

## 6 The Harmonisation of the Arts

As set out above, the artists of the Renaissance were highly aware of their own deficiencies and limitations. In order to compensate for their defects and lack of knowledge resulting from their natural inclinations, their bodily shapes, or their lack of artistic judgement, they followed the advice of experts, applied mathematical measurements, or systematically trained their *giudizio*. In a certain way, these methods guaranteed an objectivating approach to the imitation of nature, allowing the artists to create works of art without being omniscient in matters of history or equipped with a well-balanced complexion. Furthermore, this system ensured the integration of the single artist into a network of social norms and rules. As the artists exchanged different points of view with humanist advisors or discussed theories of proportion, they acquired an understanding of generally valid models of pictorial representation – and became used to behavioral patterns as well. In a restrictive society in which each individual had precisely defined obligations and duties, subordination under the social *decorum* was indispensable for the stability of the early modern state and its institutions.

### 6.1 Benvenuto Cellini's Self-Portrait as an Eloquent Artist

In contrast to this well-balanced model of artistry, in which the painter or sculptor was surrounded by learned people who advised him on particular details of a representation, the Florentine sculptor and goldsmith Benvenuto Cellini developed a theory which was based entirely on the artist's own knowledge and capacities. This theory first became known to a wider public due to Benedetto Varchi's *Lezzioni*, held in 1547 and published in Florence in 1550. For a better understanding of Cellini's ideas on artistic creation, it is helpful to briefly delineate the aims of Varchi's lecture first.<sup>1</sup>

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1 For the following see also Lampe 2016.

Varchi's *Lezzioni* were concerned with the so-called *paragone*, the question asking whether the art of painting or the art of sculpture should be considered superior.<sup>2</sup> For the printed version of his learned lecture, in which he compiles the most important arguments on both sides, he invited eight artists (featuring inter alia Michelangelo, Giorgio Vasari, and Benvenuto Cellini) to express their opinions in letter form. These letters were published as an appendix to the *Lezzioni*. Renowned as the first survey among artists, they provide us with a lively picture of the varying ideas of painters and sculptors working in Renaissance Florence in the first half of the Cinquecento. Whereas many of the ideas expressed are characterized by a conciliatory approach (trying to reconcile the art of painting with the art of sculpture), the letter of Benvenuto Cellini shows that he was particularly keen to underline the supremacy of the art of sculpture. Accordingly, his letter starts off with the affirmation that the art of sculpture is not simply superior to the art of painting but seven times superior. Cellini explains this exceptional affirmation by referring to the way in which a sculpture is usually seen: unlike a flat painting, a three-dimensional piece of marble can be seen from eight different points of view – the four sides of a block of marble and its four corresponding angles.<sup>3</sup> Having discussed the spatial nature of a statuary work, Cellini derived an additional argument in favour of sculpture from the qualities of the sculptor. According to Cellini, a good sculptor must not only be equipped with the practical tools and methods for creating a statue but also be a learned person. Knowledge of the most noble arts, comprising warfare, poetry, rhetoric, and music, are deemed necessary by Cellini because they allow the sculptor to create the faithful representation of a brave warrior by imparting his own attributes to the sculpture. A statue of an eloquent orator can thus only be made by an eloquent sculptor who embodies the same qualities as his work:

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2 For a discussion of Varchi's *Lezzioni* see the introduction by Oskar Bätschmann and Tristan Weddigen in Varchi 1550 (2013), pp. 6–64.

3 Cfr. Morét 2003, p. 204. Of course a sculpture could be seen from more than eight angles. Borghini was well aware of Cellini's lack of arithmetical coherence and sharply criticised him for his arbitrary and unreasoned numbering. Cfr. Borghini (1971–1977), p. 617: "Or veggiamo un po' prima queste otto vedute, e poi se una veduta più fa la scultura o altra cosa maggiore. Prima io vorrei sapere da lui donde e' cava queste otto vedute così per l'appunto e che le non sieno né più né meno. Dico così, perché questo è un cervello da sua possa et ha filosofie che non ne vendono gli speziali dall'insegna d'Aristotile o di Platone. Vogliamo noi dire che, avendosi a rigirare da chi guarda la figura intorno intorno e di necessità far un cerchio, e' divida questo cerchio in otto parti? Ma perché non in dodici etc. o pure in manco? A questo modo non starebbono ferme le sette volte."

“Ancora dico che questa meravigliosa arte dello statuare non si può fare, se lo statuario non ha buona cognizione di tutte le nobilissime arte; perché, volendo figurare un milito, con quelle qualità e bravure che se gli appartiene, convien che il detto maestro sia bravissimo, con buona cognizione dell’arme; e volendo fare uno oratore, convien che sia eloquentissimo e abbia cognizione della buona scienza delle lettere; volendo figurare un musico, conviene che il detto abbia musica diversa, perché sappia alla sua statua ben collocare in mano uno sonoro instrumento, che gli sia di necessità l’esser poeta.”<sup>4</sup>

Apart from the fact that Cellini could have argued in favor of painting with the same reasoning, his statements underline the obvious fact that works of art benefit from a learned artist who knows how to represent certain objects and persons. Cellini follows the clear strategy of enhancing the social status of sculptors by promoting their intellectual capacities and their interest in the traditional arts and sciences, making them more similar to erudite noblemen than to artisans who work physically with hammer and chisel. An artist who knows about musical instruments or the art of horsemanship not only makes better statues of musicians or monuments of equestrians, but is also better equipped to converse with humanists and statesmen at the courts of Renaissance cities. Conceptually and terminologically, Cellini’s ideas follow the works of influential art theorists, who argued in favor of erudite artists and whose treatises were frequently read during the Cinquecento. Of particular importance was the *De architectura* by the Roman architect Vitruvius, the only treatise on architecture from antiquity that has survived; it was rediscovered and translated into Italian during the 16<sup>th</sup> century. In the first chapter, Vitruvius discusses the essential qualifications of an architect, delineating the image of a versatile person endowed with encyclopedic knowledge. Although an architect need not equal Aristarchus in the art of grammar, nor Aristoxenus in the art of music, nor Hippocrates in the art of medicine, it might prove useful for him to be acquainted with all of these arts.<sup>5</sup> Similar ideas were expressed by Renaissance scholars and art theorists. For example, Leon Battista

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4 Cellini’s letter is dated January 28, 1546 and printed in Varchi 1550 (1960–1962), pp. 80–81, here p. 81. For this passage see also Suthor 2010, p. 28.

5 Vitruvius (1964), p. 32: “Non enim debet nec potest esse architectus grammaticus, uti fuerit Aristarchus, sed non agrammatus, nec musicus ut Aristoxenus, sed non amusus, nec pictor ut Apelles, sed graphidos non inperitus, nec plastes quemadmodum Myron seu Polyclitus, sed rationis plasticae non ignarus, nec denuo medicus ut Hippocrates, sed non aniatrologetus, nec in ceteris doctrinis singulariter excellens, sed in is non inperitus. Non enim in tantis rerum varietatibus elegantias singulares quisquam consequi potest, quod earum ratiocinationes cognoscere et percipere vix candid in potestatem.”

Alberti<sup>6</sup> and Lorenzo Ghiberti<sup>7</sup> argue in favour of painters and sculptors who were familiar with the works of philosophers, poets, and rhetors – not only from antiquity but also in the present time. When composing his *De statua*, written to ennoble the art of sculpture and published in 1504 in Florence, the humanist Pomponio Gaurico was likewise interested in the promotion of courtly arts and manners. He advises the sculptor to be particularly well acquainted with the art of horsemanship, otherwise he might build horsemen that would look like peasants instead of noble equestrians.<sup>8</sup> The learned artist was thus a recurrent theme, which served to underline the indispensable importance of knowledge for the creation of artwork and at the same time operated as a means of social promotion.<sup>9</sup>

It was precisely the latter which interested Cellini the most. But in contrast to the reasonable precepts proposed by the aforementioned authors, Cellini seems to interpret these requirements in a more fundamental sense when stating that the statue of an eloquent orator can only be made by an eloquent sculptor. By demanding “buona cognizione di tutte le nobilissime arte”, he not only points out the proper knowledge of physical characteristics of objects, but advises the sculptors to embody all of these arts.<sup>10</sup> Thus Cellini radicalized the ideas of Vitruvius, whom he knew well. Cellini was probably in possession of the 1521 *volgare* edition by Cesare Cesariano.<sup>11</sup> One of the reasons for his re-interpretation of Vitruvian

6 Alberti (2002), pp. 150 ff.: “Piacemi il pittore sia dotto, in quanto e’ possa, in tutte l’arti liberali; ma in prima desidero sappi geometria. Piacemi la sentenza di Panfilo, antiquo e nobilissimo pittore, dal quale i giovani nobili cominciarono ad imparare dipignere. Stimava niuno pittore potere bene dipignere se non sapea molta geometria. [...] Pertanto consiglio ciascuno pittore molto si faccia famigliare ad i poeti, retorici e agli altri simili dotti di lettere, già che costoro doneranno nuove invenzioni, o certo aiuteranno a bello componere sua storia, per quali certo acquisteranno in sua pittura molte lode e nome.”

7 Ghiberti (1998), pp. 46, 49: “Conviene che llo scultore, etiamdio el pittore, sia amestrato in tutte queste arti liberali: Gramatica, Geometria, Phylosophia, Medicina, Astrologia, Prospectiva, Istorico, Notomia, Teorica disegno, Arismetrica. [...] imperò non può lo scultore né debba essere gramatico, come fu Aristarco, ma bene de’ esser perito nela teorica di detta arte, cioè il disegno, come Apelles e come Mirone e molto più che nessuno, però quanto sarà più perito tanto sarà perfetissimo lo scultore e così el pittore; non bisogna esser medico come Ypocrate et Avicenna e Galieno, ma bene bisogna avere vedute l’opere di loro [...]”

8 Gaurico 1504 (1999), p. 136: “Sed enim quum equestres potissimum ponantur statuae, si modo rusticano equitatu equitem deformare noluerit, nonne optimum insessorem eum esse oportebit, aut saltem equitandi rationem ipsam tenere?”

9 For the concept of the courtly artist see also Warnke 1985.

10 The edition of 1612 of the *Vocabolario degli Accademici della Crusca* defines *conoscere*, the verb generating the noun *cognizione*, in the following way: “Apprendere con lo ntelletto a prima giunta, per mezzo de’ sensi, l’essere degli oggetti.”

11 For example, he refers to the first chapter of Vitruvius’ *De architectura* in his autobiography. Cfr. Cellini (1996), pp. 15 f.: “E perché, sí come dice Vitruvio, in fra l’altre cose, vo-

ideas can be identified with the circulating ideas on automimesis. As we have seen before, Leonardo and Paolo Pino had discussed the problem that painters were often inclined to reproduce their own physical nature in their works. Likewise, Vasari was convinced of the similarities between the character of a painter and the style of his paintings. Cellini's strategy to impersonate and embody those qualities that he intended to represent can in part be understood as a remedy against unwitting self-portraiture. Another reason for Cellini's amalgamation of Vitruvian ideas on universal knowledge lies in their power to rhetorically underline the intellectual capacities of an artist. Indeed, the idea of a universal education proposed by Vitruvius was used by Cellini mostly to fashion himself as an eloquent, erudite, and sophisticated sculptor who was well accustomed to the liberal arts that were part of the aristocratic and humanist circles in Florence. In his autobiography, written in the years between 1558 and 1567, he clearly pictured himself as an artist who was not only an excellent warrior familiar with the use of weapons, but also an excellent rhetor who knew how to engage in learned conversations with patrons and princes.<sup>12</sup> In the same evident and self-praising way, he alluded to his knowledge of ancient authors, his ability to play various musical instruments, and his skill in composing poems. Thus, by sending his letter to Varchi on January 28, 1547, he was deliberately creating an intellectual portrait of himself as an artist who was particularly proud of his qualities as musician, orator, poet, and warrior.<sup>13</sup>

## 6.2 Vincenzo Borghini's *Selva di notizie*

Not surprisingly, Cellini's self-indulgence was harshly criticized by Vincenzo Borghini, a distinguished humanist and close friend of Vasari's who helped draft the *Vite*.<sup>14</sup> His criticism of Cellini in the *Selva di notizie*, a manuscript preserved

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lendo fare bene detta arte, bisogna avere alquanto di musica e buon disegno, essendo Giovanni [i.e., Cellini's father] fattosi bun disegnatore, cominciò a dare opera alla musica, et insieme con essa imparò a sonare molto bene di viola e di flauto; et essendo persona molto studiosa, poco usciva di casa."

12 Cfr. Cellini (1996), p. 637f: "Et una sera infra le altre, essendo giunto alquanto più tardi che al mio solito, il Duca mi disse: 'Tu sia il malvenuto'. Alle quali parole io dissi: 'Signor mio, cotesto non è il mio nome, perché io ho nome Benvenuto; et perché io penso che l'Eccellenza Vostra moteggi meco, io non entrerò in altro'."

13 For Cellini's methods of self-fashioning see Gardner 1997.

14 For Borghini's impact on the first edition of the *Vite* see Ginzburg 2007.

at the Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florence<sup>15</sup> (and later discussed in detail), was not only based on personal animosities but also on diverging ideas about artistic issues. In fact, Borghini repeatedly attacked the sculptor, accusing him of laziness and misconduct.<sup>16</sup> Finally, in the summer of 1564 their mutual hostility reached an unprecedented level. What were the reasons for this escalation?

After the death of Michelangelo in Rome on February 18, 1564, the Florentine artists decided to honour their compatriot by organizing a grand funeral in Florence, including processions and festivities. Due to the great interest in Michelangelo's mortal remains, which led to lengthy discussions, the preparations for these celebrations took time. The artists entrusted with the organization of the funeral, among whom Giorgio Vasari had a prominent role, used the time to design the decoration of the church of S. Lorenzo where the obsequies were to be held. In particular, the design of a huge catafalque, meant to honour the life and work of Michelangelo with an allegorical programme, received the most attention. Featuring personifications of painting and sculpture, the catafalque illustrated his universal excellence – but also provoked rivalry amongst the artists. Whereas the sculptors were interested in granting the personification of sculpture a prominent position, the painters preferred that the personification of painting have a prominent position. Benvenuto Cellini tried to increase the significance of sculpture by providing plans in which he suggested positioning its personification on the heraldically more important right side. However, all of his suggestions and drafts for the catafalque were dismissed, so he left the preparations for Michelangelo's obsequies in anger and did not turn up for the funeral, finally held on July 14, 1564.<sup>17</sup>

As prior of the Ospedale degli Innocenti and *luogotenente* of the newly-founded Accademia del disegno, Vincenzo Borghini can be identified as the main reason for Cellini's rejection. He was responsible for the coordination of artistic life in Florence, and the obsequies were one of the tasks to be organized by the commander-in-chief of academic artistry.<sup>18</sup> In close collaboration with Vasari, Borghini decided to give the personification of sculpture a less meaningful place,

15 Library of the Kunsthistorisches Institut Florenz, Ms. K 783 (16 (RARO), ca. 242 × 174 mm.

16 In a letter to Vasari, dating August 11, 1564, Borghini writes: “[...] non dico di Benvenuto, – che stimandolo pazzo spacciato, io non ne tengo un conto al mondo, come proprio se un di questi cagnacci da beccaio abbaia – [...]”. In another, dating August 19, 1564: “Delle baie nate io me ne passerei di leggieri. Et di quella bestiaccia [Cellini] per conto mio non dire’ altro, senon che sentendo le sue pazzie, alzai il capo e me ne risi [...], perche so che egli è, fu et sara sempre una bestia asinina; et se un asino mi havessi dato un calcio, io non terrei collera: Così fo con lui, perche lo stimo da una bestia, come egli è etc. [...]”. See Frey (1923–1940), vol. 2, pp. 93, 97, 109 f.

17 Wittkower 1964, pp. 19 ff.

18 Calamandrei 1952, pp. 202 f., Wittkower 1964, p. 22.

emphasising the prominence of painting in the works of Michelangelo. By deciding to position the personification of painting to the right of the catafalque, the executive committee allocated the art of painting to the visually more important side, immediately visible upon entering S. Lorenzo.<sup>19</sup> Cellini was quick to criticise Borghini for this maneuver, claiming that the sculptor had been influenced by his friend Vasari, who was known for his immoderate predilection for the art of painting.<sup>20</sup>

The argument with the sculptors of Florence was one of the reasons that Borghini wrote the *Selva di notizie* in the summer of 1564.<sup>21</sup> As is suggested by its title, literally meaning a “forest of notes”, the *Selva* consisted of several sections, including excerpts from the works of Pliny and Benedetto Varchi. It also contained genuine and original thoughts by Borghini himself on the *paragone*. He was probably interested in clarifying the intellectual discussions that he had had with the Florentine sculptors, and Varchi's *Lezioni* proved to be a good starting point. According to Borghini's function as *luogotenente*, the *Selva* was intended as a systematic evaluation of the benefits and downsides of sculpture and painting, preferring neither the one nor the other. It was most likely to be held as a series of lectures at the Accademia del disegno.<sup>22</sup> Nevertheless, in his *Selva di notizie* Borghini did not hesitate to include a rigorous attack on Cellini's theory of imitation that we have discussed above.

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19 Carrara 2001, p. 243.

20 Calamandrei 1952, p. 208. Cellini expressed his displeasure in a short text, named *Discorso sopra la differenza nata tra li Scultori e Pittori, circa il luogo destro stato dato alla Pittura nelle Esequie del gran' Michelagnolo Buonarotti*, and published in Florence in 1564 as appendix to Giovan Maria Tarsia's *Oratione overo discorso fatto nell' esequie del divino Michelagnolo Buonarotti*.

21 In a letter dating August 14, 1564, Borghini writes to Vasari: “Hora vi bisognerà rigare più diritto, che io ho studiato Plinio et la letione del Varchi et quelle belle lettere del Tasso sopra la pittura; tal che io ci son mezzo dottorato et saprò veder meglio et giudicare più minutamente le virtù et difetti de l'arte [...]” Frey (1923–1940), vol. 2, p. 101. For the *Selva* see Barocchi 1970, Frangenberg 1990, pp. 47–58, Carrara 2001, and Burioni 2008, pp. 76–91.

22 Burioni 2008, pp. 77, 91. Nevertheless, we can attribute a certain preference for the art of painting to Borghini. According to his views, the art of painting and its expressive means were more universal and thus closer to the traditionally appreciated art of poetry. Cfr. Barocchi 1970, p. 92.

### 6.3 Ethical and Intellectual Qualities of the Artist

Borghini was particularly amused by Cellini's letter, published in the appendix of Varchi's *Lezzioni*. After having studied the *Lezzioni*, he repeatedly referred to Varchi's lecture in the *Selva di notizie*. He paid particular attention to Cellini's thoughts on the education of the artist. In taking Cellini's letter literally and thus deliberately misunderstanding him, Borghini interpreted his demand for universal knowledge as an explicit request to embody those qualities that the artist intended to represent. In fact, because Cellini was more acquainted with expressing himself through manipulating stone than with manipulating words, Cellini's incoherent theory was an easy target for Borghini's analytical and trained judgement as a humanist.

“Dice [Cellini] ch'uno statuario ha aver buona cognizione di tutte le nobilissime arti, e che, volendo figurare un milito con quelle qualità e bravure che se gl'appartiene, conviene che detto maestro sia bravissimo, e volendo figurar un oratore, convien che sia eloquentissimo et abbia cognizione della buona scienza delle lettere, volendo figurare un musico, conviene che abbia musica diversa etc. Tutte queste sono parole formali. Or non bisognerebbe qui gridare: *Proh divùm numina sancta!*<sup>23</sup> che sia un sì pazzo che dica cose sì stravaganti e che le si stampino? Prassitele, quando fece quel cavallo ch'oggi è nelle Esquilie con quel di Fidia, che perciò si dice Montecavallo, dovette esser un bravo cavallo [...].”<sup>24</sup>

Borghini's critique in a nutshell: According to Cellini's theory, wouldn't Praxiteles himself have to have been a horse in order to be able to create the equestrian statue on the Esquiline (i.e., the Quirinal)?<sup>25</sup> It is no coincidence that Borghini chose the sculptures of Phidias and Praxiteles to demonstrate the absurdity of Cellini's idea to equate the artist and the artwork. Already known to Petrarch as an example for *ars et ingenium*, their monumental statues were considered

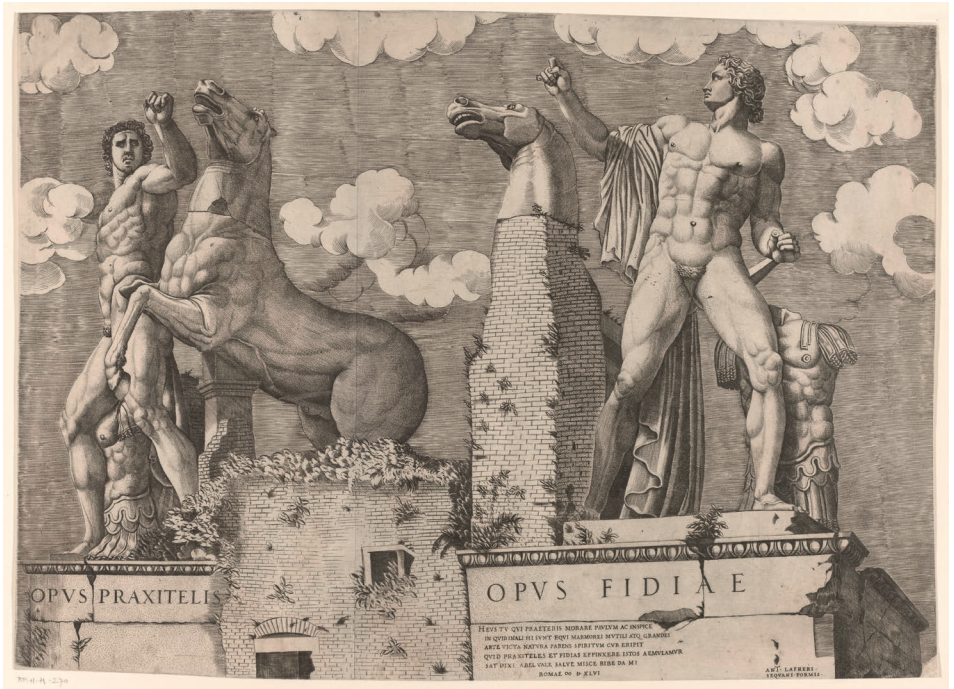
23 The exclamation “*Proh divùm numina sancta!*” is an allusion to Lucretius and his discussion of the sense of touch as a means of perception: “*Tactus enim, tactus, proh Divùm numina sancta!*” (*De rerum natura*, II, 434). Referring to the Roman philosopher, Varchi recommended the tactile sense as one of the most reliable senses in his *Lezzioni* (Varchi 1550 (1960–1962), p. 42). By alluding to Lucretius, Borghini criticized Cellini's sense of tactility in a most malicious way: The sense of touch was considered an indispensable skill of sculptors.

24 Borghini (1971–1977), p. 639.

25 Borghini composed his *Selva* hastily without checking for minor errors and inaccuracies: Obviously, the statues by Phidias and Praxiteles are not located on the Esquilin, but on the Quirinal.



unexcelled examples of artistic excellence during the Renaissance.<sup>26</sup> An etching published by Antonio Lafreri, dated 1546, gives evidence of the material condition of the monument before it was restored and altered under the pontificate of Sixtus V in the years 1589–1591 (Fig. 49). Marked as “OPVS PRAXITELIS” and “OPVS FIDIAE”, the statues were recognizable as the works of two of the most



**Figure 49** Antonio Lafreri, Statues of Praxiteles and Phidias on the Quirinal in Rome (front), 1546, Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum

prominent sculptors of antiquity. Borghini might well have read these inscriptions during one of his journeys to Rome. Furthermore, the etching by Lafreri reveals why Borghini referred to the work of Praxiteles. Whereas the horse by Phidias was partly destroyed and covered with protective bricks, the horse by Praxiteles only suffered minor damage and was generally in good condition. Another etching in Lafreri’s *Speculum romanae magnificentiae* illustrates the importance accorded to the statues by Renaissance artists (Fig. 50). Showing the sel-

26 For these sculptures see Thielemann 1996, pp. 40 f. and Thielemann 1994, p. 89 f.

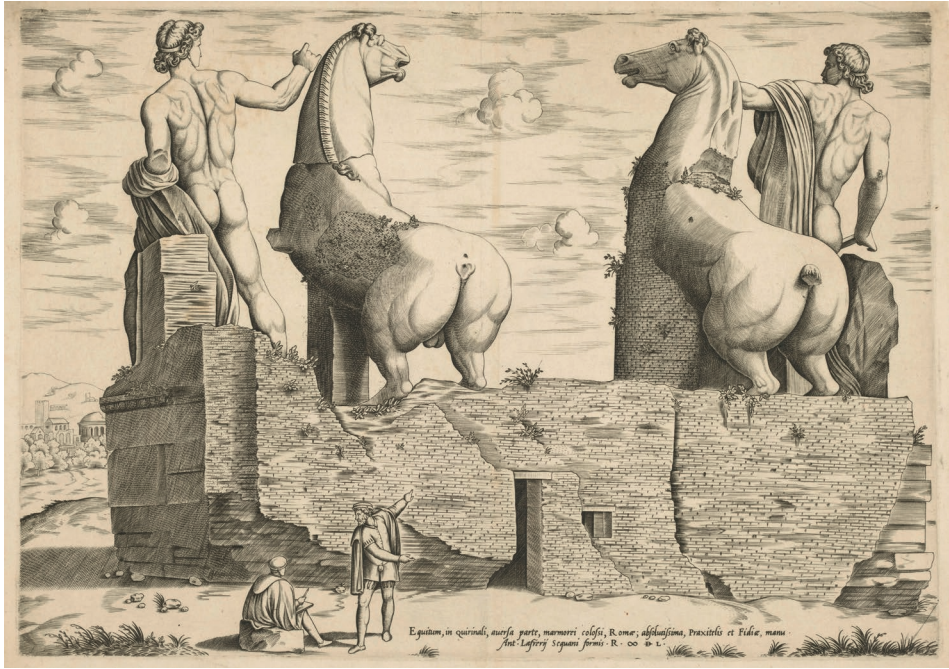


Figure 50 Antonio Lafreri, Statues of Praxiteles and Phidias on the Quirinal in Rome (rear), 1550, Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum

dom depicted rear of the monument, it also features an artist, visible at the bottom of the statues. Equipped with a pencil and a drawing board, he seems to sketch the statues; his companion, a well-dressed nobleman, is pointing to both the monument and an explanatory inscription which alludes to the excellence of the works of Phidias and Praxiteles (“marmorei colossi, Romæ; absolutissima, Praxitelis et Fidiæ, manu”).<sup>27</sup> By choosing the famous works of two famous artists to illustrate the absurdity of Cellini’s theory of imitation, Borghini mocked his mimetic ideas efficiently and polemically.

Having teased Cellini by contrasting his art theory with works by the sculptors Phidias and Praxiteles, Borghini continued to refer to ancient art history to mock the Florentine sculptor. In the second half of the passage cited above, Borghini mentions the sculptor Perillus, who – in contrast to Phidias and Praxiteles – was not known for his virtues. In fact, Perillus was better known for his inhumane cruelty and viciousness than for his works. According to various ancient

27 For Lafreri and the publication of the *Speculum romane magnificentiæ* see Parshall 2006.

authors, Perillus was in the service of the tyrant Phalaris, active in Acragas (today Agrigento) in Sicily in the 6<sup>th</sup> century BCE. One of his tasks was the construction of instruments to punish and torture the people of Acragas. His most malicious invention was a hollow brazen bull, equipped with pipe holes in the nostrils of the bull. Phalaris' victims were placed inside this sculpture, where they were burned to death by a fire underneath the bull's belly. According to the sources, Perillus presented his work to the tyrant with the following words: "If you ever wish to punish some man, O Phalaris, shut him up within the bull and lay a fire beneath it; by his groanings the bull will be thought to bellow and his cries of pain will give you pleasure as they come through the pipes in the nostril." On seeing the voluminous sculpture, Phalaris demanded a demonstration of its function. As the sculptor Perillus was the only person at hand, he was ordered to climb into the bull, where he was tortured to death by the tyrant.<sup>28</sup>

Understandably, artists frequently referred to this episode. An etching after a lost fresco by Baldassare Peruzzi<sup>29</sup> was made by the French engraver Pierre Woeiriot before 1562 in Rome. It depicts the historical account in detail (Fig. 51). Supported by two of Phalaris' assistants, Perillus is being forced to climb into the bull, while another assistant is lighting a fire underneath the bull's belly. Peruzzi's interpretation of the scene was inspired by an etching by Giulio Bonasone, published in Acchille Bocchi's *Symbolicarum quaestionum [...] libri quinque* in 1555 (Fig. 52).<sup>30</sup> In contrast to Bonasone's composition, which is rather static, Peruzzi's dramatized the execution of Perillus by positioning the tyrant in the background of the image and animating the bull. As described by various Renaissance authors, the sacrificial animal is bending its neck to emit its bellowing, as if the statue is brought to new life by the screams of pain of its victim.<sup>31</sup>

28 The most important ancient sources for the episode are Diodorus Siculus, *Bibliotheca historica*, IX, 18; Pliny, *Historia naturalis*, XXXIV, 89; Ovid, *Ars amatoria*, I, 653.

29 Peruzzi's fresco was painted on a Roman façade and probably inspired by a similar motif from the hands of Polidoro da Caravaggio. Although the work had been discussed in the *Vite*, his invention is only preserved in form of an engraving. See Frommel 1968, p. 110 and Avery 1971, p. 25.

30 For Bonasone's etchings see Massari 1983.

31 For a discussion of Perillus' bull see for instance Dante's *Divina Comedia* (XXVII, 7–15) and Cristoforo Landino's comment on Dante's passage. Landino 1481 (2001), vol. 2, pp. 904 f.: "[...] chome el bue facto di rame e messo dentro l'huomo, quando l'huomo gridava madava fuori per la bocca dell'animale un suono che pareva el muggio suo, et non la voce humana; [...]. Muggiava non con la sua voce perché era inanimato, ma con quella dell'afflicto, cioè con quella di colui che dentro v'era tormentato, [...] et questo fu chosa diricta et iusta, imperochè la crudeltà di tale inventore [i.e., Perillo] meritava tal supplicio. Sichè con tutto che questo bue fussi di rame, nientedimeno pareva che lui muggiassi chome fa el bue vivo quando è traficto dal dolore."





Figure 51 Pierre Woeriot after Baldassare Peruzzi, Phalaris and the Bull of Perillus, before 1562, London, British Museum





Figure 52 Giulio Bonasone, Phalaris and the Bull of Perillus, from the 1555 Edition of Achille Bocchi's *Symbolicarum quaestionum [...] libri quinque*

The fate of Perillus was well known to the artists of the Cinquecento. In the early modern literature on jurisdiction and governance, his death was described as an example for fair and just punishment.<sup>32</sup> Following Ovid (*Ars amatoria*, I, 653), it was argued that there is no juster law than that contrivers of death should perish by their own contrivance. Influenced by the increasing importance of the early modern state and its institutions, art theorists discussed the example of Perillus accordingly. Although he was appreciated as a valued artist, his moral virtues were considered unworthy. The true Renaissance artist had to live in accordance with an ethical *decorum* and follow certain social standards. No one knew this better than Benedetto Varchi, whose *Lezioni* had a fundamental effect on the self-conception of the Florentine artists in the middle of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. When discussing his concept of art and artistry, he explicitly referred to Perillus as a warning example. According to the humanist, art should always improve the lives of men by fulfilling noble and laudable purposes. Thus Perillus could only serve as a negative example.

“[...] nessuna arte, se è dannosa, può chiamarsi arte veramente secondo quella definizione. Né si creda alcuno che Perillo si possa chiamare veramente scultore, non avendo avuto quel fine che debbono avere gli scultori, se già non credessimo che tanto buoni e valenti maestri, che furono innanzi a lui, avessero tanto faticato nell’arte della scultura, non per fare le statue degli dèi e contraffare l’immagini degli uomini grandi, ma per fabbricare un toro, dentro al quale si devesse abbronzare crudellissimamente gli uomini vivi.”<sup>33</sup>

In Varchi’s understanding, the execution of Perillus was therefore justified.<sup>34</sup> Similar opinions about Perillus were expressed by Filarete,<sup>35</sup> in the so-called *Anonimo Magliabechiano*,<sup>36</sup> and by Pomponio Gaurico, who appreciated the sculptor as one

32 The brazen bull was frequently depicted in treatises on jurisdiction and treated as a symbol for legal practice and torture in early modern Europe, see for example the *Constitutio criminalis carolina* respectively the *Peinlich Gerichts Ordnung*, published in Frankfurt a.M. in 1573, where the bull is represented on fol. 7v.

33 Varchi 1550 (1960–1962), pp. 26 f.

34 Varchi 1550 (1960–1962), p. 26: “[...] quanto in tutte l’altre si debbe biasimare Fallari, tanto in questa crudeltà meritò d’essere lodato.”

35 Filarete (1972), vol. 2, p. 578: “Perillo gli era, benché trovato avessi l’aspro martoro del toro a Fallaride tiranno di Siracusa, ma lui prima patì la pena, perché come cercatore di crudele morte per altro fu lecito che lui prima la provasse.”

36 Anonimo Magliabechiano (1892), p. 38: “Perillo scultore non fu lodato nell’arte sua se non da Fallaride tiranno. Ne è degno d’essere lodato ne fatto conto delle sue opere per havere fatto a esso Fallaride il toro di bronzo, voto drento, nel quale gl’huomini vivi si

of the important artists of antiquity but would not grant him any fame because of his cruelties.<sup>37</sup> In criticizing the demeanour of the unscrupulous sculptor in explicit terms, the art literature of the Renaissance followed the judgement of Pliny, who first associated Perillus with the decline of the arts.<sup>38</sup>

When Vincenzo Borghini criticized Cellini's theory of imitation in his *Selva di notizie*, he drew on these characterisations of the ancient sculptor. After he discusses the horse of Praxiteles as an example of the dissimilarity between sculpture and sculptor, he brings up the example of Perillus to illustrate similarities between work and worker in a satirical way: "[...] et ora intendo quel che volse dire un valentuomo che mi disse già che quel Perillo che fece quell'animale di rame a Falari fu un gran bue."<sup>39</sup>

Whereas Praxiteles was fashioned as an autonomous artist who was able to create all kinds of artworks without reproducing his own physical features, Perillus was labeled as a counter-example. By equating the sculptor Perillus with his sculpture of the brazen bull, Borghini polemically pointed to Cellini's ideas on the similarity of artist and artwork. Just as Perillus embodied the characteristics of an uncivilized and unethical person, his bull personifies the unreasoned animal instinct.<sup>40</sup> According to the ancient saying *Artificem commendat opus* (The artist

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serravano per farli morire con grandissimo dolore, et mettendo sotto a detto toro il fuoco, gli faceva ardendo morire; et gridando essi per la gran pena, veniva la voce fuori uscendo per la bocca di tal fiera, pareva che mughiassi. Onde Fallaride veggendo questo nuovo strumento crudelissimo, fattoli per tale artefice, volle, che esso fussi il primo a prouarlo, et drento velo fece morire giustamente. Che da poi haveva l'arte humanissima del fare idii et huomini exposita a tal crudeltà, la quale i primi inventori di quella non s'erono afaticati a trovarla per tormentare gl'huomini, ma per farli eterni et a posteri notissimi."

37 Gaurico 1504 (1999), p. 252: "Perillus nullum impietate sua nomen est meritus."

38 Pliny (1938–1963), vol. 9, p. 192: "Perillum nemo laudet saeviozem Phalaride tyranno, cui taurum fecit mugitus inclusi hominis pollicitus igni subdito et primus expertus cruciatum eum iustiore saevitia. huc a simulacris deorum hominumque devocaverat humanissimam artem. ideo tot conditores eius laboraverant, ut ex ea tormenta fierent! itaque una de causa servantur opera eius, ut quisquis illa videat, oderit manus." (*Historia naturalis*, XXXIV, 89).

39 Borghini (1971–1977), pp. 639 f. The *valentuomo* mentioned by Borghini was probably Michelangelo. As is recorded by Vasari, the sculptor is said to have mocked a painting in which a bull was most skillfully painted with the following remark: "Ogni pittore ritrae sé medesimo bene." See Vasari 1568 (1878–1885) vol. 7, p. 280 and Chapter 2.3.

40 By comparing Cellini to animals, Borghini alluded to the important difference between human rationality and animal instinct. Whereas an artist repeatedly produces new compositions, animals are merely occupied with the reproduction of inherited patterns – for example, cobwebs or nests. See Chapter 3.3.



is recognized by his work), frequently referred to in Renaissance art theory,<sup>41</sup> the sculpture of the bull becomes the involuntary self-portrait of its sculptor, just as Cellini demonstrated his lack of academic reason in his letter to Varchi. Apparently, Borghini added the keen reference to Perillus after he had dictated the text of the *Selva* to his secretary. It is part of a marginal note, written with his own, less-experienced hand, which replaces a passage of the main text, now illegible (Fig. 53).

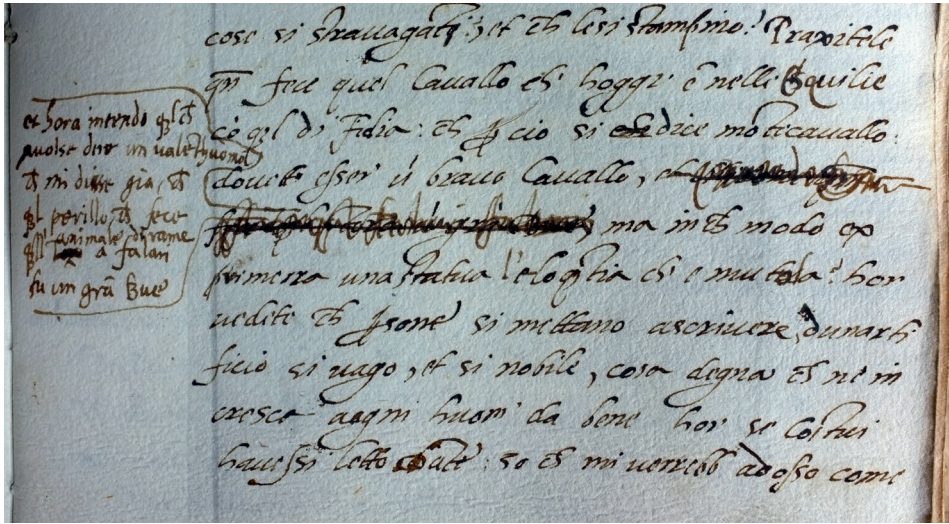


Figure 53 Vincenzo Borghini, Fol. 35r of the *Selva di notizie* with Marginal Note in Borghini's Handwriting, 1564, Florence, Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz

#### 6.4 Rationalizing Mimesis: The Accademia del Disegno

Borghini's criticism of Cellini aimed at the increased self-awareness of the sculptors and painters of Renaissance Italy. Following the example of the humanists, artists were more and more interested in achieving the ideal of an *uomo universale*, equipped with universal knowledge and refined manners.<sup>42</sup> Emancipat-

41 See for example Gaurico 1504 (1999), p. 170: "Solent enim, ut in proverbio est, artificem instrumenta, dominum qualis sit domus ostendere." More examples are discussed by Löhr 2008, p. 170.

42 The ideal of the *uomo universale* was extensively discussed in Baldassare Castiglione's *Cortegiano*, first published in 1528. Borghini's criticism was pointed explicitly against Castiglione's influential treatise on the accomplished courtier. See for example Bor-



ing themselves from the *artes mechanicae*, they not only fashioned themselves as poets, musicians, and orators, but actually performed these arts frequently. Borghini considered this development dangerous. As executive head of the Accademia del disegno, he was more interested in the actual production of artwork than in the promotion of the pastimes of the Florentine artists. His negative attitude towards the scholarly trained artist is best shown by his remarks regarding the eloquence of artists. No matter how much an artist is educated in the art of rhetoric, he would never be able to make one of his statues speak. “Ma in che modo esprimerà una statua l’eloquenzia, ch’è mutola?”<sup>43</sup>

Consistent with his viewpoint, Borghini proposed another method for creating works of art by focussing on pragmatic aspects. Rather than encouraging the artists to engage in poetry and music, he advised them to imagine the appearance of a poet, a musician, or an orator by means of their intellectual capacity. By referring to the famous poems of Dante and Michelangelo which he cited on this occasion,<sup>44</sup> he underlined the importance of the artistic *idea*, the ability of artists to generate new compositions and inventions. If an artist wants to build a statue of Cicero, it is not necessary for him to be eloquent. It is sufficient for him to use his *giudizio* to conceptualize the image of a learned and noble man before realizing it in stone. Similarly, he does not have to be armed with weapons before making an image of the warrior Achilles.

“Dirò per esempio: vorrà un buono pittore o un buono scultore fare (e non ritrarre) un Cicero? A costui non è necessario esser eloquente o buono filosofo, come fu Cicerone, ma gli basta bene aver tanto giudizio che conosca quel che si conviene a un cittadino grave, prudente, valoroso e buono, e da questa cognizione formerà nel concetto suo un volto che negl’occhi, nella fronte et un tutta la persona co’ gesti e co l’abito rappresenti quella prudenzia et autorità che fu in quell’uomo; e da questo Cicerone che

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ghini (1971–1977), p. 641: “Parmi degno di considerazione che queste arti hanno molte accompagnature e di molti corredi. E non parlando ora di quelli la Boschereccia [i.e., Cellini] voleva che avessi il suo scultore, che lo voleva musico, soldato et oratore etc. (che questo è vizio comune di tutte l’arti, e colui che formò il cortigiano voleva insino a pittore, quell’altro che fa l’oratore vuole che gl’abbia tutte l’arti etc.), parliamo un poco di certi corredi più intrinseci e più familiari, dove a me pare ch’altra cosa sia l’opera che si fa, et altro l’instrumento con che si fa.”

43 Borghini (1971–1977), p. 640.

44 Borghini (1971–1977), p. 640: “Dante, che fu veramente in tutte le cose divino disse quelle belle parole: E chi pinge figura, se non è prima lei, non la può fare. [...] Però ben disse il divin Michelangnolo, parlando delle perfezione de l’artefice: E solo a quello arriva la man che ubidisce a l’intelletto.” The poems cited by Borghini were discussed frequently in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, for example also in Varchi’s *Lezzioni*, see also Chapter 2.1.

gl' ha ne l'intelletto caverà poi la mano quel che si dipinge in su la tavola o si cava del marmo. Se per contrario arà daffar Achille, si farà quella idea d'un giovane stizoso, feroce, tutto sdegno e tutta rabbia etc., e non per questo sarà necessario che vadia armato o bisognerà che sia un Curio de' nostri tempi o quel Febus de l'Isole Lontane della Tavola Ritonda."<sup>45</sup>

In contrast to Cellini, who argued in favour of an actual knowledge of these arts, Borghini concentrates on the intellectual judgement of the artist. Rather than embodying a great variety of competencies, the artist should focus on his ability of abstract reasoning. An artist does not need to be proficient in all of the arts; it is more than sufficient to be merely acquainted with them to be able to represent the entirety of the manifestations of nature, the "proprietà della natura di tutte le cose."<sup>46</sup> Borghini's understanding of the artistic *giudizio* is thus very close to Vasari's definition of the *disegno*, further discussed and developed in the second edition of the *Vite*.<sup>47</sup> According to Vasari, the *idea* – and hence the work of an artist – is subject to his *giudizio universale*, acquired by constant practice.

"Perché il disegno, padre delle tre arti nostre architettura, scultura e pittura, procedendo dall'intelletto cava di molte cose un giudizio universale simile a una forma ovvero idea di tutte le cose della natura [...], e perché da questa cognizione nasce un certo concetto e giudizio, che si forma nella mente quella tal cosa che poi espressa con le mani si chiama disegno, si può concludere che esso disegno altro non sia che una apparente espressione e dichiarazione del concetto che si ha nell'animo, e di quello che altri si è nella mente imaginato e fabricato nell'idea."<sup>48</sup>

In contrast to Vasari's conception of *disegno*, Borghini went even further. In the same way in which he attacked Cellini for his theory of imitation, he criticized Cellini's idea of the modern artist. At a time of social mobility, Borghini was keen on reminding the artists of their actual position in the Florentine Republic. Rather than spending their time on useless activities in the courts, artists should concentrate on their duties as craftsmen. In a lecture held at the Accademia del disegno shortly after October 18, 1564, he addressed the artists directly and expressed his opinion in the following way: "Voi uscite di casa vostra, dove siate patroni, et en-

45 Borghini (1971–1977), pp. 640 f.

46 Borghini (1971–1977), p. 641.

47 Similarities between Borghini's and Vasari's definitions are discussed by Williams 1997, pp. 29–72.

48 Vasari 1568 (1878–1885), vol. 1, pp. 168 f.

trate in casa di filosofi et retori, dove voi havete non troppo gran parte et dove noi siam patroni noi [...], è Accademia di FARE et non di RAGIONARE [...].<sup>49</sup>

In the *Selva di notizie* he elaborated on this idea in more detail. Writing about the specific tasks of each artist, he advised each one to stick to his traditional duties. A painter should know how to prepare wooden panels, a sculptor how to make chisels, and an architect how to use ginny wheels. If they were to engage in other activities that had nothing to do with their art, they would hardly achieve anything.<sup>50</sup> Thus, by criticizing Cellini's (and Vitruvius') idea of universal knowledge, Borghini also managed to contribute to the enhancement of the professionalism of sculptors, painters, and architects. The latter two in particular were often charged with identical tasks, and a neat distinction between their duties could lead to a productive decrease in rivalry. This improvement must have been deemed positive by Borghini.

Borghini's neat analysis of Cellini's theory of imitation was an important contribution to the redefinition of the artistic life; it must be seen in conjunction to the evolving organization of the arts in Florence. During the second half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, artists were increasingly confronted with an organizational system which imposed new conditions on the production of art. The aristocratic establishment was interested in the production of a large amount of representative portraits, monumental statues, and ephemeral decorations of festivities which served to emphasise their authority and power. The increasing demands on painters, sculptors, architects, and their assistants led to a reorganization of existing structures – and finally to the foundation of the Accademia del disegno.<sup>51</sup> Established with the encouragement of Cosimo I in May 1563, this academy of the arts not only had the purpose of facilitating the artists' education and self-representation, but was also meant to coordinate the artistic activities of the Republic of Florence and the Grand Duchy of Tuscany. As its *luogotenente*, Vincenzio Borghini was entrusted with the mission to structure this process of institutionalizing the cultural policy under Cosimo I.<sup>52</sup>

One of his tasks consisted of the optimisation of the artistic work flow. Even though the rules and regulations of the Accademia del disegno do not provide

49 As transcribed in Carrara 2006, p. 565.

50 Borghini (1971–1977), p. 642: “[...] io ho gran paura ch’artificiosamente, come dice Vitruvio, non faccia il suo architetto un tante tante cose, come fece il Castiglione il suo cortigiano, e che quando poi egli arà a restare co’ sua proprii panni e rendere quelli che gl’ha tolti in presto, e’ non rimanga (come quella cornacchia) mezzo nudo. Questo si consideri bene.”

51 For the history of the *Accademia del disegno* see Waźbiński 1987, Barzman 2000, and Pinelli 1993, pp. 25 f., 158 ff.

52 Borghini's impact on the *Accademia* is discussed by Ruffini 2011.

much information about its didactic principles, we have fragmentary treatises from the 1560s by Alessandro Allori (*Il primo libro de' ragionamenti delle regole del disegno*) and Vincenzo Danti (*Il primo libro del trattato delle perfette proporzioni*). These two members of the academy were interested in the professionalization and rationalization of workmanship.<sup>53</sup> According to these painters' notes, the execution of pictorial representations can be facilitated by dividing a figure into several smaller parts, such as the mouth, the nose, or the ears. Frequent repetition of these patterns would then lead to an increase in speed and finally contribute to the faster completion of paintings. Along with the instruction on human anatomy and the laws of perspective, these methods were part of the instructive curricula of the academy, enabling the artists to accomplish commissions within a short length of time. Furthermore, the artists were invited to re-use their preparatory drawings for other paintings.<sup>54</sup> By inverting or re-composing single parts and patterns of their figures, they reinvented their paintings in an economic yet creative way. Minor repetitions and aesthetic disparities were ignored in favour of working better and faster. This kind of re-organization of labor had another advantage as well: executive artists who partitioned the work into subdivisions could nominate specialized assistants who were charged with specific tasks.<sup>55</sup> The systematic collaboration on major commissions was the result not only of rationalization, but also of the focus on the visual orchestration of authority and power, considered a necessity in a republic like Florence.

## 6.5 The Death of the Sculptor Perillus

Borghini's attack on Cellini was based on these precepts of productivity. Although the sculptor fashioned himself repeatedly as an assiduous worker,<sup>56</sup> Borghini accused him of laziness and disobedience. He was thus rendered the ideal antagonist

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53 Both Allori's *Il primo libro de' ragionamenti delle regole del disegno* and Vincenzo Danti's *Il primo libro del trattato delle perfette proporzioni di tutte le cose* were composed during the time of the academy's foundation. See Barzman 2000, pp. 167 f.

54 Nova 1992.

55 For these methods see also Wackernagel 1938; Bambach 1999; Hiller von Gaertringen 1999.

56 For example, when talking to Cosimo I and his wife Eleonora di Toledo in his *Vita* about the process of making a crucifix, meant to decorate the artist's tomb, he described it as being exceptionally laborious. Cellini (1996), p. 736: "Signora mia, io mi sono preso per piacere di fare una delle più faticose opere che mai si sia fatte al mondo: et questo si è un Crocefisso di marmo bianchissimo, in su una croce di marmo neris-

to the artists of the academy, who devoted their lives to the commissions of patrons and rulers. In some of the letters exchanged with Vasari, Borghini's aversion to Cellini becomes explicitly apparent. From the years 1563 to 1566, Borghini's pen portraits of Cellini were written within the important time range that covers the funeral of Michelangelo, the foundation of the academy, and the preparation of the second edition of Vasari's *Vite*. Borghini's characterisations of the sculptor are motivated by new artistic requirements, as drafted by the academy and its direct beneficiaries. Consequently, Cellini is not only labeled as *boschereccio*,<sup>57</sup> i.e., a rude artist who lacks courtly etiquette, but is also accused of being inefficient.<sup>58</sup> In another letter addressed to Cosimo I regarding the preparations for the wedding ceremony of his son Francesco I, dated April 5, 1565, he also blamed the sculptor for his lack of discipline. According to Borghini, one should be grateful if Cellini were to execute as much as the eighth part of a work he had promised.<sup>59</sup> In the concluding remarks of his letter, Borghini thus recommends that the Duke should instead focus on a new generation of artists, including Alessandro Allori, Santi di Tito, and Bartolomeo Ammannati. Proficient, well-mannered, and younger than the antiquated Cellini, these artists would thankfully execute the decorations for the festivities in honour of Cosimo's son.<sup>60</sup>

Borghini's characterisation of the sculptor was motivated by a new idea of artistic practice and later mirrored in the work of his friend Giorgio Vasari, where

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simo, et è grande quanto un uomo vivo." Similarly, on p. 764: "[...] l'avermi levato la fatica del marmo del Nettunno si era stato la propria causa dell'avermi fatto condurre una cotale opera [i.e., the crucifix], nella quale non si era mai messo nessuno altro innanzi a me; e se bene io avevo durato la maggior fatica che io mai durassi al mondo, e' mi pareva averla bene spesa, e maggiormente poi che loro Eccellenzie illustrissime [Cosimo I and Eleonora di Toledo] tanto me la lodavano."

57 Frey (1923–1940), vol. 2, p. 269 (Letter to Vasari, dating August 11, 1566). Borghini was not the only one who used the expression. Cellini used the term *boschereccio* repeatedly when referring to himself in his written works. As a method of self-fashioning, he thus turned the pejoratively used adjective into something positive and addressed his own deviant behaviour as an artist.

58 Frey (1923–1940), vol. 2, p. 109: "[Cellini] farebbe il meglio a fare et non sen' andare in cicalerie: che tirando gia 18 mesi la provvisione, non ha fatto anchor nulla." (Letter to Vasari, dating August 19, 1564)

59 Bottari/Ticozzi 1822–1825, vol. 1, p. 197: "[...] Benvenuto similmente se ei facesse l'ottava parte di quel che e' suol ragionare, farebbe pur assai: ma in vero l'età comincia a essergli troppa per certe fatiche." This is, of course, a sneaky allusion to Cellini's idea that a three-dimensional sculpture, to be seen from eight different angles, is seven times more worth than a flat painting. For a discussion of this letter see Legrenzi 1910, pp. 112 ff.

60 Bottari/Ticozzi 1822–1825, vol. 1, pp. 194 ff.

it was given a theoretical foundation.<sup>61</sup> In his characterisation of the artists of the *terza età*, Vasari emphasized their celerity when executing their works. In contrast to the artists of the early Quattrocento, who worked assiduously and repetitively on their paintings, he described the artists of his own time as being equipped with *facilità* and *prestezza*<sup>62</sup>. Although hard, continuous work was strongly recommended by Vasari<sup>63</sup>, he stressed the importance of the mental conception of paintings. Rather than engaging in lengthy labour, the modern artists should work with passion and leisure. Paraphrasing Baldassare Castiglione's concept of *sprezzatura*, a certain nonchalance and effortlessness attributed to the ideal courtier, Vasari thus promotes an art which is less concerned with the pedantic diligence of workmanship than with the joyful play of artistic *difficoltà*, the latter being a characteristic of the distinguished artist.<sup>64</sup> As explicitly stated by Vasari, this new concept of artistic self-expression also aimed to improve productivity. Whereas the artists of the Quattrocento used to work six years on one painting, nowadays the artists would execute six paintings in one year.

“Ma quello che importa il tutto di questa arte è che l'hanno ridotta oggi talmente perfetta e facile per chi possiede il disegno, l'invenzione et il colorito, che dove prima da que' nostri maestri si faceva una tavola in sei anni, oggi in un anno questi maestri ne fanno sei: et io ne fo indubitatamente fede, e di vista e d'opera; e molto più si veggono finite e perfette che non facevano prima gli altri maestri di conto.”<sup>65</sup>

Aware of his autonomy as an artist, Cellini did not remain silent confronted with this academic opposition. Several poems by the hand of the sculptor ridicule the intimate friendship between Borghini and Vasari.<sup>66</sup> In one of these poems, he was particularly concerned with Vasari's artistic qualities, since Vasari was proud of his speed when executing paintings. Comparing Vasari with unexcelled artists,

61 For the collaboration between Borghini and Vasari on the *Vite* cfr. Ginzburg 2007 and Ruffini 2011, pp. 72–103.

62 The importance of corporeal work in the art literature of the 16<sup>th</sup> century is discussed by Jonietz 2011.

63 For the concept of *prestezza* see Suthor 2010, pp. 141–149.

64 The greater *diligenza* of painters was one of the characteristics which allowed them to reclaim a superiority over the hard-working sculptors, see von Rosen 2003, pp. 327 f.

65 Vasari 1568 (1878–1885), vol. 4, p. 13. For Vasari's teleological model of history cfr. Gombrich 1955, Belting 1983, pp. 67–71, and Blum 2010.

66 Cfr. Cellini (1890), p. 113: “Giorgio Aretin e quel Frate Priore / sono uno stesso, se ben paion due: / Così non suol quel vostro buon signore. // Agli scultor dà il cuore / Di far ben quanto lor ogni pittura; / Ma lor faran mai ben di scultura. // La verità è pura; / E costor contro lor si sono armati; / Questo avvien sempre dove guidan frati.”

including Donatello, Leonardo, and the divine Michelangelo, who worked slowly but well, he accused the Aretine painter of exaggerated hastiness.

“Donato, Maso, il Lippi, e Lionardo  
 Quel gran Michel più dotto Angel divino.  
 Ciascun di questi fu pittor profondo.

A chi piace il far presto; un, meglio e tardo.  
 Or se Dio presta vita all’ Aretino,  
 Gli è per dipinger tutto questo mondo.”<sup>67</sup>

Cellini’s rejection of the productive principles of the academy not only led to personal attacks, but were also mirrored in his plans for a new signet of the academy as well. Cellini identified its unofficial symbol, a bull, as an attribute of Saint Luke the Evangelist (and painter) – and thus as a sign of superiority of the art of painting. His own ideas for a signet were based on the figure of Saint Mark, whose attribute, a lion, was relatable neither to the art of painting nor to the art of sculpture. In the same poem in which he attacked Borghini and Vasari, he thus encouraged the artists of Florence to abandon the academy of the bull and invited them to build a new organization under the sign of the lion (which was also part of his family crest).<sup>68</sup> Obviously, Cellini was well aware of the negative connotations associated with the bull. Traditionally treated as an ambivalent animal, Cellini identified it not only with ambition and assiduousness, but also with a repetitive and lifeless form of labour – a form of labour that was propagated by the academy as well.<sup>69</sup>

The commingling of personal animosities and diverging ideas on the duties of the artist is one of the causes of the enduring antagonism between Cellini and Borghini. In a letter dated August 11, 1564, the latter advised Vasari to erase every

67 Cellini (1890), p. 114. A similar observation was made by Federico Zuccari in a letter to Antonio Chigi, see Bottari/Ticozzi 1822–1825, vol. 7, p. 510 f.: “E voi sapete come [Vasari] trattò il mio povero fratello [Taddeo Zuccari], sebbene, a detta di tutti, non vi fosse ai suoi di Toscano che lo superasse, meno poi il povero Vasari che non sapeva che far presto, ed empir di figure le muraglie, che vi paiono poste a pigione.”

68 Cellini (1890), p. 113.: “O spiriti alti e pregiati, / Con la scultura vostra al mondo sola / Lasciate il bue, e fate un’altra squola. // Nè ozio, sonno o gola; / Marco e lion chiamate questi due: L’un dirà ben, l’altro sbranerà el bue.” For this passage see also Jonietz 2011, p. 643, Barzman 2000, pp. 42–47, and Kemp 1974, pp. 220–231.

69 For the different meanings of the bull/ox in the 16<sup>th</sup> century cfr. Capaccio 1592, fol. 29v–33; Dittrich 2004, pp. 397–409, and particularly with regards to the art literature Hermann-Fiore 1992, and Jonietz 2011.

reference to Cellini in the *Vite*, since a book as beautiful as Vasari's should not bear any allusion to a pork like Cellini.<sup>70</sup> Although Vasari did not follow Borghini's advice, his remarks on Cellini are rather condensed and incorporated in a collective biography of the artists of the academy.<sup>71</sup> In the same way that he despised the demeanour of Jacone and his companions (see Chapter 4.4), he must have been disgusted by Cellini's presumptuous and often aggressive behaviour.<sup>72</sup> In the following years, Borghini continued to long for the end of his enemy, before Cellini actually died on February 13, 1571, in Florence. Two years after the initial stimulus of their quarrels, Michelangelo's funeral, he equated Cellini and the ancient sculptor Perillus again. In a letter to Vasari, dating August 11, 1566, he writes:

“Fucci dua di fa messer Pietro Vettori et leggemo la lettera [...] della boschereccia, cioè di Benvenuto: Ridemo tanto, che anchora ridiamo, et conchiudemo, che per quella sua ragione che bisogna, che uno scultore che havessi a fare una istatua di Cicerone sia eloquentissimo; che bisognò, che Perillo quando e fece quel toro a Dionisio, fussi un gran bue, et massime poi che il poveraccio vi mori dentro.”<sup>73</sup>

By relating Cellini to the death of Perillus in the belly of the bull, Borghini also evokes the image of the end of an artist who is overburdened by the new requirements of the academy as a vital part of a hierarchically organized republic. In the eyes of Borghini, Cellini embodied the characteristics of an artist who was neither devoted to the new specifications of productivity nor acquainted with the elaborate social standards of the courts in Renaissance Italy. Identifying Cellini with Perillus was thus a political statement that promoted the subordination of individual ways of expression to the needs and requirements of a central state.

As is shown by a work of Giovanni Caccini, Florence provided the perfect background for this reading of the Perillus episode (Fig. 54). His terracotta relief places the punishment of the ancient sculptor in the middle of a square that is reminiscent of the Piazza della Signoria, a place in front of the ducal palace

70 Frey (1923–1940), vol. 2, p. 98: “Parmibene, che voi vogliate vituperare quel vostro libro, volendovi mescolar quel porco di Benvenuto fra tanti huomini da bene; il quale vedete come è gentile et generoso: Che havendo al vescovo d’Arezzo et il Vecchietto dato un disegno, lo vorrebbe dare a uoi et torlo al loro, come quel che dono una mula, che non havea, a tutti i cardinali di Roma.”

71 See Vasari 1568 (1878–1885), vol. 7, pp. 621–623.

72 For Cellini as a criminal see Bredekamp 2008.

73 Frey (1923–1940), vol. 2, p. 269. Writing his letter hastily, Borghini mistook the tyrant Phalaris of Acragas (Sicily) with the tyrant Dionysius of Syracuse (Sicily). A mistake that becomes comprehensible if we consider the fact, that Dionysius is said to have killed one of his personal entertainers as well.





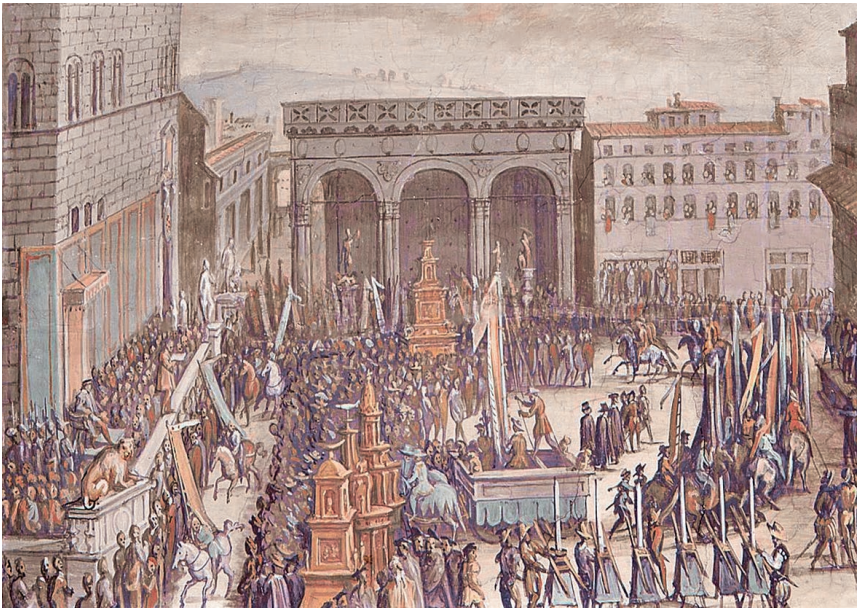
**Figure 54** Attributed to Giovanni Caccini, *Phalaris and the Bull of Perillus*, ca. 1590, Chicago, Art Institute

and townhall, traditionally used for public executions. Surrounded by a crowd of people, including the tyrant Phalaris on his throne on the left-hand side of the relief, Perillus is put into the bull by three of the tyrant's assistants. His body heavily contorted and overwhelmed by despair, the helpless sculptor is apparently trying to escape the judgement imposed on him.<sup>74</sup> Giovanni Caccini, a member of the *Accademia del disegno* and later assistant to Giambologna, made the relief in the last decade of the Cinquecento, when the academy was already an established institution. His representation of the scene was not only based on the preceding works of Giulio Bonasone and Baldassare Peruzzi/Pierre Woeiriot, but also devoted to the particular architecture in Florence. By referring to famous depictions of the *Piazza della Signoria*, such as Domenico Ghirlandaio's frescoes in the Sassetti chapel in S. Trinita, he pointed out the close interrelation that existed be-

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74 For the attribution of the relief to Caccini see Avery 1971.

tween the power of the early modern state and the events performed in the public space. This connection was made explicit by citing the architecture of a *loggia*, present in Florence among other things in the form of the Mercato Nuovo, built by Giovanni Battista del Tasso in the years between 1547 and 1551 – but foremost in the Loggia dei Lanzi on the Piazza della Signoria. As a symbol of the authority of Cosimo I, who established the Loggia dei Lanzi as a visual demonstration of his power, it was closely connected with his dominion in Florence and likely to be associated with his impact on the Accademia del disegno. Contemporary representations of the so-called *Festa degli Omaggi*, a popular feast day to celebrate Saint John, show Cosimo I frequently in a nearly identical pose to that of Phalaris in Caccini's relief. In a painting by Giorgio Vasari and Giovanni Stradano, dated 1561–1562, he is seated on a throne on a dais beneath a canopy close to the Palazzo della Signoria, while the public gathers in front of the Loggia dei Lanzi to participate in the celebration of their patron saint (Fig. 55). By showing the sentencing to death of Perillus in front of such a building, Giovanni Caccini might have been alluding to an important era which gave birth to a new kind of artist.



**Figure 55** Giorgio Vasari and Giovanni Stradano, *Festa degli Omaggi* on the Piazza della Signoria, 1561–1562, Florence, Palazzo della Signoria