

Winter 2019

## A French Affair: Drawings and Paintings from The Horvitz Collection Horvitz Drawing Brochure

Fairfield University Art Museum

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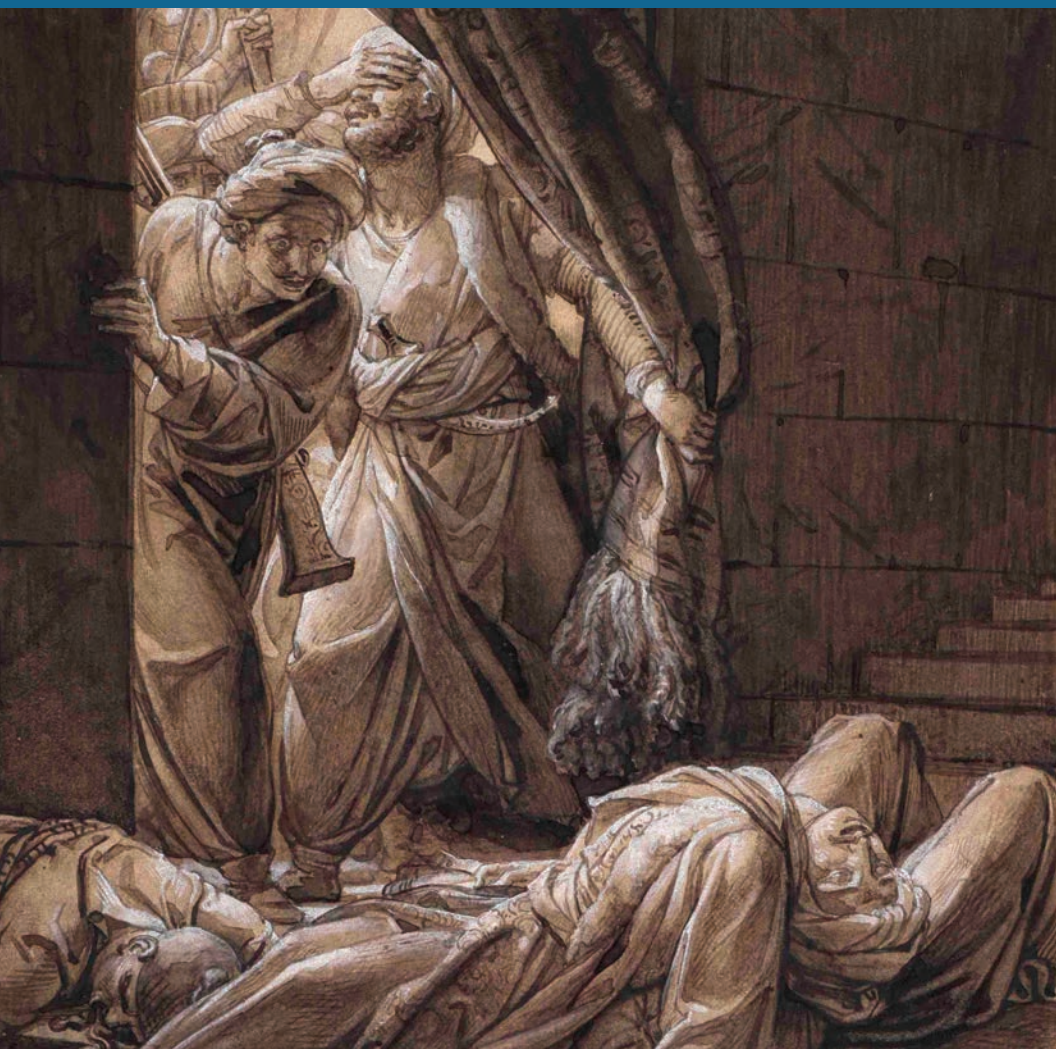
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# *Imaging Text*

French Drawings for Book Illustration  
from The Horvitz Collection



January 25 - March 29, 2019

FAIRFIELD UNIVERSITY ART MUSEUM



# *Imaging Text*

## French Drawings for Book Illustration from The Horvitz Collection

This exhibition, composed of nearly seventy drawings and a small number of related prints, presents a rich survey of designs for book illustration in France. All the works on view are from The Horvitz Collection, one of the most significant private holdings of French art in the world, which numbers over 2,000 drawings, paintings, and sculptures. Beginning chronologically in the later sixteenth century, the selection underscores the wide range of subjects artists were called on to illustrate. It also traces developments in the fields of publishing and printing, and the essential role that drawing played in those enterprises in France in the centuries before the Revolution and into the nineteenth century (figs. 1 and 2).



Fig. 1



Fig. 2

The history of book illustration is closely linked to the rise of publishing and printmaking. Woodcut illustrations appeared in Europe around 1400, followed by engraved images in about 1430. These two techniques allowed for religious scenes, secular subjects, portraits, and other types of imagery to be reproduced on paper (a far less costly medium than painting), and led to the rise of specialized trade guilds for both woodblock cutters and engravers.

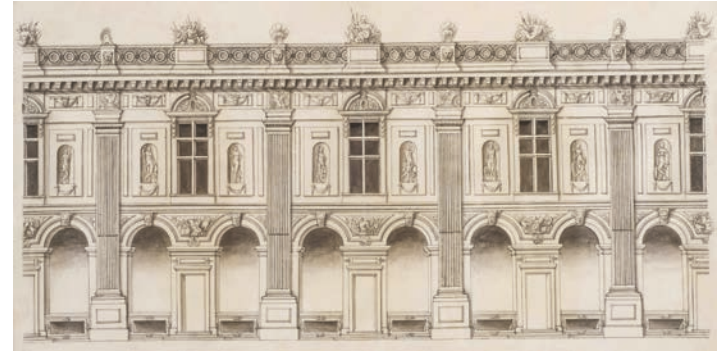


Fig. 3

The first printing press using moveable type was invented in Germany around 1440 and quickly replaced the production of texts through hand-written and painted manuscripts. The earliest known printed text with accompanying illustrations was published some twenty years later, launching the field of book illustration. A missal (a liturgical book containing all the texts for the Catholic mass) printed in 1481 was the first illustrated book produced in France. Throughout most of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, woodcut was the preferred medium, as the blocks could be printed at the same time and on the same page as the moveable type. Toward the end of this period, engraving replaced woodcuts. These illustrations were mostly separate, single-page images, since engraving required a different type of press and text and image could not be printed together.

The sixteenth century in France produced abundant and lavish book illustration, displayed here in the works of architect Jacques Androuet du Cerceau and painter Bernard Salomon who specialized in designing prints (figs. 3 and 4).



Fig. 4





Fig. 5 for French artists. The seventeenth century

also saw the rise of a new printing technique, etching, which did not require the same level of training as engraving.

The eighteenth century was the height of French book illustration. Publishers worked extensively with popular and prominent artists, who provided designs for luxury editions of a multitude of texts. Continuing the technical innovations of the previous century (see fig. 2), the majority of book illustrations in the period employ a combination of etching and engraving to create rich tonal contrasts and shading. The metal plate, typically made of copper, would first be etched by a professional printmaker. This entailed covering the plate with a ground made of a type of varnish and then drawing the design on it using an etching needle. The plate would then be placed in an acid bath that would eat into the exposed metal lines and the ground would be removed. Next, the plate would be engraved, usually by a specialist who was a different artist



Fig. 6



Fig. 7

than the etcher. Using a tool called a burin, the engraver incised a design into the metal. The finished plate could then be printed. Because of the detailed work involved, books with extensive illustrations would often be published in multiple volumes over several years. The artistic style in France also changed over the course of the century, from the theatrical exuberance of the Rococo, best exemplified in the exhibition in drawings by Jean-Honoré Fragonard (fig. 5) and Jean-Baptiste Oudry (fig. 6), to the more heroic restraint characteristic of Neoclassicism, which can be seen in the works by Anne-Louis Girodet de Roucy-Trioson (fig. 7) and Jean-François-Pierre Peyron (fig. 8).

The works on view in the exhibition reflect the variety of illustrated books published in



Fig. 8





Fig. 9

France. The literary genres range from novels and plays by celebrated authors like Jean Racine (fig. 9), to encyclopedias and histories — texts that offered artists a broad array of subjects to illustrate, including biblical, historical, and mythological scenes as well as landscape, architecture, and scientific images. The drawings also demonstrate the different types of illustrations that were in demand. The majority are for *estampes*, full-page illustrations that were generally placed to the left of a page of text. There are several *vignettes*, or smaller rectangles that were located at the top of a page, often at the start of a new chapter. Examples are the drawings

for a text on French history and two small scenes from an eighteenth-century collection of fables by Claude Gillot (fig. 11). Finally, there is a *cul-de-lampe* or tailpiece by Clement-Pierre Marillier (back cover), an example of the kind of decorative element that frequently appeared at the end of a chapter or section. As this overview of the different types of drawings for French printed books conveys, illustration was an integral counterpart to text, and artists the masterful collaborators of authors.

Sarah Cantor, PhD  
Kress Interpretive Fellow  
Fairfield University Art Museum



Fig. 10

## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

**Cover:** Baron François Gérard (1710-1837), *Death of Bajazet* (detail), pen with brown ink, brush with brown wash, heightened with white gouache; 308 x 210 mm

**Fig. 1.** Charles Le Brun (1619-1690), *Esther and Ahasuerus*, black chalk, brush with gray wash; 186 x 125 mm

**Fig. 2.** Sébastien Le Clerc the Elder (1637-1714), after Charles Le Brun, *Esther and Ahasuerus*, etching and engraving; 203 x 144 mm

**Fig. 3.** Jacques Androuet du Cerceau (ca. 1515-after 1584), *Façade with a Gallery above a Colonnade*, pen with black ink, black chalk, on parchment; 422 x 638 mm

**Fig. 4.** Bernard Salomon (ca. 1508-ca. 1561), *Abraham Refusing the Offering*, pen with brown ink, brush with brown wash, over traces of black chalk; 82 x 111 mm

**Fig. 5.** Jean-Honoré Fragonard (1732-1806), *Ruggiero and Alcina Attend a Play in the Palace*, ca. 1780, black chalk, pen with brown ink, and brush with brown wash; 396 x 242 mm

**Fig. 6.** Jean-Baptiste Oudry (1686-1755), *Love and Folly*, pen with black ink, brush with black ink wash, heightened with white gouache; 312 x 257 mm

**Fig. 7.** Anne-Louis Girodet de Roucy-Trioson (1767-1824), *Aeneas Welcomed in Hades by the Shades of his Former Comrades*, black chalk and graphite; 277 x 379 mm

**Fig. 8.** Jean-François-Pierre Peyron (1744-1814), *Fulvia Revealing the Cataline Conspiracy to Cicero*, pen with brown ink, brush with brown wash, touches of black chalk and white gouache; 256 x 192 mm

**Fig. 9.** Jean-Guillaume Moitte (1746-1810), *Coronation of Jean Racine*, pen with black ink, brush with gray wash; 248 x 184 mm

**Fig. 10.** Edme Bouchardon (1698-1762), *Visigoths Attacking Clovis I as He Kills Alaric II*, red chalk; 96 x 202 mm

**Fig. 11.** Claude Gillot (1673-1722), *The Fox and the Cat*, red chalk, brush with red-chalk wash, white gouache; 75 x 96 mm

**Back cover:** Clement-Pierre Marillier (1740-1808), *Decorative Tailpiece with "The Rooster and the Jewel,"* pen with brown ink, brush with gray wash; 171 x 178 mm

All works are in The Horvitz Collection. Photos: Michael Gould.

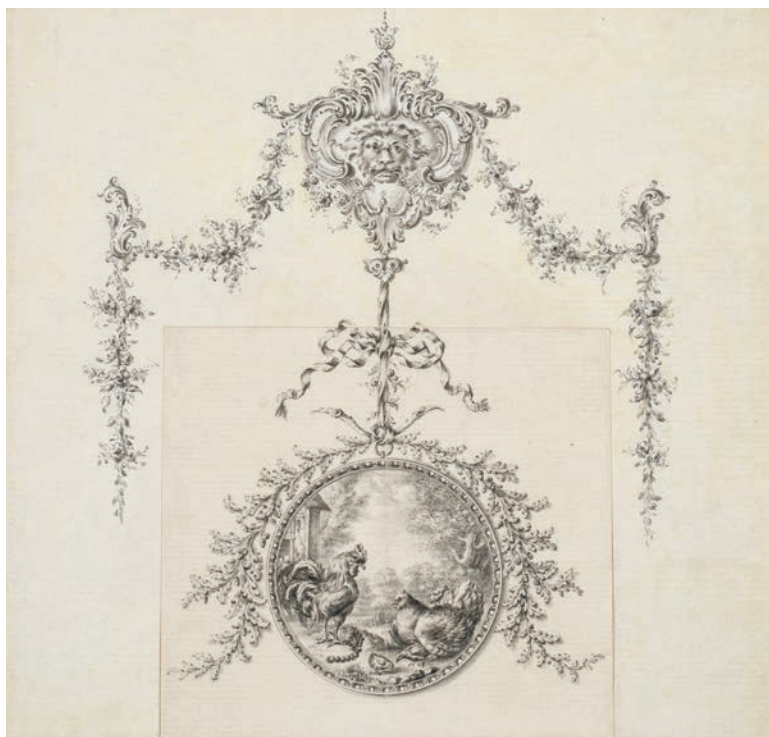
*Imaging Text: French Drawings for Book Illustration from The Horvitz Collection* was organized by Alvin L. Clark, Jr., Curator, The Horvitz Collection, and the J.E. Horvitz Research Curator, Emeritus, Department of Drawings, Division of European and American Art, Harvard Art Museums/Fogg.

An illustrated catalogue of the exhibition is available at the museum (\$10).



Fig. 11

Generous support for the exhibition is provided by the Robert and Mercedes Eichholz Foundation. TownVibe is the exclusive media sponsor of the Bellarmine Hall Galleries 2018-19 season.



## EXHIBITION PROGRAMS

### Thursday, January 24, 5 p.m.

*Collecting French Art: A Conversation with Jeffrey Horvitz and Alvin L. Clark Jr.*  
Bellarmine Hall, Diffley Board Room

### Thursday, January 24, 6-7:30 p.m.

*Opening Reception*  
Bellarmine Hall, Great Hall and Bellarmine Hall Galleries

### Saturday, February 2, Noon

*Gallery Talk: Drawing for Books in 18th-Century France*  
Sarah Cantor, PhD, Kress Interpretive Fellow  
Bellarmine Hall, Bellarmine Hall Galleries

### Thursday, February 7, 11 a.m.

*Art in Focus: Pierre-Paul Prud'hon, Sylvia and the Satyr, 1800*  
With Michelle DiMarzo, PhD, Curator of Education and Academic Engagement  
Bellarmine Hall, Bellarmine Hall Galleries

### Saturday, February 9, 1-4 p.m. (2 sessions)

*Family Day: Fun with Book Illustration*  
Bellarmine Hall, SmART Classroom

### Tuesday, February 12, 6-7:30 p.m.

*Performance: ekphrasis vii*  
Fairfield University MFA students read original pieces inspired by the works on view in *A French Affair: Paintings and Drawings from The Horvitz Collection*  
Bellarmine Hall, Bellarmine Hall Galleries

### Thursday, February 21, 5 p.m.

*Gallery Talk: Drawings to Prints*  
Sarah Cantor, PhD, Kress Interpretive Fellow  
Bellarmine Hall, Bellarmine Hall Galleries

### Wednesday, February 27, 7-9 p.m.

*Event: A Drawing Party*  
Drawing materials and light refreshments are provided.  
Bellarmine Hall Galleries and smART classroom, Bellarmine Hall  
Co-sponsored by the Creative Life Residential College

### Wednesday, March 6, 5 p.m.

*Lecture: 18th-Century French Drawings*  
Elizabeth Rudy, PhD, Carl A. Weyerhaeuser Associate Curator of Prints, Harvard Art Museums  
Bellarmine Hall, Diffley Board Room  
*Part of the Edwin L. Weisl, Jr. Lectureships in Art History, funded by the Robert Lehman Foundation*

All events are free of charge and open to the public. Advance registration is recommended. For more information on the exhibition and related programming, and to register for events, visit the museum's website: [fairfield.edu/museum](http://fairfield.edu/museum)



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