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Drawing The Line: Benvenuto Cellini On The Principles And Method Of Learning The Art Of Drawing And The Question Of Amateur Drawing Education

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Patricia L. Reilly. (2004). "Drawing The Line: Benvenuto Cellini On The Principles And Method Of Learning The Art Of Drawing And The Question Of Amateur Drawing Education". *Benvenuto Cellini: Sculptor, Goldsmith, Writer*. 26-52.

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BENVENUTO CELLINI

Sculptor, Goldsmith, Writer



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 **CAMBRIDGE**
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Carpen
NX
552
Z9
C4533
2004

PUBLISHED BY THE PRESS SYNDICATE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE
The Pitt Building, Trumpington Street, Cambridge, United Kingdom

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS
The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 2RU, UK
40 West 20th Street, New York, NY 10011-4211, USA
477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia
Ruiz de Alarcón 13, 28014 Madrid, Spain
Dock House, The Waterfront, Cape Town 8001, South Africa

<http://www.cambridge.org>

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First published 2004

Printed in the United Kingdom at the University Press, Cambridge

Typefaces Bembo 11.75/16 pt. *System* L^AT_EX 2_ε [TB]

A catalog record for this book is available from the British Library.

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data

Cellini, Benvenuto, 1500–1571.

Benvenuto Cellini : sculptor, goldsmith, writer / edited by
Margaret A. Gallucci, Paolo L. Rossi.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 0-521-81661-0 (HB)

I. Cellini, Benvenuto, 1500–1571 – Criticism and interpretation. 2. Art,
Renaissance – Italy. I. Gallucci, Margaret A. II. Rossi, Paolo L., 1946– III. Title.

NX552.Z9C4533 2004

730'.092 – dc22 2003056913

ISBN 0 521 81661 0 hardback

DRAWING THE LINE



BENVENUTO CELLINI'S *ON THE PRINCIPLES AND
METHOD OF LEARNING THE ART OF DRAWING* AND THE
QUESTION OF AMATEUR DRAWING EDUCATION

Patricia L. Reilly

Benvenuto Cellini's unfinished discourse *On the Principles and Method of Learning the Art of Drawing* (ca. 1565) offers the reader a guide to learning the art of anatomical drawing. Based upon the anatomical principles derived from the works of Michelangelo, Cellini's discourse has traditionally been interpreted as an attempt to create a pedagogical program for the members of the Florentine artists' Accademia del disegno.¹ What has not been discussed until now, however, is the fact that Cellini's discourse also reveals the tensions and strife that existed among the members of the newly founded artists' academy; for, as I argue here, Cellini uses this discourse not only to lay out the proper method of anatomical *disegno*, but also as an opportunity to launch an invective against two of his fellow academicians, the painters Alessandro Allori and Giorgio Vasari. Indeed, Cellini's discourse is a response to what he perceived as a threat posed by these two to the founding principles, integrity, and practice of their shared art of *disegno*.



Cellini's *Principles and Method* has traditionally been grouped with two other unfinished discourses on artistic anatomy written by academicians of *disegno*: Alessandro Allori's *Discussions on the Rules of Disegno*

and Vincenzo Danti's *The First Book of the Treatise of Perfect Proportions of All the Things That Can Be Imitated and Portrayed with the Art of Disegno*.² There is much to warrant this comparison. All three of these artists were members of the Accademia del disegno; all three wrote their treatises sometime between 1564 and 1565; and all three take as their subject the artist's construction of the human body. Further, all three of these authors insist that the human body be constructed from the inside out. As Cellini declares, the most important thing for an artist to know is how to make "a nude man and woman well . . . [thus] it is necessary to come to the foundation of such nudes, which is their bones."³

This program of a working anatomy for artists was based on that first proposed by the Florentine Leon Battista Alberti in his *On Painting* of 1436. In painting the nude, he states, "we first lay the foundation of its bones and muscles, which we then cover with its flesh so that it is not difficult to understand where each muscle is under this flesh."⁴ Adhering to this tradition, Cellini, Allori, and Danti limit their discussions to just those parts of the anatomy that are required for creating a convincing image of the exterior of the human form – bone, muscle, and flesh. Finally, all three of these artists derive the principles and rules of their artistic anatomies from the works of the great Michelangelo. As Cellini asserts, it is Michelangelo's knowledge of the skeletal structure – of the "order of the bones" – that he attempts to codify in this discourse⁵:

And in order to show you an example of this and to direct you to an author most grand, see the works of master Michelagnolo Buonarroti; because his high manner is so . . . pleasing, for no other reason than for having held to this order of the bones. And [to see] that this is the truth, look at all of his works, sculpture as much as painting, for the most beautiful muscles well situated in their places have not done him as much honor as his showing of the bones.⁶

Danti, too, cites the works of this master as the source of his knowledge and precepts, as here, when he expresses to Duke Cosimo I de' Medici his most humble hope that

through these, my writings (if, by my singular fortune you ever deign to read them), you can know whether the precepts that I demonstrate having observed in the above said sculpture [of Michelangelo] will, in some part, be achieved in my statues.⁷

The only painter in this group, Allori, also saw himself as the inheritor and transmitter of the anatomical principles derived from the art of Michelangelo. Unlike his colleagues, however, Allori transmitted these principles through a treatise based on the work of the venerable *heir* to this Michelangelesque tradition in Florence, his mentor Bronzino.⁸

That these three authors chose the work of Michelangelo as the source for their treatises on artistic anatomy is not surprising. In the Cinquecento the figures of Michelangelo were seen to exemplify anatomical *disegno* itself, and it was in honor of his genius that the members of the Accademia del disegno elected him (in absentia) as their spiritual guide – “as head, father, and master of all.”⁹ Indeed, in 1564, the same year that the three treatises under consideration here are thought to have been begun, the Academy devoted much of its financial and artistic resources to creating an ostentatious funerary event for Michelangelo, who had died on 18 February of that same year.

In light of Michelangelo's death, then, the project of composing an anatomical treatise based on principles derived from his work seems a natural one for the Academy to have undertaken. By positioning itself as the undisputed guardian and disseminator of Michelangelo's principles of *disegno*, the newly established Academy could underscore its legitimacy and lend status to the art upon which it was founded. Further, these three academicians could be seen as completing a

project that Michelangelo himself had begun. For, according to Michelangelo's pupil, biographer, and close friend, Ascanio Condivi, Michelangelo intended to write a treatise on anatomy for sculptors and painters, one that would be on "all manner of human movement and appearances and on the bone structure, with a brilliant theory which he arrived at through long experience."¹⁰

Writing this biography in 1553, eleven years before the master's death, Condivi recounts how Michelangelo, aware that he was not going to realize this project, chose instead to pass on his knowledge of artistic anatomy to Condivi himself. To this end, Michelangelo obtained a corpse and performed a dissection with his pupil, demonstrating to the latter the knowledge he had spent a lifetime accumulating. Through the dissection of this corpse, Condivi recounts,

Michelangelo showed me many rare and recondite things, perhaps never before understood, all of which I noted and hope one day to publish with the help of some learned man for the convenience and use of all who want to work in painting and sculpture.¹¹

Given these circumstances, then, the common assumption that these treatises were conceived by members of the Accademia del disegno to honor Michelangelo and to pass on the principles of his figural art to its members seems a reasonable one. I would suggest, however, that these three treatises were conceived within the context of two academies, the Accademia del disegno and the prestigious literary Accademia Fiorentina. More precisely, I argue that Condivi did indeed have the aid of what he refers to above as a "learned man" to help him publish a Michelangelo-inspired anatomy for artists, and that this man was Benedetto Varchi, official historian to Cosimo I and one of the most eminent members of the Fiorentina.

The project of publishing two treatises – one written by a sculptor and the other by a painter – on the principles of Michelangelo's anatomical *disegno* was a particularly appropriate one for Varchi to have

instigated. Not only had the recently deceased Michelangelo been one of the Fiorentina's most honored members since his admission on 31 March 1541, but Varchi was one of his most ardent admirers. His admiration manifested itself in many ways over the years, from the lectures he delivered to the Academy on the *paragone*, or the comparative merits of the arts – lectures that were based on letters he solicited from the leading artists of the time, most notably Michelangelo himself – to those he delivered as exegeses of Michelangelo's sonnets.¹² It culminated, appropriately enough, in the oration he wrote and delivered on the occasion of Michelangelo's funeral. Further, Michelangelo's death might well have inspired Varchi to solicit works that demonstrated the continuity between Michelangelo and his predecessor Alberti, who was the first artist/theorist to “articulate a coherent theoretical justification for drawing the human figure.”¹³ Indeed, in 1547, the same year that Varchi delivered his lectures on the *paragone*, Alberti's *De Pictura* had been translated into the vernacular by Varchi's colleague Lodovico Domenichi.¹⁴ In his lectures on the *paragone*, in fact, Varchi had cited Alberti as one of his predecessors in this debate.¹⁵

At the time of Michelangelo's death the most venerable Florentine practitioners of the figural tradition set out by Alberti, and brought to fruition in the works of Michelangelo, were Varchi's two close friends, the sculptor Cellini, then sixty-two years old, and the painter Agnolo Bronzino, sixty-five years old. It is not to these elder statesmen, however, that Varchi turned to realize this ambitious project of producing two treatises on the Michelangelesque principles of constructing the anatomically correct human form. Instead, I would argue, he enlisted the aid of the leading representatives of the next generation of Michelangelesque artists practicing in Florence, the sculptor Danti, then thirty-five years old, and the painter, Allori, thirty years old. As we have seen, Danti claims it was Michelangelo who inspired him to become a sculptor, and, according to his biographer, Danti in fact studied anatomy with the master in Rome sometime before he entered the Medici service in 1557.¹⁶

Allori, too, was a devoted pupil of the works of Michelangelo, studying them in Rome for over four years.¹⁷ His determination to be seen as the standard-bearer for the Michelangelesque tradition in Florence can be seen in the *Last Judgment* he painted in the Montauto Chapel in Santissima Annunziata upon his return. Here large passages from Michelangelo's own *Last Judgment* are virtually duplicated in this homage to the master. That Allori intended to use this painting to advertise his credentials as heir to the Michelangelesque tradition is evidenced by his signature: "Alessandro Allori, citizen of Florence, pupil of Bronzino, diligently painted this great invention of the painter [Michelangelo] Buonarotti."¹⁸ Further, he included a portrait of Michelangelo in the painting itself. One could not have crafted a better Florentine pedigree.

Thus I am arguing that Varchi conceived of bringing to print two treatises on the principles of Michelangelo's art and that he enrolled the help of his friends to realize his vision. In doing so, he brought together the memory of Condivi, the skills and talents of Danti and Allori, and his own philosophical knowledge and editorial skills.¹⁹ In return, I suggest, he secured for his young colleagues membership in the Fiorentina.

Indeed, one of the most compelling pieces of evidence for the argument that these treatises were written in the context of the Fiorentina is the fact that Allori and Danti were accepted into this Academy on 26 September 1565, the same year that they are thought to have written these works.²⁰ As a prerequisite for membership, they would have been required to submit a short literary composition to the Academy censor.²¹ Further, at least three of the six young Florentine noblemen whom Allori casts as the students and interlocutors in his treatise are known to have been members of the Fiorentina, and two of them were admitted on the same day as were Allori, Danti, and Condivi.²² For, Condivi, too, was accepted on this date, although there is no evidence that he submitted a written work to the censor.²³ Perhaps his role as the source of the principles and rules laid out in the

treatises of Danti and Allori served in the stead of a treatise of his own. Or perhaps, as David Summers has suggested, his authorship of the biography of Michelangelo was considered accomplishment enough at this time.²⁴

For Danti and Allori, the opportunity to have their works published under the auspices of the Fiorentina must have had great appeal.²⁵ The center of philosophical and literary activity in Florence during the reign of Cosimo I, the Fiorentina was, like the artists' Accademia del disegno, part of Cosimo's "conscious, multifaceted program . . . to restore Florence's reputation as the primary cultural center of Italy."²⁶ Unlike the artists' academy, however, the Fiorentina was home to noblemen, courtiers, and men of letters.²⁷ As such, it served as an ideal venue for advertising these academicians' abilities to codify and carry on the figural tradition of Michelangelo. In other words, the Fiorentina offered these two the perfect venue in which to develop and expand their patronage networks.

It was the compromises that Allori made in his treatise to do so, however, that earned him Cellini's censure; for, unlike his sculptor colleagues, the painter Allori gears his treatise toward his audience of dilettantes in the Fiorentina not toward his fellow artists. To that end he sets out to teach them a simplified version of the art of *disegno*, the knowledge of which, Allori maintains, "these gentlemen desire principally for their ornament."²⁸ As already mentioned, several of the young noblemen that he lists as his interlocutors were members of the Fiorentina, and it is likely that Allori was their drawing instructor at the time he wrote this treatise. Young noblemen such as these were interested not in learning the principles of anatomy step by step, principles that Allori admits might appear to them "somewhat pointless and tedious," but in learning how to create a simplified image of the body on a two-dimensional surface.²⁹ To this end Allori formatted the illustrated drawing lessons that accompany his dialogue in a manner calculated to appeal to the manual skills of this audience – lessons that would have appealed to hands trained in calligraphy and geometry. As Paola Barocchi has noted, Allori's *Discussions* was written

with “the intent of providing a handbook of beautiful handwriting to dilettante gentlemen.”³⁰

Allori informs his young and noble students that he will be teaching them to draw the form of man, “the most beautiful and most noble thing” there is.³¹ From the outset, Allori professes to be instructing them according to the Albertian method followed by painters and sculptors, beginning with the bones and ending with the flesh. When he actually begins the drawing lessons, however, he presents them with a drawing of the exterior of the head in profile. After presenting this as an example of the end product they will produce, he demonstrates how to construct it piece by piece. The first lesson, then, is a demonstration of how to construct the exterior appearance of the eye in profile. Beginning with the strokes required to construct the upper lid, Allori proceeds to demonstrate in three further stages how to add to this the eyeball, lower lid, and brow.

Allori’s decision to begin his anatomical drawing program with the construction of the eye was calculated to appeal to the interests of his audience. Of the fifty-one subjects addressed in lectures delivered to the Fiorentina, the one most frequently addressed was the color, anatomy, and physiology of the eye. Cosimo Bartoli’s lecture on Canto xxxi of Dante’s *Purgatorio* for instance, was just such a lecture, and was based on Aristotle’s discussions of the same in his texts.³²

By beginning with the exterior view of the head and eye, however, Allori fundamentally compromises the anatomical program he earlier purports to be setting out. As we have seen, according to Alberti an artist cannot arrive at an understanding of the exterior appearance of the body until he has acquired a knowledge of the underlying skeletal and muscular foundation upon which it is built. The depiction of the exterior of the body is the culminating stage of this three-part sequence. To begin at the end of this sequence is to defeat the purpose – but only if the purpose is to teach the principles of anatomical drawing to artists.

This is not, however, what Allori attempts to do in this treatise. His intent here is to teach a group of gentlemen how to draw a

simplified version of the male nude. It is purely in the service of this goal that he first outlines the Albertian method for teaching anatomical drawing. Allori does so, not so that he can then teach this method, but so that he can allow his audience to believe that they are getting the same training as a real artist, without burdening them with any of the “tedious” aspects of such training. What he provides in reality, of course, is nothing more than an ABCs of drawing for the nonprofessional. It was this that elicited Cellini’s censure. As a result, Cellini wrote his own treatise in part to refute the two basic tenets of Allori’s: that the nonprofessional can practice the art of *disegno*; and that the eye is the appropriate place for the apprentice to begin.



Cellini begins his anatomical program with the following embellished invocation:

You, princes and *signori*, who take delight in such arts, and you, excellent artists, and you, young men, who want to learn them, for certain you must know that the most beautiful animal that human nature ever made is man; and the most beautiful part of man is the head; and the most beautiful and marvelous thing that is in the head are the eyes.³³

As Cellini makes clear here, his audience is divided into two groups, the princes and *signori* who “delight” in the arts, and the artists and apprentices who practice them. Unlike those in Allori’s treatise, the *signori* can appreciate the arts, but they cannot practice them. The program Cellini proposes instead is one for training workshop apprentices, “young men” who, like himself, entered the profession at a very young age. That this is the case can be seen in his discussion of why it is that imitating the eye is an inappropriate place to begin one’s studies. When he was young, he claims, masters would place a human eye in front of young and most tender apprentices as the starting point of their anatomical drawing education. “Because the

same thing happened to me in my childhood," he vows, "I hold for certain that this method is not a good one . . . and that the true and better method would be to put in front of them things that would not only be easier but also more useful than beginning by drawing an eye."³⁴

It seems unlikely, however, that Cellini learned anatomical *disegno* by beginning with an eye disengaged from its socket as he describes here. Indeed, this method would have gone against the anatomical practice outlined in the two most important anatomy books of the period, Vesalius' *De fabrica* and Juan Valverde de Amusco's *Historia de la composicion del cuerpo humano*.³⁵ Further, this method would have gone against standard medical and university dissection practice, which began with the abdominal and chest cavity, moved to the head, and finished with the limbs. Thus Cellini's description of having an eyeball thrust before him is less likely a direct account of his own experience than a derogatory reference to the treatise of his colleague Allori.³⁶

By characterizing this method of beginning with the eye as distasteful and counterproductive, Cellini can then offer his reader the correct alternative. "Now consider" he begins, "whether it is easier to draw a single bone to begin with, or truly, to draw a human eye." It is best to start with the former, he argues, for if a youth of a tender age begins with this bone, "it will most certainly seem to him that he is drawing a small stick . . . and there will not be any spirit of a child, who beginning to draw such a little stick of a bone, will not promise himself to do it very well, if not the first time, then the second."³⁷ The bone he proposes to begin with is the "first bone of the shin," or tibia. From here Cellini systematically discusses the remaining bones of the skeleton: from those of the leg up to the collarbone, neck, and head. In other words, Cellini proposes a practical method for teaching drawing to the apprentice, a method uncompromised by Allori's concessions to the amateur. Indeed, the mere fact that Allori would break ranks with his colleagues by marketing trade secrets to the nonprofessional, or at least that he would give the amateur that impression, was enough to elicit Cellini's ire. For, as Jane Tylus has

noted, "Cellini's last written works define the artist as a member of a community that shared a secret 'wisdom' based upon the practice of their art." And it was through this secret knowledge, she concludes, that Cellini could ensure his difference from, and superiority to, his patrons.³⁸ It was precisely this sense of community, and of shared and guarded knowledge, that Cellini viewed Allori as compromising for the sake of personal advancement and monetary gain.

Allori was not the only academic painter to come under fire in Cellini's discourse. Indeed, Cellini uses this admonitory treatise to take yet another colleague to task, his longtime rival Giorgio Vasari, court painter to Cosimo I and de facto head of the *Accademia del disegno*. He did so to reward Vasari for the many real and imagined slights that he received at his hands, the most recent of which was the one dealt to him in the context of the funeral obsequies organized for Michelangelo. For this, a bit of background is in order.



Vasari was quick to see that Michelangelo's death provided an unprecedented opportunity to elevate the status of the Academy as well as himself. Within a month of the master's death he met with Vincenzo Borghini, the deputy of the *Accademia del disegno*, to organize the funeral event.³⁹ After numerous discussions it was decided that two painters, Vasari and Bronzino, and two sculptors, Bartolomeo Ammannati and Cellini, should be in charge of the entire organizational and artistic arrangements. After gaining permission to hold the event in the Medici church of San Lorenzo, Vasari set about organizing the members of the Academy to design a huge catafalque, as well as hangings, paintings, and sculptures, to embellish the interior of the church.

It was in the context of planning and preparing this event that the troubles began. This was not surprising. Cellini's cantankerous personality in general and his animosity toward Vasari in particular were already well known; indeed, so much so that Borghini warned Vasari that Cellini's malice might well get in the way of the plans for the funeral event.

He was right. When, as programmers for the event, Borghini and Vasari rejected Cellini's plans for the site and design of the catafalque, Cellini refused to participate in any further planning. His antagonism toward both further increased when he perceived Borghini and Vasari to demonstrate their prejudice against sculpture by preferentially positioning the allegory of painting on the catafalque. Confronted with the objections of this "hopeless lunatic [*pazzo spacciato*]," Borghini finally compromised and moved both allegorical figures to the other side of the funerary structure.⁴⁰ This, however, did not appease the ill-tempered Cellini, who perceived that painting was still allotted the place of privilege. He vented his disappointment in a discourse that was appended to the printed version of the funeral oration delivered to the Academy.

Titled "On the dispute that has arisen between sculptors and painters regarding the location on the right given to painting on the catafalque of the great Michelangelo," this discourse contends that sculpture is the greatest of all of the arts and that God, as the first sculptor, formed all things on earth, the most marvelous of which is man. Painting, on the other hand, Cellini asserts, is nothing other than a lie, a beautiful and delightful lie that charms the eyes of the ignorant. Those who defend it, he contends, merely spin tales [*favellare*] and chirp like birds [*cicalare*].⁴¹ Cellini prevails upon his reader to see the truth in his discourse and not to succumb to the false propositions of these deceitful painters (read *Vasari* here). The truth, he declares, is that sculpture is the greater art.⁴²

It was in this context that Cellini employed his *Principles and Method* to take to task the second target of his discourse, Vasari. He did so by launching an attack upon Vasari's contorted and muscular figures and upon his reputation for hastily executing his works.

This would not be the first time that Cellini had attacked Vasari in his writings. He did so in his poetry and in the *Vita*.⁴³ Early in the latter, written from 1558 to 1566, he laments to the reader how the wretched Vasari had successfully, if only temporarily, turned Duke Alessandro de' Medici against him. Vasari did so, he tells us, by telling

the duke that he had heard Cellini boast that he would be the first to scale the walls of Florence with the duke's exiled foes when they returned to take back the city. When he confronted Vasari at court with this slander, Cellini tells us, the little coward ran off in fear.⁴⁴

This "bad turn" done to him by "Giorgetto Vassellario of Arezzo," Cellini surmises, was "perhaps in compensation for the many good turns I did him." Among these good turns was having housed and protected Vasari in Rome and provided for his costs. In repayment, Cellini laments, Vasari turned his household upside down. As Cellini describes it, Vasari had a dry, leprouslike skin condition that he was forever scratching. One night, when Vasari was sharing a bed with one of Cellini's best workmen, Manno, he once again set out to claw at his afflicted legs, only this time he seized on the leg of Manno "with his filthy little hands, the nails of which he never cut." As a result, Cellini tells us, Manno left his service, intent upon killing Vasari. That Manno never realized this goal must surely have been a disappointment to Cellini.⁴⁵

Cellini, in other words, had a history of attacking Vasari in his writings, and it is my argument here that he uses his discourse as yet another forum in which to do so. This would help to explain why, in the middle of this work, after discussing how to draw the ribs and neck and before proceeding to the breastbone, arms, hands, and head, Cellini takes a vitriolic sidetrack. He interrupts his discussion with the following diatribe:

And those who have not well committed to memory these bones, make the most deranged things in the world; things that I have seen made by certain painters, indeed, presumptuous daubers [*impiastratori presuntuosi*], who trusting themselves to a little of their horrible memory, without any study other than that which they have done using their bad principles, rush to create their works [*corrano a mettere in opera*] and do not make anything of worth, and moreover they form a habit such that, when they want, they cannot make

anything well; and when their bad practice is accompanied by avarice, they do harm to the good way of studies, and bring shame to the principles [of our art], such that, blinded by that quickness [*abbagliati da quella prestezza*], they demonstrate to the world that they do not know anything.⁴⁶

Cellini was likely referring here to the figures that Vasari was painting at that very time on the walls of the Palazzo Vecchio, figures whose implausibly flexed and bulging torsos took the muscular bodies of Michelangelo to an extreme. In figures such as the commander shown mounting his horse in *Maximilian Lifts His Siege of Livorno*, for instance, the anatomical awkwardness is palpable. As these figures testify, the order of the bones so admired by Cellini was lost under the layers of implausible musculature Vasari imparted to his figures. Indeed, implicit in Cellini's critique of painters whose art was founded on "bad principles" and practice is a critique of Vasari's training, which appears to have been lacking the firm anatomical foundation Cellini lays out here. In the detailed *Life* he writes for himself, in fact, Vasari does not mention having had any anatomical training nor do his extant drawings indicate such training.⁴⁷

Thus Vasari's figures did not ascribe to the Michelangelesque anatomical principles Cellini admired, principles that emphasized the skeletal structure of the figure.⁴⁸ It was his admiration of these principles that led Cellini to denigrate musculature in his works, as Michael Cole has argued, and instead create figures that "highlight the body's skeletal armature" – "slim, ribby, twisting, fleshless creatures" such as the *Narcissus*.⁴⁹ Appropriately enough, it was a figure constructed according to the "order of the[se] bones," that Cellini proposed as the crowning ornament to Michelangelo's catafalque: "The figure that it would seem to me appropriate to make for the top of the bier would be a figure of death, one well constructed through the order of the bones, as our art teaches us."⁵⁰

The true arrow of Cellini's retribution, however, was aimed not at the anatomical inadequacies of Vasari's figures, but at Vasari's

Achilles' heel – his legendary haste in executing his works. Indeed, Cellini's use of the term quickness [*prestezza*] here hits its mark; for, in the account Vasari writes in his own *Life* three years later, it is this very quickness of execution that he states he most regrets and that he goes to great lengths to justify.

The first time he does so is in his discussion of his quick execution in 1546 of the Hall of the Cancelleria for Cardinal Farnese's palazzo in Rome. Against all odds, he boasts, he executed it in an unprecedented 100 days in order to satisfy the cardinal's wish that it be finished in that time. Although Vasari expended great effort in conceiving and executing cartoons for that work, he claims, "I confess to having erred in then placing it in the hands of assistants, in order to execute it more quickly [*per condurla più presto*], as it was necessary for me to do."⁵¹

It appears that Vasari did not willingly draw attention to his hastily executed works. Indeed, his regret over these (and later works) was prompted by Annibale Caro who, two years after the Cancelleria paintings had made their mark on Vasari's reputation, writes asking him for a notable work from his hand in order to show it to "certain people who know you more for your dispatch [*ispiditivo*] in painting than for your excellence in it." Indeed, Caro does not mince words: "And it is quite true that the world believes that, working less quickly [*manco presto*], you would do better."⁵² According to G. P. Lomazzo, Michelangelo is said to have voiced this same criticism. Upon learning that Vasari's frescoes had been executed in such a short time, the master was said to reply, "And one can see it [*e si vede*]."⁵³

Thus Vasari's acknowledgment of his quick technique was likely a forced one. Later in his *Life* he tries to turn this fault into a virtue by boasting of his ability to quickly execute major commissions in his discussion of the paintings he created for Cosimo I in the Sala Grande of the Palazzo Vecchio. Despite the skepticism of many, Vasari tells us, he executed these works "in much less time, not only than I had promised and that the work merited, but than I or his most illustrious Excellency ever imagined." "The cause of such haste [*la cagione di tanta sollecitudine*]" he continues, was the impending nuptials

between Cosimo's son Francesco and the sister of the recently crowned emperor. To that end, Vasari explains, he made every effort to make sure that the hall was readied for the festivities.⁵⁴ He concludes this apologia by claiming that "if for the most part, I made these paintings with some haste and quickness [*fretta e prestezza*] . . . I hope to make at my leisure" the murals on the walls of this hall.⁵⁵ After describing this, and other quickly executed projects such as the corridor between the Palazzo Vecchio and the Palazzo Pitti, Vasari states that he will leave it to the viewer of these great works to decide whether or not the gravity and importance of the occasions for which they were made did not excuse his "haste [*fretta*]" in their execution.⁵⁶ Thus it is most certainly to Vasari that Cellini refers when he refers to certain "presumptuous daubers" who, blinded by their quickness, demonstrate to the world that they do not know anything.

To the notoriously slow Cellini, Vasari's *prestezza* must have been particularly annoying. Indeed, his bitterness over Vasari's speedy practice was fueled by the fact that his own practice was deemed just the opposite. As Cellini recounts in his autobiography, Cosimo I and his representative both expressed their impatience with his laboriously slow pace.⁵⁷ He complains for instance of having to pay his workmen for the *Perseus* out of his own pocket because Cosimo, having waited for over eighteen months for the work, ordered his agent Lattanzio Gorini to withhold their wages. In describing this event Cellini makes this assertion: "I asked Lattanzio why it was that he did not pay me and he replied, wagging his horrible spider-webish hands and in the tiny voice of a gnat: 'Why do you not finish your work? One believes that you will never finish it.'"⁵⁸

In response to Vasari's acknowledged *prestezza* Cellini counters with a defense of his own slower method – a "better method" that brings greater glory to Cosimo, whom he addresses here⁵⁹:

Worthy sculptors and painters make their works to last for many hundreds of years, and they make them for the glory of princes and as beautiful ornaments to their cities.

Therefore, since these works must have such a long life, do you, valorous and worthy prince, not expect that they would be made well, being that they make up the major part of your glory? Thus, two or three years is not important if the difference is between making them well or making them poorly.⁶⁰

In addition to doing so here in his discourse, Cellini explicitly compares his working method with that of Vasari in one of his sonnets, writing, “One man likes to make things quickly [*presto*], another, better, and slowly [*meglio e tardo*]. If God lent life to the Aretine [Vasari], it was so that he would paint the entire world.”⁶¹

After having vented his spleen in these sidetracks against his colleagues – one a turncoat and the other an ill-trained and presumptuous dauber – Cellini resumes his anatomical discourse with the rather disingenuous observation that, “although I have wandered a bit from the subject of my beautiful discourse, I return to it here.”⁶²



As we have seen, in addition to “prince” Cosimo, Cellini addresses his discourse to *signori* who delight in the arts and artists and apprentices who practice them. The tradition of circulating manuscripts in the sixteenth century make it quite possible that these latter two groups of readers would have been, respectively, the members of the Fiorentina and the members of the Accademia del disegno. Although most of the barbs directed toward Allori would have been best understood by members of the Accademia del disegno, those against Vasari would have been equally well understood by the members of the Fiorentina, or indeed by anyone who had read Vasari’s account of his own *Life* or had seen the figures he had painted on the walls of the Palazzo Vecchio.

If the members of the Fiorentina were one of Cellini’s targeted audiences, was this because he, like Allori and Danti, intended to use this discourse as a submission piece to the Fiorentina? His name does not appear with those of his colleagues among those who were

accepted into the Fiorentina.⁶³ Does this mean that he was rejected? We may never know, for the Academy records list only those who were admitted, not those who submitted works in the hopes of such admission. If Cellini did indeed submit his treatise to the Fiorentina, what prevented him from gaining membership? Was it his refusal to compromise the integrity of his workshop-based Michelangelsque method? Was it his refusal, in other words, to appeal to the interests of the amateur? Or did the censor at the Fiorentina deem that only one treatise based on the principles of Michelangelo's sculptural practice was necessary and that Danti's served, having as it did the benefit of Varchi's philosophical guidance? Or was it the case that Cellini never intended to submit this treatise to the Fiorentina at all, writing it instead for his fellow Academicians of *disegno* to criticize the project of Allori and get a few jabs in at Vasari while he was at it?

Although we may never be able to answer these questions, what we do know is that, in 1565, the year that Cellini is thought to have written his discourse, he was sixty-five years of age. At this point in his life he had long since given up hope of receiving any further commissions from the princes of Europe. The only means left to him to achieve the honor that he so desperately sought was through his writings, works such as the *Vita*, *Trattati*, and, as I argue, the *Principles and Method of Learning the Art of Drawing*.⁶⁴ Through this discourse Cellini portrayed himself as the true practitioner – and guardian – of the principles of anatomical *disegno* derived from the works of “an author most grand,” the “master Michelagnolo Buonarroti.”

NOTES

This essay grew out of a paper delivered at the Renaissance Society of America conference in Florence, 2000. It has benefited greatly from my subsequent conversations with Michael Cole.

- 1 *Sopra i principii e 'l modo d'imparare l'arte del disegno*, in *Benvenuto Cellini, Opere*, Bruno Maier, ed. (Milan: Rizzoli, 1968), 869–77. See, for example, Zygmunt Waźbiński, *L'Accademia medicea del disegno a Firenze nel cinquecento: Idea e istituzione* (Florence: Olschki, 1987), Vol. 1, 300; and Charles Davis,

- “Benvenuto Cellini and the Scuola Fiorentina,” *North Carolina Museum of Art Bulletin* 13, No. 4 (1976): 1–70. On the meanings of the term *disegno* in the Cinquecento, see Karen-edis Barzman, *The Florentine Academy and the Early Modern State: The Discipline of Disegno* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 2000); Luigi Grassi, *Il disegno italiano dal trecento al seicento* (Rome: Archivio G. Izzi, 1956; reprinted 1993); Wolfgang Kemp, “Disegno: Beiträge zur Geschichte des Begriffs zwischen 1547 und 1607,” *Marburger Jahrbuch für Kunstwissenschaft* (1974): 219–40; Maurice Poirier, “The Role of the Concept of *Disegno* in Mid-Sixteenth Century Florence,” in *Age of Vasari* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Art Gallery, 1970), 53–68; and Paola Barocchi, ed., *Scritti d’arte del cinquecento* (Milan: Ricciardi, 1973), Vol. 2, 1899–1904.
- 2 There are six drafts of Allori’s treatise bound together and housed in the Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Florence (MS Palatino E.B.16.4.). Paola Barocchi has labeled these drafts A through F and has transcribed the most finished of these, Draft F, in *Scritti d’arte*, Vol. 2, 1941–81 (for her discussion of the drafts, see pp. 2347–9). The draft that I am arguing Cellini was responding to in his discourse is Draft B, fols. 32r–52v. On Allori’s treatise see Patricia L. Reilly, “Grand Designs: Alessandro Allori’s ‘Discussions on the Rules of Drawing,’ Giorgio Vasari’s ‘Lives of the Artists’ and the Florentine Visual Vernacular,” Ph.D. dissertation (Berkeley, University of California, 1999). For Danti’s *Treatise of Perfect Proportions*, see Paola Barocchi, ed., *Trattati d’arte del cinquecento fra manierismo e controriforma* (Bari: Gius, Laterza & Figli, 1960–2), Vol. 1, 207–69.
 - 3 “Ora, perché tutta la importanza di queste tali virtù consiste nel fare bene uno uomo e una donna ignudi, a questo bisogna pensare che, volendogli poter far bene e ridursegli sicuramente a memoria, è necessario di venire al fondamento di tali ignudi, il qual fondamento si è le loro ossa.” *Opere*, Maier, 871. Unless otherwise noted, all English translations are my own.
 - 4 “[D]ipigniendo il nudo, prima pogniamo sue ossa et muscoli quali poi così copriamo con sue carni che non sia difficile intendere ove sotto sia ciascuno moscolo.” Leon Battista Alberti, *Della Pittura* (Florence: Sansoni, 1950), 88. On the influence of Alberti’s anatomical theory in Cinquecento art theory and practice, see Bernard Schultz, *Art and Anatomy in Renaissance Italy* (Ann Arbor, MI: UMI Research Press, 1985).
 - 5 Allori’s use of Michelangelo’s work and method is a bit more complicated. He uses as his model the work of his mentor Agnolo Bronzino, whom he sought to promote as the Florentine standard-bearer of the Michelangelesque tradition.
 - 6 “E per mostrartene uno esempio e allegarti uno autor grandissimo, vedi le opere di maestro Michelagnolo Buonarroti: ché la sua alta maniera è tanto diversa dagli altri e da quella che per l’addietro si vedeva, ed è tanto piaciuta, non per altro che per avere tenuto questo ordine delle ossa; e che sia il vero, guarda tutte le opere sue tanto di scultura, quanto di pittura, che non tanto

- i bellissimi muscoli ben posti a i luoghi loro gli abbian fatto onore, quanto il mostrare le ossa.” *Opere*, Maier, 877.
- 7 “[M]ediante questi miei scritti (se voi per mia singular ventura mai di leggergli vi degnaste) possiate conoscere se i precetti che sopra la detta scultura mostro d’aver osservati, saranno nelle mie statue in qualche parte adempiuti.” Barocchi, *Trattati*, 210.
- 8 On Bronzino and Michelangelo, see Elizabeth Pilliod, *Pontormo, Bronzino, Allori: A Genealogy of Florentine Art* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2001) and S. J. Freedberg, *Painting of the High Renaissance in Rome and Florence* (New York: Harper & Row, 1972).
- 9 An honor of which Michelangelo was later notified by letter. Vasari writes to him on 17 March 1563, saying: “Et (gli accademici) – scriveva Vasari in nome di tutta la generazione – per l’obbligo che ha tutta l’arte alla S.V. eleggerla per capo, padre et maestro di tutti, non avendo questa sua città né forse il mondo il più eccellente in queste tre professioni che se n’abbi memoria.” Ważbiński, *L’accademia medicea del disegno*, Vol. 1, 205.
- 10 Ascanio Condivi, *The Life of Michelangelo*, trans. Alice Sedgwick Wohl, ed. Hellmut Wohl, 2nd ed. (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1999), 98–9.
- 11 *Ibid.*, 99.
- 12 On Varchi’s relationship with Michelangelo see Leatrice Mendelsohn, *Paragone: Benedetto Varchi’s “Due Lezzioni” and Cinquecento Art Theory* (Ann Arbor, MI: UMI Research Press, 1982).
- 13 Barzman, *The Discipline of Disegno*, 162.
- 14 According to John R. Spencer, Alberti’s own translation of *De Pictura* into the vernacular was unknown by the sixteenth century. Leon Battista Alberti, *On Painting*, trans. John R. Spencer (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1956; reprinted 1966), 11. Domenichi was a polygraph with whom Vasari had exchanged sonnets and who served as a corrector and editor for the Medici-sponsored Torrentino press, the unofficial press for the Accademia Fiorentina. I thank Michael Cole for bringing this to my attention. On Domenichi, see Antonio Ricci, “Lorenzo Torrentino and the Cultural Programme of Cosimo I de’ Medici,” in *The Cultural Politics of Duke Cosimo I de’ Medici*, ed. Konrad Eisenbichler (Aldershot, England: Ashgate, 2001), 107.
- 15 Mendelsohn, *Paragone*, 118–19.
- 16 Danti may have been there when Condivi was writing the *Life of Michelangelo*. David Summers, *Michelangelo and the Language of Art* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1981), 24.
- 17 On the career of Alessandro Allori, see Pilliod, *Pontormo, Bronzino, Allori*, esp. Chap. 9.
- 18 ALEXANDER ALLORIVS CIVIS FLOR. BRONZINI ALVMNVS INVENTVM OPTIMI PICTORIS BONARROTAE HAEC SEDVLO PINXIT, as quoted in Pilliod, *Pontormo, Bronzino, Allori*, 159.

- 19 For Varchi's friendship with Allori see Pilliod, *Pontormo, Bronzino, Allori*, 176–7. For Varchi's friendship with Danti and his role in the writing of Danti's treatise see Summers, *Michelangelo and the Language of Art*, 23–4.
- 20 *Annali dell' Accademia degli Umidi poi Fiorentina*, Biblioteca Marucelliana, Florence, MS B. III. 54, vol. III, fol. 15r.
- 21 As Judith Bryce describes it, "The major hurdle now placed in the path of aspiring academicians was productivity, and substantial productivity at that: by 'composition' we do not mean something insubstantial such as three or four sonnets [*non s'intendendo mai per composizione una cosa piccola, come tre o quattro sonetti*]." Judith Bryce, "The Oral World of the Early Accademia Fiorentina," *Renaissance Studies* 9, 1 (1995), 101.
- 22 *Annali dell' Accademia degli Umidi poi Fiorentina*, Biblioteca Marucelliana, Florence, MS B. III. 54, vol. III, fol. 15r.
- 23 See Summers, *Michelangelo and the Language of Art*, 24 and 465, n. 48.
- 24 *Ibid.* 24.
- 25 Danti's treatise was published in Florence by the Medici-sponsored Giunti Press in 1567. On the relationship between the Accademia Fiorentina and the Medici-sponsored presses in Cinquecento Florence, see Claudia Di Filippo Bareggi, "Giunta, Doni, Torrentino: Tre tipografie fiorentine fra repubblica e principato," *Nuova Rivista Storica* 58 (1974), 318–48. Draft F of Allori's manuscript bears indications that it was being readied for print, although there is no evidence that it was ultimately published.
- 26 Armand L. De Gaetano, "The Florentine Academy and the Advancement of Learning Through the Vernacular: The Orti Oricellari and the Sacra Accademia," *Bibliothèque d'Humanisme et Renaissance* 30 (1968), 45.
- 27 As Barzman has demonstrated, the Accademia del disegno members had initially considered the idea of admitting dilettantes into their ranks when they were drawing up reforms in July of 1563, but they ultimately rejected the idea. Dilettantes were not admitted until the late 1580s. Barzman, *The Discipline of Disegno*, 35 and 72–3.
- 28 "[Q]uesto è quello che principalmente per loro ornamento desiderano questi gentiluomini." Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Florence MS Palatino E.B.16.4, fol. 39v. All excerpts from this manuscript draft are my own modernized transcriptions.
- 29 *Ibid.*, fol. 40v. "[I]o vi pregassi che se questi primi principii vi paresse alquanto deboli e fastidiosi che con buon animo sopportasse poi che senza essi come vedrete al suo tempo non si poteva altrimenti fare."
- 30 Barocchi, *Scritti d'arte*, Vol. 2, 1902.
- 31 "... parlando ora per l' imitatione dell' huomo, come cosa più bella e più nobili." Florence MS Palatino E.B.16.4, fol. 39v.
- 32 De Gaetano, "The Florentine Academy," 32.
- 33 "Voi, principi e signori, che di tali arti vi dilettrate, e voi, artisti eccellenti, e voi, giovani, che apprendere le volete, per certo dovete sapere che 'l più bello animale che mai abbia fatto la umana natura, si è stato l'uomo; e la più bella parte che abbia l'uomo, si è la testa; e la più bella e maravigliosa cosa

- che sia nella testa, si sono gli occhi." *Opere*, Maier, 870. Cellini might well be referring to Allori's statement, quoted previously, that man is the most beautiful and noble thing that one can imitate.
- 34 "Sicché a me pare che e' sia stato un grande inconveniente per infino a oggi, per quanto io ho veduto, li maestri mettere innanzi a i poveretti tenerissimi giovani per li loro principii a imitare e ritrarre un occhio umano; e perché il simile intervenne a me nella mia puerizia, così penso che agli altri avvenuto sia. Io tengo per certo che questo modo non sia buono, per le ragioni dette di sopra; e che il vero e miglior modo sarebbe di mettere innanzi cose più facili, le quali non solo più facili, ma sarieno ancora molto più utili, che non è il cominciare a ritrarre uno occhio." *Opere*, Maier, 870.
- 35 Andreas Vesalius, *De humani corporis fabrica libri septum* (Brussels: Culture et Civilisation, 1964). Juan de Valverde de Amusco, *Historia de la composicion del cuerpo humano de Juan Valverde de Amusco*, facsimile edition (Valladolid: Editions of the University of Valladolid, 1981). Although Vesalius addresses the muscles of the eye in the second book, he does not anatomize the eye until the seventh and last. Valverde's book adopts virtually all of the images from the *Fabrica*.
- 36 Summers, too, suggests that Cellini's discussion of the eye as the starting point of an anatomical program is a barb at Allori, although he does not posit why. Summers, *Michelangelo and the Language of Art*, 403. The possibility that Cellini's animosity toward Allori was known in academic circles is suggested by a sonnet written by Anton Francesco Grazzini (*Il Lasca*), a founding member of the Accademia Fiorentina. Addressed to Cellini, Lasca's sonnet assumes a kinship with the sculptor in its critique of Allori's newly completed frescoes in the Montauto chapel in Santissima Annunziata, Florence (1560–4). For an analysis of this sonnet and its riposte, see Michael Cole, "Grazzini, Allori and Judgment in the Montauti Chapel," *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz* 45 (2001), 302–12. For a differing analysis of the same, see Pilliod, *Pontormo, Bronzino, Allori*, 269, n. 143.
- 37 "Ora considera se sia più facile il ritrarre uno solo osso, per cominciare, o sì veramente il ritrarre uno occhio umano. Voglio che tu cominci a ritrarre il primo osso dello stinco della gamba, qual si chiama il fucile maggiore, a tal che mettendo innanzi questo tal principio a un tuo giovanetto di tenera età, è certissimo che a quello gli parrà ritrarre un bastoncello. E perché in tutte le nobilissime arti la maggiore importanza che è in esse, volendole vincere e dominare, non in altro consiste, che nel pigliare animo sopra di loro; e' non sarà così pusillo animo di fanciullo, che cominciando a ritrarre un tal bastoncello d'osso, che non si prometta di farlo, se non alla prima, alle due benissimo: ché così non interverrebbe quando lo mettessi a ritrarre uno occhio." *Opere*, Maier, 871.
- 38 Jane Tylus "The Merchant of Florence: Benvenuto Cellini, Cosimo de' Medici, and the *Vita*" in her *Writing and Vulnerability in the Late Renaissance* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1993), 53.

- 39 The following account is based on that given in the introduction to Rudolph and Margot Wittkower, trans., *The Divine Michelangelo: The Florentine Academy's Homage on His Death in 1564* (London: Phaidon, 1965).
- 40 Ibid., 20.
- 41 For the linguistic subtlety of Cellini's use of the term *cicalare* here, see Piero Calamandrei "Sulle relazioni tra Giorgio Vasari e Benvenuto Cellini," in *Studi Vasariani: Atti del convegno internazionale per il IV centenario della prima edizione delle "Vite" del Vasari* (Florence: Sansoni, 1950), 207.
- 42 *Sopra la differenza nata tra gli scultori e pittori circa il luogo destro stato dato alla pittura nelle esequie del gran Michelagnolo Buonarroti in Opere*, Maier, 863–8. On Cellini's use of the trope of God as the first sculptor, see Tylus, "The Merchant of Florence," 46, and Margaret A. Gallucci, *Benvenuto Cellini: Sexuality, Masculinity, and Artistic Identity in Renaissance Italy* (New York: Palgrave/St. Martin's, 2003), 51.
- 43 For examples of Cellini's poetic critiques of Vasari see *Opere*, Maier, 885, 889, and 991.
- 44 Ibid., 268. Cellini also recounts how Vasari later attempted to spoil the former's reputation with Alessandro's successor, Cosimo I, by badmouthing Cellini's unfinished *Neptune*. Ibid., 599.
- 45 "Questo cattivo uffizio l' aveva fatto Giorgetto Vassellario aretino, dipintore, forse per remunerazione di tanti benefizii fatti a lui: ché avendolo trattenuto in Roma e datogli le spese, e lui messomi a soquadro la casa: perché gli aveva una sua lebbrolina secca, la quale gli aveva usato le mane a grattar sempre, e dormendo con un buon garzone che io avevo, che si domandava Manno, pensando di grattar sé, gli aveva scorticato una gamba al detto Manno con certe sue sporche manine, le quale non si tagliava mai l'ugna." *Opere*, Maier, 268. On Cellini's use of his writings to attack Vasari, see Calamandrei "Sulle relazioni tra Giorgio Vasari e Benvenuto Cellini," 195–214. On this, and more specifically, on Cellini's graphic description of Vasari as a sodomite in his poetry, see Gallucci, *Benvenuto Cellini*, 61–3.
- 46 "[E] quelli, che non hanno benissimo a memoria queste tali ossa, fanno le più diavole cose del mondo: le quali cose io ho veduto fare a certi pittori, anzi impiatratori presuntuosi, che fidandosi di un poco di lor buona memoriuccia, senza altro studio se non quello ch'egli hanno fatto ne' lor cattivi principii, corrono a mettere in opera, e non fanno nulla di buono, e dipoi si fanno uno abito tale che, quando e' volessero, non potrebbero far bene; e con quella lor praticaccia accompagnata dall'avarizia fanno danno a quegli che son per la buona via degli studii, e vergogna a i principii, che, abbagliati da quella prestezza, mostrano al mondo di non intendere nulla." *Opere*, Maier, 875.
- 47 Vasari does mention having once made anatomical studies with Francesco Salviati in a cemetery in Rome in the *Life* of the latter. Giorgio Vasari, *Le vite de' più eccellenti pittori scultori e architettori nelle redazioni del 1550 e 1568*, ed. R. Bettarini and P. Barocchi (Florence: Sansoni, 1984), Vol. 5, 516.

- 48 On the concept of *ordine*, and Cellini's use of the term, see Summers, *Michelangelo and the Language of Art*, 316 and 403-4.
- 49 Michael Cole, "The *Figura Sforzata*: Modelling, Power and the Mannerist body," *Art History* 24 (2001), 540.
- 50 "La figura che mi parebbe far da capo al detto cataletto si sarebbe una Morte, fatta bene di ossature, come ci insegna l'arte." As quoted in Aurelio Gotti, *Vita di Michelangelo Buonarroti* (Florence: Tipografia della Gazzetta d' Italia, 1875), Vol. 1, 364-5.
- 51 "E tutta quest'opera è piena d'inscrizioni e motti bellissimi, fatti dal Giovio; et in particolare ve n'ha uno che dice quelle pitture essere state tutte condotte in cento giorni. Il che io come giovane feci, come quegli che non pensai se non a servire quel signore, che, come ho detto, desiderava averla finita, per un suo servizio, in quel tempo. E nel vero, se bene io m'affaticai grandemente in far cartoni e studiare quell'opera, io confesso aver fatto errore in metterla poi in mano di garzoni per condurla più presto, come mi bisognò fare, perché meglio sarebbe stato aver penato cento mesi et averla fatta di mia mano." Giorgio Vasari, *Le vite*, 6: 388.
- 52 In a letter of 10 May 1548 Caro wrote to Vasari, "Il mio desiderio d' avere un' opera notabile di vostra mano è così per vostra laude come per mio contento, perché vorrei poterla mettere innanzi a certi, che vi conoscono più per ispiditivo ne la pittura che per eccellente. . . . E ben vero, che 'l mondo crede, che facendo voi manco presto, fareste meglio." Karl Frey, *Der Literarische Nachlass Giorgio Vasaris* (Munich: Georg Müller, 1923), Vol. 1, 220. For a discussion of this letter see Summers, *Michelangelo and the Language of Art*, 64.
- 53 As quoted by Summers, *Michelangelo and the Language of Art*, 64-5.
- 54 "[E] come si è veduto, la condussi, contra l'openione di molti, in molto manco tempo non solo che io avevo promesso e che meritava l'opera, ma né anche io [pensassi] o pensassi mai Sua Eccellenza illustrissima. Ben mi penso che ne venissi maravigliata e sodisfattissima, perché venne fatta al maggior bisogno et alla più bella occasione che gli potessi occorrere: e questa fu, acciò si sappia la cagione di tanta sollecitudine, che avendo prescritto il maritaggio che si trattava dello illustrissimo principe nostro con la figliuola del passato imperatore e sorella del presente, mi parve debito mio far ogni sforzo che, in tempo et occasione di tanta festa, questa, che era la principale stanza del Palazzo e dove si avevano a far gli atti più importanti, si potessi godere." Vasari, *Le vite*, Vol. 6, 401-2.
- 55 *Ibid.*, 403. "E se le cose dette, per la più parte, ho fatto con qualche fretta e prestezza, per diverse cagioni, questa [the walls of the Sala Grande] spero io di fare con mio comodo."
- 56 *Ibid.*, 401. "E qui lascerò pensare non solo a chi è dell'arte, ma a chi è fuori ancora, purché abbi veduto la grandezza e varietà di quell'opera: la quale occasione terribilissima e grande doverrà scusarmi se io non avessi per cotal fretta soddisfatto pienamente, in una varietà così grande."

- 57 “Più volte feci intendere a sua Eccellenza che se io mi sviavo il giorno dal Perseo, che e’ ne seguirebbe parecchi inconvenienti; e il primo, che più mi spaventava, si era che ‘l gran tempo che io vedevo che ne portava la mia opera, non fussi causa di venire a noia a sua Eccellenza illustrissima, sì come poi e’ mi avvenne.” *Opere*, Maier, 564–5.
- 58 *Ibid.*, 522–3. “[E] mi conveniva pagare i lavoranti de il mio: perché, avendomi fatto pagare certi lavoranti il Duca da Lattanzio Gorini in circa a diciotto mesi ed essendogli venuto a noia, mi fecie levare le commessione, per la qual cosa io domandai il detto Lattanzio, perché e’ non mi pagava. E’ mi rispose, menando certe sue manuezze di ragnatelo, con una vocerellina di zanzara: ‘Perché non finisci questa tua opera? E’ si crede che tu nolla finirai mai.’”
- 59 As Tylus argues, Cellini “insists that the tremendous amount of time and energy that he has invested in each of his projects” is what makes them worthy. One example of this insistence can be seen here when Cellini claims that “those works that are easily done are of little worth because they are soon completed; thus other works are worthy of greater praise.” As translated by Tylus in “The Merchant of Florence,” 44–5. On Cellini’s use of the concept of *furor poeticus* to defend the slowness of his work, see Michael W. Cole, *Cellini and the Principles of Sculpture* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 144–8.
- 60 “I valenti scultori e pittori fanno le loro opere per molte centinaia d’anni, e sono fatte per gloria de’ principi e vago ornamento alle loro città. Adunque, poiché elle hanno a avere così lunga vita, perché tu, valoroso e degno principe, non aspetti ch’elle si facciano bene, essendo la maggior parte della gloria la tua? Ché dal far bene e far male non importa due o tre anni.” *Opere*, Maier, 875.
- 61 As quoted and translated by Cole, *Cellini and the Principles of Sculpture*, 216, n. 112.
- 62 “Sebbene io mi sono un poco scostato da i segni del mio bel ragionamento, ecco che io ritorno.” *Opere*, Maier, 875.
- 63 See note 20 of this chapter. The Academy records list Cellini’s name only once on the roster of those accepted, and that is when he was accepted into the Fiorentina on 23 April 1545. He was subsequently expelled in 1547 when the Fiorentina stripped all members of their affiliation as a result of Academy reforms. On the relationship between artists and the Fiorentina in the Cinquecento see Detlef Heikamp, “Rapporti fra accademici ed artisti nella Firenze del ’500,” *Il Vasari* 15 (1957), 139–63.
- 64 The *Vita* was being written from 1558 to 1566 and the *Trattati* from 1565 to 1567, at the same time this discourse is thought to have been written. Maier, *Opere*, 36.