TWELVE RARE BOOKS ON
THE HISTORY OF ART

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1. AGLIONBY, WILLIAM. *Painting illustrated in three diallogues, containing some choice observations upon the art. Together with the lives of the most eminent painters, from Cimabue, to the time of Raphael and Michael Angelo. With an explanation of the difficult terms.* London: Printed by John Gain for the author, 1685. $1250.00

First edition, of particular note as the first appearance of any part of Vasari in English (the lives of Cimabue, Ghiotto, Lionardo, Andrea del Sarto, Raphael, Giorgione, Michael Angelo, Giulio Romano, Perino del Vaga, Titian and Donato, a sculptor [all spellings sic]). The preface contains brief remarks on the author’s English contemporaries such as Inigo Jones, Grinling Gibbons, Dobson, Walker, Riley and the miniaturists Oliver and Cooper. He intended a second volume on the lives of the painters from the Carracci onwards but this was never published. Following the preface are three dialogues explaining the art of painting, the history of painting and ‘how to know good pictures.’ Then, finally, comes the major section, the lives from Vasari. Wing A 764. Rostenberg, *Engi publishers in the graphic arts,* p. 98 (B53). Schlosser-Magnino, pp. 339, 646. Besterman, p. 1. UCBA, I, p. 10. There was a copy in Philadelphia in 1757 (Schimmelman, Checklist (1983), no. 1.

4to, recent boards, calf spine, dark red lettering piece. (xxxviii)-i-375 pp (pagination irregular due to compositor’s errors, but complete) with imprimatur and title in red and black. Old waterstain in lower outer blank corner; light marginal waterstain in the gutter of the last dozen or so leaves. But not bad.
ONE-POINT PERSPECTIVE

2. ALBERTI, LEON BATTISTA. *Della pittura e della statua*. Milano: Societa Tipografica de Classici Italiani, 1804  $450.00

Originally published in 1436. This work is given an exhaustive analysis by Martin Kemp who states: “His treatise contains the first written account of one-point perspective. His attitude to the making of a picture is founded upon his conviction that ‘a painting is the intersection of a visual pyramid at a given distance, with a fixed centre and a defined position of light, represented by art with lines and colors on a given surface.” ([The science of art](#), pp. 21-25). A further long analysis of the *Della pittura* is given by F. Borsi, *Leon Battista Alberti, the complete works* (1986), pp. 199-210. The work went through innumerable editions; the present one includes a life of the author by Girolamo Tiraboschi. The present edition is found in the UCBA, I, p. 13.

8vo, modern boards, old style. xxvii+136+(iii) pp. with engr. authors port., and 6 engr plates numb *, *, I, I, II, II. The plates illustrate the principles of Alberti’s perspective.
WITH A LECLERC MODEL BOOK BOUND AT THE END


A classic work in the literature of art history. Originally published in 1668 as a poem in Latin (De Arte Graphica) of 549 verses; it was translated in the same year into French prose by Roger de Piles and published in Paris in 1668. In that French translation as well as in the second edition of 1673 and the present [third] edition the French text is set so it faces the Latin original on the facing page. “Piles’s translation was not a literal one. As he writes in the preface, his close friendship with the author allowed him to work freely with a knowledge of Du Fresnoy’s intentions, making corrections as he wished. Although Piles’s work was challenged because of his approach, it became the authoritative version for his own and later generations.” - Collins & Land, Early books on art, no. 37.

The Le Clerc bound at the end consists of an engraved title page and 30 engraved plates of muscular male nudes, some draped, some set in landscapes. These were put there to serve as models for artists to copy. Berlin catalogue 4619 lists the second edition of the Du Fresnoy with the Le Clerc bound in.

12mo, recent marbled sides, calf spine. (xii)+276+(xxxiv)+(xxiv) pp; Le Clerc: engr. t.p. & 30 engr plates. Occas pencil annotations to the text. Nice copy.
4. FREART, ROLAND. *An idea of the perfection of painting. Translated by J[ohn] E[velyn].* London: Henry Herringman, 1668. $575.00

First edition in English. Freart’s *Idée de la Perfection de la Peinture* was first published in France in 1662. André Fontaine (*Les doctrines d’Art en France*, p. 20) despite his strictures on the narrowly classicizing outlook of Freart, concedes that he is the first to have written a work of aesthetics in the true sense of the word in his native country; its principal idea is that one can arrive at beauty only by means of inspiration derived from the antique. Freart’s method is to briefly examine the five principal parts of painting: invention, proportion, coloring, motion and expression and composition, and to subject selected works by Raphael and Michaelangelo to scrutiny on these five counts. Keynes, *Evelyn*, pp. 191-4. Schlosser-Magnino p. 634. Cicognara 127 citing the original French edition.

12mo, recent marbled sides, calf spine. (x⅞)+136 pp. Trimmed close to the margins; a few of the catchwords sliced in half; else a good clean copy. T.p. within a double line border.
5. [GWYNN, JOHN]. *An essay on design: including proposals for erecting a Public Academy to be supported by voluntary subscription (till a Royal Foundation can be obtain’d) for educating the British youth in drawing, and the several arts depending thereon.* London: mo. Brindley, 1749 $1750.00

First edition. One of the first proposals for a Royal Academy, of which Gwynn was eventually a founder-member. Another proposal for such an establishment was put forth by George Vertue at about the same time. The general subject of the academy, as well as Gwynn’s essay are discussed by Eileen Harris (BABW, p. 216 and no. 274). See also Colvin, pp. 372-4. RIBA, *Early printed books*, 1415 noting that “the engraved head-piece at the beginning of the main text, showing a quadrangle, was drawn by Gwynn and may be an attempt to give pictorial realization to his scheme of an academy.” The Royal Academy of Arts was eventually founded in 1768. This copy has tipped in a MS slip reading as follows: “Dedication to the Duke of Rutland by his Grace’s most humble servant John Gwyn.” The book was in fact dedicated to Rutland, but it is impossible to say if the MS note is in the hand of the author.

8vo, finely rebound in full polished calf, and signed ‘MASSEY BINDER, PARK ST.’ (iv)+vi+92 pp. with engr. frontisp., engr. title, 2 head-pieces and 1 tail-piece. There are several MS comments on the blank front flyleaf regarding the engr. vignette at the beginning of the main text. An interesting copy.
THE FIRST “PORTABLE” DICTIONARY OF ART


First published 1752. There were later editions in 1753, 1755, 1759, and 1766. An accurate and reliable guide to the arts, being a biographical dictionary and a dictionary of terms. Lewine, p. 271, cites the first edition and states that Lacombe was a lawyer. Arntzen/Rainwater E21 calling this the first “portable” dictionary of art. Chamberlin 189. OCLC locates 6 copies in this country.

8vo, decorated paper sides, polished calf spine, gilt. viii+686+ (ii) +19 pp. A nice copy.

CHARLES WOOD RARE BOOKS

First published 1584. This copy has been very extensively annotated in a contemporary hand. “Lomazzo, a Milanese poet and painter, having lost his sight in 1571, turned to writing art treatises. His first book appeared at Milan with the title Trattato dell’arte della pittura; in the same year, 1584, a second edition with an errata was published. Our edition of 1585, with an extended title, is the third, and the text is the same as the first and second editions. The author divided his treatise into seven books each devoted to a particular part, or division, of painting... [these are] proportion, expression, color, light, perspective, composition and form. These seven parts later appeared in his Idea tempio della pittura (Milan, 1590). The book is evidence of the writer’s vast knowledge of sixteenth-century art which he felt had declined after Michaelangelo. The elements which Lomazzo discusses in his theory of painting are essentially those of earlier authors, but he places a new emphasis on light, a divine element to him, and he holds the figura serpentinata, a flame-like form, to be the paradigm of beauty.”-Collins & Land, Early Books on Art (1977), no. 30. Schlosser 395s, 402. Berlin Catalogue 4612 (ed. of 1584). Fowler 186.

As noted above, the present copy was read and annotated very extensively in the 16th or 17th (or 18th?) century. The annotations are placed opposite the line of text they refer to and usually repeat one or two words of the text. But there are occasional other annotations, in Latin, which are original comments by the reader. A copy worthy of study.

4to. bound (for some reason I cannot explain) into two volumes: the first consists of pages 1-560; the second pages 561-700 + 1 final leaf which is the errata. Binding is old (orig?) vellum, wrinkled and soiled. The ‘second’ volume also in vellum. (18)+(20)+700+(ii) pp. Portrait of the author on p. 17 which is the title of the first book. A few patination irregularities which match those in the Fowler copy (and are explained in the Fowler note). Both volumes are preserved in a folding-back box with morocco label.
8. PATCH, THOMAS. The life of Fra Bartolommeo della Porta, a Tuscan painter, with his works, engraved from the original pictures, dedicated to the Honorable Horace Walpole, an intelligent promoter of the Fine Arts. [Florence, 1772] BOUND WITH Al nobil uomo il signore Bernardo Manetti patrizio Fiorentino Tomasso Patch dedica questi monumenti dell'antico splendore di sua famiglia in segno di obbligazione e di stima. [Florence, 1772] BOUND WITH To the Hon'ble Sir Horace Mann Bart Knight of the Most Hon'ble order of the Bath and his Majesty's Envoy Ext at the Court of Tuscany, the following life of the celebrated painter Masaccio, with some specimens his works in fresco, at Florence, is most humbly dedicated by his most obligated and most obedient servant, Thomas Patch. [Florence, 1770] $13,500.00

Thomas Patch (1725-1782) was an English painter, engraver, physiognomist and art historian. He lived most of his life in Florence. He was amongst the first artists to study early Italian art seriously and he published a series of prints that reproduce the work of Giotto, Masaccio, Ghiberti and Fra Bartolommeo. - Wikipedia. An excellent scholarly note on this series was written by Bogislaw Winner for Quaritch Cat. 1406:61 and I quote part of it here:

First editions, very rare. The present volume comprises three suites of etched and engraved plates. The first reproduces 24 plates of panel paintings and frescoes attributed to Fra Bartolommeo (1472?-1517); ten of these are now in the monastery of San Marco, Florence. The second reproduces 12 frescoes now attributed to Spinello Aretino (d.1410/11) but which in the author’s day were thought to be by Giotto. This series is of particular importance, being the only record of Aretino’s fresco cycle in the Manetti chapel in Santa Maria del Carmine, Florence, which was destroyed (save a few fragments some of which Patch came to own) as a result of a fire on 28-29 January 1771. Patch reproduces the compositions of the damaged frescoes, carefully rendering, in two plates, the underlying sinopia where the painted surface had become detached. The third suite reproduces 25 plates by Masaccio (1401-1428). These are portrait heads traced from frescoes and reduced and engraved. References: F. J. B. Watson, “Thomas Patch (1725-1782)” in The Walpole Society Annual Volume 28 (1939-40) pp, 15-50. See also: Edward A. Maser, “Giotto, Masaccio, Ghiberti, and Thomas Patch” in Festschrift Klaus Lankheit 1973, pp. 192-199.

These are the earliest reproductive prints after these artists and “were doubtless a contributary influence in the rise of a taste for pre-Renaissance painting in England” (Watson, p. 27). Maser places Patch at “a turning point in the study of art” where Italian artists before Raphael began to be appreciated for their own merit. In Maser’s view Patch’s attempts at careful visual documentation are “enough to earn him a place, a small one perhaps, but a secure one nevertheless, among the pioneers of Kunstwissenschaft.” (ibid, p. 198).

“Patch, an intelligent and original artist with a sharp eye and a louche disposition, spent 35 years in Italy, mostly in Florence where he lived across the street from Horace Mann... in 1770, with the publication of The Life of Masaccio, he embarked on a plan to publish books of engravings ‘after every celebrated author.’” (Ingamells, A Dictionary of British and Irish travellers in Italy 1701-1800, pp. 745-6). The present volumes followed, but the ambitious project was then abandoned and Patch’s next and last publication was a volume on Ghiberti’s bronze doors to the Baptistery in Florence.
All three suites are rare. Evidence cited by Watson suggests that only forty sets of the Fra Bartolommeo and ‘Giotto’ series were issued before the plates were destroyed. OCLC locates six copies of ‘Fra Bartolommeo’ (Morgan; Getty; NGA; Yale; Harvard; Huntington). I can locate no copies of the ‘Giotto’ or ‘Masaccio’ suites.

Three works bound together in one folio volume: (18 x 15”), orig. faded paper covered boards, respined and recornered by Green Dragon Bindery. I. (ii), title and text in English and Italian, title within engr. vignette, with 24 plates printed in black, red or ochre. II. (ii), title and text in English and Italian, title within engr. vignette, with 12 plates printed in black or ochre. III. (iv), title and text in English and Italian with title and tailpiece within engr. vignette, with 26 plates printed in black. Nice clean and fresh copies printed on high quality thick paper.
“A NEW TYPE OF LITERATURE ABOUT ART”


Originally published Paris, 1699, this is a text of fundamental importance in late 17th - early 18th century French art history. “1699 was an important year for Roger de Piles; it was the date of his reception into the Académie as a conseiller-amateur. During the quarter of a century between the publication of his *Dialogue sur le coloris* in 1673 and that of the *Abregé*, the French version of that old Italian debate on the relative merits of disegno and colonito had raged between the Poussinistes, representing the academic orthodoxy, and the Rubenistes, whose spokesman was Roger de Piles. The year of Piles’ reception signalled an end to the hegemony of Poussinisme in the Académie. From then on there was an acceptance, mainly because of the force and popularity of Piles’ writings, of various subjects and styles in painting. Piles’ academic position also established the place of the connoisseur or amateur in the world of art… Written by an experienced connoisseur for a public, which either hasn’t the time or doesn’t require a full recounting of all the facts on every artist, the *Abregé* is a new type of literature about art, a sort of brief guide or handbook on painters and painting.” - Collins & Land, *Early books on art*, 19. Arntzen-Rainwater H113. Copies of one or another edition of this work were available in America before 1815; see Schimmelman 29. OCLC locates 10 copies in American libraries.

121 ENGRAVED PORTRAITS OF THE FAMOUS ARTISTS OF EUROPE

10. (PORTRAITS). The True Effigies of the most Eminent Painters, and Other Famous Artists that have flourished in Europe. Curiously engraven on copper plates. Together with an account of the time when they lived, the most remarkable passages of their lives, and most considerable works. [London: D. & T. Browne], 1694 $3750.00

Very nice copy of a wonderful and compelling book; it consists of 121 engraved portraits. It is the first series of portraits of the famous artists of Europe ever to be printed in England. The 142 biographical entries constitute the earliest compendium of the lives of the painters in English, as Vasari, Karel van Mander and Félibien were not yet translated. It is also one of the earliest art historical works in English.

One hundred and twenty-one painters, engravers and architects, and one astrologer, are portrayed, most of them from the Netherlands, but also from Italy and France. There are two series of portraits here, which are numbered consecutively. Both sets were first printed at Antwerp but at different times. The first set is Dominicus Lampsonius's Pictorum Aliquot Celebrium Geremaniae Inferioris (1572); 22 engravings. The second series is Jan Meyssen's Image de divers hommes d'esprit sublime (1649); 99 engravings. The plates from both series must have reached London from Antwerp in the late 17th century. United, they form an incomparable gallery of Netherlandish painters from the Van Eyks to Rubens and Van Dyke. The two sets are in very different styles, as the engravings after Lampsonius's drawings were executed about three quarters of a century earlier than those engraved by Meyssens. The British Library catalogue ascribes all the biographical entries to Sebastiano Resta. Wing R1174, Brunet III 410.

Folio, cont. calf, neatly rebacked. Engr. title (with printed title in English cut out and laid over the central cartouche); printed title; 18 pp letterpress; 2 engr. titles & 122 engravings. The final plate is an allegorical figure of Rome. Excellent copy.
THE WORKS OF
MR. JONATHAN RICHARDSON.

CONSISTING OF

I. THE THEORY OF PAINTING.
II. ESSAY ON THE ART OF CRITICISM, so far as it relates to painting.
III. THE SCIENCE OF A CONNOISSEUR.

All corrected and prepared for the Press
By his Son Mr. J. RICHARDSON.

LONDON:
Printed for T. DAVIES, in Ruffell-Street, Covent-Garden;
Bookseller to the Royal Academy.
MDCCLXXIII.

A MAJOR CONTRIBUTION TO ENGLISH ART LITERATURE

11. RICHARDSON, JONATHAN. The works of...consisting of I. The theory of painting; II. Essay on the art of criticism, so far as it relates to painting; III. the science of a connoisseur. All collected and prepared for the press by his son Mr. J. Richardson. London: T. Davies, 1773 $750.00

First edition of the collected works. In the first essay, ‘The theory of painting,’ first published in 1715, “Richardson divides the art of painting into seven parts: invention, expression, composition, drawing, coloring, handling, and grace and greatness. He defines and discusses each of these components of painting in relation to, for the most part, the art of the past, particularly to the art of Michaelangelo, Raphael, and the seventeenth century Bolognese masters. Beyond question Richardson’s writings on art are the most important English contribution to art literature before the publication of Sir Joshua Reynolds’s Discourses.” - Collins & Land, Early books on art, no. 39-40. The second two works in this collected volume, ‘The art of criticism’ and ‘the science of a connoisseur’ were first published in London, 1719. All three works were translated into French and published in Amsterdam in 1728. Schlosser 674. UCBA, II, 1734.

8vo, recent paste paper sides, polished calf spine, marbled endpapers and flyleaves, nicely bound. (viii)+xix+346+(ii) pp. Scattered light foxing, but a good copy.

CHARLES WOOD RARE BOOKS
‘THE STATE OF THE ARTS IN ENGLAND’


First edition of the miniature painter Rouquet’s views on the burgeoning London art scene. Rouquet (1702-1759) lived and worked for more than thirty years in England. A good selection of his miniature paintings are illustrated on Google. For a detailed analysis of his book see J. Dobai, *Die Kunstliteratur des Kiassizismus ... II*, pp. 338-343. The work was published in London as “The Present State of the Arts” also in 1755; Rouquet translated the work himself. The English edition is rare.

12mo, orig. full mottled calf, gilt spine with dark red lettering piece. (x)+211+1 pp with engr vignette (signed C. Cochin fils fecit 1754) on dedication leaf. Nice copy.