



Acknowledgments

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Cover and inside overleaf detail: **Thomas Gainsborough and Joseph Wood**, *The Gipsies* (also, *Wooded Landscape with Gypsies Round a Campfire*), c. 1754-1764, etching and engraving on paper, 18 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 16 $\frac{3}{8}$ in., University of Arizona Museum of Art, Museum Purchase with funds provided by the Edward J. Gallagher, Jr. Memorial Fund, 1991.22.4.

Inside: **Cornelis Cort** (after **Titian**), *Roger Liberating Angelica*, 1565, engraving on paper, 11 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 17 $\frac{1}{16}$ in., University of Arizona Museum of Art, Museum Purchase with funds provided by the Edward J. Gallagher, Jr. Memorial Fund, 1990.6.2.

Philip Galle (after **Pieter Bruegel the Elder**), *Spes (Hope)*, 1559, from *The Seven Virtues*, engraving on paper, 9 $\frac{1}{16}$ x 12 $\frac{3}{8}$ in., University of Arizona Museum of Art, Museum Purchase with funds provided by the Edward J. Gallagher, Jr. Memorial Fund, 2000.4.1.

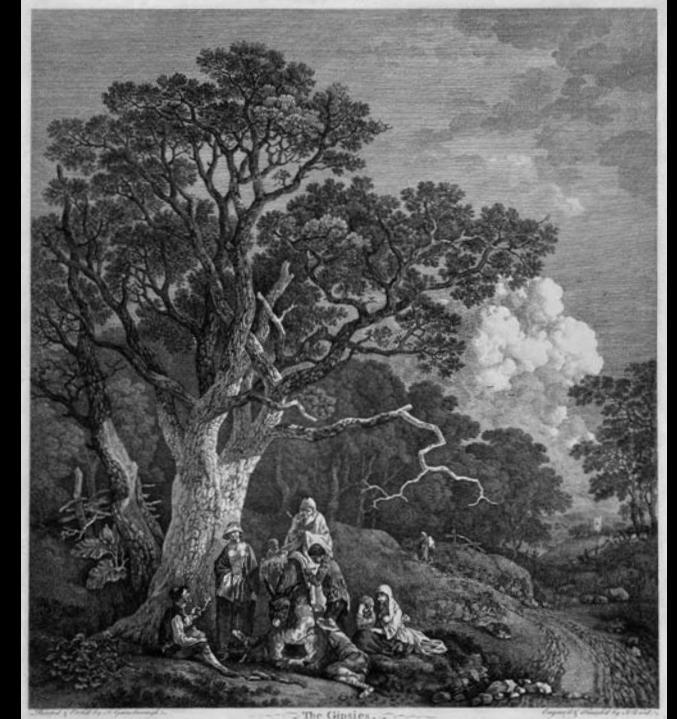
Marco Dente (after **Raphael**), *Entellus and Dares*, c. 1520-25, engraving on paper, 12 $\frac{3}{16}$ x 10 $\frac{3}{16}$ in., University of Arizona Museum of Art, Museum Purchase with funds provided by the Edward J. Gallagher, Jr. Memorial Fund, 1998.23.3.

- 1 Michael Bury, "Infringing Privileges and Copying in Rome, c. 1600," *Print Quarterly* 22, no. 2 (2005), 134.
- 2 For further reading, see: David Landau and Peter Parshall, *The Renaissance Print 1470-1550* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994) and Evelyn Lincoln, *The Invention of the Italian Renaissance Printmaker* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000).
- 3 Christopher Witcombe, *Copyright in the Renaissance: Prints and the Privilegio in Sixteenth-Century Venice and Rome* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2004), 81-86.
- 4 Witcombe, *Copyright in the Renaissance*, xxvii.
- 5 Lisa Pon, *Raphael, Dürer, and Marcantonio Raimondi: Copying and the Italian Renaissance Print* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), 68.
- 6 Madeleine Viljoen, "Raphael and the Restorative Power of Prints," *Print Quarterly* 18, no. 4 (2001), 392.
- 7 Witcombe, *Copyright in the Renaissance*, 5.
- 8 Ilja M Veldman, *Crispijn De Passe and His Progeny (1564-1670): A Century of Print Production* (Rotterdam: Sound & Vision Publishers, 2001), 12.
- 9 For a complete history of Hieronymus Cock's printing business see: Timothy A. Riggs, *Hieronymus Cock: Printmaker and Publisher* (New York: Garland, 1977).
- 10 Manfred Sellink, *The New Hollstein Dutch & Flemish Etchings, Engravings and Woodcuts 1450-1700, Philips Galle, Part 1* (Rotterdam: Sound & Vision Publishers, 2001), xiii.

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THE CULTURAL POLITICS OF PRINTS

THE 2007-08 SAMUEL H. KRESS FOUNDATION
POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWSHIP EXHIBITION

October 30, 2008 – February 22, 2009

THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA MUSEUM OF ART

The concept of intellectual property is of tremendous importance in contemporary life, particularly in the age of the Internet, when an idea or an image can be transmitted instantly to millions of people around the globe. However, the definitions of intellectual property rights and the legal mechanisms that protect them have evolved and changed over time. *The Cultural Politics of Prints* explores the birth and early development of such mechanisms, and the political, social, and economic interests that drove them, specifically as they pertain to the world of printmaking.



Cornelis Cort (after Titian)

Prints have long been a cost-effective means of disseminating visual information. Not only are they less expensive than paintings to produce, and far easier to create in multiples, but before the advent of photography they were often the only means by which an individual might ever see a work of art. A print might function as a copy of a work originally created in another medium: in paint, say, or in marble. Or the print medium allowed an artist to create a completely new piece. Historically, some artists have made their own prints; many others, however, have turned to a professional printmaker for such needs. Printmaker and artist would then search for outlets to circulate their work, leading to further association with publishers and print sellers. These chains of relationships could become extremely complicated. Through Old Master prints in The University of Arizona Museum of Art collections, this exhibition explores such relationships and illuminates the long process of defining intellectual property as it relates to the creation and distribution of fine prints.

The concept of copyright developed in 18th century Europe. Prior to that time, the commonly used term was *privilege*. These are not synonymous terms: as art historian Michael Bury explains, copyright is a means of protecting intellectual property, whereas privileges were a form of investment protection. Privileges were granted to creators of images to establish sole control over printing and sales, or to printers and print dealers to establish their sole right to print and distribute images.¹ These privileges were granted by the Pope— or, in Venice, by the senate and the Doge, or in France by the King— and were referred to as *cum privilegio*. In this way, religion and politics became deeply entwined with the cultural production of prints.

With the advent of the printing press, in about 1439, artists understood that their artworks could reach a broader geographical and cultural audience. Many recent studies have noted the impact of the printing press on the international exchange of ideas. For instance, depictions of religious scenes, which varied widely from region to region, became increasingly standardized across Europe as the print market grew.² International exchange began to break down traditional barriers between northern and southern Europe, as both prints and their makers traveled.

Beginning in the sixteenth century, artists increasingly sought recognition for their individual talents, as well as the financial and social benefits of this appreciation. Unlike painters, printmakers were not regarded as having high social standing. One figure who challenged and changed this conception was the German artist Albrecht Dürer. When he saw that his works were being copied and sold in Venice without his permission, he filed a complaint with the Venetian courts. He was granted a *cum privilegio* by the senate and the Doge. As a result, artists could continue to copy his work as part of their traditional artistic training, but were no longer permitted to copy his signature.³ In this way, his signature effectively became the first trademark. His prints came to be regarded as original works of art in their own right, rather than as secondary visual products belonging to no one and available for appropriation.

Other artists saw the advantage of collaborating with printmakers and publishers who could produce their images in quantity for sale to a broader audience. The Venetian artist Titian, for instance, received a privilege from the Venetian courts to ensure that only the Flemish engraver Cornelis Cort— whose proficiency he evidently valued— could reproduce his paintings. The fear that an unskilled artist would replicate his work is evident in his letter to the courts of Venice:

As some men ignorant of art, in order to avoid the work and out of greed for profit put themselves to this task [of copying prints, thereby] defrauding the honour of the inventor of the prints by depreciating them and profiting from the labours of others; besides cheating the public with a forged print of little value...⁴

A print acted as a preview and promotional device for an artist's work. If a print was badly reproduced, an audience might perceive the original as just as poor. On display here is Cort's print *Roger Saving Angelica* (1565), for which Titian requested a privilege in 1565. The print is based on a drawing by Titian, now housed in the Musée Bonnat, in Bayonne, France.

The Italian master, Raphael, likewise saw the benefits of collaborating with specific printmakers, among them Marco Dente and Marcantonio Raimondi.⁵ He provided the printmakers with drawings and sketches that they reproduced and sometimes embellished, with his permission. For example, Dente's *Entellus and Dares* (c. 1520-25), presented here, contains a view of classical ruins that were Dente's own contribution to the composition— after Raphael's original.⁶

The improved status of printmaking in the public imagination is evident in the 1550 edition of *Lives of the Painters, Sculptors, and Architects* by Giorgio Vasari. Unlike prior editions, which included only brief mention of the medium, Vasari's 1550 publication contained an entire chapter on printmaking. This chapter in turn spurred the



Marco Dente (after Raphael)

growth of the print market, because Vasari's approval was seen to ennoble the craft of printing, elevating it to the status of art.⁷

The increasing desire for prints drove the establishment of massive multi-national printmaking and publishing companies. The publisher controlled the print production, bringing together the designer and engraver. The publisher was also responsible for arranging the financing and sale of the print.⁸ For instance, in Antwerp around 1550, Hieronymus Cock's publishing house *Aux quatre vents* (House of the Four Winds) published his own prints as well as those by the Flemish engraver Cornelis Bos and the Italian engraver Giorgio Ghisi. Cock was first to introduce engravings after Italian works (especially those of Ghisi) and employed numerous engravers, including Dirck Volckertsz Coornhert, Cornelis Cort, and Philip Galle.⁹ On view here is Galle's *Hope*, from the series *Seven Virtues* (1559) after Pieter Bruegel the Elder.



Philip Galle (after Pieter Bruegel the Elder)

Inscriptions on Old Master prints often acknowledge the work of the artist, engraver, and publisher: *invenit* or *delineavit* denotes the designer or original artist; *sculpsit* represents the engraver; and *excudit*, *divulgavit apud*, *caelavit* or *formis* identify the publisher. In the lower right corner of Galle's *Hope*, in a cartouche, the following mark appears: *H. cock excu* [Hieronymus Cock, publisher]; and, to the left of that, *BRUGEL. INV* [Bruegel, artist]. Galle's name is not represented, yet recent scholars have attributed the print to Galle based on his known service as an engraver at *Aux quatre vents* from 1557-63.¹⁰

The complex relationships among artists, printmakers, designers, and publishers required for the production of prints flourished for centuries. The influence of religion and politics on the process remained undiminished: printmakers and publishers frequently had to apply for permission from royals, religious leaders, and governments in order to reproduce works in their vast collections. Similarly, prints were often dedicated to such leaders in exchange for social and political favors. By the late eighteenth century, the print market had created its own momentum: prints, once valued only as copies of distant, inaccessible original works of art, had become collectibles in their own right, driving an entire auxiliary industry of collectors' handbooks and guides. Print culture, supported by political interests, achieved new heights of economic success.

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