that numbered more than eleven thousand. As in the Grand Gallery, the drawings were arranged sequentially by school and vertically by size. Anticipating modern custom, they were matted and framed uniformly under glass. Once again, a strict chronological arrangement had to be modified in the interests of achieving "a symmetry pleasing to the eye."<sup>30</sup>

The museological ambitions of the early Louvre can be gleaned through close scrutiny of one small section of the museum arranged by Dominique-Vivant Denon (1747–1825) soon after he became director of the museum in 1802. In a letter of January 1, 1803, Denon invited Napoléon to visit the Louvre to inspect a new installation of paintings by Raphael (1483–1520) and his master Perugino (ca. 1450–1523), which he described as "like a life of the master of all painters" and a model for the "order, instruction, and classification" he aimed to bring to the entire collection (fig. 8-5). "In a few months, while visiting the gallery one will be able to have . . . a history course in the art of painting," he boasted.<sup>31</sup> Two days later, on January 3, Denon published an article in the *Moniteur universelle* proclaiming that this new installation would allow the public to "see at a glance the extent of [Raphael's] genius, the astonishing rapidity of his progress, and the variety of genres that his talent encompassed."<sup>32</sup> According to Denon, the two paintings by Perugino crowning the arrangement on either side, both of them depictions of the Virgin and Child with saints, represented "the refined, precious, and delicate school where Raphael imbibed the principles of an art that he carried to the highest degree of perfection." The paintings that filled out the wall offered a concise overview of Raphael's career, from fledgling pupil to mature master. The installation worked counter-clockwise: Raphael's *Coronation of the Virgin* (1502–4; today Vatican City, Pinacoteca Vaticana, Musei Vaticani), at center left, manifested a style still heavily indebted to Perugino; the predella panels at bottom (the Baglione predella, of 1507, and the Oddi predella, of 1502–4; both today Pinacoteca Vaticana) showed Raphael absorbing Florentine tradition before assimilating and developing the genius of Leonardo da Vinci, which was evident, on the right, in Raphael's *Portrait of Baldassare Castiglione*, of 1514–15, and *Virgin and Child with the Infant Saint John the Baptist (La belle jardinière)*, of 1507–8. Dominating the wall was the *Transfiguration*, of 1516–20, the climactic masterpiece of Raphael's brief but brilliant career. A model of didactic display—it was inspired by the account of Raphael's progress in Giorgio Vasari's life of the artist, written



**FIGURE 8-5.**

Maria Cosway  
 (English, 1759–1838),  
 Display of paintings by  
 Perugino and Raphael,  
 including Raphael's  
*Transfiguration*, at  
 the Louvre, ca. 1803.  
 Etching. From Julius  
 Griffiths and Maria  
 Cosway, *Collection  
 de gravures à l'eau-  
 fortis des principaux  
 tableaux d'après l'école  
 italienne, contenus dans  
 le Musée Napoléon, avec  
 des notices critiques  
 et historiques...*  
 (Paris, 1806), pl. 10.  
 Philadelphia, American  
 Philosophical Society  
 Library

in the mid-sixteenth century—the installation was also exemplary in its attention to visual harmony. Within an overall symmetrical configuration, the two Peruginos balance the composition through the mirrored poses of the Virgin and Child and the repetition of arched canopies, echoed in the shapes of the two flanking Raphaels in the middle register and in the disposition of figures within the *Transfiguration*.<sup>33</sup>

Under the direction of Denon, the museum at the Louvre, renamed the Musée Napoléon in 1803, took on a more refined appearance and grew in size. More important paintings came from abroad, especially from Germany in 1806 (see chap. 5, fig. 5-5) and Vienna in 1809; after 1811 Denon raided Italy once more, this time in search of so-called primitive, early Renaissance works to further extend the chronological exhibition of the all-important Italian school (and further enhance Raphael's stature). Denon supervised renovations to the Grand Gallery between 1805 and 1810 by the architects Charles Percier

(1764–1838) and Pierre-François-Léonard Fontaine (1762–1853), who added the much-awaited skylights and columned subdivisions, providing extra wall space for paintings and a punctuated rhythm to the space. The ceremonial grandeur of the Louvre at its height is amply manifested in Benjamin Zix's drawing of the wedding procession of Napoléon and Marie-Louise of Austria through the Grand Gallery in 1810 (fig. 8-6). Although by all accounts Napoléon had little interest in the fine arts, he understood their value as an ornament of state and vehicle of propaganda. He used the best artists of his day—David, Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres, Baron Gros—to craft an imperial self-image that still resonates in the popular imagination. And he retained d'Angiviller's ambition to make the Louvre into the greatest art museum the world had known.

At the museum's height under Napoléon, the Louvre became a must-see tourist destination, as compelling as any other site in Europe. Napoléon wrote to one of his generals that he hoped to see Paris become "the rendezvous of all Europe," and thanks in good part to the Louvre, it largely did.<sup>34</sup> During the brief Peace of Amiens (1802–3) and again after Waterloo, thousands of foreign visitors flocked to Paris, and the Louvre was frequently the first stop on their itineraries. "The first thing I did . . . was go to the Louvre," recalled the English writer William Hazlitt (1778–1830). It was "the first last and midst in my thoughts."<sup>35</sup> The museum was also the first port of call for Sir John Dean Paul, who, setting foot in the Grand Gallery, found "[the first] coup d'œil . . .

**FIGURE 8-6.**

Benjamin Zix (French, 1772–1811), *The Wedding Procession of Napoléon and Marie-Louise of Austria through the Grand Gallery of the Louvre*, April 2, 1810, 1810. Pen and watercolor, 40 × 60 cm (15<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> × 23<sup>5</sup>/<sub>8</sub> in.). Paris, Musée du Louvre



[to be] almost overpowering.” “No words can express,” wrote Paul, “the sensation of delight that this grand assemblage of all that is most exquisite in the fine arts afforded us.”<sup>36</sup> During Paul’s eleven-day stay in Paris, he went to the museum four times; it was the only place he visited more than once. Other travelers were equally awed. Thomas Jessop, from the north of England, wrote: “*The effect upon a stranger’s mind when he 1st enters this magnificent museum is better conceived than described. The eye is lost in the vast and original perspective; the sense is bewildered amid the vast combinations of art.*”<sup>37</sup> The architecture and the “grand assemblage” represented by the collection together generated universal astonishment.

Foreign visitors noted the “very liberal regulations which open [the museum] . . . to the French public,” including “the lowest classes of the community.”<sup>38</sup> Some days of the week were set aside for use by artists and foreign visitors, but the public days, while “not suited to study or careful examination and reflection,” according to Carl Christian Berkheim, from Germany, afforded the amusement of overhearing “the often bizarre comments that are made and observing the hoards of people drawn from all classes and walks of life as they traverse the gallery.”<sup>39</sup> No thought was given to helping ignorant visitors grasp what they saw. Early guidebooks sold at the door were of no use to the illiterate poor and, in any case, provided little information beyond names of artists and titles of works. The pedagogical intent of the methodical arrangement of the art surely went over the heads of all but the most knowledgeable visitors. Educational programs and explanatory wall labels were not to be widely available at museums for another century.

Some art-world aficionados resented the Louvre’s open doors and the loss of privileged access. John Scott, visiting from London in 1815, complained that the museum had been designed “to excite the wonder of crowds instead of the sensibility of a few,” to “please . . . the multitudes of Paris” rather than “the person of taste and feeling.”<sup>40</sup> Echoes of early class friction in museums may still be felt today in controversies over blockbuster exhibitions, seductive architecture, shops, and restaurants. Perhaps those best served by the Louvre and the museums it engendered were the emerging middle classes, who were eager to better themselves but lacked the means to pursue extended travel. Men like Henry Milton rushed to Paris in 1815, before the Louvre’s treasures were dispersed after Napoléon’s defeat, fearing that the great works were “never again to be seen except by the rich and idle few.” “Every man can command the time and means requisite to visit Paris,” Milton remarked, but “not one in a thousand can accomplish a journey to Italy.” In the Grand Gallery, Milton condemned the superficiality of his social superiors who went to the museum for the sake of fashion, merely to be seen and heard, finding it “laughable . . . how very few are really attentive to the treasures which surround them.”<sup>41</sup> The art museums of the modern era were to be built around Milton’s ethos of earnest self-improvement.

As noted earlier, the guiding spirit of the Musée Napoléon was Dominique-Vivant Denon, whose appointment by Napoléon as director general of French museums may be viewed as a decisive step in the bureaucratization of museums.<sup>42</sup> A gifted administrator with enormous energy, Denon was charming and polished, a well-traveled former diplomat and man of letters at ease in elite social circles before and after the French Revolution. His rare combination of urbane social and diplomatic skills and knowledge of art made him, in effect, a model for the modern museum director.

Not the least of the ways in which Napoléon's Louvre anticipates museums of our time was in its undoing following the collapse of the Empire in 1815. Following the decisive battle of Waterloo, the allies demanded the return of art appropriated by force over the previous twenty years. Like today's museum directors Denon did his best to block repatriation (and a good deal of what the French armies took, including half of the five hundred paintings looted from Italy, remained in French museums), but the principle of moral right prevailed. The coordinated return of cultural treasures broke a pattern of taking spoils of war going back to antiquity and set a precedent for restitution efforts in the modern era. Denon defended the overriding value of a comprehensive museum like the Louvre, claiming that "time heals the pain of war, scattered nations rebuild, but a collection such as this, a comparison of the efforts of the human spirit through the centuries, . . . has just been extinguished, and extinguished forever" and could not be reassembled.<sup>43</sup> However, for the victor of Waterloo, the Duke of Wellington, justice demanded the return of works of art "to the countries from which, contrary to the practice of civilized warfare, they had been torn during the disastrous period of the French Revolution and the tyranny of Buonaparte."<sup>44</sup> At issue were the relative merits of a centralized and comprehensive art collection and the rights of nation-states to define and control their own cultural patrimony. The dispute foreshadows current debates about repatriation and the value of universal museums.

## NOTES

- 1 [Étienne La Font de Saint-Yenne], *Réflexions sur quelques causes de l'état présent de la peinture en France, avec un examen des principaux ouvrages exposés au Louvre le mois d'août 1746* (The Hague, 1747), esp. p. 36ff.
- 2 Louis de Jaucourt, "Louvre, le," in *Encyclopédie; ou, Dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts, et des métiers*, edited by Denis Diderot and Jean Le Rond d'Alembert, vol. 9 (Paris, 1765), pp. 706–7. Diderot's article "Musée," in volume 10 (Paris, 1765), pp. 893–94, of the *Encyclopédie* is also important for a definition of Enlightenment views of the ideal museum.
- 3 Maille Dussausoy, *Le citoyen désintéressé; ou, Diverses idées patriotiques concernant quelques établissemens et embellissemens utiles à la ville de Paris*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1767–68).
- 4 Quoted in Andrew McClellan, *Inventing the Louvre: Art, Politics, and the Origins of the Modern Museum in Eighteenth-Century Paris* (Berkeley, 1999), p. 54.
- 5 Charles-Axel Guillaumot, *Mémoire sur la manière d'éclairer la galerie du Louvre* (n.p., [1787]), p. 40.
- 6 Quoted in McClellan, *Inventing the Louvre* (note 4), p. 63. For the "rediscovery" of Spanish art in the nineteenth century, see Gary Tinterow and Geneviève Lacambre, with Deborah L. Roldán et al., *Manet/Velázquez: The French Taste for Spanish Painting*, exh. cat. (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2003); and Francis Haskell, *Rediscoveries in Art: Some Aspects of Taste, Fashion and Collecting in England and France*, Wrightsman Lectures, 7 (Ithaca, 1980).
- 7 McClellan, *Inventing the Louvre* (note 4), pp. 68–69. In return for the paintings, the Crown gave the Carthusians thirty thousand livres toward the cost of a new roof.
- 8 McClellan, *Inventing the Louvre* (note 4), p. 66.
- 9 Archives nationales, Paris, 01 1913 (1775), fol. 349.
- 10 Archives nationales, Paris, 01 1917 (1784), fol. 361.
- 11 Archives nationales, Paris, 01 1918 (1785), fol. 190.
- 12 Archives nationales, Paris, 01 1915 (1780), fol. 286.
- 13 Archives nationales, Paris, 01 1920 (1790), fol. 86. On the fate of the Orléans collection, see Haskell, *Rediscoveries in Art* (note 6), pp. 39–44.
- 14 Armand-Guy Kersaint, *Discours sur les monuments publics, prononcé au Conseil du département de Paris, le 15 décembre 1791* (Paris, 1792), p. 42.
- 15 *Le moniteur universelle*, vol. 14 (1796), p. 263.
- 16 Abbé Henri Grégoire, *Rapport sur les destructions opérées par le vandalisme, et sur les moyens de le réprimer* (Paris, [1794]), p. 21.
- 17 Alexandre Tuetey and Jean Guiffrey, *La Commission du muséum et la création du Musée du Louvre (1792–1793)* (Paris, 1909), p. 213.
- 18 For Enlightenment attitudes toward picture arrangement, see Debora J. Meijers, *Kunst als natuur: De Habsburgse schilderijengalerij in Wenen omstreeks 1780* (Amsterdam, 1991); and Édouard Pommier, ed., *Les musées en Europe à la veille de l'ouverture du Louvre* (Paris, 1995).
- 19 The quotation is from Gabriel Bouquier, *Rapport et projet de décret, relatifs à la restauration des tableaux et autres monumens des arts, formant la collection du Muséum national* (Paris, [1794]), p. 2.
- 20 Jacques-Louis David, *Second rapport sur la nécessité de la suppression de la Commission du muséum* (Paris, [1794]), p. 4.
- 21 *La décade philosophique* (10 pluviôse Year III [January 29, 1795]), p. 211.
- 22 Quoted in Gilberte Émile-Mâle, "Le séjour à Paris de 1794 à 1815 de célèbres tableaux de Rubens: Quelques documents inédits," *Bulletin de l'Institut royal de patrimoine artistique* 7 (1964), pp. 159–60.
- 23 Francis Haskell and Nicholas Penny, *Taste and the Antique: The Lure of Classical Sculpture, 1500–1900* (New Haven, 1981), p. 109.
- 24 Quoted and translated by Patricia Mainardi, "Assuring the Empire of the Future: The 1798 Fête de la Liberté," *Art Journal* 48, no. 2 (Summer 1989), p. 158.
- 25 *La décade philosophique* (20 prairial Year VI [June 8, 1798]), p. 230.
- 26 Baltard, *Homage d'un artiste, aux armées de la République* (n.p, n.d.), p. 2.
- 27 *La décade philosophique* (20 germinal Year VI [April 9, 1798]), p. 154.
- 28 See Carole Paul, *The Borghese Collections and the Display of Art in the Age of the Grand Tour* (Aldershot, 2008), pp. 239–47, for the decorative program of the sculpture galleries at the Louvre. See also Daniela Gallo, "The Galerie des Antiques of the Musée Napoléon: A New Perception of Ancient Sculpture?" in *Napoleon's Legacy: The Rise of National Museums in Europe, 1794–1830*, edited by Ellinoor Bergvelt et al., *Berliner Schriften zur Museumsforschung*, 27 (Berlin, 2009), pp. 111–23.
- 29 See chapter 1 in this publication for the precedent at the Capitoline Museum, in Rome, for the politicization of the display of antiquities in public museums.
- 30 *La décade philosophique* (30 thermidor Year VII [August 17, 1799]), p. 365. See also *L'an V: Dessins des grands maîtres*, exh. cat. (Paris: Réunion des musées nationaux, 1988).
- 31 Archives nationales, Paris, AF IV 1049, fol. 2.
- 32 *Le moniteur universelle*, no. 103 (13 nivôse Year XI [January 2, 1803]), p. 415. Quoted by Jane Van Nimmen, "Responses to Raphael's Paintings at the Louvre, 1798–1848" (PhD diss., University of Maryland, 1986), p. 148.
- 33 The Perugino paintings are the *Virgin and Child Enthroned with Saints John the Evangelist and Augustine* (1494; today Chiesa di Sant'Agostino, Cremona), on the left, and the *Virgin and Child Enthroned with Saints Lawrence, Louis of Toulouse, Herculanus, and Constantius* (1495–96; today Vatican City, Pinacoteca Vaticana, Musei Vaticani), on the right.
- 34 Quoted by Francis Henry Taylor, *The Taste of Angels: A History of Art Collecting from Rameses to Napoleon* (Boston, 1948), p. 542.
- 35 William Hazlitt, *Notes of a Journey through France and Italy*, vol. 10 of *The Complete Works of William Hazlitt*, edited by P. P. Howe (London, 1930), p. 106.

- 36 [Sir John Dean Paul], *Journal of a Party of Pleasure to Paris, in the Month of August, 1802*... (London, 1802), pp. 36, 39. For other visitors' responses, see Dominique Poulot, "Surveiller et s'instruire": *La Révolution française et l'intelligence de l'héritage historique* (Oxford, 1996).
- 37 Quoted in McClellan, *Inventing the Louvre* (note 4), p. 198.
- 38 Rev. John Chetwode Eustace, *A Letter from Paris, to George Petre, Esq.* (London, 1814), p. 47; Rev. William Shepherd, *Paris, in Eighteen Hundred and Two, and Eighteen Hundred and Fourteen* (London, 1814), p. 52.
- 39 [Carl Christian Berkheim], *Lettres sur Paris* (Heidelberg, 1809), p. 353.
- 40 John Scott, *A Visit to Paris in 1814*... (London, 1815), pp. 57, 251–52.
- 41 Henry Milton, *Letters on the Fine Arts, Written from Paris, in the Year 1815* (London, 1816), pp. 9, 10, 28.
- 42 On Denon, see Pierre Rosenberg, ed., *Dominique-Vivant Denon: L'œil de Napoléon*, exh. cat. (Paris: Réunion des musées nationaux, 1999); and Peter Brooks, "Napoleon's Eye," *The New York Review of Books* (November 19, 2009), pp. 30–33.
- 43 Dominique-Vivant Denon, *Précis de ce qui s'est passé au Musée royal depuis l'entrée des alliés à Paris* (1815), reproduced in *Vivant Denon, Directeur des musées sous le Consulat et l'Empire: Correspondance, 1802–1815*, edited by Marie-Anne Dupuy, Isabelle le Masne de Chermont, and Elaine Williamson, *Notes et documents des musées de France*, 32 (Paris, 1999), vol. 2, p. 1170. My thanks to Monica Preti-Hamard for drawing my attention to this publication.
- 44 *The Dispatches of Field Marshall the Duke of Wellington... from 1799 to 1818*, edited by Lieutenant Colonel Gurwood (London, 1838), vol. 13, p. 12.