

ABSTRACT

Title of Thesis: BY THE BOOK: EARLY MODERN
WOMEN'S ARTISTIC EDUCATION AND
THE SILENT INSTRUCTION OF PRINT
CULTURE

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Across early modern Europe, the use of the hand as a tool, full of vigor, and comparatively, attentive to both medium and content, remained at the forefront of artistic practice. For many artists, particularly women, a question of refining the skilled work of the hand became central to understanding the gendered nature of art itself and the limits of contemporary artistic education. This paper broadly considers the changing nature of women's artistic education between the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, guided by the work of the woman artist through print culture and self-instruction. With central case studies exploring the artistic texts of Giovanna Garzoni, Élisabeth-Sophie Chéron, and Catherine Perrot, this thesis traces the private means by which women artists utilized rising access to print culture for artistic instruction in domestic spaces, commensurate with mass production and expansion of printed volumes in Europe between the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

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THE SILENT INSTRUCTION OF PRINT CULTURE

by

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Dedication

In memory of my beloved great-grandparents, James Roy Deaver and Martha Pearl Chandler Deaver, whose love, perseverance, hard work, and tenacity lives on in all I do.

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Introduction

“This Book must be of a singular esteem, if we reflect that it contains the two principal reasons which are ordinarily used to esteem and seek a Book, and render it considerable, when they are found joined together; knowledge, convenience, and utility.”¹

Across early modern Europe, the use of the hand as a tool, full of vigor, and comparatively, attentive to both medium and content, remained at the forefront of artistic practice. The hand’s vigor was most often realized in works on paper, drawn with the quill or pen, immediately exhibitiv of the artist’s skill behind the stroke. Supported by the longstanding *disegno* tradition in Florentine artistic practice and exported across European artistic circles, the power of drawing and sketch impressed upon artists the necessity of formulating ideas on paper—capturing a moment, idea, or impression of the world, either for its own sake or for discovering the essence of form before committing its image to the canvas. The motion of the hand, indicative of the “direct testimony to the artist’s imaginative activity,” and resulting from the act’s “proximity to writing as a form of intellectual expression,” secured drawing’s necessity in training young artists setting out to become masters.² For many artists, particularly women, a question of refining the hand’s skill became central to understanding the gendered nature of art itself and the limits of contemporary artistic education. This thesis broadly considers the changing nature of women’s artistic education through print culture between the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, from refinement in texts according to a male hand’s intellect to one thoroughly defined and guided by the work of the woman artist.

¹ Catherine Perrot, “Avis,” in *Les Leçons Royales ou la maniere de Peindre en Mignature les Fleurs & les Oyseaux* (Paris: n.p., 1725). Original text reads: “Ce Livre doit être d’une singuliere estime, si l’on fait reflexion, qu’il contient les deux raisons principals qui sont pour l’ordinaire estimer & rechercher un Livre, & le rendent considerable, los qu’elles se trouvent jointes ensemble; sçavoir [sic], la commodité & l’utilité.”

² Nicola Suthor, “Guercino’s ‘Wet’ Drawing,” *RES: Anthropology and Aesthetics* no. 63/64 (Spr./Aut. 2013): 84.

In the 1631 text, *The Writing Schoolemaster, or, The Anatomie of Faire Writing*, John Davies does not hesitate to describe women's inability for succeeding in calligraphy and line formation, recognizing that they "naturally lack strength in their hand to perform those full strokes, and (as it were) to bruise a letter as men can do."³ Other writers, such as the French-Huguenot John de Beauchesne, found women as an ideal studentship yet without the "bruis[ing]" quality perhaps necessary for strong expression. Dedicating his 1593 volume, *La Clef de l'écriture laquelle ouvre le chemin à la jeunesse, pour bien apprendre à excire la vraye lettre françoise & italique*, to Ladies Mary, Elizabeth, and Alethea Talbot, Beauchesne describes the inspiration for his text as the "vertuous zeale which I perceive doth move the desire of your fine and dainty pennes to surmount even the best in skill and nimbleness of well writing."⁴ The immediate connection fostered between writing and drawing in these works mimics concurrent ideas relating to debates on the *querelle des femmes*, the rise of literacy and printed materials, and the presence of the professional woman artist as counterpoint to the traditional male master.

By the beginning of the seventeenth century, artistic education began and endured with the student's continued drawing practice—first of practicing works from the master, then of antiquity, and finally of the student-as-master in creating new *invenzione* and compositional schemes to express artistic command.⁵ For women, this process of artistic education was less straightforward.⁶ Access to the live model, for instance, was often impossible as it provided

³ John Davies, *The Writing Schoolemaster, or, The Anatomie of Faire Writing Wherein is Exactlie Expressed Each Severall Character, Together with Other Rules & Documents, Coincident to the Art of Faire and Speedy Writing* (London: Michael Sparke, 1631), 2.

⁴ Heather Wolfe, "Women's Handwriting," in *The Cambridge Companion to Early Modern Women's Writing*, ed. Laura Lunger Knoppers (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 2.

⁵ See, for instance, Charles Dempsey, *Annibale Carracci and the Beginnings of Baroque Style* (Glückstadt: Augustin, 1977) for more on the *Accademia degli Incamminati's* standard practices for teaching artists, particularly in considering group drawing exercises.

⁶ See Babette Bohn, *Women Artists, Their Patrons, and Their Publics in Early Modern Bologna* (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2021), 174. As Bohn notes, drawing practice afforded women the properties of "naturalism and invention" for their art, something rarely acknowledged of women's artistic work in

immoral access to the nude body and served as a direct threat to female integrity.⁷ It is not uncommon, even for women artists formally educated by their fathers, brothers, or other familiars, to be cited in scholarship as exhibiting imperfect understandings of body composition, musculature, or proportion in works dealing with the lines of the human form because of their lack of figural training universally provided to men.⁸ Other women artists, such as the Florentine Suor Plautilla Nelli, are often discussed in terms of confinement and solitary access to the female body due to the artist's placement in the convent. Although with access to other artistic works and drawings, Nelli was largely self-taught and perceived by contemporary theorists as wanting for formal training.⁹ Women were similarly barred from artistic academies, and with limited access to the independent artist's studio, and so their education in artistic pursuits necessitated a vastly different approach dependent upon an originality of form and process. For a woman artist

early modern biography. The lack of extant drawings by women suggests that either they did not utilize drawing as prevalently as men, though Bohn suggests this is unlikely, or that their work has since been lost or misattributed to male artists within museum and private collections.

⁷ Laura Auricchio, "The Laws of Bienséance and the Gendering of Emulation in Eighteenth-Century French Art Education," *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 36, no. 2 (Winter 2003): 233. As Auricchio suggests, "Following Jean-Jacques Rousseau's gendered model of virtue, [Pierre-Joseph Boudier de] Villemert ranks silence and modesty among the greatest feminine values. [...] If men play upon 'the great theater of the world,' with their faces unmasked, 'women must act only, as it were, behind the scenes.' According to this logic, women who seek acclaim for their art consequently court dishonor for themselves." Any public, formal attention paid to art by women was widely perceived as untoward behavior because of its masculine qualities by contemporary writers and theorists. The reality of women in art, however, suggests that despite these difficulties, women were still largely involved in artistic pursuits as members of family studios, partnerships between spouses or siblings, or independently. For more on the issue of painting as a "masculine" art, see Adelina Modesti, "'Il pennello virile': Elisabetta Sirani and Artemisia Gentileschi as Masculinized Painters?" in *Artemisia Gentileschi in a Changing Light*, ed. Sheila Barker (Turnhout: Brepols, 2017), 131-46.

⁸ Discussions of Artemisia Gentileschi's problems in anatomical proportions in her early works, such as the 1613-14 *Penitent Magdalen*, Palazzo Pitti, have proliferated in the past thirty years. John T. Spike's evaluation of the 1991 exhibition, *Artemisia*, held at the Casa Buonarroti in Florence identifies as much: "It is hard to credit the seventeen-year-old Artemisia with the superb invention of the nude Susanna [*Susanna and the Elders*, ca. 1610, Pommersfelden] when one compares the anatomic solecisms that appear a few years later in the *Penitent Magdalen* (who has no proper left shoulder and whose legs are different lengths)." See Spike, "Artemisia Gentileschi. Florence, Casa Buonarroti," *The Burlington Magazine* 133, no. 1063 (Oct. 1991): 733.

⁹ An argument for Nelli's skill in depicting "feminine" men, such as that in her ca. 1568 *Last Supper*, goes back to Vasari's 1568 edition of *Le vite de' più eccellenti pittori, scultori, e architettori*. The implications of this argument—as minimizing of Nelli's artistic skill by her gender alone—are explored in Andrea Muzzi, "The Artistic Training and Savonarolan Ideas of Plautilla Nelli" in *Plautilla Nelli (1524-1588): The Painter-Prioress of Renaissance Florence*, ed. Jonathan K. Nelson (Florence, IT and Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2008), 36-8.

without access to immediate learning of bodily proportion, the instructional opportunities of the studio or academy, or the perceived ability to “bruise” a letter or drawn form, a private form of education could become necessity.

Using three central case studies, this paper broadly traces the private means by which women artists utilized rising access to print culture for artistic instruction, commensurate with mass production of printed volumes in Europe between the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Between 1600 and 1800, European book production rose from around 500,000,000 volumes circulating across the continent to 1,000,000,000 by the end of the eighteenth century.¹⁰ Novels, poems, treatises, compilations, and instructional manuals became the chief means for circulating and sharing knowledge—even for those with little access to formal education. I argue that the physical qualities and contents of printed instructional volumes made it possible for general consumers—not limited to, but especially women—to utilize these forms of knowledge circulation for the benefit of artistic proficiency. For women artists without access to familial connections in the artistic field, or for those of the “middling sort” without the financial means to hire an artistic tutor or instructor, this thesis envisions printed volumes and other ephemera, such as engravings, as methods for supplementing artistic learning by a self-education in print.

The first chapter addresses the rise of general instructional manuals in early modernity and suggests that these volumes made the space for additional topics, namely calligraphic, limning, and oil painting volumes popularized during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Drawing on women’s book ownership and general trends in self-instructional volumes beginning in the sixteenth century, I outline how women’s potentiality for artistic self-education was

¹⁰ Eltjo Buringh and Jan Luiten van Zanden, “Charting the ‘Rise of the West’: Manuscripts and Printed Books in Europe, A Long-Term Perspective from the Sixth through Eighteenth Centuries,” *The Journal of Economic History* 69, no. 2 (June 2009): 409-445, esp. pp. 418-424 and Table 2, “Production of Printed Books Per Half Century, 1454-1800.”

predicated on the rise of printing across Europe. The second chapter builds upon the woman artist's use of the printed volume by evaluating the Italian calligrapher and painter, Giovanna Garzoni (1600-1670), recognizing how her use of calligraphic texts inform her skilled linework and extend into her mature career as a miniature painter. Centralizing on the artist's *Libro de' caratteri* created during her teenage years, this chapter recognizes the private uses of calligraphic manuals for fostering a successful career in miniature compositions and expressing artistic skill in painting small. In collaboration with the second chapter, the third chapter considers the shifting means of women artists utilizing print culture for educating pupils, altering models of artistic studentship and mastery in the eighteenth century. Two women artists in the French *Académie Royale de Peinture et de Sculpture*, Élisabeth-Sophie Chéron (1648-1711) and Catherine Perrot (ca. 1620-unknown), crafted artistic treatises for instructing students in drawing and miniature painting around the turn of the eighteenth century. Drawing on the physical format of the two artists' volumes, Chéron's 1706 *Livre a dessiner, composé de testes tirées des plus beaux ouvrages de Raphaël* and Perrot's 1686 *Les Leçons Royales ou la maniere de Peindre en Mignature les Fleurs & les Oyseaux*, the thesis concludes by evaluating new conceptions of the book's function for teaching future generations of artists through woman-authored texts.

Chapter 1: Artistic Print Culture and Textual Training in Early Modernity

To begin the early modern artist's training, the student first learned to draw. From the fifteenth to eighteenth centuries, "student[s] would begin [their] studies by copying prints about works by past masters," moving next to drawing plaster casts of antique sculpture, and finally from nature itself as the student mastered representation.¹¹ The work of learning to draw took place in the artist's studio, with the learned master offering direction on the proper formation of figures and designs, as well as appropriate techniques for conveying ideas on paper. For Bolognese artist, Ersilia Creti, this early connection was fostered by "training by her father and her use of the pen" to produce "*disegni fatti con molta eleganza, e pulitezza*"¹² as acknowledged by biographer Giampietro Zanotti in the eighteenth century.¹³ Formal training, however, was not guaranteed for young women interested in an artistic profession. Rather than only learning to become an artist by formal instruction, the matter of rising print culture afforded new means to learn how to become an artist. In her landmark *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change*, Elizabeth Eisenstein envisions the rise of printed volumes as an alternative to traditional oral forms of knowledge transmission. As she describes, the printing press offered "powerful new incentives to open closed sketchbooks and publicize the tricks of various trades [resulting in] an avalanche of technical treatises and teach-yourself books, which had at least as much effect on advanced studies as on procedures followed in workshops."¹⁴ Early modern women artists

¹¹ Auricchio, "The Laws of Bienséance," 231.

¹² See Marco Riccomini, "In the Shadow of Donato Creti: 'Amico di Donato,'" *Master Drawings* 49, no. 1 (Spring 2011): 95 and Bohn, *Women Artists*, 199.

¹³ This thesis largely considers early modern authors who wrote "life stories" as "biographers," drawing from the Oxford English Dictionary's definition identifying a writer of such texts as the "author of a biography of a particular person." This definition was in common use by the late seventeenth century. By the eighteenth century, this term is the most accurate description of the authorial work, however inaccurate or fanciful the contents of the theorists' written biographies on women artists. Many of the artists included within this thesis are most discussed by contemporary art theorists during the eighteenth century, and so their stories are regarded as biographies herein.

¹⁴ Elizabeth Eisenstein, *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), 554.

compose a useful profile for understanding the means within which learning to draw became a matter of textual training, apart from conventional forms of learning in the studio.

A variety of tools were required for writing and drawing in early modernity: ruler, set square, inkwell, quill and stylus, compass, scissors, grip, *toccalapis*, knife, thimble, and an additional quill ready to be cut anew.¹⁵ Drawing chalks could be added at the artist's leisure, or as desire or necessity required. The list of writing implements referenced above was realized first in print by the sixteenth-century Italian calligrapher, Giovanni Battista Palatino, in his 1538 *Libro nuovo d'imparare a scrivere*, a manual for the art of calligraphy and letter formation used throughout the Renaissance to teach effective writing (Figure 1).¹⁶ Palatino's instructional text was letterpress printed using metal type, but further offered engraved surface plates often used for broadsides and other ephemera for effective instruction.¹⁷ By the 1520s, volumes providing guidance on calligraphic writing became commonplace across Europe, and most notably in Italy. Recognizable by its elegant upstrokes, slender letterforms, and right-facing slant, the chancery style was fostered through perpetual practice on paper by Palatino and his contemporary, Ludovico Vicentino degli Arrighi, in volumes aiming to craft a culture of beautiful hands.¹⁸

¹⁵ Rick Scorza, "El Greco: 'Calligrafia,' 'Disegno,' and Context," *Master Drawings* 52, no. 4. (Winter 2014): 432. The use of the *tocca lapis* or *toccalapis* is identified in artist's portraits, including Simon Vouet's portrait of Artemisia Gentileschi. The artist is shown holding a palette in the left hand and the *toccalapis* in the right, lifted in preparation to draw on a prepared sheet of paper or canvas. See Simon Vouet, *Artemisia Lomi Gentileschi*, ca. 1623-26, private collection.

¹⁶ Similar printed illustrations in other books, such as Tagliente's *Opera nuova che insegna a le donne a cuscire* from 1527 outlines the use of specific tools for embroidery work, and as Femke Speelberg describes, necessitates the use of scissors and other implements to "draw and transfer designs." The similarities between the tools utilized for all kinds of creative work, produced by both men and women, recognizes the overlapping elements of artistic production from the domestic and artistic spheres in early modern printed manuals. See Speelberg, "Fashion & Virtue: Textile Patterns and the Print Revolution, 1520-1620," *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin* 73, no. 2 (Fall 2015): 19-24, esp. p. 23.

¹⁷ See Stanley Morison, *Early Italian Writing-Books: Renaissance to Baroque* (Boston: David R. Godine, 1990), 72. Earlier instructional texts such as Arrighi's were printed only from engraved plates for surface printing. To my knowledge, Palatino's volumes are the first combining both forms to begin a precedent for true "printed" volumes educating through the book form after the manuscript tradition.

¹⁸ Scorza, "El Greco," 433. See also Arrighi's 1533 *Regola da imparare scrivere varii caratteri de littere con li suoi compassi et misure*.

Beyond their contributions to the art of writing, however, the popularized calligraphic manuals draw attention to the presence of instructional volumes in rising early modern print culture. To draw, a student must learn to write; to write, a student must learn to draw. The combinatory actions of the hand utilized in both gestures prove effective marks of the artist's skill, and more importantly, their dexterity in the art of the pen across the centuries. In instances where formal instruction was unavailable to the student, volumes afforded new means to learn the skill of the hand prompted by the printed word. As Stanley Morrison indicates, the printing press, "by its mere power to multiply, stimulated calligraphical development, since the availability of printed treatises necessarily expanded the profession."¹⁹ Texts to be used, learned from, and adapted over time became central to the work of the early modern pupil and the expanding possibilities of the printed word between the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

I draw attention to the examples of Palatino and Arrighi for their placement in the early history of instructional manuals to consider the implications of print culture for artists and artisans beginning in the sixteenth century as well. Rather than unlimited printings, authors of calligraphic volumes between 1514 and 1538 remained limited to buyers including noblemen, doctors, priests, notaries, merchants, scholars, and government officials.²⁰ Printed texts throughout this period were, like artistic compositions, supported by the patronage of interested—and highly educated—parties, rather than the ordinary layperson.²¹ Nearing the end of the century, however, more numerous opportunities for educational texts and treatises became

¹⁹ Morrison, *Early Italian Writing-Books*, 31.

²⁰ Myra Nan Rosenfeld, "From Bologna to Venice and Paris: The Evolution and Publication of Sebastiano Serlio's Books I and II, 'On Geometry' and 'On Perspective,' for Architects," *Studies in the History of Art* 59 (Symposium Papers XXXVI; *The Treatise on Perspective: Published and Unpublished*, 2003): 283.

²¹ Amaranth Borsuk draws attention to this idea in *The Book* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2018), 88. As she describes, contemporary ideas of printed volumes placed value on the codex as commodity: "the value placed on reading during the Renaissance was not simply in absorbing a text, but in actively engaging, consuming, and reframing it." These activities were largely pursued by the most learned in a society, namely those close to the nobility or nobility themselves.

accessible to the public as intimacy with the textual object expanded. Thea Burns describes the popularity of Raffaello Borghini's 1584 *Il Riposo*, as well as Giovan Battista Armenini's *De Veri Precetti della Pittura* from 1586, both works advocating for artistic betterment based on Cennino Cennini's fourteenth-century *Libro dell'arte*.²² Borghini and Armenini's texts, rather than limited to a narrow audience, were made accessible to a broader artistic public.²³ Inventories of Giovanni Andrea Sirani and Rembrandt Harmensz van Rijn's studios document the breadth of printed materials in their working environments for the instruction of students or apprentices, that include emblem books, historical texts, architectural and perspectival treatises, and writing and drawing volumes.²⁴ Texts known to exist in the workshop aid considerably in understanding materials used daily by the professional artist, for compositions or for instructing pupils.

While the use of instructional and practical manuals in the workshop could be utilized by any student artist, no matter their gender, the question of women's placement and participation in this arrangement requires an alternative analysis. Books, in their material and textual functions, afford consideration of the "human motives and interactions which texts involve at every stage of their production, transmission, and consumption."²⁵ In the fields of book history and bibliographical studies, Kate Ozment draws attention to the histories of readers and books as having long-existed as a "male homosocial environment where female figures are briefly

²² Thea Burns, "Cennino Cennini's *Il Libro dell'Arte*: A Historiographical Review," *Studies in Conservation* 56, no. 1 (2011): 3.

²³ Burns, 3.

²⁴ See Adelina Modesti, "In Her Father's Workshop: Elisabetta Sirani's Artistic Formation and Training," and "Elisabetta Sirani 'Maestra Perfetta': Education, Cultural Formation, and Teaching" in *Elisabetta Sirani 'Virtuosa': Women's Cultural Production in Early Modern Bologna* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2014), 99-130. Modesti identifies many of the volumes held in Giovanni Andrea Sirani's professional library, with twenty-five of around eighty inventoried after their ceding to Anna Maria Sirani in 1672. The texts include artist biographies by Malvasia, Vasari, and Ridolfi; treatises by Lomazzo, Barbaro, and Il Vignola; literary works by Ovid, Boccaccio, and Cartari; classical texts by Pliny and Cassio; Plutarch's *Lives*; modern history by Giovio and Jewish history by Flavio; Ricci's *Geroglifici morali* and hagiographic texts; Ripa's *Iconologia*; a manual of historical portrait medals [*"Prontuario delle medaglie"*]; and Malvezzi's *Tarquinio Superbo*, a contemporary political treatise. See esp. pp. 94-95.

²⁵ D.F. McKenzie, *Bibliography and the Sociology of Texts* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 15.

mentioned on the margins of textual production or invisible altogether.”²⁶ It is therefore necessary to consider the implications of women’s utilizations of texts imagined in scholarly literature as “overwhelmingly about men,” recognizing alternative uses and interpretations of those accessible also to women.²⁷ This process is clarified by evaluating the literary output of authors such as the Venetian Giovanni Antonio Tagliente, whose works were advertised as appropriate for domestic instruction, alongside other various texts proliferating across Europe throughout the seventeenth century. In drawing attention to artistic instructional manuals present throughout the period, this section of the thesis encourages a framework for understanding the case studies in the second and third chapters, considering how women artists utilized the book format for artistic means in transnational European contexts.

Tagliente’s body of work marks rising interests for improving women’s knowledge acquisition, from learning to read and complete basic arithmetic, to gaining aptitude in embroidery and the other textile arts. As the calligrapher explains in his preface for the *Libro Maistrevole*, “Even mature and young women who are illiterate can [use this text to] learn how to read.”²⁸ The *Libro Maistrevole*, first published in 1524, was reprinted in thirty-five editions after its initial publication, thus indicating its long and storied use as an instructional manual for men and women alike.²⁹ The most basic of Tagliente’s instructional volumes, the *Libro Maistrevole* still required a learned instructor to guide the pupil: “[this text] instructs anyone who can read to teach his son, daughter, or friend who cannot read, in such a way that anyone can

²⁶ Kate Ozment, “Rationale for Feminist Bibliography,” *Textual Cultures* 13, no. 1 (Spring 2020): 150.

²⁷ Ozment, 156.

²⁸ Anne Jacobson Schutte, “Teaching Adults to Read in Sixteenth-Century Venice: Giovanni Antonio Tagliente’s *Libro Maistrevole*,” *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 17, no. 1 (Spring 1986): 8. I utilize Schutte’s translations herein due to a lack of access to the primary source material during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic; other volumes by Tagliente, such as the *Opera nuova che insegna a le donne* (1527), are more readily accessible to researchers in museum and library collections.

²⁹ For more on the editions of the *Libro Maistrevole*, see Richard Mackenney, “Venice,” in *The Renaissance in National Context*, eds. Roy Porter and Mikuláš Teich (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 62.

learn.”³⁰ Other texts in Tagliente’s body of work were geared towards literate individuals requiring occupational skills, such as embroidery, and thus could be used as the basis for knowledge to be self-taught by the student placing their individual learning within the margins of the volume or in the commonplace book.³¹ Despite the limited printings and patronage of expansive artistic treatises, other texts were more readily accessible through their lower-cost printing or binding processes, like the proliferating genre of instructional manuals.³²

Rising interests in women’s participation in print culture and recognition of their ownership of books during the early modern period has become a broader portion of scholarship that has only recently begun to expand into artistic texts.³³ Ownership by Louisa Augusta Grevile (1743- ca. 1779) of a copy of Jean Dubreuil’s *La perspective pratique*, a three-volume manual offering advice on perspective for use in painting and engraving, was recently rediscovered dating the then eleven-year-old artist’s ownership of the 1663 volume to 1754 (Fig. 2).³⁴ Rather than receiving the book upon its publication, Grevile’s ownership dated over one-hundred years after the book’s initial printing speaks to the “hand-me-down” quality of women’s book ownership throughout early modernity and the long history of book knowledge for artistic

³⁰ Schutte, “Teaching Adults to Read,” 8.

³¹ Eisenstein, *The Printing Press*, 553-9. For the purposes of this text, I adhere to Earle Havens’ definition of the commonplace book as blank texts used for an individual’s writings, akin to a notebook: “They have been used as general storehouses of knowledge, as personal books of reference, as diaries of day-to-day reading, and toward countless other ends,” as well as texts to be used for “student’s future reference and application.” See Earle Havens, *Commonplace Books: A History of Manuscripts and Printed Books from Antiquity to the Twentieth Century* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001), esp. pp. 13 and 26.

³² For more on stab-stitched bindings, created to reduce costs of printing by creating book objects without the necessity of formal covers, see Aaron T. Pratt, “Stab-Stitching and the Status of Early English Playbooks as Literature,” *The Library* 16, no. 3 (September 2015): 304. Sarah Werner also discusses “cheap” volume formats in *Studying Early Printed Books, 1450-1800* (New York: Wiley Blackwell, 2019), 72.

³³ See Leo Cadogan, “Jean Dubreuil, *La perspective pratique*, vol. I (1663),” *Early Modern Female Book Ownership*, accessed February 25, 2023, <https://earlymodernfemalebookownership.wordpress.com/2020/09/07/jean-dubreuil-la-perspective-pratique-vol-i-1663/>.

³⁴ Leo Cadogan, “Jean Dubreuil, *La perspective pratique*, vol. I (1663).”

capacity.³⁵ While eighteenth-century examples of women's book ownership have been readily established, as by the Early Modern Female Book Ownership digital finding aid, earlier examples of this phenomenon of young women artists owning instructional manuals have not yet been firmly identified beyond a few examples, such as the Dutch Anna Maria van Schurman, whose calligraphic self-instruction was based upon the model of Maria Strick's manuals.³⁶ Despite the nominal statistics of women's ownership of artistic manuals in current scholarship, it is possible to discern basic patterns of women artists' works aligned with contemporary volumes.

Dissimilar from the binaries cemented in Renaissance conceptions of art as separated between the liberal and mechanical arts, volumes comparable to Tagliente's emphasize the seemingly distinct scope of women's artistic expression and erudition. The process of learning to draw is freely connected to embroidery practice in their corresponding printed formats, not negating the relevance or interdependence of both practices, but recognizing similarities as that of writing and drawing in other educational texts. Contemporary to printed volumes instructing women and artisans to read, embroidery pattern books expanded across Italy, France, Germany, and the Low Countries. One of the first, Johann Schönsperger the Younger's 1524 *Ein new Modelbuch [...]*, duplicates the personal creation of "sketchbooks in which embroiderers and weavers recorded their own and borrowed inventions" in print (Fig. 3).³⁷ The change of formats

³⁵ For an engaging evaluation of how early modern women gained access to books and other formats of textual objects, such as manuscripts, see Brian Richardson, "Access to Texts," in *Women and the Circulation of Texts in Renaissance Italy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020), esp. pp. 149-79.

³⁶ Mark Empey, Sarah Lindenbaum, Tara Lyons, Erin McCarthy, Micheline White, Georgianna Ziegler, and Martine van Elk host the Early Modern Female Book Ownership blog, including the above-mentioned finding aid, at <https://earlymodernfemalebookownership.wordpress.com/>, accessed February 25, 2023. For more on Van Schurman, see Elizabeth A. Honig, "The Art of Being 'Artistic': Dutch Women's Creative Practices in the 17th Century," *Woman's Art Journal* 22, no. 2 (2001): 33. As Honig describes, "Anna Maria van Schurman, for instance, taught herself calligraphy using a model-book published by a professional female calligrapher, Maria Strick (1577-after 1631)." Maria Strick published multiple calligraphy books, including the 1607 *Tooneel der loflijkcke schrijffpen* and the 1618 *Schat oft voorbeelt ende verthooninge van verscheyden geschriften*.

³⁷ Speelberg, "Fashion & Virtue," 16. See also Brigitta Schmedding, *Mittelalterliche Textilien in Kirchen und Klöstern der Schweiz: Katalog* (Bern: Stämpfli, 1978), 15.

between the two forms of knowledge production mark similarly differing spheres of access: the intimacy of the manuscript shared with a minimal audience, and that of the printed volume, beginning in the printer's shop and extending across the continent in bookseller's wares.

Manuscript sketchbooks were commonplace among artists' studios as well, crafted by the master artist and used by pupils and assistants.³⁸ Babette Bohn's recent investigations of Bolognese women artists, including those in Elisabetta Sirani's (1638-1665) studio, suggest the commonality of the sketchbook's use for instruction well into the seventeenth century. An anonymous print with the inscription, "*Elisabeta Sirani mostra disegni a una sua compagna,*" identifies the artist with an oversized volume of drawings instructing a pupil (Fig. 4).³⁹ Sirani, seated beside the table in a private chamber, points with one finger to an image of two drawn figures, her mouth open in address. The pupil leans towards her teacher in interest, domestic duties forgotten in a basket at her feet. While this image effectively presents the women artists with the sketchbook as a learning tool in their hands, it is particularly engaging for its imagining of artistic education linked to domestic spaces and the activities requisite within its confines.

Early modern embroidery volumes like Schönsperger's foster further connections to the formalized sketch and model books used by artists. Textile historian Lisa Monnas has identified textile-like designs in Pisanello and Jacopo Bellini's model books as "*simili* drawings," used as "inspiration for the depiction of luxurious silks, velvets, and brocades in paintings" (Fig. 5).⁴⁰

³⁸ See Maryan W. Ainsworth, "Northern Renaissance Drawings and Underdrawings: A Proposed Method of Study," *Master Drawings* vol. 27, no. 1 (Spring 1989): 5-38. Ainsworth provides a useful examination of drawings in the workshop, for such purposes as cartoons and perpetual re-use in underdrawings that assist in both recognizing the artistic process for artists and clarifying attributions. The primary examples in Ainsworth's study centralize on sixteenth-century Northern artists, such as Holbein the Younger, but can also be brought to bear on Southern artistic practice as well.

³⁹ Bohn, *Women Artists*, 199.

⁴⁰ Speelberg, "Fashion & Virtue," 17. Lisa Monnas' monograph, *Merchants, Princes and Painters: Silk Fabrics in Italian and Northern Paintings* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), further discusses the connection between artistic compositions and pattern books in crafting painted fabrics rather than physical textile objects. See pp. 39-52.

The value of maintaining these images in the codex book form, as is pertinent to all discussions of women's utilization of printed volumes, exists in the book's varied usability. Codex books, unlike scrolls, could be utilized from any page of the reader's choice. Despite formal pagination, or sectioning of chapters and segments, freedom marked the printed text and its innumerable uses. Christina Lupton describes that the originality of the book format exists in the facilitation for "more circular and open-ended journeys that its reader might undertake" in their exploration of pages.⁴¹ This understanding of the book format is equally relevant for recognizing the goals of instructional volumes at the turn of the seventeenth century influencing the creation, and circulation, of these works through the eighteenth century. The codex book serves as a "portable, resource-efficient physical support [...] We can annotate the margins to talk back to the author, to subsequent readers, or to our future selves. The book accommodates us, and we accommodate to it."⁴² Rather than something necessarily taught within the workshop or studio in the moment, the book's possibility to be placed in a pocket, used next to the palette, or picked up at random to make use of a specific page, makes the form an ideal, accessible companion.

Rather than objects only to be read, artistic manuals and other contemporary volumes, like pattern books, found physical uses in the hands of their readers. Pattern books, as might be anticipated for other artistic manuals, reflect their storied use through extensive damage because their owners "tore out pages, pasted or nailed them to workroom walls, fingered, folded, cut, scribbled on them, chalked and pricked them for transfer."⁴³ Helen Smith and Louise Wilson have further theorized the early modern book as a material object, "which [is] visible as well as

⁴¹ Christina Lupton, *Reading and the Making of Time in the Eighteenth Century* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2018), 98.

⁴² Borsuk, *The Book*, 198.

⁴³ Janet S. Byrne, "Patterns by Master f," *Metropolitan Museum Journal* 14 (1979): 106.

legible,” meant to be read as well as intimately interacted with.⁴⁴ Jaya Remond recognizes these interactions by drawing attention to German artistic manuals and an anonymous artist’s drawing practice, a seventeenth-century loose sheet inserted into a 1543 volume of Erhard Schön’s *Unterweisung der Proportion und Stellung der Possen* located in the Stadtarchiv Nürnberg. Interacting directly with Schön’s illustrations of square-edged mannequins in pictorial space to recognize formal compositional organization, the anonymous artist’s work creates a direct interaction with the printed work in the private development of “optical acumen through intense visual absorption” recreated on the page (Fig. 6).⁴⁵ Not a book to be simply read, the printed text requires the student’s physical involvement through the eyes and hand, utilizing their powers of observation to “save the manual’s pictorial devices in [their] mind, [and] absorb and internalize” its images by realizing the arrangement on the page.⁴⁶

Formal artistic treatises with limited printings may well have been out of the hands and scope of a young woman aiming to become an artist in the seventeenth century, but other pieces of ephemera, such as prints, engravings, and instructional manuals, prove likely candidates for their instructional value that continued into the nineteenth century.⁴⁷ In their extensive years of use, the pattern books and artistic manuals described above might be recognized to exist as

⁴⁴ Helen Smith and Louise Wilson, “Introduction” in *Renaissance Paratexts*, eds. Helen Smith and Louise Wilson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 2-3.

⁴⁵ Jaya Remond, “Artful Instruction: Pictorializing and Printing Artistic Knowledge in Early Modern Germany,” *Word & Image* 36, no. 2 (2020): 114.

⁴⁶ Reymond, 114.

⁴⁷ A lack of proper educational opportunities and materials was a common problem by the eighteenth century in the colonies, as well, for men and women artists alike. See Janice G. Schimmelman, *A Checklist of European Treatises on Art and Essays on Aesthetics Available in American Through 1815* (Worcester: American Antiquarian Society, 1983). Schimmelman describes the constant woes of European artists who came to the early colonies, where examples of sculpture, fine art, and artistic instruction was lacking and required alternative methods for education. She describes that “the American artist who desired to learn the rudiments of his craft had to seek information about European painting through engravings and art treatises. Although reduced in scale, linear in execution, and devoid of color, engravings and mezzotints of European paintings [...] provided the best visual sources for composition, attitude, anatomy, and accoutrement.” See pp. 96-7.

complements of writing manuals centering an artist's duplication practice. Gabriele Bleeke-Byrne describes the standard processes for learning to draw in the late-sixteenth century as fostered over two-hundred years of practice, where a student selected an engraving or an illustration in a pre-determined text, "chose his paper size to coincide exactly with that of the engraving [and created a drawn] result [that] is an almost identical image."⁴⁸ Reviewing artworks such as Giovanna Garzoni's *Libro de' caratteri*, featured in the second chapter, expands upon the likelihood of the "copying" model of women's early artistic education as well. Brought together in the pages of the artistic manual, the master's representation of compositional space is placed in conversation with the student's work, highlighting the book format's value for circulating artistic knowledge. In women's artistic work, reconstituting and reimagining the original becomes possible through the printed form, creating new means for learning to draw, write, and teach in the histories of European art.

⁴⁸ Gabriele Bleeke-Byrne, "The Education of the Painter in the Workshop," in *Children of Mercury: The Education of Artists in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (Providence, RI: Department of Art, Brown University, 1984), 35, citing Giovanni Battista Armenini's 1586 *De' veri precetti della pittura*. Despite this practice's concentration in the late 16th century studio, it was still utilized by artists in the seventeenth century as well. Bleeke-Byrne draws attention to the examples of Moses Ter Borch and Rubens, who copied works in this manner by Rembrandt and Tobias Stimmer, respectively. See also Chapter 3, for the prevalence of this practice in Chéron and Perrot's texts.

Chapter 2: Scribe and Painter in Seventeenth-Century Italy

Although the writing and calligraphy texts discussed above are often relegated to the sphere of “practical aid,” Elizabeth Eisenstein further draws attention to the use of technical manuals as “‘silent instructors’ during student years.”⁴⁹ For an artist like Giovanna Garzoni (1600-1670), one of Baroque Italy’s most well-known artists of botanical subjects and miniature paintings, the book as a “silent instructor” assists in interpreting a largely uncharted portion of the artist’s early training. Born around 1600 in Ascoli Piceno in the Marche region of Italy,⁵⁰ Garzoni spent much of her early life in Venice, and while there, began her aspirations for an artistic career that came to fruition by her teenage years.⁵¹ Between the years 1617 and 1622, Garzoni first traveled to the Florentine Medici court where she was introduced to the Grand Duchess of Tuscany, Maria Maddalena of Austria, consort of Cosimo II.⁵² By this time, the young artist was skilled in a variety of media and recognized by members of the court, including the cleric Cristofano Bronzini, who noted that Garzoni—aged fifteen—“draws, paints, makes miniatures, colours, plays instruments, and sings most excellently.”⁵³ Her artistic skills, however, were one of the most marked features of her favor while visiting the court. Bronzini describes

⁴⁹ Eisenstein, *The Printing Press*, 555.

⁵⁰ As Sheila Barker has noted, Florentine biographer Cristofano Bronzini, from his manuscript *Della dignità et della nobiltà delle donne*, indicated Garzoni’s birth year of 1605. No current birth record for the artist has been traced, and so the commonly recognized date of 1600 indicated in the artist’s will is included here despite Bronzini’s addition. See Sheila Barker, “‘Marvellously gifted’: Giovanna Garzoni’s First Visit to the Medici Court,” *The Burlington Magazine* 160 (August 2018): 654.

⁵¹ Gerardo Casale, *Giovanna Garzoni: “Insigne Miniatrice” 1600-1670* (Milano: Roma, 1991), 5-6. See also Francesca Bottacin, “*Appunti per il soggiorno veneziano di Giovanna Garzoni: documenti inediti*,” *Arte veneta: rivista di storia dell’arte* 53 (1998): 141-7.

⁵² Multiple authors, including Barker 2018, Bottacin, and Casale have postulated on the period of Garzoni’s first travels to the Florentine court prior to her middle-aged employment for Vittoria della Rovere. Bronzini’s volume, indicating his contemporary meeting with the artist, places the five-year period of the late 1610s in context prior to Garzoni’s time spent in Venice during the 1620s, and in Naples during the 1630s.

⁵³ Barker, “‘Marvellously Gifted,’” 658-59. The translation provided in the text originates in the manuscript text Cristofano Bronzini, *Della dignità et della nobiltà delle donne*, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Florence, Magl. Cl. VIII, vol. 1525, pt. 1, ff. 128v-131r. Original text reads: “*ed allevata da suoi Progenitori con quei più nobili costumi, virtù ed Arti, che in qualsivoglia bell’ingegno desiderare si possano; poiche ella (come si è detto), dissegna, dipinge, colorisce, et minia tanto eccellentemente bene, che eccede ogni credenza [...]*”

Garzoni's presentation of artworks to the Grand Duchess, clarifying the prized qualities of her hand and artistic mastery, wherein

One *Magdalene* in particular (in addition to some of her other very exceptional paintings and works) in miniature on parchment [were shown to the court], with her given name and surname written by her in beautiful lettering on an illusionistic cartouche below. The work is so beautifully and finely drawn and coloured, and carried out with such good detail (and also such good judgment), that I and many other deemed her [the *Magdalene*] truly worthy of the exceedingly virtuous hands that painted her, and most worthy of those most eminent hands to which she was given. [...] I also saw three sheets of hers which she had written on in pen in the three major and diverse styles of handwriting, which were chancery cursive, *formati*, and modern. They were so skillfully executed and lovely that they could have easily vied with those of the greatest and most vaunted scribes alive today. They were decorated all around not just with creative flourishes, but in two cases also with superb drawings of festoons, plant leaves, flowers, fruits and various animals of the land and sky, all of which were so lifelike that they seemed to compete with Nature herself.⁵⁴

As Sheila Barker explains, Bronzini's description of Garzoni's calligraphic works complements the variety of pages included in the artist's *Libro de' caratteri cancellereschi corsivi* dated to the same period of 1617 through 1622. The full breadth of Garzoni's early artistic training is currently unknown, but careful examination of the *Libro* and elements from the artist's later miniature compositions recognize Garzoni's lifelong interest in and engagement with print culture.

⁵⁴ Barker, "Marvellously Gifted," 659; translation from Barker. The Italian transcription reads: "Ho veduto io (et l'hanno veduta ancora infinite altre ^persone^ con esso me insieme) una Maddalena in particolare (oltre alcun' altre sue rare Pitture et opere) miniata in cartapecora, col suo nome, et cognome in bellissimo Carattere, scritto da lei in una finta carteletta di sotto, tanto ben lineata, colorita, et sottilissimamente (anzi giudiziosissimamente lavorata) che le giudicai (come anco fecero altri) degna nel vero di quelle virtuosissime mani, che la miniarono, et dignissima di quelli eminentissime, alle quali pervennero, che fù la Serenissima Arciduchessa d'Austria Maria Maddalena Gran Duchessa di Toscana, sovranominata. Vidi in oltre, tre sue cartelle, scritte a penna da lei, in tre principalissimi, et varii Caratteri, [written in margin: cancelareschi corsivi, formati, e moderni] [crossed out: che si vogliono dire] talmente ben tirati, et belli, che potevano bene stare al pari di quelli de' più sopremi, et maggiori scrittori, che hoggidi vivono. Ornati poi a torno a torno non solo di artificiosi tratti, ma due di essi con disegni bellissimi di festoni, frondi, fiori, frutti, et di diversi animali volatili, et terresti, et tutti talmente naturali, che pareano gareggiassero con la stessa Natura."

Giovanna Garzoni was presumably educated in miniatures, botanical drawings, and painting in her uncle's studio, yet much of her early artistic education remains unknown despite the few details made available by recent archival work.⁵⁵ The artist's calligraphic training is still less definite. Folios 39r, 40r, and 41r within Garzoni's *Libro* include the artist's signature as an "allieva del Signor Giacomo Rogni," identifying portions of her calligraphic education in a workshop environment by an external tutor, but no evidence has yet been discovered of neither Rogni nor his studio apart from Garzoni's claims.⁵⁶ Beyond the studio or workshop of a tutor, however, Garzoni's use of contemporary calligraphic texts is of interest in perceiving the artist's development by self-instruction. Aoife Cosgrove suggests that much of Garzoni's calligraphic work was situated in independent study of "writing manuals and copy-books, [both] useful resources which instructed students of calligraphy in the forming of letters and words in a variety of writing styles."⁵⁷ Garzoni was known to have written in three different hands, as Bronzini's account makes clear, yet the *Libro* preserves only examples of her skill in composing chancery hand. Beyond the artist's mastering of this style in her *Libro*, her reliance on books for instruction, emblemized in her copy work from Jan van de Velde the Elder's 1605 *Spiegel der schrijfkonste*, indicates the power of book knowledge in the student's exploration of her craft.

The physical format of the *Libro*, both in scale and function, afford the viewer an introduction to Garzoni's skilled hand and artistic power. The *Libro de' caratteri cancellereschi corsivi* is an ideal size for the presentation and private circulation discussed in Bronzini's biography of the artist. Measuring 20.5 cm by 29 cm, Garzoni's open *Libro* is easily held in its

⁵⁵ Barker, "Marvellously Gifted," 658. See also Aoife Cosgrove, "'E scrittrice, e pittrice': Giovanna Garzoni and the Art of Calligraphy," in *The Immensity of the Universe in the Art of Giovanna Garzoni*, ed. Sheila Barker (Livorno: Sillabe, 2020), 32.

⁵⁶ Cosgrove, "'E scrittrice, e pittrice,'" 30.

⁵⁷ Cosgrove, 30.

landscape orientation with two hands. The volume is large enough to read and appreciate the skilled representations of calligraphic characters on the page, as well as to closely evaluate the miniature illustrations surrounding the written exercises. In addition to a private audience with the Grand Duchess, Garzoni's circulation of her calligraphy and pseudo-miniature painting was established for a formal audience of artists, musicians, embroiderers, clerics, and other members of the court.⁵⁸ The Florentine poet, Francesco Maria Gualterotti, who met Garzoni and encountered her work in Florence, lauded her applications as "Both scribe and painter, lofty and multiplying / Achievements [that] feather your nest, for which I pay you tribute."⁵⁹

Contemporary women artists' uses of self-manufactured book objects aiming to combine artistic and calligraphic skill commonly retained sizes useful for the viewer's scrupulous attention. Other examples of artistic calligraphy volumes, such as those created by the Dutch artist Gesina ter Borch (1631-1690), evaluate the connections between artistic and literary work (Fig. 7).⁶⁰ With similar proportions to Garzoni's volume, and including laudatory poems citing the artist's accomplishments, Ter Borch's mid-century *Poëzie-album* mirrors the function of Garzoni's own and cites the particularity of the book form in women's self-rendering.

⁵⁸ Useful evaluations of Florentine court culture and the idea of spectacle—artistic and otherwise—contributed to and performed by a variety of members, include Sara Mamone and Anna Maria Testaverde, "Court culture and Pageantry of the 'Spanish Nation' in Florence," *Bulletin of Spanish Visual Studies* 3, no. 2 (2019): 255-66 and Sara Mamone, "Tra tela e scena: vita d'accademia e vita di corte nel primo Seicento fiorentino," *Biblioteca Teatrale* 37-38 (1996): 213-28.

⁵⁹ Barker, "'Marvellously Gifted,'" 659. The original text by Francesco Maria Gualterotti reads: "E scrittrice, e pittrice, alteri, e nuovi / Pregi acquisiti al tuo nido ond' io t' honoro."

⁶⁰ See Gesina ter Borch, *Poëzie-album*, ca. 1652-80, Rijksmuseum. The *Poëzie-album* further mirrors Garzoni's *Libro* in its size and function. Ter Borch's volume measures 32cm by 21cm, and is read in portrait orientation rather than landscape, yet the commonalities between the volumes are notable despite their distance in time and space. Elizabeth Honig's 2001 essay cites the communal purposes of ter Borch's *boeks*, which were circulated among the artist's family and friends and feature their own interventions in the text. The laudatory poems, including an anagram poem spelling out Gesina ter Borch's name, reflect upon her artistic and poetic skills. Ter Borch crafted three volumes of her own work merging her calligraphic and artistic inventions, and another, the 1646 *Materi-boek*, mimics the scrawling chancery hand in Garzoni's earlier work discussed here. See also Mallory N. Haselberger, "A New History of Artists' Books: Practice and Praxis of Early Modern Bookwork" (unpublished MA thesis, University of Maryland, College Park, 2020).

On first opening the forty-two-page volume, the content in Garzoni's *Libro* reflects the artist's refining practice of tracing full strokes in calligraphy, imitating calligraphers' works from workbooks and manuals during her adolescent training. From an image of a fanciful galleon to the whimsical flourish at the end of Garzoni's signature, the *Libro*'s format and presentation indicates its connection to the sketchbook and commonplace books discussed previously. One of Garzoni's primary references for practice and imitation, Jan van de Velde the Elder's 1605 *Spieghel der Schrijfkonste*, assisted the artist's "astonishing dexterity and control in manipulating a single, uninterrupted stroke" in her learning process.⁶¹ Like many seventeenth-century calligraphy volumes, van de Velde's *Spieghel* alludes to the reflective work expected of the student in its title, *Mirror of the Art of Writing*. Providing extensive examples of chancery hand, as well as larger calligraphic exercises such as the above-mentioned image of a ship created by only one stroke of the pen and of curling, sinuous *putti*, van de Velde's volume provides a variety of images to refine the hand's strength in imitation (Fig. 8).⁶² Garzoni's reproductions of van de Velde's volume are both similar and dissimilar to the original, offering the artist's skill in both *imitazione* of replicating text and image, as well as *ingegno* in her addition of original figural decoration. Garzoni's powers of line and proficiency in controlling the hand are not limited to calligraphic lettering alone, but also extend into her practice of depicting flora and fauna that marked her mature career.

⁶¹ Sheila Barker, "Libro de' caratteri cancellereschi corsivi," in "The Immensity of the Universe" in the Art of Giovanna Garzoni, ed. Sheila Barker (Livorno: Sillabe, 2020), 120.

⁶² Michael W. Cole, *Sofonisba's Lesson: A Renaissance Artist and Her Work* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2020), 77-9. Other women artists also utilized writing books in their artistic works. Cole draws attention to Sofonisba Anguissola's use of books for knowledge acquisition and imitation in calligraphic exercises, describing her references to Giovanni Battista Palatino's 1545 *Il libro... nel qual s'insegna a scriuer ogni sorte lettera*, referenced above, in the artist's 1556 *Self-Portrait* in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

One of Garzoni's most lavishly decorated pages, Folio 1r, is completed in both ink and tempera on paper (Fig. 9). Although fixing a passage of chancery hand in the central field of the page as that in van de Velde's volume, Garzoni's two series of decorations in the margins set the work apart in its artistic focal points. The first set of motifs features a generalized peacock with bright blue spots covering its body, a small snail, a moth, and a pink floral element with winding vines; the second depicts a fly, moth, rose, and clearly defined white parrot subsequently added to the page. As Cosgrove suggests, the difference between the two sets of motifs imply Garzoni's return to the sheet more than once, "improving her technique as she went and adding additional details."⁶³ These early illustrations in Garzoni's *Libro* realize the artist's changing techniques over time, beginning with artificial, idealized depictions, and concluding with more naturalistic stippled representations familiar from her later paintings. The first group of natural elements on Folio 1r is simplistically realized, with a singular green vine spanning the upper lettering on the page to extend the decoration of her ascending "G" character. The stylized vine includes leaves formed by the edge of a brush, with circular pink flowers as flourishes on the left side of the calligraphy. The peacock settled above the text is not well formed but exists as a seeming blotch of olive paint with deep cobalt spots representing the animal's natural patterning. Unlike many of Garzoni's later depictions concentrating on specific elements of an object's physicality, such as a defined beak or curvature of a flower's buds, these representations might be best understood as some of Garzoni's earliest approaches to depicting the natural world. Given the approximate dating of this volume, I suggest that these elements were crafted closer to 1617-18. Rather than mirroring the art of nature, Garzoni's work at the top of Folio 1r expresses a youthful intent to capture nature without the full breadth of practice required for precision.

⁶³ Cosgrove, "*E scrittrice, e pittrice*," 31.

As the viewer's eye scans the first page of Garzoni's *Libro*, the focus moves adeptly between the imprecise peacock and stylized floral elements to that of the oval cartouche-like component below. The second group of elements in Garzoni's Folio 1r represent the artist's successful discernment and refinement of figural forms over time, central to contemporary artistic educational practice. Compared to the indefinite elements of Garzoni's initial motifs, the parrot, moth, and fly settled on the curved descender of the "G" character advance an understanding of the artist's skill in her continuing education. The parrot, unlike the peacock, is well-defined in tempera with carefully stippled feathers of white, brown, and rose similar to the artist's miniature paintings from the 1620s.⁶⁴ Garzoni's representation of the parrot's eye, feet, and beak suggest her familiarity with the physical traits of the animal perhaps gained from viewing the exotic bird during her visit to the Florentine court,⁶⁵ or might also be attributed to her knowledge of works by Joris Hoefnagel and Jacopo Ligozzi, whose illustrations were held in Medici collections.⁶⁶ Unlike Garzoni's mature botanical illustrations, her work in the *Libro* is identifiable as belonging to her early period for its lack of shadowing. Barker has described this common trope in Hoefnagel and Ligozzi's representations, depicting "natural specimens in their actual size, seen from above and casting shadows as if they had been casually scattered across the surface of a folio."⁶⁷ Later works in Garzoni's career, such as the ca. 1632-1649 *Cherries, Strawberries, and Pods* tempera on parchment illustration, include such shadowing under each painted element to provide the impression of its reality on the page (Fig. 10). In Folio 1r, Garzoni

⁶⁴ Sheila Barker, "The Universe of Giovanna Garzoni: Art, Mobility, and the Global Turn in the Geographical Imaginary" in *"The Immensity of the Universe" in the Art of Giovanna Garzoni*, ed. Sheila Barker (Livorno: Sillabe, 2020), 18.

⁶⁵ Angelica Groom, *Exotic Animals in the Art and Culture of the Medici Court in Florence* (Leiden: Brill, 2018) clarifies the use of exotic animals in the Medici court for a variety of purposes, including the creation of menageries, animals in ceremonial practices, and most relevant for this thesis, the depiction of exotic animals aiming to draw together both Florentine and "Other" cultures in artworks commissioned by the court.

⁶⁶ Barker, "The Universe of Giovanna Garzoni," 19-21.

⁶⁷ Barker, 20.

approaches shadowing only on the underbelly of the parrot, whose darkened feathers and flesh lightly shadow its feet on the descender. The other elements of the circular composition seem to exist in a timeless, spaceless plane where insects, flora, and animals congregate as components of calligraphy rather than natural existence.

The artificial qualities of Garzoni's illustrations in the *Libro*, found in her youthful undertaking of depicting the natural world, represent the young artist's early approach to refining the qualities of her hand by the pen and brush. Garzoni's calligraphic compositions in the *Libro* "demonstrate a masterful fusion of word and image" central to the interwoven practice of writing and drawing at question in her early artistic work, present as well in the extant examples of educational volumes throughout Europe.⁶⁸ Rather than finding direct comparisons between Garzoni's images of flora and fauna to other artists' renderings in botanical or painted works, the mediation of the printed volume remains central to her early education and growth. The book's ability to be revisited and help cultivate an artistic skill set of strengthening the hand further indicates the nature of self-teaching relevant to early modern women's artistic education. Along with traditional domestic and humanistic knowledge perceivably gained through literary works, Garzoni's use of erudite volumes on artistic formation suggests the heightened use of books as a universal facet of artistic educational practice. In the early-seventeenth century, where women like Garzoni would not have had access to the academy, the self-instructional volume and the world of printed books provide images to practice, emulate, recreate, and reinterpret.

Garzoni's book suggests the fusing of instructional volumes with the artist's sketchbook, a format possible for continued reference by the artist, their patron, or workshop as a record of knowledge and personal invention. However, Garzoni's work does not become pure imitation of

⁶⁸ Cosgrove, "'E scrittrice, e pittrice,'" 30.

the cited original volumes but falls within the seventeenth-century conception of *imitatio*, copying an original artist's work and improving upon its qualities through the skill of the copying artist's hand. The hand continually refines motor skills as an "investigative and recording organ" in artistic practice.⁶⁹ Garzoni's *Libro* resounds on the learning artist's difference, or *ingegno*, to improve upon the singular motif of ideal penmanship into powerful figural and botanical forms. The volumes Garzoni relies upon in her education become images to afford practice only, leaving space on the page for the hand's self-expression without mediation. Garzoni's *Libro* indicates the strength of the artist's hand in her calligraphic education, developing both the original work and her own skillful artistic additions through mastering the works of the engraved and printed page. The book remains central to Garzoni's artistic knowledge acquisition on a thoroughly student-centric level, where the artist's earliest education is situated amongst a practice of copying and learning within literary volumes. However, despite Giovanna Garzoni's calligraphic training under the supposed tutelage of Rogni and of authors like van de Velde, her work and hand raise questions about the power of books—by women themselves—for providing artistic instruction realized around the turn of the eighteenth century.

⁶⁹ Suthor, "Guercino's 'Wet' Drawing," 84.

Chapter 3: Between Student and Master in the French *Académie*

Artists and theorists in France had long produced volumes for artistic instruction, including works including by Jean Dubreuil, Charles Le Brun, and Abraham Bosse, yet women's place in the production of instructional volumes before the late seventeenth century is markedly absent. In advancing beyond the situation of the seventeenth century and into the early-eighteenth century, women artists utilized expanding opportunities in the public sphere for instructing students through the book. The use of printed books as the basis for women's artistic education is not purely centered in the instruction of women by men, yet as I argue, can also be seen in the evolution of women educating women through the codex format with their own volumes. Two members of the French *Académie Royale de Peinture et de Sculpture*, Élisabeth-Sophie Chéron (1648-1711) and Catherine Perrot (ca. 1620-unknown), began using published volumes for instructional purposes separate from those printed in previous centuries. Providing a reading of the textual materials in Chéron's 1706 *Livre a dessiner, composé de testes tirées des plus beaux ouvrages de Raphaël*, and Perrot's *Les Leçons Royales, contenant la pratique universelle de la Peinture en Miniature*, first published in 1686 and existing in at least three editions, this chapter considers how two professional women artists thought about educating the next generation of students pursuing artistic careers. Perrot and Chéron's volumes, when read together, provide insight into the alternative modes of education prioritized for men and women alike during the eighteenth century.

Catherine Perrot, unlike many of her contemporaries, was admitted to the *Académie* in 1682 around the age of sixty.⁷⁰ Her artistic training, likewise, was uncommon for women who

⁷⁰ Nicolas Guérin, *Descriptions de l'Académie royale de peinture et de sculpture* (Paris: Société de propagation des livres d'art, 1715), 74. See also Elisabeth Lavezzi, "Catherine Perrot, peintre savant en miniature, *Les Leçons royales* de 1686 et de 1693," in *Femmes savants, savoirs de femmes. Du Crépuscule de la Renaissance à l'aube des*

generally began their studies with drawing and copy work during their teenage years. Perrot began formal training under the tutelage of the bird painter, Nicolas Robert (1614-1685), from whom she learned the foundations of miniature painting techniques in the 1660s. Upon her entrance to the *Académie*, Perrot established herself as a miniature painter by producing a small miniature painting for her reception piece, “representing a pot of flowers, on a mirror,” accepted by the academicians on January 31, 1682.⁷¹ The small number of women artists part of the *Académie* by this date include Catherine Duchemin, Anne-Marie Stresor, Dorothee Massé, Élisabeth-Sophie Chéron, and Madeleine and Geneviève Boullogne.⁷² The women accepted as academicians were aged between twenty-one and thirty-three; of them, Perrot was the oldest at sixty, as well as the last to gain membership until Rosalba Carriera in 1720.⁷³ Although no artworks are currently attributed to Perrot, the artist’s 1686 *Les Leçons* discusses the creation of miniature paintings of birds and flora, and clarifies the techniques in her body of work (Fig. 11).⁷⁴ Despite her late training, Perrot’s work as an artist and instructor does not appear to have been limited.

Perrot’s *Preface* in the 1693 edition of the *Les Leçons* identifies the artist as a teacher to both Anne de Rohan, Princess of Guéméné and Marie Louise d’Orléans, instructing the women “how to paint Flowers in their Naturalness, [making the text] all the more due [...] since it only

Lumières, ed. Colette Nativel (Geneva: Droz, 1999), 229-45, esp. p. 245. Lavezzi suggests that Perrot’s professional and personal relationships likely prompted her entrance into the *Académie*, not only her skills as an artist.

⁷¹ Guérin, *Descriptions de l’Académie*, 74. Guérin describes the following concerning Perrot’s entrance into the *Académie*: “Petit Tableau en Mignature représentant un pot de fleurs, sur une glace. Par Mlle Catherine Perrot, épouse de M. Horry, Notaire Apostolique, sur lequel ouvrage lui a été donnée lettre d’Académicienne le 31 janvier 1682.”

⁷² Lavezzi, “Catherine Perrot,” 230-31. Duchemin and Stresor worked in miniature; Chéron in portraiture and history paintings; Massé in sculpture; and the Boullogne sisters in still life.

⁷³ Lavezzi, 230.

⁷⁴ Lavezzi, 229.

contains Lessons that Your Highness has done me the honor to receive from me.”⁷⁵ Perrot describes her instruction of both royal women, yet the volume remains dedicated to the Princess of Guéméné who is referenced throughout the text as its central inspiration.⁷⁶ The lessons in the second edition of the *Les Leçons* range from identifying pigment sellers in Paris, to forming the various styles of botanical motifs and birds in collaboration with such volumes as Nicolas Robert’s *Recueil de fleurs dessinées et peintes*, aiming to provide women artists the tools to craft artistic compositions “without difficulty.” The didactic form of Perrot’s *Les Leçons*, simplifying theoretical principles and the structuring of artistic works, speaks provocatively to the extension of the artistic manual for a readership of women ahead of the turn of the century. In Perrot’s work, the student is not intended to be an artist with the professional means to become a master, but for those with “little or no knowledge of this Noble art” aiming to gain artistic aptitude and to make artistic processes “familiar & practicable.”⁷⁷ The volume does not aim to construct the identity of a fully learned artist as acquired under the tutelage of the tutor, but guides the hand through the tracing and coloring of artworks necessary for the beginning of artistic practice.

⁷⁵ Perrot, *Les Leçons*, iii-iv (1725 edition; from 1693 text. Original text reads: “[...] qui enseigne à peindre les Fleurs dans leur Naturel, vous est dû d’autant plus qu’il ne renferme que des Leçons que Votre Altesse m’a fait l’honneur de recevoir de moi [...]”

⁷⁶ The 1686 text was originally dedicated to Marie Louise d’Orléans, Queen of Spain and consort of Charles II, identified in the first edition as the *Madame la Dauphine*. The second edition was subsequently dedicated to Anne de Rohan, and a note concerning d’Orléans’ death from appendicitis in 1689 added to the text. D’Orléans was the daughter of Henrietta of England and Philippe I, Duke of Orléans, the younger brother of Louis XIV. As such, the familial connection of nobility in the French court would have provided Perrot access to both d’Orléans and Rohan because of her close affinities to the *Académie*. Perrot chooses to direct her text to her dedicant, Anne de Rohan, throughout the 1693 edition using “you.” Unlike other contemporary works intended for a genderless audience, Perrot appeals to the “you” of readership as distinctly female in the second edition. The first edition of 1686, by contrast, is crafted to “*rendre service au Public*” without defining a specific readership. I choose to adhere primarily to the 1693 text for its change in scope and audience. See “Preface.”

⁷⁷ Perrot, 17 (1686). Original text reads: “*Ce livre estant fait plutôt pour les personnes, qui ont peu ou point du tout de connoissance de ce Noble Art, que pour celles qui y ont acquises quelque degré de perfection, il estoit absolument necessaire de mettre ces avis à la teste de ce Livre pour le leur rendre familier & pratique;*” Lavezzi, “Catherine Perrot,” 236.

Unlike Garzoni's *Libro* designed for circulation in a scale large enough for scrutiny of its miniaturized details, Perrot's volume is noteworthy for its smallness intended for private consumption. Two editions of the text, from the original 1686 publication to the subsequent edition of 1693, retain a duodecimo (12mo) format measuring around 10 x 16.5 cm despite additions made to the written material between the first and second editions.⁷⁸ The final contemporary edition, printed in 1725, was included as part of André Félibien's six volume *Entretiens sur les vies et sur les ouvrages des plus excellents peintres anciens et modernes* but retains the small scale format.⁷⁹ Perrot's intentions in using small scale printing are clarified in the *Notice* of the 1693 text, as she claims that the volume "makes it[self] known for its convenience, since its smallness makes it portable."⁸⁰ Throughout the *Les Leçons*, Perrot clarifies her interests in textual convenience because the volume "contains an easy manner, & an easy practice for learning the mixture of colors, & painting without difficulty all kinds of subjects."⁸¹ Rather than a volume to be shared among an expansive audience, the physical size and format of Perrot's book insists upon privacy and intimacy with the single reader. Perrot's *Les Leçons* is not, unlike early writing manuals, used by an instructor for the betterment of the pupil, but for the pupil herself to read and muse upon its contents at her own pace. This concept is further established in the second half of the text, "*Livre d'Oyseaux*," subdivided into sections regarding

⁷⁸ Extant copies of the 1686 edition held by a French bookseller and another in the Bibliothèque nationale de France provide these measurements for the first edition; additional metadata provided by the Getty Library offers the same scale and 12mo format for the 1725 Félibien edition. Additional descriptions on scale have not yet been discovered for the 1693 publication, but in viewing reproductions of the work, it seems likely that the miniaturized scale of the text was retained for this printing since the formatting is equivalent. The lengths of the text are also relatively consistent; the 1686 edition is 177 pages in length, while the 1693/1725 editions are 123 pages, commensurate with the reduction of purely didactic text for more general conceptual framing on miniature painting.

⁷⁹ Lavezzi, "Catherine Perrot," 232.

⁸⁰ Perrot, *Les Leçons*, vij (1725 edition; from 1693 text). Original text reads: "*Son volume en fait connoître la commodité, puisque sa petitesse le rend portatif.*"

⁸¹ Perrot, *Les Leçons*, vij (1725 edition; from 1693 text). Original text reads: "[...] *une manière aisée, & une pratique facile pour apprendre le mélange des couleurs, & à peindre sans peine toutes sortes de sujets.*"

the depiction of landscapes, patterns of weather and changing skies, trees and plants, colors and figuration of the saints, opaque and transparent draperies, emblematic animals, and the proclaimed birds and flowers found in the first edition.⁸² Young pupils, as indicated by Garzoni's references to van de Velde's *Spieghel* made in her *Libro*, can be imagined to utilize Perrot's book as a step-by-step manual for personal artistic refinement. Beginning by copying the shapes and scale of provided images, and completing the composition with coloring and shading, Perrot's *Les Leçons* enables an alternative form of copy work outside of the studio and taught by the learning artist herself. Perrot emphasizes the artist's presence in domestic spaces with materials that do not offend, noting that miniature painting conveniently uses "colors [soaked] with gummed water only, [that] do not dirty, and have no bad odor."⁸³ While the 1686 edition requires the use of Robert's *Recueil de fleurs* for crafting compositions, the edition of 1693 affords more latitude (Fig. 12). Following the woman artist's tenets and explanations, the private pupil could read Perrot's book in collaboration with other texts or move into creating her own compositions and postulate a new standing as a self-master.

Contrasting her contemporary Perrot, Élisabeth-Sophie Chéron spent her lifetime as an accomplished artist, being taught the arts of miniature painting and enameling during childhood that composed only a portion of her larger output in the arts.⁸⁴ Chéron published her *Livre a*

⁸² The first edition of the text, by contrast, is far more simplified than the changes effected in 1693 and reprinted in 1725. The 1686 edition's "*Livre d'Oyseaux*" provides step-by-step instructions for depicting the birds in Robert's text, including even directions for painting "*les Cages des Poules*" dependent upon the pupil's interests for composition. Lavezzi further identifies that the revised second edition of 1693, rather than providing instructions for depicting only images after Robert, further affords "*La pratique universelle de la peinture en miniature*" in its title to afford more general topics in miniature painting. See Lavezzi, "Catherine Perrot," 232.

⁸³ Perrot, *Les Leçons*, x (1725 edition; from 1693 text). Original text reads: "[...] *les couleurs qui fe détrempent avec de l'eau gommée seulement, ne salissent point, & n'ont aucune mauvaise odeur.*"

⁸⁴ See Julia K. Dabbs, *Life Stories of Women Artists, 1550-1800: An Anthology* (Surrey, UK: Ashgate, 2009), 348-55. For more on Chéron's multiple fields of knowledge, see René Démoris, ed., *Hommage à Elizabeth Sophie Chéron, texte et peinture à l'âge classique* (Paris: Presses de la Sorbonne nouvelle, 1992). Lavezzi further discusses Perrot in relation to Chéron in her essay, suggesting that Perrot's own late entrance into the *Académie* was a potential attempt to counter Chéron's extensive "feminine threats" to the Academy in her activities as portrait

dessiner, composé de testes tirées des plus beaux ouvrages de Raphaël in 1706, replicating Raphael's compositions in engravings for instructing new artists (Fig. 13). The 1706 date of Chéron's *Livre* notably coincides with the *Académie*'s ban on women members and is suggested here to pointedly speak to this exclusionary practice, reimagining a new method for women interested in beginning artistic training. As the *Académie* had long maintained control over the teaching of artists, exhibition of artworks, and access to royal commissions, women's immediate lack of access in this formal space would have had long-standing effects on artistic opportunities.⁸⁵ As such, Chéron's decision to avoid the gendered language in her *Livre a dessiner* speaks to the differing circumstances of her volume's publication compared to Perrot's 1693 *Les Leçons*. Rather than transparently arguing against the *Académie*'s ban, Chéron provides a space where men and women are treated equitably in their opportunities for artistic education. Just as literary texts were accessible to men, so too does Chéron provide a space for women outside of the *Académie*'s restrictions.⁸⁶ Chéron's volume speaks provocatively to the education of the young women artists prevalent in the early eighteenth century, as well as women with availability to artistic volumes in a relative's library. As Chéron suggests of her work in the *Lecteur* of the *Livre a dessiner*:

I could not resist the temptation to engrave this attempt myself & to share it with the Public. I have tried not to alter anything, & to follow exactly everything that can give the idea of the genius and the taste of their Author [Raphael], where everything is true, everything is simple, everything is great. [...] Moreover, what must give credence to the fidelity of this Work is that the [features of the] Designs [are] taken from the Originals.⁸⁷

painter, history painter, writer, and student of the human figure. In contrast to Chéron's extensive activities, Lavezzi suggests that Perrot's age and less obtrusive occupation in miniatures would have "balanced" the scales and made her a less "offensive" member, in Lavezzi, "Catherine Perrot," 230-31.

⁸⁵ Alain Mérot, *French Painting in the Seventeenth Century* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), 133.

⁸⁶ Chéron's *Livre a dessiner*'s was presented to Robert de Cotte, "vice-protecteur" of the *Académie*, as evidenced on its title page. I suggest here that Chéron's pointed presentation of a teaching text, produced around the time that the institution first excluded women's participation, was envisioned as a text to be perused in non-formal environments for artistic students from its inception.

⁸⁷ Élisabeth-Sophie Chéron, "Au Lecteur," *Livre a dessiner; composé de testes tirées des plus beaux ouvrages de*

Chéron is not yet known to have relied on printed volumes in the process of her artistic education⁸⁸, but her reliance on the book's form for instructing other artists marks an engaging transition in eighteenth-century artistic education, notable for the period's growing investment in teaching women—however generally centralized in cultural and domestic work. In her 1696 *An Essay in Defence of the Female Sex*, Mary Astell describes that young girls were taught “Musick and Painting [as] they give us an insight into two Arts, that makes up a great part of the Pleasures and Diversions of Mankind,” among other gendered expectations for practice, including needlework and dancing.⁸⁹ Astell singles out the relevance of painting and drawing, however, recognizing both studies' importance in educational curricula for the betterment of the mind, as well as the hand's productivity. Despite their separation in geography, Chéron subscribes to the same process of erudition described in Astell's essay: through the process of imitation, a woman's hand gains artistic capacity, ability, and skill necessary for generating artistic power. Sketches, drawings, and calligraphy return to writing's functionality as a visual method, “notating thoughts and understanding them,” in the process of the pen or stylus' movement

Raphaël (Paris: Nicolas Langlois, 1706). Original text reads: “[...] je n'ay pu resister à la tentation de graver moy-mesme cet essay & d'en faire part au Public. J'ay tasché de n'y rien alterer, & de suivre exactement tout ce qui peut donner l'idée du genie & du goust de leur Auteur, où tout est vray, tout est simple, tout est grand. [...] Au reste, ce qui doit donner creance à la fidelité de cet Ouvrage, c'est que le trait de la pluspart de ces Desseins a esté pris sur celuy des Originaux;”

⁸⁸ Despite this lack of current knowledge, it can be presumed that Chéron was well-learned across the disciplines of art, literature, and music—something that her contemporary biographers make clear in her multiple talents as a polymath. I make this distinction for the primary reason that Chéron's larger body of artistic work, composed largely of portraits and history paintings, was equally informed by the long literary tradition in history painting as well as the contemporary cultural impetus of the theater. See, for instance, the previously attributed portrait of Antoinette du Ligier de la Garde Deshoulières (now Pierre Mignard) placing the French poetess in the pastoral landscape of popular literature and dramas with “Arcadian” influences. For more on the pastoral in seventeenth-century French and Italian art, see Claire Pace, “‘The Golden Age... The First and Last Days of Mankind’: Claude Lorrain and Classical Pastoral, with Special Emphasis on Themes from Ovid's ‘Metamorphoses,’” *Artibus et Historiae* 23, no. 46 (2002): 127-56.

⁸⁹ Mary Astell, “Selection from *An Essay in Defence of the Female Sex*,” in *Women in the 18th Century: Constructions of Femininity*, ed. Vivien Jones (London: Routledge, 1990), 211.

across a page.⁹⁰ As with Garzoni and Perrot, Chéron's *Livre* opens new opportunities for understanding methods for fostering an education in private domestic spaces.

In her *Livre*, Chéron provides her rationale for producing a drawing text based on the principles of Raphael's works, as well as thirty-six engravings of Raphael's drawn and painted figures, each classicized and reinterpreted in Chéron's personal style. Unlike Garzoni's use of the book form as a self-educational tool, Chéron clarifies the volume's purpose as first steps in the teaching process, positioning herself as teacher rather than student. She notes that as "new vessels usually retain the smell of the first liquors that are put into them, it is prudent to first enter only things incapable of being corrupted [i.e. the master's drawings] and of corrupting those [i.e. Chéron's interpretations] which we wish to introduce in the following [work]."⁹¹ Chéron's notation of her own "corruption" processes in interpreting Raphael provide a semantics of the woman artist's conception of her copy work: through altering images for improvement, Chéron's purity of models also affords the artist's validity as teacher. Printed in only one edition, Chéron's *Livre a dessiner* was produced in folio format by Nicolas Langlois according to the artist's "*désir de faire imprimer*."⁹² Given permission to print the volume under Louis XIV's privilege until 1726, Chéron's death in 1711 and subsequent passing of her properties to her niece, Jeanne de la Croix, likely led to the work's discontinuance.⁹³ Despite its singular printing, however, Chéron's *Livre* recognizes the regeneration of the large-scale drawing book and the reimagination of the artist's manual by the woman artist.

⁹⁰ Suthor, "Guercino's 'Wet' Drawing," 92.

⁹¹ Chéron, "*Au Lecteur*." Original text reads: "[...] *les vaisseaux neufs conservent ordinairement l'odeur des premières liqueurs que l'on y met, il est de la prudence de n'y faire entrer d'abord que des choses incapables de se corrompre, & de corrompre celles que l'on y voudra introduire dans la suite.*"

⁹² Chéron, "*Privilege du Roy*."

⁹³ Chéron's will indicates the artist's passing of her estate to her niece, Anne de La Croix, likely Jeanne de La Croix, an identified pupil and collaborator of the artist as well. See Chéron, "Le Testament et la demeure d'Élizabeth-Sophie Chéron," in *Bulletin de la Société de l'histoire de Paris et dell'Ile-de-France* (Paris: H. Champion, 1905), 159-63.

Sirani's engagement with her young pupil in the domestic space comes to mind upon inspecting Chéron's engravings in the *Livre*. The large size of Chéron's folio, with measurements of 29 x 44cm, speaks to the overlapping uses of the text as pattern book and self-instructional work.⁹⁴ Each engraving comprises the entirety of each *recto*, edges of the printing plates evident in the bruised paper, with blank *verso* pages as that of a formal artist's sketchbook with hand-drawn figures. Chéron's *Livre*, as that of Sirani's depicted sketchbook and Garzoni's *Libro*, is large enough to be viewed closely to enable appreciation—and capitalization—of the woman artist's hand despite its changed format in print. The *Livre* places Chéron within the realm of artistic teacher, separating the artist from her previous influences and instructors to foster a new manner to learn artistic practice. In producing proper models for young artists to emulate, refine, and produce their own inventions and interpretations, Chéron presses the learning student to “recall with pleasure the ideas that the Savants conceived of the Original” in acknowledging the master's artistic power.⁹⁵ Chéron's sensitivity to this idea is evident in her own rendering of Raphael's works, where the treatment of figures is referential to antique examples in realizing facial features, such as a serpentine curve of the neck, elongated proportions, and Roman noses aligned with artistic trends in the French school and perhaps also prefiguring the Neoclassical.

⁹⁴ Chéron's text is an unusual size for folio volumes; typical folios in early modernity measure around 31.5 × 21cm and double-folios around 66.5 × 43cm. The *Livre*'s height of 44cm and width of 29cm, by contrast, further suggests the author's intentionality in selecting the size of her printed volume. A second copy of the *Livre* in the Bibliothèque nationale de France, as confirmed by curator Chloé Perrot, measures a comparable 43.8 × 27.8 cm. For more on the formats of early modern texts, see Peter Beal, *A Dictionary of English Manuscript Terminology: 1450 to 2000* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 157-58. For the scale of other contemporary women artist's drawings, see Bohn, “Drawings,” in *Women Artists*, 174-203. I wish to offer special thanks to Jason Nargis, Special Collections Librarian for Instruction & Curriculum at Northwestern University, who graciously provided me with photographs and the physical dimensions of Chéron's volume held in the Charles Deering McCormick Library Special Collections and Archives.

⁹⁵ Chéron, “*Au Lecteur*.” Original text reads: “[...] rappelleroient avec plaisir les idées que les Savans ont conceuës des Originaux [...]”

Chéron's purpose for producing her engraved volume was not intended for the well-seasoned artist, but as with the calligraphic manuals central to Garzoni's early self-instruction and Perrot's treatise, for the introductory student new to the practice of art. "As my main wish has been [to] help those who are starting to draw," Chéron claims, "I am sure that this Work will appeal to the strong and the weak, and that the most skillful will advise their pupils to imitate it, like a study very capable of advancing them."⁹⁶ The volume's engravings attest to this educational urge in Chéron's interpretations of Raphael, citing the artist's paintings and sketches. The first of Chéron's images included in the *Livre* comes from Raphael's preparatory study for the 1516–20 *Transfiguration* altarpiece, completed in black chalk on paper, showing the twisted head, shoulder, and extended arm of the female figure pointing to Christ (Fig. 14). The figure's shoulder blades in Raphael's drawing include light hatch marks for delineation of the body's shaping, as well as shadowing to define the hair, nape, and chin later realized in the finished painting. Chéron strengthens the contrast in the image, the definition of musculature, and the completion of the figure's hand existing only as a soft line in Raphael's original (Fig. 15). A softness of skin texture, wisps of braided hair, and generalized features from Raphael's work receive intense, dramatic tension in Chéron's engraving. Despite Chéron's claims of copying the master's works with "exact fidelity," these traits are difficult to discern.⁹⁷ Instead, Chéron's image signals the artist's move beyond minute alterations and imitation of figures into expressions singular to the artist herself, fit for a teacher and master in her own right.

⁹⁶ Chéron, "Au Lecteur." Original text reads: "[...] *Ainsi quoyque ma veüe principale ait esté en cela d'aider ceux qui commencent à dessiner, je ne laisse pas d'estre persuade que cet Ouvrage plaira aux forts & aux foibles, & que les plus habiles em conseilleront l'imitation à leurs Eleves, comme une estude tres capable de les avancer.*"

⁹⁷ Chéron, "Au Lecteur." Chéron uses the phrase "*une exacte fidelité*" to describe her work, though it is arguable that this is not realized in her finished compositions. Although the works copy the content of Raphael's work, as discussed further below, Chéron's manipulation of style, attributes, and figuration do not produce exact copies of Raphael's originals to represent her own *ingegno* apart from *imitazione*.

Chéron's figure of the woman before the transfiguration produces a visual exemplar aligning with contemporary theorists' investments in studying Raphael's work: "correcting nature's imperfections and raising its imitation to a state of ideal beauty" to afford the artist a "guide to *'la belle nature.'*"⁹⁸ Remodeling the master of the artistic works copied in her *Livre*, Chéron further idealizes Raphael to highlight her practice of *ingegno*, realizing the rendering of the muscles of the body through extensive hatching and shading to elucidate areas of light and dark and further classicizing the facial features. The female figure's eyes, brow bone, slant of the nose, and extension of the jawline are all reinterpreted in Chéron's engraving, mimicking, yet not fully mirroring, Raphael's original. As in the interconnectivity of writing and drawing, where "writing is presented as a comparable and exemplary technique of forming lines that helped develop refinement in draftsmanship," Chéron's use of the book form to situate her engravings for an "enlightened public" overtly interweaves her written and artistic prowess.⁹⁹ The printed volume's structure intended for reproduction beyond Chéron's audience in the Court or Salon furthers the expressive qualities of writing and drawing intended for students. Chéron transfigures her skill and attention to the "so correct, so varied, so expressive, and so elegant" engravings beyond her immediate public, and into external spheres for instructing the next generation of artists.¹⁰⁰ Insisting on the power of the hand and mind for learning from the masters, Chéron included, the *Livre* expresses the possibilities of changing the meaning of learning through image and word.

Chéron's contemporaries, including the writer Antoine-Joseph Dezallier d'Argenville who composed the artist's first biography, acknowledged that many of her engravings were

⁹⁸ Martin Rosenberg, *Raphael and France: The Artist as Paradigm and Symbol* (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1994), 28.

⁹⁹ Suthor, "Guercino's 'Wet' Drawing," 84; Chéron, "*Au Lecteur.*" Literally, "*le public éclairé.*"

¹⁰⁰ Chéron, "*Au Lecteur.*" Original text reads: "[...] *si correctes, si variées, si expressives, & si élégantes* [...]"

copies, yet were defined by a “uniqueness and intelligence of her drawing technique.”¹⁰¹ This, more than the exposition included in the *Livre*, traces the most valuable facet of Chéron’s printed volume for new students: the power to learn by doing, creating a uniqueness in the student’s skill by tracing Chéron’s hand. Considering Chéron’s pseudo-copies of Raphael’s work as a body of materials to be used for instruction, the artist’s attentiveness to providing her own interpretations—mediating them prior to putting them forth to a new body of pupils—speaks also to Garzoni’s and Perrot’s texts, improving upon the masters van de Velde, Raphael, and Robert to find a particular voice in artistic representation. Chéron’s engravings, including reproductions of figures from many of Raphael’s most well-known paintings, provide the artist’s skill and hand to a masculine artistic process emphasized by the *Académie*’s ban. Changes to shadow and figuration of faces, while removed from the intention of the original compositions, provides a place for the student to become teacher by redefining the meaning of an artistic work. Chéron’s figures, thoroughly idealized and unconventionally non-imitative, define a new space in women’s artistic production meant for broad circulation to learn from the book’s structure. Not confined in the private marginal space of a manual or artist’s notebook, the works produced by both Chéron and Perrot consider the space of the book as an opening of opportunities for women’s artistic education and practice in the eighteenth century and beyond.

¹⁰¹ Dabbs, *Life Stories of Women Artists*, 349.

Conclusion

From calligraphy to miniatures, oil painting and sculpture, the use of the book and its resounding associations with knowledge production are not simply a facet of the established artist's reference library but mark the onset of young women's artistic practice. Soon after the publications of Perrot's *Les Leçons* in 1686 and 1693, and Chéron's *Livre a dessiner* in 1706, a variety of other artistic manuals proliferated in France, the Dutch Republic, and England. While often not indicated singularly for the use of women as artistic students—something Perrot and Chéron similarly refuse to identify in the first editions of their works—artistic volumes used for students preserved the humanistic, self-teaching model of education throughout the eighteenth century. Yet the problematized nature of imitative work for the woman artist remained a question of propriety in the academy and workshop, rooted in the gendered pedagogical systems of European art instruction continuing through the end of the century. The drawing, an artist's "physical trace," is realized by the woman master innovating artistic education's future where the student can learn to expand the litany of imitation and improvement in art by alternative means.¹⁰² Envisioning a future of artistic education where women artists might learn from the knowledge source of the book for self-instruction, Chéron and Perrot's projects trace those of the preceding seventeenth century to capture the possibility of teaching artists through women's authorship in printed volumes.

This thesis aims to capture only three examples of the broader case for early modern women's use of the "silent instruction" afforded by the printed book between 1600 and 1725 in Southern Europe. By nature of the current study's length, this investigation is necessarily confined to examples of women artists and print cultures in Southern Europe, concentrating on

¹⁰² Suthor, "Guercino's 'Wet' Drawing," 84.

Italy and France for their storied locations of both artistic and book histories. In furthering this study, it would be valuable to consider broader instances of women artists' use of print culture for instructional purposes, particularly in the Northern European contexts of the Netherlands, Germany, and England, contemplating such artists with minimal, unusual, or unknown training provenances, such as Joan Carlile (ca. 1606-1679) and Catharina Backer (1689-1766).

Examining other artists with known training by family members, but without direct inventories identifying the textual volumes accessible to them in their educations, such as the Italian Artemisia Gentileschi (1593-after 1654) or English Mary Beale (1633-1699), could further clarify the methods women used for learning to draw—and potentially paint as well—in early modernity. Furthermore, this study attempts to recognize the “silent instruction” of print culture in art to open new inquiries into the value of artistic manuals in book histories, often undervalued by scholars in favor of those considering reading, writing, and general occupational skills.

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