The Erotics of Reading in the Art of Henry Fuseli

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Abstract

In the years around 1790, when literary picture schemes came to dominate London's marketplace of commercial galleries, Swiss-born painter Henry Fuseli worked on multiple commissions for John Boydell's Shakespeare Gallery and began to contemplate the gestation of his own print-based Milton Gallery. During this period, he was developing theoretical notions about the analogous power of art and literature to "whirl us along as readers and spectators," linking all aesthetic productions—literary or plastic—by their mutual operation on the imagination of a beholder. The mind was its own medium, he argued, equally amenable to a linguistics of paint or a visual formalism of language. These were not merely erudite disquisitions, but, Fuseli mistakenly believed, fertile ground for commercial exploitation. Drawing on Fuseli's extensive critical writings, his correspondence, and a repetitive series of metaliterary compositions, this thesis reconstructs the contours of an ambitious art built around the conception of a "reader/viewer"—a calculus that would amount to a massive misreading of the London market and the commercial viability of his gallery scheme.

Aux alentours de 1790, alors que les projets de tableaux littéraires commençaient à dominer le marché Londonien des galeries commerciales, le peintre d'origine suisse Henry Fuseli travaillait sur des commandes pour la Shakespeare Gallery de John Boydell et commençait à envisager la gestation de sa propre Milton Gallery. À cette époque, il développe des notions théoriques sur le pouvoir analogue de l'art et de la littérature à "nous faire tourbillonner en tant que lecteurs et spectateurs", reliant toutes les productions esthétiques - littéraires ou plastiques - par leur opération mutuelle sur l'imagination de celui qui regarde. Selon lui, l'esprit est son propre médium, qui se prête aussi bien à une linguistique de la peinture qu'à un formalisme visuel du langage. Il ne s'agissait pas seulement de disquisitions érudites, mais, croyait Fuseli à tort, d'un terrain fertile pour l'exploitation commerciale. En s'appuyant sur les nombreux écrits critiques de Fuseli, sur sa correspondance et sur une série répétitive de compositions métalittéraires, cette thèse reconstruit les contours d'un art ambitieux construit autour de la conception d'un "lecteur/spectateur" - un calcul qui équivaudrait à une mauvaise interprétation du marché Londonien et de la viabilité commerciale de son projet de galerie.

Introduction

In 1767, Swiss-born painter Henry Fuseli (1741-1825) penned an emotive critique of immersive reading experience. Targeting Jean-Jacques Rousseau's massively popular 1760 novel, *Julie ou la Nouvelle Heloïse*, Fuseli's *Remarks on Writings and Conduct of J.J. Rousseau* cast impressionable young women in his then adoptive home of England as menaced by reading's transports. Allowing young women to read wantonly, the young Fuseli warned, was to usher them into dangerous knowledge:

> What, in the name of mutiny! what consequences will it have for wenches, to know—that there are kisses, out of family …kisses at once the flash of lightning and the morning's dew… —that with perfumes of their toilet contagion spreads—that aprons will invite Hamlet to build tabernacles between Beauty's legs—and petticoats appear to Romeo the gates of Heaven—
>
> —What will be the consequence of all this?—
>
> They will open them—yea and dream at the same time, that virginity may drop a maidenhead, and matrimony pick it up;—that nature now and then lays a stumbling-block in Virtue's way to teach her to walk.
>
> Your daughter may prove a harlot—Very like—and may have read *Heloïse,* and mightily been pleased with it;—but pray examine two things: how she came to read romances, and whether the dogs-ears go any further than where Julia gives the *rendez-vous.*[1]

[1] Henry Fuseli, "Heloïse" in *Remarks on the Writings and Conduct of J.J. Rousseau* (London: Printed for T. Cadel, 1767), 36-39. The English poet Anna Laetitia Barbauld similarly identified Rousseau's seductive appeal, writing of "the passionate, the eloquent, the seductive Rousseau… whose thoughts… breathe and words… burn"; Anna Laetitia Barbauld, *The British Novelists: With and Essay, and Prefaces, Biographical and Critical,* 50 vols (London: F.C. and J. Rivington, 1810), 1:19. Literary critic Claire Grogan writes that "no one novel appears to epitomize the genre's dangerously seductive character so well as Jean-Jacques Rousseau's Julie"; See Claire Grogan, "The Politics of Seduction in British Fiction of the 1790s: The Female Reader and Julie, ou La Nouvelle Héloïse." *Eighteenth-Century Fiction* 11, no. 4 (1999): 460. In his own preface to *Heloïse,* Rousseau wrote "Jamais fille chaste n'a lu de Romans"—("A chaste girl has never read a novel"); Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Lettres de Deux Amans, Habitans d'une Petite Ville Au Pied des Alps* (Amsterdam, Marc-Michel Ray, 1761), 5; See also Henri Roddier, *J.-J. Rousseau En Angleterre Au Xviiie Siècle: L'œuvre Et L'homme* (Paris: Boivin, 1950), 65-6.

In the excerpt's concluding lines, Fuseli suggests that the potential for sexual corruption occurs not so much in the process of reading, but in in the imaginative fantasy it inspires—that, at a climax of erotic anticipation ("where Julia gives the *rendez-vous,"* in the case of *Heloïse*) an impressionable young reader will drop their book and indulge in an erotic dream.

Putting aside the apparent disingenuousness of this excerpt's moralizing tone, the notion that books can seduce their readers reveals a faith in a type of aesthetic power to which Fuseli increasingly referred when literary picture schemes came to dominate London's marketplace of commercial galleries. Although penned in the late 1760s, these remarks effectively set the groundwork for the aesthetic contours of the artistic project and entrepreneurial venture at the heart of this thesis: Fuseli's literary paintings of the 1780s and 1790s. Drawing on evidence from his critical writings, pictures, and correspondence, this thesis analyses Fuseli's formulation of immersive readership to consider its influence on the aesthetics and commercial logic of his literary paintings and eventual gallery scheme.[2]

A spate of galleries dedicated to displaying scenes from popular literature were opened in Georgian London following the announcement of John Boydell's Shakespeare Gallery in 1786, a venture with which Fuseli was involved from the outset. Their ostensible purpose was to rectify Britain's comparative inferiority in history painting, to provide a foundation—as the Royal Academy had largely failed to do—on which to erect a British school to rival the more established traditions of the continent. Boydell professed in his gallery's catalogue that "no subjects seem so proper to form an English School of History Painting, as the Scenes of the immortal Shakespeare."[3] Indeed, pride in the Englishness of the

[2] Martin Myrone has theorized how, through a particular sense of temporality he terms "gothic spectacle," Fuseli's paintings participated in the late-eighteenth century's phantasmagoria of sensationalist novels and popular entertainment technologies. This thesis seeks to build on those these insights. Martin Myrone,"Henry Fuseli and Gothic Spectacle," *Huntington Library Quarterly* 70, no. 2 (2007): 289-310.
[3] John Boydell, *A Catalogue of the Pictures: &c. in the Shakespeare Gallery. Pall-Mall* (London: Printed by H. Baldwin, 1790), ix; Stuart Sillars, *Painting Shakespeare: The Artist as Critic, 1720-1820* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 259.

endeavour and the "native genius" Shakespeare represented were defining features of the praise and support with which his Gallery was immediately met.[4]

An aesthetic nationalism based on the collective experience of canonical texts fit nicely within the shifting parameters of painting's civic purpose in late-eighteenth century Britain. As the salience of The Earl of Shaftesbury's civic humanism (which elevated history painting for its rhetorical promotion of public virtue) was attenuated over the course of the century, new justifications for the public value of painting became necessary.[5] As John Barrell has demonstrated, for Joshua Reynolds, president of the Royal Academy and the leading portrait painter of his day, this involved shifting the moral emphasis of painting from the promotion of public action to the cultivation of collective consciousness; "instead of a *rhetorical* aesthetic, which situates the function of painting within a civic *vita activa,* he offers us a philosophical aesthetic, which situates the function of painting within a *vita contemplativa,* but still a *civic* life."[6] This formulation implied an expansion of painting's audience, from Shaftesbury's "public," limited to those active in political life—the governing classes—"to whoever was capable of the intellectual labour of abstraction."[7] Boydell's mobilization of a pre-existing collective consciousness, found in the cultural ubiquity of Shakespeare's plays, was an ingenious expedient to a national school of painting directed at this expanded public, a way into the *vita contemplativa* of all literate (or at least theatre-going) citizens. A precedent was set for a truly popular and—for a time—commercially viable national art. [8]

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[4] Rosie Dias, *Exhibiting Englishness: John Boydell's Shakespeare Gallery and the Formation of a National Aesthetic* (New Haven: Yale University Press, Published for the Paul Mellon Center for Studies in British Art, 2013), 1.

[5] For the intellectual history of Shaftesbury's civic humanism see Michael Crozier, "The Civic Paradigm and Shaftesbury." *Thesis Eleven* 40, no. 1 (1995): 68–92.

[6] John Barrell, "Sir Joshua Reynolds and the Political Theory of Painting." *Oxford Art Journal* 9, no. 2 (1986): 38.

[7] Barrell, "Sir Joshua Reynolds and the Political Theory of Painting," 40.

[8] To some observers, however, this commercialization of history painting seemed suspicious, if not downright corrupt. James Gillray lampooned Boydell and Fuseli along these lines in his 1789 satirical print, *Shakespeare*

While such projects were necessarily framed by Gotthold Ephraim Lessing's influential 1766 treatise, *An Essay on the Limits of Poetry and Painting*, or, *Laoköon,* which argued that literature is an art of time and the plastic arts are arts of space, such orderly and definitive categories were anathema to Henry Fuseli's ambitious aesthetics, which linked all aesthetic productions by their mutual operation on the mind of the beholder. [9] Seeking to transcend his spatial purview by engaging the viewer's literary imagination, he frequently pushed beyond the aesthetic boundaries the German critic assigned to the artist, playing with those he assigned to the author, who "had it in his power to take up every action of his hero at its source, and pursue it to its issue, through all possible variations."[10] In the June 1788, when working on multiple canvases for Boydell, Fuseli contributed an anonymous essay to the *Analytical Review* (a critical periodical published by Joseph Johnson, to which he was a regular contributor),[11] in which he wrote that,

> The analogy between poetry and painting has been admitted in earliest times.
>
> *Painting is silent poetry*
> *And Poetry is a speaking picture.*
> (Simonides)
>
> Men of superior minds see nature through the medium of a fine imagination, so that, however different the machinery of their art and the quality of their materials, they will have a general resemblance in the ideal, and make very similar impressions. The painter's language is his

Sacrificed; or, The Offering to Avarice (fig. 1). Fuseli's dubious contentions that he was "breaking through" such "money-getting trammels" will be considered below. [Unknown Writer] *Times,* June 22, 1799.

[9] Fuseli also harboured a personal antipathy towards Lessing. In 1766, when his friend, the Swiss physiognomist Johann Kaspar Lavater, asked him to write a review of *Laoköon,* Fuseli refused because Lessing was a critic of his mentors, Johann Jakob Bodmer and Friedrich Gotlieb Klopstock. Eudo Colecestra Mason, *The Mind of Henry Fuseli: Selections from His Writings* (London: Routledge & Paul, 1951), 203.

[10] Lessing, *Laoköon*, 22.

[11] Johnson was one of Fuseli's earliest supporters. Shortly after Fuseli arrived in London from Zurich, Johnson invited the young artist to stay in the flat above his bookshop and found him work translating Latin, Ancient Greek, French, and German texts into English; see Gerald P. Tyson "Joseph Johnson, An Eighteenth-Century Bookseller," *Studies in Bibliography* 28 (1975): 7. John Knowles would later claim that Fuseli wrote over eighty articles for the *Analytical Review*. Most of these were anonymous and some remain unidentified; John Knowles, *Life and Writings of Henry Fuseli Esq. M.A R.A, Keeper and Professor of Painting to the Royal Academy in London; Member of the First Class of the Academy of St. Luke at Rome, the Former Written the Latter Edited by John Knowles F.R.S.* Vol. I (London: Henry Colburn and Richard Bentley, 1831), 8.

> colours, the poet's colours are his diction. The excellence of pictures or of language consists in raising clear, complete and circumstantial images and turning readers into spectators. A style in painting is the same as in writing; be it words or colours, they convey sentiments. [12]

Limited by a lack of formal training in figure drawing, yet bolstered by literary erudition, Fuseli distanced himself from the necessity of painterly virtuosity by asserting that the mind was its own medium, equally amenable to a linguistics of paint or a visual formalism of language.[13] Whether intentionally or not, he seemed to directly refute Lessing, who wrote in his Preface to *Laoköon* that,

> It is probable that the dazzling antithesis of the Greek Voltaire: "Paintings is dumb poetry and poetry speaking painting," would never have been found in any systematic work; but like several of the ideas of Simonides, the truth it contains is so striking that we feel compelled to overlook the indistinctness and error which accompany it.[14]

Fuseli disavowed Lessing's assertion that painting was "compelled to restrict itself into the space of a single moment."[15] In late-eighteenth century London, these were not merely erudite disquisitions, but, Fuseli believed, new grounds for commercial exploitation. When Fuseli opened his Milton Gallery in 1799, however, according to his friend and future biographer John Knowles, critics objected to the way he "attempted to represent on canvas scenes adapted only to poetic imagery, and thus transgressed the limits of the imitative art."[16]

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[12] Henry Fuseli, "The Arts," *Analytical Review* (June 1788): 216.
[13] Eudo Colecestra Mason argues that Fuseli's 1788 remarks suggest that he had still not read Lessing, but that he evidently had by the middle of the 1790's. This might explain the slight increase in temporal coherence in in the Milton gallery, compared to his earlier literary works. Mason also suggests that "Lessing may have been responsible for Fuseli having no more to say in the last half of his life about the all-importance of poetic imagery, a fruitful topic on which he had formerly written so magnificently." Eudo Colecestra Mason, *The Mind of Henry Fuseli: Selections from His Writings* (London: Routledge & Paul, 1951), 203.
[14] Gottold Ephraim Lessing, *Laocöon: An Essay on the Limits of Poetry and Painting*, trans. E.C. Beasley (London: Longman, Brown, Green and Longmans, 1853), xv.
[15] Lessing, *Laocöon*, 22.
[16] Knowles, *Life and Writings of Henry Fuseli* (London: Printed for H. Colburn and R. Bentley, 1831), 197.

Keen to capitalize on the burgeoning public appetite for literary paintings, Fuseli sought to create embodied (and marketable) aesthetic experiences by presupposing his viewers as readers susceptible to seduction, a formulation that largely confounded his audience and contributed to the commercial failure of his Milton Gallery. Beginning with formulations of what I term the "reader/viewer" in Fuseli's early career, this thesis traces the development of these bookish aesthetics, elaborating their most explicit formulations in the late 1780s and early 1790s when Fuseli was working for Boydell and beginning to gestate plans for his Milton Gallery.

Reading, Seeing, and Hearing through a "A Fine Imagination"

In the autumn of 1778, after eight years of study in Rome, Fuseli visited his native Zurich while on his return journey to London.[17] During this six-month stint, he drew himself seated between two women, reading a book (fig. 2). A single candle burns at the center of the composition, shining through the space between Fuseli's face and the book he reads, so that the outward pen strokes with which he depicts the light emanating from its flame seem to emanate equally from his head in a sort of halo. *Fuseli Reading to the Hess Sisters* (as this pen and ink sketch is known) evokes many of the artist's favored tropes. He depicts himself semi-nude and heroically athletic, a posture wishfully evoking Michelangelo's *ignudi*—the male figures who sit at the corners of the frames to the Genesis scenes of creation on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel. The women on either side of this lecturing demiurge wear their hair in outlandishly ornate, geometric styles favored by Fuseli when rendering courtesans and model Sophia Rawlins whom he would marry in 1788. The low-cut bodice of the woman seated behind Fuseli—her eyes downcast, almost closed in concentration—also recall his

[17] Mechthild Fend, "Making Drawings—Doing Hair: Fetishism, Artifice, and the Pleasures of Display" in *Fuseli and the Modern Woman: Fashion, Fantasy, Fetishism,* ed. David H. Solkin (London: The Courtauld Gallery, 2022), 49.

stock courtesan costuming. (fig. 3)[18] The women, however, are not courtesans, but Anna Magdalena Schweizer (*née* Hess) and her sister Martha, sisters of his friend Felix Hess, whom he had met many years earlier when studying for a Master of Arts degree at the *Collegium Carolinum* in Zurich.[19] Given art historian Mechthild Fend's observation that Fuseli shared many of the Hess sisters' philosophical and literary interests, the drawing appears to be a fantastical restaging of the group's social meetings wherein the auditory experience of literature verges upon sexual intimacy.[20]

Yet, reducible neither to the tropics of Fuseli's own libidinal geography nor to some factual rapportage, the unmistakably eroticized drawing is most telling in its valorization of artist as narrator.[21] With glowing light standing in for his invisible voice, the aureole-bound painter seen in profile poses as an aesthetic intermediary between literary source and the sort of embodied experience he sought to engender.[22] While Fuseli pictured reading aloud as a dignified, even quasi-heroic act, it also bore less flattering connotations: namely, the supposedly degraded mode of aesthetic consumption inherent to the gothic novel, later to be influentially mocked by James Gillray in an satirical print known as *Tales of Wonder!* (1804) (fig. 4). Bearing remarkable, though most likely coincidental, similarities to *Fuseli Reading to the Hess Sisters,* Gillray's caricature depicts four women seated around a table with a burning candle at its center, reading Matthew Lewis's infamously salacious 1796 novel, *The*

[18] Fend, "Making Drawings—Doing Hair," 50.
[19] John Knowles, *The Life and Writings of Henry Fuseli* (London: Printed for H. Colburn and R. Bentley, 1831), 12.
[20] Fend argues that Fuseli's heroic musculature suggests he was envisioning himself as one of the heroes of the book—a form of immersive character identification, essential to Fuseli's erotics of reading, to which I will return below. Fend, "Making Drawings—Doing Hair," 50.
[21] Biographical studies stress that Fuseli was not romantically involved with either woman; instead, he was then engaged in an ill-fated obsession with a girl he called "Nanna," the daughter of a municipal magistrate who would not consent to his daughter marrying the impecunious artist; see Knowles, *The Life and Writings of Henry Fuseli*, 56; Fend, "Making Drawings—Doing Hair," 49.
[22] Around the same time, Fuseli created another drawing of Martha Hess absorbed in thought (fig. 5), apparently imagining or recollecting something, in a posture similar to that in which he later depicted Milton in *Milton Dictating to his Daughters* (fig. 6). Both works are now in The Art Institute of Chicago.

Monk. Fuseli would have to contend with the tension between these two conceptions as he went on to theorize and promote his narrational art.

The artist's grandiose sense of his own narrating ability found some corroboration among period supporters. In 1789, Federica Lock described Fuseli's performance at a social gathering to her friend Frances Burney as little short of spellbinding: "I long to go and hear all [Fuseli] says… Spectres was one of the subjects and [he] produced many extraordinary stories told with all the fire of poetic genius—it began with incredible effects that may be produced in imaginations even the dullest. . ."[23] But, in an age internalizing Lessing's *Laoköon*, this impulse to bewitching storytelling was not necessarily a path to painterly success. Reviewing the Royal Academy's spring exhibition of 1781, one reviewer observed that "most of his Performances have shown more reading than painting."[24] The critic may have had a point. Putting to one side *The Nightmare* (listed as a "conversation piece"—fig. 7)—the most sensational of three contributions to the 1781 exhibition—his other two submissions belabor their literariness. *The Death of Dido* (fig. 8) attracted significant press attention by competing with Joshua Reynolds's painting of the same subject taken from Virgil's *Aeneid*. And while *Queen Katherine's Vision* (fig. 9) might be likened to *The Nightmare* insofar as it too depicted a woman in bed overwhelmed by a fantastical imaginative experience, the painting hewed explicitly to a well-known literary source. The picture derives from a scene in Shakespeare's *King Henry VIII* in which the spirits of peace and happiness traipse across the stage, representing a vision Queen Katherine of Aragon sees in her dreams. Patience, the queen's attendant, turns to her elevated liege, Griffith (the seated, male usher at left), whom Catherine has dubbed her "honest chronicler." Griffith has just finished narrating a tale of a man's death, prompting the queen to demand that "the musicians

[23] David H. Weinglass, *The Collected English Letters of Henry Fuseli* (Millwood N.Y.: Kraus International, 1982), 41.
[24] [Unknown Writer] *St James Chronicle*, April 28, 1781.

play me a sad note/… whilst I sit meditating/ on the celestial harmony I go to"— (this precipitating the vision on which we look). That Griffith's narrative causes the queen's rapturous vision is foregrounded by Fuseli's depiction of the usher seated in front of a book in a clerical posture evocative of reading or writing—though the play makes no such suggestion. Patience is also depicted reading a book, which Fuseli uses as the origin point of a compositional vector, directed by both women's gazes, leading up Katherine's arm as she reaches towards her vision. The near-identical features and mirrored postures of the two women also suggests a metaliterary interpretation: that the seated woman is a reader imagining herself as Katherine engrossed in her vision, while Griffith, lurking in the background, is a figuration of the author, seated at his desk.

None of that appears to have impressed the 1781 reviewer who ascribed Fuseli's emphasis on text to his mediocre facility as a draftsman. Nonetheless, his literary aesthetics became more intentionally formulated over the course of the decade, finding their most explicit formulation in the 1788 essay quoted above, published when the Horatian conception of literature and painting as "sister arts" was taking on new public significance. Indeed, as Luisa Calé has pointed out, when Fuseli wrote about "turning readers into spectators," he seemed to be expressing the fundamental aim of the series of literature galleries entering the fray of London's popular entertainment market.[25]

The Rise of the Literature Gallery

The concept of a commercial gallery dedicated to displaying scenes from popular literature was mythically conceived at a dinner party hosted by Josiah Boydell, a painter, in November of 1786, attended by Benjamin West, Paul Sandby, George Nicol, William Haley, George Romney, and Josiah's uncle, John Boydell. Though it was later disputed who raised

[25] Luisa Calé, *Fuseli's Milton Gallery: "Turning Readers into Spectators"* (Clarendon Press: Oxford, 2006), 1.

the idea, at some point, someone proposed the merits of a gallery of pictures illustrating scenes from Shakespeare's plays, in effect, to organize and cultivate the diverse Shakespearean efforts that artists like Fuseli had been proffering at the Royal Academy in recent years. John Boydell, a print seller often credited with the proliferation of that industry in Britain, latched onto the idea and was determined by the end of the night launch it. In December of that year, he published a prospectus whose title page listed, in descending order, the components of his tripartite scheme: "A MOST MAGNIFICENT AND ACCURATE EDITION OF THE PLAYS OF SHAKESPEARE, IN EIGHT VOLUMES […] BY SUBSCRIPTION A SERIES OF LARGE AND CAPITAL PRINTS [… and in small print at the bottom of the page:] As soon as they [the pictures] have all been engraved, they will be hung up in a gallery built on purpose, and called the GALLERY OF SHAKESPEARE."[26] The priority placed on the new edition of plays reveals the extent to which Boydell and his partners counted on the enduring fame and popularity of Shakespeare, rather than the novelty of the illustrations, to drive subscriptions.[27] Though literary scholar Richard Altick has demonstrated how England's burgeoning middle-class readership—the "nation of readers", spoken of by Samuel Johnson in 1781—was also a "staring nation", one thoroughly enthralled by London's array of commercial spectacles, the country's national character remained essentially literary, and it was to this sensibility that Boydell primarily appealed.[28] As art historian Rosie Dias has argued, it was, above all, to Shakespeare's fame that he sought to yoke an emergent school of history painting. The gallery itself opened in the spring

[26] [Unknown Writer] *Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser,* December 7, 1786.
[27] By commissioning an illustrated edition of the plays, Boydell was following a lucrative publishing trend. As Sandro Jung writes, "Book-sellers catered to a significant growth in the market for literary classics in the last two decades of the [eighteenth] century... Frequently, new editions included paratextual paraphernalia…, illustrations of material from the poem, authorial portraits, and elaborate frontispieces, indices and glossaries. The proliferating market for books also facilitated the establishment of discrete and class specific niche markets the could be supplied with different editions, as well as increasingly fashionable spin-offs including paintings and engraved versions…" Sandro Jung, "Print Culture, High-Cultural Consumption, and Thomson's 'The Seasons', 1780-1797," *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 44, no. 4 (2011): 495.
[28] Richard D. Altick, *The Shows of London* (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press, 1978), 1.

of 1789 in a purpose-built space at 52 Pall Mall (fig. 10). Boydell's example was followed by the print seller and picture dealer Thomas Macklin, though he managed to open his Poets' Gallery in 1788, a year before Boydell's, and Thomas Bowyer, whose Historic Gallery illustrating scenes from David Hume's *History of England* opened in 1792. Both schemes likewise relied on revenue from associated printing and publishing operations.

Fuseli was involved with Boydell's scheme from the outset, preparing multiple canvases for its first iteration. In 1788, not long after his "turning readers into spectators" essay, he published an anonymous progress report on the gallery in the *Analytical Review* professing himself "happy to congratulate the public on the turn which the age is likely to give to the executions of painting and engraving."[29] When the gallery opened, the *St. James Chronicle* echoed Boydell's claims when it published a review claiming that "though the Royal Academy has been established in England thirty years; and its annual exhibitions applauded, we may consider the opening of the Shakespeare Gallery as the first Aera [sic] of competition in painting."[30] A reviewer in the *London Chronicle* was similarly enthusiastic, writing that "The exquisite beauties of the greatest dramatic poet that ever existed, are here embodied with a skill and force of expression[…] with which he himself would certainly have been delighted."[31] The reviewer goes on in praise of Boydell: "The enterprising proprietor of these admirable works has done much for the arts[…] for by his spirit and taste an English school for historical painting will be established, which will keep his name in perpetual remembrance and regard."

The scheme would not, however, keep Boydell in perpetual funds, as the overhead costs turned out to be untenable. The 1789 *États Généraux* in Paris, coincided almost exactly with the opening of Boydell's Gallery and the French Revolution soon foreclosed the

[29] Henry Fuseli, "Paintings for Shakespeare," *Analytical Review* (October 1788): 235.
[30] [Unknown Writer] *St James Chronicle or The British Evening Post*, May 5-7, 1789.
[31] [Unknown Writer] *London Chronicle,* May 2-5, 1789.

lucrative export market on the continent.[32] The business limped on until 1804 when Boydell was forced to shut down the gallery and auction its holdings by lottery.[33] At that time, he also made a gift of eleven volumes of engravings to the Royal Academy, to which Benjamin West, then president, responded with effusive praise of his "exertions" which, he wrote, "raised the character of the English School of Arts."[34] After a stretches of moderate success in the 1790s, the other schemes were similarly short-lived.[35]

Yet, as its initial press response suggests, Boydell's gallery rode a wave of nationalistic enthusiasm and seemed destined to remain an unmitigated commercial and critical success. Fuseli positioned himself as a leading figure in this new "aera of competition." He received a series of lucrative commissions from Boydell, including the paintings *Titania and Bottom* and *Titania Awakening,* for which he received 250 guineas each in 1790 (figs. 11 & 12).[36] In his own anonymous review of the exhibition, Fuseli joined the refrain about history painting "emerging from its cradle in this country" and proceeded by "remarking on those [paintings] that seem to be most important, from a combination of the poet's and the painter's powers."[37] Chief among these, he decided, were his own paintings from *Macbeth* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream,* the first of which was apparently a "sublime scene. . . uncommonly grand," the second evinced "a glowing harmony" from "a daring pencil that appears ever on the stretch to reach the utmost boundary of nature."[38]

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[32] David Solkin, *Art in Britain 1660-1815* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2015), 183.
[33] Hermann Arnold Bruntjen. "John Boydell (1719-1804): A Study of Art, Patronage, and Publishing in Georgian London," (PhD Diss., Stanford University, 1974), 121.
[34] President and Council to Alderman John Boydell (RAA/SEC/2/26/2) and John Boydell to Benjamin West (RAA/SEC/2/26/1):
[35] Ian Haywood, "Illustration, Terror, and Female Agency: Thomas Macklin's Poets Gallery in a Revolutionary Decade," in *Romanticism and Illustration*, eds. Ian Haywood, Susan Matthews, and Mary L. Shannon, 199–220 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), 202.
[36] David H. Weinglass, *The Collected English Letters of Henry Fuseli* (Millwood N.Y.: Kraus International, 1982), 47.
[37] Henry Fuseli, "Catalogue of Pictures in the Shakespeare Gallery," *Analytical Review* (May 1789): 108.
[38] Fuseli, "Catalogue of Pictures in the Shakespeare Gallery," *Analytical Review* (May 1789): 110-11. Such self-puffery was hardly isolated. Reviewing Thomas Macklin's Poet's Gallery for *Analytical Review* in August 1789, Fuseli professed himself "rather disappointed" by many of the efforts, but dedicated significant space and praise to his own revision of *Queen Katherine's* Dream; Henry Fuseli, "Catalogue of Pictures Painted for Mr. Macklin," *Analytical Review* (August 1789): 370; Maricia Allentuck, "Henry Fuseli's 'Queen Katherine's

Fuseli would eventually produce nine canvases for Boydell's gallery: three from *A Midsummer Night's Dream*[39] and one each from *Macbeth, Hamlet, King Henry IV Part II, Henry V, King Lear,* and *The Tempest.*[40] Despite the pecuniary benefits of this "new aera of competition," he soon came to resent his position in its commercial structure. To Liverpool banker William Roscoe (a friend and patron), Fuseli complained in August 1790 that "I have [sic] and am Contributing to make the public drop their gold in purses not my own." As such, he wrote, "I am determined to lay, hatch and crack an egg for myself too."[41] Boydell's entrepreneurial approach to literary visualization clearly appealed.

These plans remained vague through 1790, but by late August 1791 the outline of the scheme appears to have been settled.[42] Then, publisher Joseph Johnson wrote to William Cowper (editor of an esteemed edition of Milton's *Paradise Lost*) intimating his intention to open a Milton Gallery in partnership with Fuseli, and explaining, "the truth is that it is not the fashion to employ historical painters, [Fuseli] has therefore determined upon a scheme for himself with which the enclosed address will make you acquainted."[43] Johnson subsequently attempted to enlist Cowper in that partnership, a scheme that would have seen him producing scholarly notes and supplying translations of Milton's Latin and Italian texts. Despite G.E.

Vision' and Macklin's Poet's Gallery: A New Critique," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes,* Vol. 39 (1976): 268.

[39] That Fuseli focused on *A Midsummer Night's Dream* is remarkable since it was not a popular play in the eighteenth century—a period during which it saw no successful full-length productions; Kevin Pask, "Painting Shakespearean Fantasy" in *The Fairy Way of Writing* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2013), 83.

[40] Dias, *Exhibiting Englishness*, 130.

[41] Fuseli goes on in his letter to Roscoe that "what it shall be—I am not yet ready to tell with certainty—but the sum of it is, a Series of Pictures for *Exhibition,* such as Boydell's and Macklin's"; John Knowles, *Life and Writings of Henry Fuseli Esq. M.A R.A, Keeper and Professor of Painting to the Royal Academy in London; Member of the First Class of the Academy of St. Luke at Rome, the Former Written the Latter Edited by John Knowles F.R.S,* Volume I (London: Henry Colburn and Richard Bentley, 1831), 175.

[42] Knowles, *Life and Writings of Henry Fuseli,* 175.

[43] David H. Weinglass, "Joseph Johnson to William Cowper, Monday 22 August 1791" in *The Collected English Letters of Henry Fuseli* (Millwood N.Y.: Kraus International, 1982), 66.

Lessing's unequivocal claim that "Milton cannot fill galleries" because of the nonvisual quality his verse, Fuseli meant to try.[44]

Publishing his prospectus on September 1, 1791—less than two weeks after Johnson's initial letter to Cowper—Fuseli followed Boydell in characterizing his venture as a printing scheme with the gallery cast as an afterthought. The painter solicited:

> proposals for engraving and publishing by subscription 30 capital plates from subjects in Milton; to be painted principally, if not entirely by Henry Fuseli, R.A. and for copying them in a reduced size to accompany a correct and magnificent Edition, embellished also with 45 elegant vignettes of his poetical works, with notes, illustrations, and translations of his Italian and Latin poems. by William Cowper… as soon as sufficient number of paintings are finished to form an exhibition, they will be placed in a room for that purpose, to be called the Milton Gallery.[45]

When the gallery eventually opened at James Christie's exhibition space at 118 Pall Mall[46] nearly a decade after its initial conception, though critics were divided, it was an unmitigated commercial failure.[47] While the circumstances of that failure will be detailed below, it is worth pausing in the years around 1790 to flesh out the texture and cosmology of bookish painting and readerly transport that Fuseli envisioned as commercially viable. Drawing upon Fuseli's extensive critical writings, his correspondence, and a repetitive series of metaliterary compositions, I will reconstruct contours of an ambitious art built around the conception of a "reader/viewer"—a calculus that would amount to a massive *misreading* of the London market.

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[44] Lessing, *Laocöon*, 96. In his *Lives of the English Poets,* Samuel Johnson similarly criticized Milton for being "unhappily" enticed by immateriality, a poetic mode which "supplied no images." Samuel Johnson, *The Lives of the English Poets and A Criticism of Their Works* (London: Printed for R. Dodsley, 1795), 225.
[45][Unknown Writer] *The World*, October 8, 1791; [Unknown Writer] *Morning Chronicle,* October 15, 1791; Though the author of the solicitation is uncertain, it was presumably penned by Fuseli or Johnson.
[46][Unknown Writer] *Courier*, May 16, 1799.
[47] Calé, *Fuseli's Milton Gallery,* 50.

Dropped Books

In 1790, the same year he decided to "lay, hatch and crack" his Miltonic egg, Fuseli's drawing practices reveal a preoccupation with the dream-like phenomenology of immersive reading. In a print, usually referred to as *Falsa ad Coelum* (fig. 13), which survives in a single copy etched by William Blake, Fuseli weaves a dense associative network of dreams, aesthetics, and sexual power, filtering these concepts through an allusion to a concluding line in Book VI of Virgil's *Aeneid*. Commissioned by Augustus to mythicize the causes of Rome's founding, or its *aetiology*, the *Aeneid* is a fundamentally propagandistic poem. It tells the story of Aeneas—a prince of recently-sacked Troy—who, mirroring the elliptical journey of Odysseus, is buffeted about the Mediterranean as he seeks a new homeland for his people. Book VI consists of the hero's catabasis (his journey to the underworld) in which the ghost of his father, Anchises, prophesizes that Aeneas is fated to become the progenitor of a line of kings and to establish a great city, whose glory will culminate in the apotheosis of Caesar Augustus. Yet, in its infamous concluding passage involving the phrase "falsa ad caelum" (Fuseli uses the irregular spelling: "coelum"), Virgil destabilizes not only the book but the entire epic's aetiology by hinting at the fictionality of Anchises guiding prophesy.

In Fuseli's *Falsa ad Coelum*, a woman reclines on a couch, naked other than a band around her chest holding a symbolic heart between her breasts. Her limbs hang limp over the furniture and her head is slumped towards her chest in a posture deep sleep. To the left are three Cupid figures, one raising a stage-like curtain which hangs over the background, revealing an expansive landscape into which he flies, another follows him, flaunting his testicles towards the viewer (possibly an allusion to similar view of Apollo on the ceiling panel of the Palazzo del Tè—fig. 14). The third aims an arrow between the woman's parted legs, or perhaps at the massive butterfly resting on her inner thigh. A statue of Harpocrates,

the Egyptian god of silence, pokes through the drapery, recalling the wild-eyed horse in Fuseli's 1781 painting, *The Nightmare.* He looms above the sleeping woman with a finger at his lips, directing the implied voyeur to remain silent so as not to dispel the erotic dream.

The words "falsa ad coelum mittunt insomnia Manes" are etched on the floor of the print's foreground, gestured to by the pointing finger and phallic trunk of a small, elephant-headed man. Parsing the allusion demands a more than superficial familiarity with the poem; Fuseli addresses his viewer as a classically educated *erudit* who not only knows the contiguous lines of the text, but commands knowledge of the longstanding scholarly controversy on their significance. In context, the line in John Dryden's influential 1697 translation is as follows:

> Two gates the silent house of Sleep adorn;
> Of polish'd ivory this, that of transparent horn:
> True visions thro' transparent horn arise;
> Thro' polish'd ivory pass deluding lies.
> Of various things discoursing as he pass'd,
> Anchises hither bends his steps at last.
> Then, thro' the gate of iv'ry, he dismiss'd
> His valiant offspring and divining guest.[48]

The implications are ambiguous and manifold. What does it mean that the hero's prophetic journey is concluded through the ivory gate, through which, according to Dryden's translation, "pass deluding lies?" Importantly, with the words "*his dictis"* (which Dryden translates as "discoursing as he pass'd," but whose more literal translation is "with these words") Virgil emphasizes that it is not only Aeneas, but Anchises's prophesy that travels into the world like a false dream—or, *falsa insomnia,* which Dryden translates as "deluding lies," but is also sometimes translated, with suggestive resonance for painting, as "false

[48] John Dryden, *Virgil's Aeneid*, 3d ed. Morley's Universal Library (London: G. Routledge and Sons, 1887), 156.

vision." To what is the elephant-headed figure, possibly a representation of the Hindu deity Ganesh and/or a visual pun on Virgil's ivory gates, and, more to the point, Fuseli seeking to draw the viewer's attention?

Given Fuseli's self-conscious erudition, a deeper turn into the scholarly commentary on these lines helps flesh out their import on his figuration of the reader/viewer. The lines' earliest commentators were Servius, the fourth century Grammarian, and Macrobius, best known for his 431 AD *Saturnalia,* with which Fuseli was demonstrably familiar, having quoted it elsewhere.[49] Servius emphasized that the ivory gates were indicative of Aeneas's deception, and the inherent unreality of his catabasis; yet, he also implies that they represent the two levels at which poetry should be understood: both as false words and vehicles of deeper truths.[50] Macrobius quoted Virgil's lines to argue that dreams, particularly in the Latin form *insomnia,* are deceptive visions generated by the ardour of desire and love, just as Dido's *insomnia*—in the only other instance of the *Aeneid* in which the word is used rather than the regular form, *somnia*—are caused by her lust for Aeneas.[51] For some later-medieval Neo-Platonists, the *falsa insomnia* sent by ghosts (*Manes*) back into the sky were interpreted as the sensory images transmitted from the body to the soul.[52] Many Christian commentators, in the intervening centuries between the poem's creation and its employment in Fuseli's word-image game, found in these lines a framework for their necessarily ambivalent relationship with pagan literature, an internal validation that the poem was like a dream: literally false yet capable of imparting wisdom when appropriately studied.

For Fuseli's contemporary Edward Gibbon, the lines' implications were deeply disappointing. In his 1770 *Critical Observations on the Sixth Book of the Aeneid,* he wrote

[49] Weinglass, "Henry Fuseli to William Roscoe Saturday 8 September 1798" in *The Collected English Letters of Henry,* 190.
[50] Lola Sharon Davidson, "Aeneid VI and Medieval Views of Dreaming." *Sydney Studies in Society and Culture* 11 (1994): 59
[51] Davidson, "Aeneid VI and Medieval Views of Dreaming," 60.
[52] Davidson, "Aeneid VI and Medieval Views of Dreaming," 63.

that "the ivory gate puzzles every commentator and grieves every lover of Virgil."[53] Gibbon lamented that Virgil seemed to disavow the reality of his work, trivializing the poem's most intimate and affecting book. Claiming that he gave voice to the "common opinion," he wrote that "that by six unlucky lines, Virgil destroy[ed] the beautiful system, which it had cost him eight hundred to raise" and that, the poet had "explain[ed] away his Hero's descent into an idle dream."[54] Gibbon quotes extensively from John Jortin, a church historian and Virgilian commentator, who wrote in his *Dissertation on the State of the Dead, as Described by Homer and Virgil* (1755) that "the troublesome conclusion still remains as it was; and from the manner in which the hero is dismissed after the ceremonies, we learn, that in those initiations, the Machinery, and the whole shew, was (in the poet's opinion) *a representation of things*, which had no truth or reality."[55] Jortin alleges that Virgil's Epicurean belief in the finality of death impelled him to suggest that his "hero had been asleep, and had seen all these marvelous things in a dream or vision."[56] Jortin also argues, however, that Virgil intended this dream-vison to be understood as a product of poetry:

> The sense is this: the horn gate, plain, homely, and transparent, lets out true dreams: the ivory gate,
>
> "_____*fertur*
> *Candenti perfecta nitens elephanto,"*
> [" . . . said to be gleaming, wrought of dazzling ivory"][57]

[53] Edward Gibbon, *Critical Observations on the Sixth Book of the Aeneid* (London: 1770), 53.
[54] Gibbon, *Critical Observations on the Sixth Book of the Aeneid,* 54.
[55] John Jortin, "Dissertation VI: On the State of the Dead, as Described by Homer and Virgil," in *Six Dissertations Upon Different Subjects (1755)* (London: Richard Taylor and Co., 1809), 226.
[56] Jortin, "Dissertation VI," 226.
[57] This quote is abridged, not given verbatim. The full sentence, which includes the line depicted in Fuseli's print, reads, "*Sunt geminae portae, quarum altera fertur/ cornea, qua veris facilis datur exitus umbris,/ altera candenti perfecta nitens elephanto, sed falsa ad caelum mittunt insomnia Manes,"* or, according to Frederick Holland Dewey's *Literal Interlinear Translation* (New York: Translation Publishing Company, 1917, 315) "There are two gates of Sleep, one of which is said to be of bone, by which an easy egress is given to true spirits; the other is gleaming, wrought of dazzling ivory, but the Manes [shades] send (by it) false dreams to the upper world."

> is far more elegant and resplendent, BUT it sends forth false dreams. Truth is artless and simple: poetic fiction is far more laboured and adorned, more striking and alluring, *but* it is mere error and illusion.[58]

Fuseli was most likely familiar with this interpretation. In the *Analytical Review,* in July 1790, the same year of *Falsa ad Coelum*'s facture*,* Fuseli reviewed a new collection of Jortin's work—*Tracts, Philological, Critical, and Miscellaneous*—writing that "much important classical criticism is interspersed" in the volume, while praising the writing as "acute," "learned," and "important."[59] Fuseli spends much of the lengthy review disputing minutiae in Jortin's interpretations of passages in Homer; however, when he comes to Jortin's "*critical remarks on* Latin authors," he writes that they are "all made with the same felicity, the same acuteness, with equal ease and diligence" and that, furthermore, "every scholar of taste, ought to acquaint himself with the criticisms of a man, who, in our opinion, may challenge the first names in foreign and English literature."[60]

Jortin's reading of the ivory gates would have allured an artist of Fuseli's grandiose sensibility by valorizing the power of "poetic-fiction," above the ineluctability of fate. By representing as false the prophesies that would become Aeneas's guiding motivation, Virgil characterizes Anchises as a poet rather than an actual hierophant of Roman destiny. As one modern classical scholar puts it, "by reordering Jupiter's *fata* and tampering with the details, Anchises rises to a level above that of mere prophet, messenger of the gods' will, to that of a

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[58] Jortin, "Dissertation VI," 228.
[59] Henry Fuseli, "Jortin's Tracts," *Analytical Review* (July 1790): 243-244; It's difficult to identify with certainty which *AR* articles were written by Fuseli, as he typically published anonymously. However, he consistently signed his essays with a double letter ("Z.Z," "Y.Y." or, in this case "R.R."). For such identifications we are particularly lucky for the years between 1788 and 1790, because the Auckland Art Gallery holds a pen-and-wash drawing, listed as *Sophia* [Rawlins] *Fuseli, seated at a table (drawn over a list of Fuseli's articles for the 'Analytical Review'),* c, 1790-91 (fig. 15). As the title suggests, Fuseli reused a piece of paper to make this drawing, on which a non-exhaustive list of his *AR* reviews from 1788-90 is written at the top left, a list including his review of the new edition of Jortin and his reviews of the Macklin and Boydell Galleries.
[60] Henry Fuseli, "Jortin's Tracts," *Analytical Review* (July 1790): 248.

'maker,' *poeta,* of the *fata."*[61] In other words, by Jortin's reading, poetry becomes an aetiological catalyst of the Roman Empire. Anchises, as the primary narrator of the book and a purveyor of nationalist fiction, becomes a surrogate of Virgil himself, while heroic Aeneas becomes a duped reader, unwittingly entranced by the "deluding lies" of fantasy. Aesthetics, rather than the classically venerated and (hitherto in the epic) dominant forces of fate and heroic *virtu* become the driving impetus of the founding of Rome—the epic's telos, and the subject which Caesar Augustus commissioned it to mythicize. The allusion, with such gravid stakes for Roman identity and nationalist ideology, might seem bathetic in the context of Fuseli's erotic print—listed by the British Museum as an *Allegory of a Dream of Love*. While the print might seem like a piece of frivolous and lightly classicised eroticism (and doubtless served as such), its allusions to the *erudit* would have opened up a commentary on the deceptive power of aesthetics to "whirl us along as readers and spectators," as Fuseli would later put it in an 1804 lecture delivered at the Royal Academy.[62] The line is a literary key in Fuseli's aspirational cosmology of bookish painting. It conflates Aeneas's "idle dream" (in Gibbon's terms), the erotic fantasy of the central figure, and the reader/viewer's own immersive experience.

In that conflation, enlightening self-knowledge mingles with seduction. The presence of the print's viewer is implied by Harpocrates's commanding gesture to silence. Ogling the sleeping woman from the background, statuesque Harpocrates is held up as a mirror of the spectator. Just as the armed cherubs induce her involuntary submission to a fantasy, so the print aims to send the spectator through the ivory gate, inducing momentary transport into a *falsum insomnium.* Said less willfully, the print made in those months of 1790 when Fuseli

[61] Urania Molyviati-Toptsis, "Sed Falsa ad Caelum Mittunt Insomnia Manes (Aeneid 6.896)," *The American Journal of Philology* 116, no. 4 (1995): 650.
[62] Henry Fuseli, "Lecture IV" in *Lectures on Painting Delivered at the Royal Academy* (London: Printed for T. Cadwell and W. Davies, 1820), 163.

was contemplating the gestation of his print-based gallery scheme sounds the relations by which literature and pictorial art could entrance readers and/as spectators.

This mythologizing of reading/viewing is expanded in a *Sleeping Woman with Cupid* (fig. 16). Dated 1780-1790, the print's exact date of production is uncertain and no preparatory drawing survives. Uncharacteristically, it was engraved by Fuseli himself. A woman wearing a classically styled gown and headdress reclines on a couch, her head slumped towards her chest. Stray locks of hair hang down over her face; her arms hang loosely over the side and back-rests of the couch. Her body is turned slightly towards the viewer, her left leg folded under her right in a posture conveying only slightly more self-containment than the abject laxity with which Fuseli imbued the central figure of *Falsa ad Coelum.* A lone cherub hovers overhead. His left arm aims an undrawn bow at the sleeping woman; his right hand is cocked back towards his ear implying that he released his arrow only moments ago. While the woman's arm in *Falsa ad Coelum* leads the viewer's gaze to the elephant-headed figure, who himself gestures towards the literary allusion in the foreground, the *Sleeping Woman*'s titular figure gestures with extended index finger to a dropped book. On the ground, left of the book, two fantastically large moths are copulating. To the left of them are two separate botanical specimens, one vine-like with heart shaped leaves, the other leafier and amorphous. As in *Falsa ad Coelum,* we are commanded to "hush," though not by a gesturing Harpocrates, but by the Greek word inscribed on the column at the top left, transliterated as "SIGA," the second-person imperative form of the verb "σιγάω"—"to be silent."

The most significant deviation from *Falsa ad Coelum* is the substitution of the literary allusion for a small (perhaps novel-sized) book dropped from the woman's downward pointing hand. By implication, her dream has been induced not simply by the meddling cherub, but by the overwhelming reverie of her reading experience. This figure recalls the seduced novel-

reader invoked by Fuseli in 1767, whose dog-ears (or page-markers) "go no further than where Julia gives the *rendez-vous*"—*i.e.,* whose progress through the book is arrested by the force of the fantasy it inspires. This figuration of a reader excited into a state of unconsciousness was a popular trope of literary criticism in the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries, often imposed on the implicitly female readership of gothic novels and popular romance.[63] In his *Biographia Literaria,* Samuel Taylor Coleridge writes scathingly about this supposedly degraded mode of passive readership:

> [A]s to the devotees of the circulating libraries, I dare not compliment their *pass-time*, or rather *kill-time*, with the name of *reading*. Call it rather a sort of beggarly daydreaming, during which the mind of the dreamer furnishes for itself nothing . . . while the whole *materiel* and imagery of the doze is supplied *ab extra* by a sort of mental *camera obscura* manufactured at the printing office, which *pro tempore* fixes, reflects and transmits the moving phantasms of one man's delirium, so as to people the barrenness of an hundred other brains afflicted with the same trance or suspension of all common sense and all definite purpose.[64]

During what would come to be known as the "decade of Gothic fiction,"[65] Fuseli appears to have courted this condition of novelistic immersion.[66] Notably, Coleridge's formulation recalls the larger structure of the literature galleries, in which "the *material* and imagery" of poems and plays were served to audiences *"ab extra,"* from the artist's studio or

[63] See Claire Grogan, "The Politics of Seduction in British Fiction of the 1790s: The Female Reader and Julie, ou La Nouvelle Héloïse." *Eighteenth-Century Fiction* 11, no. 4 (1999): 459-476; Maggie Kilgour. *The Rise of the Gothic Novel* (London: Routledge, 1995), 6.
[64] Samuel Taylor Coleridge, *Biographia Literaria* (London: Rest Fenner, 1817), 49-50. Coleridge was obliquely associated with Fuseli through their mutual publisher, Joseph Johnson. Though mostly associated with figures of intellectual prestige—such as Joseph Priestley, William Godwin, Mary Wollstonecraft, Thomas Cowper, Thomas Malthus, Erasmus Darwin, and William Wordsworth, among others—Johnson also "discovered" and published William Beckford, author of the infamously salacious oriental-gothic novel *Vathek* (1786)*,* of which, based on his remarks cited here, Coleridge certainly would have disapproved. See Gerald P.Tyson "Joseph Johnson, An Eighteenth-Century Bookseller" *Studies in Bibliography,* Vol. 28 (1975): 2.
[65] Fred Botting "Gothic Writing in the 1790s" in *Gothic* (Oxfordshire: Taylor and Francis Group, 1995), 40.
[66] Martin Myrone,"Henry Fuseli and Gothic Spectacle," *Huntington Library Quarterly* 70, no. 2 (2007): 289-310.

"the printing office." Despite the largely self-evident parallels between literature galleries and the theatre, there is an important sense in which the experience they offered was less analogous to drama than to the conception of popular novel reading voiced by Coleridge. Shakespearean scholar Stuart Sillars argues that the paintings in Boydell's gallery, not only Fuseli's, historicized their scenes while creating an experiential sense of the time-based procession of narrative, more characteristic of a novel than a play.[67] Fuseli's comments seems to bear this out. Regarding one painting of *Macbeth Consulting the Vision of the Armed Head* (fig. 17), made for James Woodmason's Irish Shakespeare Gallery in 1793, Fuseli wrote in a letter to his friend and future biographer John Knowles that he sought to "supply what is deficient in the poetry."[68] While the artist's habitual arrogance might lead us to misread the significance of this statement—indeed, there is certainly some hubris in his claim to improve upon Shakespeare—he also seems to imply something about the inherent limitations of the dramatic form. In *Macbeth Consulting the Vison,* Fuseli depicts the eponymous king confronting the play's three witches, ghostly figures who sit around their cauldron and merge into a pitch-black background. Each gestures with a bony hand towards the disembodied, white-eyed head at the bottom-right of the composition, who, in the play, warns Macbeth to "beware MacDuff." Macbeth, serpentine and muscular, plants his foot on a rock and gazes down at the prophetic vision, with a pensive finger at his lips. Fuseli's "improvements" are not in plot, dialogue, or metre—the formal purviews of dramatic verse—but in the description of ambient details, those elements which become too ponderous to enumerate in poetry or too complicated to replicate in stagecraft, and, along with the explanation of psychological states, are more rightly the purview of the prose narrator. Fuseli's novelization of Shakespearean scenes is not only a function of their gothicization (the embellishment of

[67] This formulation is, of course, contrary to the eighteenth century's most influential theorization of the relationship between literature and painting offered by Gotthold Ephraim Lessing in his treatise on *Laoköon*.
[68] Dias, *Exhibiting Englishness*, 160

sensational and supernatural scenes), but their increased attention to place and atmosphere, both elements of the formal realism scholars identify as the eighteenth-century novel's characteristic innovation.[69]

Asia Haut has argued that Fuseli's most iconic image of a dreaming woman, *The Nightmare,* also carried novelistic connotations when a print rendering of it was included in Erasmus Darwin's *Botanic Garden* (fig. 18)*,* a book largely marketed to young women for whom botany was considered a respectable, though also potentially corrupting endeavour in the late-eighteenth century.[70] Simultaneously evoking the serial quality of literature galleries and the privacy of novelistic indulgence, Darwin tells his reader that his illustrated poem should be read as a series of "diverse little pictures suspended over a chimney of a Lady's dressing-room, *connected only by a slight festoon of ribbons."* As the "lady's dressing-room" was often figured as an illicit space of erotically indulgent aesthetic consumption, the image of the dreaming woman, "gripped in the involuntary process of relating to herself an internal narrative," necessarily evoked this popular conception of novel reading and the attendant moral hazards of over-identifying with the sexually charged experiences of their characters.[71] As one critic said of Anne Radcliffe, whose popular novels were published in the early 1790s, "her readers are the *virtual* heroes and heroines of her story as they read".[72] Reading *The Nightmare* through the lens of Fuseli's later formulations of novelistic seduction

[69] Ian P Watt, *The Rise of the Novel: Studies in Defoe, Richardson, and Fielding* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1957), 26
[70] Asia Haut, "Reading Flora: Erasmus Darwin's The botanic garden, Henry Fuseli's illustrations, and various literary responses," *Word & Image* 20, no. 4 (2004): 245.
[71] Haut, "Reading Flora," 245; For commentary on the rise of novel in the 1790s, its effect on burgeoning divisions between "high" and "low" culture, and its discursive and aesthetic influence, see respectively: Fred Botting "Gothic Writing in the 1790s" in *Gothic* (Oxfordshire: Taylor and Francis Group, 1995), 40-58; Michael Gamer, *Romanticism and the Gothic: Genre, Reception, and Canon Formation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000); Robert Miles, "Introduction: Gothic Romance as Visual Technology" in *Gothic Technologies: Visuality in the Romantic Era,* ed. Robert Miles Boulder: University of Colorado Boulder Press, 2005).
[72] [Unknown Writer], "Mrs. Radcliffe's Posthumous Romance," *New Monthly Magazine,* Part 1 (1826): 533.

illuminates its continuity with the notion of readerly transport he envisioned in his theoretical justifications of literary painting.

Fuseli returns to the dropped-book motif in the *Dream of Belinda* (uncertainly dated *c.* 1780-90), a painting illustrating a scene from Alexander Pope's high burlesque mock-epic, *The Rape of the Lock* (fig. 19). Satirizing a real London society scandal as a heroic clash of supernatural forces, the poem tells the story of "a well-bred lord [who] assault[s] a gentle belle" by surreptitiously snipping off a lock of her hair. A two-canto version was published in 1712, followed by a five-canto version in 1714 illustrated by Louis du Guernier, making it one of only six English poems to be illustrated in the decade.[73] These illustrations were overseen and approved by Pope himself, lending them a remarkable authority as graphic reinforcements of meanings that were merely implicit, or even repressed in the text.[74] As such, *The Rape of the Lock's* finished form—like Fuseli's *Dream of Belinda*—anticipated reader/viewers who would cross-reference their textual and pictorial experiences. Since the dream scene and two of the painting's three main figures do not appear in the 1712 version of the poem, we can infer that Fuseli was working with the illustrated 1714 edition—an important distinction as Fuseli's creative adaptation seems to have been influenced by du Guernier's illustrations.[75]

Incorporated into the *Dream of Belinda's* larger tableau, the dreaming-woman-dropped-book motif evokes Fuseli's standard schemata while expanding the implications of his reader/viewer cosmology. Belinda (the gentle belle) lies slumped on a couch; her chin hangs down towards her bare chest. Her right arm lies across her lap, while her left hangs

[73] Ronald Paulson, *Book and Painting: Shakespeare, Milton, and the Bible: Literary Texts and the Emergence of English Painting* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1982), 12
[74] Paulson, *Book and Painting,* 12.
[75] Years later, when Francis Isaac Du Roveray published a new edition of the poem he commissioned Fuseli to supply illustrations to replace du Guernier's. When the publication of the new edition of *The Rape of the Lock* was announced, it included notice that a new edition of Thomas Gray's poem's, illustrated by Fuseli, was also forthcoming from Du Roveray; [Unknown Writer] *Oracle,* January 18, 1799.

down behind her, the elbow hooked over the backrest. Both hands point toward a red book balancing awkwardly on its fore-edge, having evidently been dropped only moments before. As in the *Sleeping Woman with Cupid,* two enormous moths are mating on the floor at the center of the composition.[76]

The painting derives from a scene in Canto I, in which Ariel, Belinda's "guardian Sylph" induces his mistress to fall back asleep after waking in the morning so that he can explain to her how fairies meddle in human affairs and warn her to "Beware of all, but most beware of man!" (I.114). Ariel imparts this wisdom through a "morning dream that hovered o'er her head," in which "a youth [Ariel himself] more glittering than a birthnight beau/ (That eve'n in slumber caused her cheek to glow)/ Seemed to her ear his winning lips to lay/ And thus in whispers said, or seemed to say: [the aforementioned warning]"(I.20). Pope's language is ambiguous here. He describes both the dream and its architect, Ariel, as hovering over Belinda's head, a textual trick Fuseli accommodates by naturalistically depicting Ariel's gleaming shoulders, arms, and flower-crowned head looming over Belinda, while his lower body, cloaked in a diaphanous robe, dissolves into the background, merging with an off-white haze out of which other dream-figures emerge. This device may have been appropriated from du Guernier's illustration (fig. 20), which similarly depicts Ariel's upper body hovering above Belinda's ear, while dissolving the floating lower-body in concentric cloud-like etchings. Both images suggests that Ariel has a veritable bodily presence in the room but has nonetheless sprung from the immaterial realm of dreams.

Fuseli, however, situates his airy haze in the central background so that other figures may similarly emerge from it.[77] Gnomic Umbriel bounds into the left foreground, naked except for a loincloth and tangled ivy crown. Suspended mid-stride, Umbriel's left leg trails

[76] See the appendix of this thesis for an elaboration of Fuseli's fascination with moths, their conflation with incubi, and their import in Fuseli's reader/viewer cosmology.
[77] A similar device appeared in *Queen Katherine's Dream.*

behind him. His right is extended so that we glimpse the blackened sole of his foot, anticipating a line in book IV, stating, "swift on sooty pinions flits the gnome" (IV.17). In his right hand is a sprig a spleenwort, taken by Umbriel as an offering to personified "Spleen" during the poem's satirical catabasis in book IV—an ironic allusion to the Golden Bough that secures Aeneas's safe passage to the underworld in book VI of the *Aeneid*.[78] Umbriel, the "hateful gnome" (IV.141), furtively hunches his shoulders and directs a side-eyed grin at the sleeping woman. As a mischievous agent of chaos who imparts erotic and impetuous emotions on unwitting women, his dramatic function echoes that of the armed cherubs who assail the dreamers of *Falsa ad Coelum* and *Sleeping Woman with Cupid*. Three other small figures lurk in the darkness beneath and behind Umbriel, Fuseli's renditions of what Ariel tells Belinda are the "unnumbered spirits [who] round thee fly, / The light militia of the lower sky." (I.41-2). At least one, lurking between Umbriel's legs with a crescent moon and star adorning her blonde hair, is identifiable as one of the "airy elves by moonlight shadows seen," who wears "golden crowns and wreaths of heav'nly flow'rs."(I.31-36). On the far right a childlike fairy leaps after a winged though indistinct airborne shape, possibly a moth.

Fuseli's deviations from Pope's narrative of Belinda's dream provide key insights as much into his reading of the poem as the composition of the reader/viewer plotted into his depiction. Along with literary images, circumstantial details, and sequence, Fuseli reworked what Pope called "the machinery" of the poem, or those roles "which the deities, angels, or demons are made to act."[79] Umbriel, who features so prominently in Fuseli's composition, is nowhere present in the dream scene of Pope's book I, not being introduced until book IV,

[78] In the Aeneid, the Cumean Sibyl tells Aeneas that before entering the underworld he must retrieve a golden bough from a nearby tree and offer it to Proserpina, queen of the underworld, as a sign of goodwill. This gift grants him safe passage through the world of the dead. Virgil, *Aeneid,* trans. Robert Fitzgerald (New York: Vintage Classics, 1990), 164.

[79] Alexander Pope, "Preface to the *Rape of the Lock* (1714)" in *The Broadview Anthology of English Literature, Concise Edition, Volume A, Third Edition,* eds. Black, Conolly, Flint, Grundy, LePan, Liuzza, McGann, Prescott, Qualls, Waters (Peterborough: Broadview Press, 2017), 1521.

when he journeys to the "underworld" cave of Spleen. By incorporating him in the dream scene, Fuseli transplants the circumstances of his later appearance: the "sooty pinions" on which he "flits," his "dusky" complexion, and the "branch of healing spleenwort" whose specific purpose from book IV would be superfluous were we to read the figure as a simple transplantation of character. Instead, it suggests a transplantation of Umbriel's narrative purpose as well as his person, condensing the poem's dramatic action into an evocative though sequentially nonsensical tableau. Particularly interesting for this argument, by forcefully reordering the events of the poem, Fuseli puts Belinda's erotic dream experience in dialogue with Pope's allusion to the Virgilian catabasis. Umbriel's sprig of spleenwort, like a super-organic key, highlights his capacity to traverse the ivory gates, to pass from the dream realm of Ariel and the Cave of Spleen, into a material world where he wreaks havoc on the affairs of Belinda. Here, it's worth noting how Fuseli, more so than Pope, associates the "machinery" of the poem (the sylphs, gnomes, and minor deities) with the realm of dreams. The obvious implication is that Fuseli is coding Belinda's fanciful experience—not just the visitation of Ariel—as a dream, or an *insomnia* in Virgil's terms; however, by depicting the more conspicuously artful elements of the narrative as both products and further catalysts of an agitated imagination, Fuseli yokes the mechanisms of poetic transmission with the psychological effects of dreaming. As such, one could even imagine the dropped book as the *Rape of the Lock* itself, and the dreaming woman as a reader/viewer who imagines the supernatural experience of its beleaguered heroine.

This network of metaliterary compositions, assembled circa 1790 at the height of Fuseli's employment for Boydell and on the cusp of his formulation of the Milton Gallery, delineate the contours of a theoretical beholder—a reader/viewer—to whom he believed his continued literary paintings would appeal. Mingling the notion of dream-like epic absorption licenced by Virgil's *Aeneid* with the spectacular aesthetics of popular novel-reading, the

images discussed in this section plot the nexus at which the academic prestige of classical learning could merge with the commercial viability of popular entertainment.

"Do You Not Hear the Dog that is Going to Assault You?"

Amalgamating loosely connected narrative threads, the Fuseliean reader/viewer diagnosed so far is not unlike the model-subject of "associationism"—a branch of aesthetics that came to dominate eighteenth-century theories of reading. By those lights, the associationist beholder would be offered a compilation of narrative indicators, then left to link and fuse them according to their own recollection of the poem. Such an aesthetic experience recalls the more the granular process by which David Hartley argued minds connect disparate sensory impressions. In his 1749 *Observations on Man,* Hartley claimed:

> this power of forming ideas, and their corresponding miniature vibrations, does equally presuppose the power of association. For since all sensations and vibrations are infinitely divisible, in respect of time and place, they could not leave any traces or images of themselves […] unless their infinitesimal parts did cohere together through joint impression, *i.e* association.[80]

Envisioned this way, we might say that *The Dream of Belinda* leaves Fuseli's viewer to cohere the scene through "joint impression," enlisting the imagination to the associative work of narrative reconstruction.[81] We might also recall Hartley's argument that the mind's slackened powers of associations are responsible for the supernatural figures of dreams; "in dreams, where complex associations are much weakened, and various parcels of visible ideas, not joined in nature, start up together in the fancy, contiguous to each other, we often see monsters, chimeras, and combinations, which have never actually been present."[82]

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[80] David Hartley, *Observations on Man, His Frame, His Duty, and His expectations* (London: Printed for James Leake and WM Frederick, 1749), 45.
[81] The model of associative reconstruction was also at play in the Milton gallery, where viewers were driven to fuse together scenes represented on separate canvases to form coherent adaptations of Milton's poetry. See Calé, *Fuseli's Milton Gallery,* 81.
[82] Hartley, *Observations on Man,* 45.

Luisa Calé has made the strongest case for the associationist drive upon the experience offered by Fuseli's Milton Gallery and the gamut of popular spectacles with which it competed. "Blurring the boundary between body and mind, exploring the mechanisms whereby the mind dissolves into the bodily operation of the senses," as Calé puts it, "associationist psychology offered an energized account that questioned the polite model of detached spectatorship."[83] Calé's case gains credence when it is recalled that, a few months before Fuseli published the prospectus for his Milton gallery, the *Analytical Review* published a review of a new edition of Hartley's *Observations on Man*. Therein, an anonymous reviewer (signed "Q.Q."),[84] praises Hartley's theory of association as being "of eminent use in a moral view" but "in nothing more than taste and criticism."[85] Enticingly invoking the doubled consonant pseudonyms apparently favored by Fuseli when publishing in the *Analytical Review*, Q.Q.'s review of April 1791 put *Observations on Man* in rarefied company: "Though it has been publick ever since the year 1749, it is only of late years, in comparison, that it has been much attended to, in which respect its fate has been similar to that of the *Principia* of the great Newton."[86] This new edition of the *Observations*, edited by Joseph Priestley, also included a "Head of the Author," engraved by the same hand as *Falsa as Coelum,* William Blake's (fig. 21).

Salient though it is, Calé's associationist formulation of viewer experience in the Milton Gallery is only half the story. Associationism appears to have guided not only the reception of the Milton Gallery, but also the notions informing its conception: Fuseli's figuration of the beholder in the 1780s and 90s. Though "turning readers into spectators"

[83] Calé, *Fuseli's Milton Gallery,* 125.
[84] Though difficult to prove, it's likely that Fuseli was the author of this article, as he often signed his *AR* articles with a double letter. Some signatures which have been positively identified as Fuseli's on *AR* articles include Z.Z., Y.Y., L.L., R.R., U.U., and V.V; Allentuck, "Henry Fuseli's 'Queen Katherine's Vision' and Macklin's Poet's Gallery," 267.
[85] [Unknown Writer] "Hartley's Observations on Man," *Analytical Review* (April 1791): 366.
[86] [Unknown Writer] "Hartley's Observations on Man," *Analytical Review* (April 1791): 361.

morphed into the supporting logic of a commercial endeavor, Fuseli's words were rooted in theories of the dream-like nature of aesthetic experience articulated by Joseph Warton and Henry Home (Lord Kames), "the founding father of associationist aesthetics."[87] In fact, the crux of Fuseli's 1788 essay in *Analytical Review* (quoted above) is plagiarized nearly *verbatim* from Joseph Warton, who wrote in his 1756 *Essay on the Genius and Writings of Pope* that "the use, the force, and the excellence of language consists in raising clear, complete, and circumstantial images and turning readers into spectators."[88] Warton goes on to write of Pope's verse that "every epithet, here used, *paints* its object, and *paints* it *distinctly.* After having passed over the most full of cresses, do you not *actually* find yourself in the middle court of this forlorn and solitary mansion, overgrown with docks and nettles? And do you not hear the dog that is going to assault you?"[89] Having read this essay and been sufficiently convinced by it to parrot one of its theses, in his rendition of the *Rape of the Lock,* Fuseli apparently sought to embed this conception of readerly transport into the narrative itself, characterizing Belinda as Warton's beholder who seems to "*actually* find" herself assailed by the figures of her dreams. Undoubtedly, Fuseli also aspired to literalize Warton's metaphorical figuration of Pope's painterly power. The inverse of Warton's claim—*i.e.,* every painted object speaking the epithet it derives from—is a more dubious formulation; however, if Fuseli had this excerpt in mind while painting *The Dream of Belinda*, a possibility given the timeline, such a conception of painting's relation to literature would justify the work's compositional incoherence. The characters are excessively referential. Exuding their epithetic qualities, they evoke the narrative plenitude of their own character over and above their immediate relationships to each other.

[87] Timothy M. Costelloe, *The British Aesthetic Tradition: From Shaftesbury to Wittgenstein* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 96.
[88] Joseph Warton, *An Essay on the Genius and Writing of Pope, Vol. II, Fifth Edition* (London: Printed for W.J. and J. Richardson, 1806), 160.
[89] Warton, *An Essay on the Genius and Writing of Pope (1756-1782),* 165.

The immersive power of art and language was theorized more extensively, though in almost the same terms, by Lord Kames, who wrote in his 1762 *Elements of Criticism,* "the force of language consists in raising complete images; which have the effect to transport the reader as by magic into the very place of the important action, and to convert him as it were into a spectator, beholding every thing that passes."[90] Kames terms this condition of imaginative spectatorship, "ideal presence," which he opposes to "real presence," the state of consciousness with which we apprehend ordinary life. Kames theorized ideal presence as an explanation for the emotional power of art, arguing that the reader's sympathy (or lack thereof) is predicated on the author/artist's ability to induce a "*waking dream,"* to bring something to mind "in a manner so distinct as to form an idea or image of it as present."[91] Ideal presence thus provides a solution to the question of sympathy (empathy in modern parlance) in art:

> The power of language to raise emotions, depends entirely on raising such lively and distinct images as are here described: the reader's passions are never sensibly moved, till he be thrown into a kind of reverie; in which state, forgetting that he is reading, he conceives every incident as passing in his presence, precisely as if he were an eye-witness.[92]

Such mid-eighteenth-century philosophies of mind privileged immersion in aesthetic experience in a way that obscured, or even disavowed, the difference between the quality of emotions produced in reality or by those induced by its virtual substitutes—dreams, memory, and art. As literary historian Deidre Lynch argues, the distinction between emotions caused

[90] Henry Home, Lord Kames, "Narration and Description" in *Elements of Criticism Vol II,* ed. Knud Haakonssen (Online Library of Liberty, 2012), 614.
[91] Kames, *Elements of Criticism*, 68.
[92] Kames, *Elements of Criticism*, 69. Fuseli expressed a similar idea in a 1775 letter to his friend Johan Caspar Lavater, writing that "*Images—...* are what make Homer the father of all poetry, Homer and also the song of Solomon and the book of Job; they it is that authenticate the value of emotions. A genuine, universal, vital emotion streams through the medium of an appropriate image into all hearts…" Mason, *The Mind of Henry Fuseli: Selections from His Writings* (London: Routledge & Paul, 1951), 93.

by fiction and those caused by experience are "repeatedly raised only to be put aside" in the writings of Hume, Hartley, and Kames.[93] In other words, the experiential immersion of the reader/viewer is engendered not only by the verisimilitude of sensory impressions in the imagination, but by the emotions excited though an empathic engagement with narrative.

Though Fuseli was concerned with these predecessors and early proponents of associationism in 1788, he was engaging in 1790 with the newly published work of the figure who would become known as its primary exponent: Archibald Alison. When Fuseli reviewed Alison's *Essays on the Nature and Principles of Taste* in the May 1790 *Analytical Review* it was not a popular text and would not become so until it went to a second edition in 1811.[94] Fuseli, however, deemed it an "ingenious work." The review praised Alison's argument that (in Fuseli's words) aesthetic objects "derive their power of exiting emotions in us, not from the qualities inherent in themselves as material forms, but from some association with our feelings, habits, or mode of life."[95] In this formulation, a painting derives its power not from the inherent qualities of material forms—such as that implied by doctrines like Albertian *disegno* or Hogarth's ideal "S"—but by its ability to evoke associations in the mind. The painting is an intermediary between the artist and the beholder who sees nature, as Fuseli wrote in his 1788 essay, through "the medium of a fine imagination." Hence, in Fuseli's formulation of aesthetic transport, the novel is always dropped. The seduction occurs through the work of art, but the experience lies outside it in the realm of "fancy," making the dream the associative model *par excellence*, the state in which the mind relinquishes control to its own associative force, riding the impetus of its "train of thought*."* Alison provided a theoretical justification for Fuseli's allusive games, his constant efforts to send his beholders elsewhere, like his sleeping readers, into the associative reveries of literary memory.

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[93] Deidre Lynch, "On Going Steady with Novels," *The Eighteenth Century,* Vol. 50, No. 2/3, Summer/Fall (2009): 212.
[94] Costelloe, *The British Aesthetic Tradition,* 117.
[95] Henry Fuseli, "Alison's Essays on the Nature and Principle of Taste," *Analytical Review* (May 1790): 27.

Fuseli was further steeped in the intellectual milieu of associationism through his friendship and professional collaborations with Erasmus Darwin, who wrote about the dream-like nature of aesthetic experience in his poetical-scientific treatise *The Botanic Garden,*[96] first published along with Fuseli's illustrative prints by Joseph Johnson in 1791.[97] And while more might be (and has been) said about the implications of this collaboration,[98] presently I will turn back to the field of commercial galleries to consider how the associationism of Joseph Johnson's publishing circle[99] informed Fuseli's formulation of the beholder in his burgeoning literary practice.

Supernatural Seduction

Fuseli's assertion that the power of literature inhered in its ability to evoke images was far from disinterested. In 1788, during the same month he wrote about "turning readers into spectators", Fuseli was at work on multiple canvases for Boydell's Shakespeare Gallery, including his picture of *Hamlet, Horatio, Marcellus and the Ghost* (fig. 22)*,* illustrating

[96] Darwin illustrated his physiology of dreaming with a print adaptation of Fuseli's *Nightmare.* In a footnote to his verse description of the image, he offers the following explanation: "Sleep consists in the abolition of all voluntary power, both over our muscular motions and our ideas; for we neither walk nor reason in sleep. But at the same time, many of our ideas continue to be excited into action in consequence of internal irritations and of internal sensations… Hence, I conclude, that our nerves of sense are neither torpid or inert during sleep… When there arises in sleep a painful desire to exert the voluntary motions, it is called the Nightmare or Incubus." Erasmus Darwin, *The Botanic Garden, Part II, Containing the Loves of the Plants. A Poem with Philosophical Notes* (London: Printed for Joseph Johnson, 1794), 96.

[97] The *Botanic Garden* was regularly republished in new editions throughout the 1790s. Darwin wrote that "When by the art of the Painter or Poet a train of ideas is suggested to our imaginations, which interests us so much by the pain or pleasure it affords, that we cease to attend to the irritations of common external objects, and cease also to use any voluntary efforts to compare these interesting trains of ideas with our previous knowledge of things, a complete reverie is produced: during which time however short, if it be but for a moment, the object themselves appear to exist before us. This, I think, has been called by an ingenious critic, "ideal presence" of such objects (Elements of Criticism by Lord Kaimes [sic])." Darwin, *The Botanic Garden,* 53; Joseph Johnson paid Darwin £900 for *The Botanic Garden,* an astronomical sum, testifying to its popular appeal and commercial success. See Gerald P. Tyson "Joseph Johnson, An Eighteenth-Century Bookseller" *Studies in Bibliography,* Vol. 28 (1975): 3.

[98] See Asia Haut, "Reading Flora: Erasmus Darwin's The botanic garden, Henry Fuseli's Illustrations, and Various Literary Responses," *Word & Image* 20, no. 4 (2004): 245; Andrei Pop, *Antiquity, Theatre, and the Painting of Henry Fuseli* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), 88; Martin Priestman, "'Fuseli's Poetic Eye': Prints and Impressions in Fuseli and Erasmus Darwin." In *Romanticism and Illustration*, ed. Ian Haywood, Susan Matthews, and Mary L. Shannon (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), 94–118

[99] Johnson's literary circle regularly gathered at his flat at No. 72 St. Paul's Churchyard to discuss such ideas; Tyson, "Joseph Johnson, An Eighteenth-Century Bookseller," 9.

Hamlet I.IV, for which he applied and received a fifty guinea advance from Boydell on June 28th.[100] Held back by Horatio, Fuseli's Hamlet leans athletically towards the ghost of his father—who stands tall, armed, illuminated as if by a halo—in whose veritable presence he evidently believes. The print's dramatic action turns on this pivotal encounter between a dead father and his son, the yearning of the natural, corporeal Prince Hamlet towards the supernatural, elder King Hamlet—a scenario notably evocative of Aeneas meeting the ghost of Anchises. Fuseli would later cast this type of supernatural encounter as the ideal scene through which to engagement an audience. In his *Fourth Lecture on Painting,* delivered in 1804, Fuseli would write that,

> It is that magic which places us on the same basis of existence, and amalgamates the mythic or superhuman, and the human parts of the Ilias, of Paradise Lost, and of the Sistine chapel, that enraptures, agitates, and whirls us along as readers or spectators. (IV, 163)[101]

Ronald Paulson argues of this passage that, "what signifies here is the relationship Fuseli sees between the superhuman and human as the basis for sublimity."[102] The passage also, however, signifies Fuseli's pointed refusal to differentiate the aesthetic experiences produced by literature and painting and his insistence on their analogous power to seduce the beholder: to "enrapture, agitate, and whirl us along." [103]

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[100] *Henry Fuseli, St Martin's Lane, to Alderman Boydell*, AND/2/221, Royal Academy Archives London, England. It is unclear how much he was paid in total for this painting, which is now lost and survives only through the print version in Boydell's edition of the plays. Although fifty guineas is already a significant sum (more than double what Sir Brooke Boothby paid for *The Nightmare* in 1781), the full price could have been quintuple that, as were the exorbitant sums Boydell paid Fuseli for both *Titania and Bottom* and *Titania Awakening.*

[101] Henry Fuseli, "Lecture IV" in *Lectures on Painting Delivered at the Royal Academy* (London: Printed for T. Cadwell and W. Davies, 1820), 163.

[102]Ronald Paulson, *Book and Painting: Shakespeare, Milton, and the Bible: Literary Texts and the Emergence of English Painting* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1982), 130.

[103] This formulation recalls Kames' line, quoted above: "the force of language consists in raising complete images; which have the effect to transport the reader as by magic into the very place of the important action, and to convert him as it were into a spectator, beholding every thing that passes." Kames, "Narration and Description," 614.

Fuseli's *Hamlet* is typical of his fixation on the power of supernatural scenes to enrapture readers and spectators and his conception of art itself—both narrative and plastic—as a form of "magic" which may seem to affect our very "basis of existence."[104] It was, however, a different, more ambitious literary work, through which Fuseli most explicitly conflated aesthetic experience with supernatural deception. Commissioned in 1788 and first exhibited in 1789, *Titania and Bottom* (fig. 11) depicts lines 1-39 of Act IV, Scene I of *A Midsummer Night's Dream.* Though compositionally distinct from the sleeping woman motif Fuseli was repeating at this time, the conceptual parallels are remarkable. At this point in the play, at the behest of Oberon, Robin "Puck" Goodfellow has surreptitiously drugged Titania with a "juice" made from a flower on which Cupid's errant "love shaft" fell. Just as the cupids of *Falsa ad Coelum* and *Sleeping Woman With Cupid* assault the women with their arrows, Oberon schemes to "streak" the eyelids of his sleeping wife with Cupid's arrow-infused poison to "make her full of hateful fantasies."(2.1.630). This induces her to fall in love with Bottom, whose head has been changed into that of an ass by Puck. Fuseli depicts Titania doting on Bottom after seducing him with her fairy charms and enlisting her coterie of attendants to cater to his needs. The scene opens with Titania coxing Bottom, "Come, sit thee down upon this flow'ry bed,/ while I thy amiable cheeks do coy,/ and stick muskroses in thy sleek smooth head,/ and kiss thy fair large ears, my gentle joy."(IV.I. 1-4).

[104] As art historian Martin Myrone has pointed out, *Hamlet, Horatio, Marcellus and the Ghost* was appropriated for a stage design in a gothic theatre production, testifying to contemporary appreciation of its spectacular capacity to suggest immersion in a magical alternate reality; Myrone,"Henry Fuseli and Gothic Spectacle," 292. Erasmus Darwin likely had this painting in mind when, in 1791, he praised the seductive power of Fuseli's art, writing: "the daring pencil of Fuseli transports us beyond the boundaries of nature, and ravishes us with the charms of the most interesting novelty. And Shakespeare, who excels in all these together, so far captivates the spectator, as to make him unmindful of every kind of violation of Time, Place, or Existence. As at the First appearance of the Ghost of Hamlet…" Though, in this passage, Darwin is writing about the power of Shakespeare's Hamlet to captivate spectators, given his invocation alongside the "charms" of Fuseli's "daring pencil", it seems likely that was alluding to his friend's recent work. Erasmus Darwin, *The Botanic Garden, Part II, Containing the Loves of the Plants. A Poem with Philosophical Notes* (London: Printed for Joseph Johnson, 1794), 54.

Quoting the pose of Leda in Da Vinci's *Leda and the Swan* (fig. 23), Fuseli depicts Titania standing over Bottom, who sits as instructed, not on a "flow'ry bed" but on a rocky ground, which merges with the darkness. Ominous figures surround them—most of whom are Fuseli's inventions, not deriving from the text. Vaguely menacing, their presence conveys much of the scene's implicit violence. Most notably, a fashionably dressed young woman towards the right of the composition, whose facial features resemble Titania's, holds a kneeling, shrunken old man on a leash—an amplified mirroring of Titania's power over Bottom. A moth-headed fairy at the bottom left of the canvas holds a finger to their lips, performing the same function as Harpocrates in *Falsa ad Coelum* or the "SIGA" column in *Sleeping Woman with Cupid.* Much like the sleeping woman motif, *Titania and Bottom* depicts a forcibly imposed erotic fantasy, yet the dynamic of the imposition is multiplied to reflect the mediating step from Shakespeare to Fuseli to the beholder, or rather: from text, to canvas, to imagination. The painting's chain of aesthetic transmission is structurally analogous to the play's chain of seductions, with one figure imposing an imagined reality on the next. Oberon, king of the fairies, incites Titania to use her own power to seduce Bottom, just as Shakespeare inspires Fuseli to entrance the viewer: the unwitting, nonmagical terminus of aesthetic transmission. Chemically induced, Titania whirls her wand above her head, marshaling the figures of her fairy troop to aid in her seduction of Bottom; textually inspired, Fuseli illustrates the play to "whirl us along as readers and spectators." Contemporary critics did, in fact, put the painting's power over the beholder in such magical terms, such as one critic in the *Star* who claimed that Fuseli emulated Shakespeare by "rais[ing] in the mind of the spectator sensations which one would have supposed were impossible for anything short of magic to excite."[105]

[105] [Unknown Writer] *Star,* May 14, 1789.

Yet, the Fuselian reader/viewer is not formulated as a passive receptacle of aesthetic inputs, like Coleridge's gothic reader whose mind is like a camera obscura receiving the "moving phantasms of one man's [the artist's] delirium." Fuseli hails an associative viewer whose imagination is enlisted to creative work even as it's subjected to the impositions of the artist. Bottom is seduced, deceived, subjugated, yet he is also the king of the little knoll on which he's placed, commanding the lesser fairies to obey his whims: "Scratch my head Peaseblossom."(4.1.7). Peaseblossom obliges, shown standing on Bottom's left shoulder. "Monsieur Cobweb, good monsieur, get you/ your weapons in your hand and kill me a red-hipped/ humble-bee on the top of a thistle, and, good/ monsieur, bring me the honey bag"(4.1.10-13). Cobweb obliges, shown lunging at the left edge of the canvas with his thistle sword. Mustardseed stands in Bottom's palm, receiving his orders. Titania, the artist, conjures the fairies; Bottom, the beholder, animates them.

Titania and Bottom is one of Fuseli's most explicit formulations of the power dynamic inherent to the conflation of dreaming, seduction, and literary imagination, whereby the reader, or beholder, relating to themselves an internal narrative is both the architect and recipient of their imaginary visions. As John Locke influentially argued in his *Essay on Human Understanding*, there is a sense in which the subject is always like a person seated within the dark chamber of a camera obscura, just as the mind is a receptacle for information brought before the senses.[106] Yet, the work of Hartley, Warton, Kames, and Alison—all heavily weighted in Fuseli's intellectual milieu—emphasized that the beholder must generate these visons through their own associative trains of thought. There is a collaboration between the artist, who is the prime mover, a conjuror like Fuseli's Titania, and a beholder who must

[106] See John Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1689), (Edinburgh: Printed for Mundell & Son, 1798), 71.

use their mind as its own supplementary medium (as Fuseli put it in 1788), to supply images in the case of literature, or motion in the case of painting.

Like the images using the dropped book motif, *Titania and Bottom* is essentially metaliterary and intermedial, formulating the relationship between writer and reader—or artist and beholder—as a meeting between the active creativity of the artist, conflated with sexual potency, and the passivity of the beholder, conflated with sexual vulnerability, or receptivity. Fuseli once again uses the dream state as an analogy for the beholder's most absorptive state of passivity, in which a receptive mind collaborates with its manipulator: the author as incubus. The sexual violence of this formulation becomes apparent by comparing *Titania and Bottom* with its companion piece, *Titania's Awakening* (fig. 12), a second rendition of the same scene which Boydell likely commissioned (or agreed to buy) only after the overwhelming success of the first canvas. In it, *Titania* wakes from her dream of bestiality to learn that it was not in fact a dream and that, drugged by Oberon, she was induced (at least by Fuseli's implication) to have sex with ass-headed Bottom. Bottom appears in a state of implicitly post-coitus torpidity, with the ass's head removed. Fuseli depicts him in a pose quoted from Botticelli's *Venus and Mars* (fig. 24), with the same euphuistically flaccid wrist as the Roman god of war. A goblin, not unlike that which sits on the sleeping woman in *The Nightmare,* careens above Bottom's head on a flying horse—possibly a figuration of an incubus, an interpretation supported by its similarity with a painting from the same period, Fuseli's most disturbingly explicit aestheticization of sexual violence, *The Incubus Leaving Two Sleeping Women* (c. 1793) (fig. 25). Such images suggest a more sinister subtext to Fuseli's stated desire to "enrapture" beholders, a word etymologically descended from the Latin *raptus*, variously translated in English as the verb to

abduct or rape.[107] Art, in Fuseli's terms, might be a seduction, but it is bound up in such notions of deception, force, and bodily imposition, that it frequently lapses into a rhetoric of sexual violence.[108]

These elaborately allusive (and largely unheeded) literary games occupied Fuseli during some of his most critically acclaimed years of production, years when the intellectual hubris from which they were born merged with commercial ambition in a fateful miscalculation.

The Milton Gallery

When Fuseli decided to lay his Miltonic egg he did so not only in emulation of Macklin and Boydell's literature galleries but "in imitation of so great a man [as Benjamin West]," who pioneered a lucrative model of single-painting exhibitions, and "advised him that, to make money painting, you must either secure royal patronage or "meditate a Scheme of Your own."[109] The desirability of such commercial independence must have occurred to Fuseli not only while watching Boydell reap profits from the popularity of his own contributions to the Shakespeare Gallery, but also after his failure to capitalize on the broad appeal of *The Nightmare,* for which he was paid £20 by Sir Brooke Boothby in 1781, while the enterprising publisher John Raphael Smith made over £500 from his engraved version.

Yet, predicated on his conception of the reader/viewer elaborated thus far, Fuseli's Milton Gallery was based on a series of misreadings about its commercial viability and the

[107] The Latin meaning of the word lands somewhere between these two translations, typically referring to an abduction for the purpose of rape, or one in which rape is implied, as in the various Ovidian stories: *Raptus Europa, Raptus Ganymedes, Raptus Proserpinae.* For commentary on the history of this linguistic and conceptual ambiguity, see Caroline Dunn, "The Language of Ravishment in Medieval England." *Speculum* 86, no. 1 (2011): 79–116.
[108] Unsurprisingly, eighteenth-century critics had disappointingly little to say about this sexual violence. For a compelling modern argument about how we might factor such ethical considerations into aesthetic judgements, see Anne W. Eaton, "Where Ethics and Aesthetics Meet: Titian's Rape of Europa." *Hypatia* 18, no. 4 (2003): 159-188.
[109] Knowles, *Life and Writings of Henry Fuseli,* 175.

causes for the popularity his earlier literary efforts. Firstly, in an effort to move from a dramatic to an epic mode of painting, a distinction Fuseli theorized in his lectures delivered at the Royal Academy shortly after the gallery's collapse, Fuseli excised much of the compositional exuberance for which his earlier Shakespearean efforts had been praised. Secondly, in the reactionary milieu of post-French Revolution Britain, Milton's republicanism would have would have rendered such an extended encomium of his works politically suspect, particularly in light its financial backing by the Liverpudlian radical William Roscoe and Joseph Johnson, a known publisher of seditious pamphlets.[110] Thirdly, and most importantly, Fuseli fruitlessly appealed to the viewer's literary imagination rather than their proven appetite for formal novelty and visual spectacle. As John Knowles records, Fuseli aimed not "to engage attention by colour or brilliant execution of pictures," but to impress the sublimity of Milton by judiciously selecting the most affecting of his poetic images.[111]

One observer who recognized Fuseli's folly from the start was his friend Mary Wollstonecraft, the author of *The Vindication of the Rights of Woman* and a fellow node of Joseph Johnson's publishing network. Though she happened to harbour an unrequited "passion"—in her words—for the irascible artist, she was singularly prescient about the fallibility of his plans. Writing to their mutual friend William Roscoe, not only did Wollstonecraft say she "doubt[ed] whether he[Fuseli] will produce an Eve to please me in any of the situations, which he has selected,"[112] but, more to the point, she noted that "schemes for printing works *embellished* with prints have lately been started with *catch-penny* eagerness, and such an inundation… has damped my hopes with respect to the success

[110] Tyson, Joseph Johnson Bookseller, 14.
[111] Knowles, *Life and Writings of Henry Fuseli,* 196.
[112] Weinglass, "Mary Wollstonecraft to William Roscoe, 3 January 1792" in *The Collected English Letters of Henry,* 79. This is, perhaps, unsurprising, given the anti-feminist bent of Milton's theology as well as Fuseli's painting.

of our friend's."[113] Unlike Fuseli, Wollstonecraft correctly identified literary picture schemes as a commercial fad rather than the basis for a new school of history painting; by 1792, as the market became saturated, their novelty along with their commercial viability had begun to evaporate. Another problem, according to Wollstonecraft, was that Joseph Johnson, who was supposed to publish the illustrated edition of Milton accompanying the gallery, was unwilling to employ the "mean arts" of self-promotion necessitated by such schemes in "this puffing age." And while she was right about Johnson's disinclination to puffery (which might explain why he backed away from the plan)[114] there could be no doubt about Fuseli's willingness for self-promotion. Cross referencing Fuseli's correspondence with the "puffing" campaign he undertook in the daily papers shortly after the Milton Gallery's opening on May 16, 1799, provides insight into both the trajectory of the gallery's failure and his misplaced confidence in the marketability of the experience he sought to engender.

As the publishing venture associated with the gallery failed in its preparatory stages, Fuseli solicited commissions from his friends in order to sustain himself while preparing the exhibition.[115] Most of the gallery's financial backing, however, came from William Roscoe, to whom Fuseli repeatedly applied for funds between 1794 and 1800, while assuring him that if only he could "bring it to an exhibition" he was "morally sure of Succeeding."[116] Elsewhere he wrote Roscoe about the "extreme probability of success."[117] In one comment

[113] Weinglass, "Mary Wollstonecraft to William Roscoe, 14 February 1792" in *The Collected English Letters of Henry,* 79.
[114] The Johnson-led publishing component of Fuseli's Milton Gallery was abandoned sometime between its announcement in 1792 and July 1794, when Fuseli told William Roscoe that "the printsellers have withdrawn themselves" as part of his explanation for imploring his partnership. See Weinglass, "Henry Fuseli to William Roscoe, 3 July 1794" in *The Collected English Letters of Henry,* 121.
[115] Johnson wrote a letter on Fuseli's behalf, announcing that "Mr. F… finds it necessary to address his friends for their encouragement in an undertaking so arduous and expensive… He wishes to inform Such/His friends, that… he Should be glad to receive orders for small pictures at 20, 30, 50 Guineas each, half to be paid at the time of giving the Commission, and the remainder on receiving the picture…" Weinglass, "Henry Fuseli to William Roscoe, 30 April 1794" in *The Collected English Letters of Henry,* 116.
[116] Weinglass, "Henry Fuseli to William Roscoe, 26 February 1794" in *The Collected English Letters of Henry,* 90.
[117] Weinglass, "Henry Fuseli to William Roscoe, 1 June 1794" in *The Collected English Letters of Henry,* 119.

shortly before the exhibition's launch, after receiving a third one hundred pound infusion from Roscoe, he hedges this certainty slightly, replying that he was "morally Certain, that, if the Exhibition Should not Succeed, the Sale of some of the small pictures alone would produce more than [the] Capital and Interest" on his investment.[118] The first sign of anxiety came after the exhibition was open for little more than a week. Fuseli wrote to Roscoe that

> "I come on tolerably well, and am getting about five guineas to onehundred of the Royal Academy; but as this would not in the long run answer *Our* purpose, the usual help of every bauble great or Small offered to John Bull [the public] must be administered to this and John Milton must be *puffed,* not to go to the bottom in my Time as he did in his *own.* Verses and paragraphs must be written, *falsis involentia Vera* [truth joined with lies] says my expiring modesty.*"*[119]

Two days earlier, Fuseli had expressed this intention to Joseph Farington, a prominent member of the Royal Academy, who records in his diary entry for May 22, 1799, that "Fuseli called to speak to me abt. mak[ing] his exhibition more Known & said He believed He must write himself to explain it."[120] Farington recommended that Fuseli write a laudatory "criticism" and offered to look over and edit it before Fuseli published. In the puff-pieces that follow, we can see Fuseli pretending to be the critically astute reader/viewers he wished he was attracting. The day after his letter to Roscoe, the *True Briton* published the first extended review of the gallery, in which the anonymous reviewer offered a familiar Fuselian refrain: the works in the Milton Gallery "do not address the outward sense, but address the imagination; and if they excite a powerful sentiment in the mind, they accomplish the only

[118] Weinglass, "Henry Fuseli to William Roscoe, 31 August 1798" in *The Collected English Letters of Henry,* 189.
[119] Weinglass, "Henry Fuseli to William Roscoe, 24 May 1799" in *The Collected English Letters of Henry,* 195.
[120] Joseph Farington, *The Diary of Joseph Farington*, Vol. IV, eds. Kenneth Garlick, Angus D Macintyre, Kathryn Cave, and Evelyn Newby (New Haven: Published for the Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art by Yale University Press, 1978), 1227.

purpose for which they are intended."[121] The paintings, in other words, were reverie-making machines, associative engines designed to excite the viewer's literary imagination. The next day, in *Bell's Weekly Messenger,* an anonymous review praised Fuseli's ability to embody Milton's genius which scorns "the trite realities of this sublunary sphere, and soars through the wide expanse of the world of fancy."[122]

Yet seeking to scorn the "trite realities" of the material world necessarily posed greater problems for the painter than the writer. In many paintings, particularly those of Satan, Sin, Death, Adam, and Eve, Fuseli eschewed detailed description, in favour of austere forms and a murky delineations of secondary figures—a significant departure from the imaginative panoplies characterizing highly-praised works like *Titania and Bottom*. Fuseli had been introduced to Edmund Burke's *Philosophical Enquiry* when studying under Swiss critic and poet Johann Jakob Bodmer in the 1760s and was likely working with its claim in mind that obscurity is an essential component of the sublime; [123] furthermore, that "no person seems better to have understood the secret of heightening, or of setting things terrible, if I may use the expression, in their strongest light by the force of a judicious obscurity, than Milton."[124] Fuseli, however, evidently rejected Burke's argument that literature is a more appropriate vehicle of obscurity than painting, which is limited by the formal necessity of fixing an image. Aspiring to the condition of writing, Fuseli left much of his canvases blank, often merely hinting at forms, apparently hoping that the active imaginations of his reader/viewer's would be cast into the "wide expanse of the world of fancy."

[121] *True Briton,* May 25, 1799. A critical reader might here have wondered how this supposedly impartial judge could be so sure about "the purpose for which they are intended."
[122] *Bell's Weekly Messenger,* May 26, 1799.
[123] Karen Junod, "Henry Fuseli's Pragmatic Use of Aesthetics: His epic Illustrations of Macbeth," *Word & Image*, 19:3, (2003): 138-150.
[124] Edmund Burke, *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful,* (London: Printed for J. Dodsley,1798), 100.

The elimination of circumstantial details and secondary figures, characterizing works such as *Adam and Eve Dismissed from Paradise* (fig. 26, see also fig. 27), is partly a function of Fuseli's aspiration to graduate from a dramatic to an epic mode of painting, a categorical shift modelled on literature's—rather than painting's—hierarchy of genres. In his "Third Lecture on Painting," delivered at the Royal Academy shortly after the Milton gallery's collapse, Fuseli sought to justify a hierarchical subdivision of modes of history painting based on literary categories. "Invention" Fuseli wrote, had three modes: the "*epic* or sublime," the "*dramatic* or impassioned," and the "*historic* or circumscribed by truth." The epic mode, as in literature, is the most exalted form, Fuseli claimed;

> The aim of the epic painter is to impress one general idea, one great quality of nature or mode of society, some great maxim, without descending to those subdivisions, which the detail of character prescribes: he paints the elements with their own simplicity, height, depth, the vast, the grand, darkness, light; life, death; the past, the future; man, pity, love, joy, fear, terror, peace, war, religion, government: and the visible agents are only engines to force *one* irresistible idea upon the mind and fancy…[125]

Eschewing detail, Fuseli argued, could "astonish" spectators (in Burke's terms), creating the conditions for the readerly self-deception licenced by Virgil himself in his formulation of Aeneas's catabasis as a *falsa insomnia,* during which the irresistible idea of fate was forced upon the hero by the engine of his father's poetic discourse. Yet, as we have seen in Fuseli's assemblage of the reader/viewer circa 1790, Fuseli plotted epic absorption at its intersection with gothic (*i.e.,* popular) terror. He was not the only one. Anne Radcliffe, the most popular gothic novelist of the 1790s, similarly exhorted the obscurity of Miltonic imagery. In an essay titled "On the Supernatural in Poetry," written in 1802 though published

[125] Henry Fuseli, *Lectures on Painting Delivered at the Royal Academy by Henry Fuseli P.P. with Additional Observations and Notes* (London: Printed for T. Cadell and W. Davies, 1820), 123.

posthumously in 1826, she expands on Burkes aesthetic theory by distinguishing between the "active" effects of terror and the "passive" effects of horror. Radcliffe writes "[Milton's] image imparts more of terror than horror; for it is not distinctly pictured forth, but is seen in glimpses through obscuring shades, the great outlines only appearing, which excite the imagination to complete the rest."[126] Fuseli, like Radcliffe, sought to mobilize this critically venerable model aesthetic engagement for commercial ends, depending on the active engagement of reader/viewers, who would be susceptible to the terrible and seductive power of maxims designed for apprehension in the imagination rather than the liquid field of painterly marks. One puff-piece in the *Times* purported to be written by such an active reader/viewer, who claimed that "the admirable Picture of Adam and Eve quitting Paradise [fig. 26], in the Milton Gallery, is a striking instance of the effect which mere outline and general contour sometimes produce, when managed by a great master."[127] Though this review was probably written by Fuseli or a partisan of the gallery such as Roscoe, even if it was genuine, we know that such praise was not the consensus of the public. The commercial success of Radcliffe's manoeuvre did not translate from prose to painting.

On June 5th, Fuseli's friend William Shepherd (a Liverpudlian radical who contributed to the puffing-campaign with his *Verses on the Milton* Gallery)[128] wrote to Roscoe that he had been to the gallery multiple times and always found between ten and twenty visitors in attendance—"but never a crowd."[129] One month after opening, the gallery had only brought in £117, and by July 10th it had still only made £170, a paltry return for a massively expensive venture which had taken nearly a decade to prepare.[130]

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[126] Anne Radclifee, "On the Supernatural in Poetry," *New Monthly Magazine* Volume 16, no. 1 (1826): 150.
[127] *Times,* 21 June, 1799.
[128] William Shepherd, *London Packet,* June 7, 1799.
[129] Weinglass, "William Shepherd to William Roscoe, 5 June 1799" in *The Collected English Letters of Henry,* 189; Farington, *The Diary of Joseph Farington*, Vol. IV, 1252.
[130] Weinglass, "Henry Fuseli to William Roscoe, 20 June 1799" in *The Collected English Letters of Henry,* 189.

Many of the daily-paper reviews were defensive, arguing, for example, that though the Milton gallery surpasses anything which had been "offered hitherto in any series of Art,", given its scale, "inadequacies must be expected to creep in."[131] The same review dubiously praises Fuseli's "nice and subtle discrimination of the limits that separate the poet's and the painter's province," thus contradicting the artist's avowed theoretical stance, implied in many of the other daily-paper articles, that there were no such limits—that Fuseli and Milton worked equally within the realm of the imagination. It likewise contradicts John Knowles' diagnosis that the gallery failed precisely because critics objected to Fuseli's unwillingness to discriminate separate purviews for literature and painting. The review might be read as an early response to such critics, also indicating that Fuseli may have begun to realise that a Lessing-esque separation of the sister arts was more valuable in the economy of public opinion than his own theoretical conflations of reading and viewing hitherto codified in his readerly cosmology.

It soon became clear that the gallery's viewership dilemma was not only one of quantity, but also of kind. On May 20, 1799, shortly before the puffing-campaign began, Farington, records in his diary that his friend, a fellow Royal Academician, had remarked that the gallery "had parts of great ability, *but the public wd. laugh."*[132] Apparently with a remedy in mind, Faringdon decided to call on Fuseli that evening "and advised him to get some ladies to attend his exhibition to make it more general." Not long after, the *Morning Chronicle* published an anecdotal review of the gallery, noting that "the old nurse's stories about the Devil are properly confuted by the exhibition of a figure that is bold, daring, and majestic, and a model of muscular strength and gigantic symmetry [see fig. 28]. 'I have often wondered,' said a Lady, 'how Eve could have been tempted to transgress by such a hideous

[131] *Morning Chronicle,* June 1, 1799.
[132] Farington, *The Diary of Joseph Farington*, Vol. IV, 1226.

monster as Satan has been represented to me, but if he was in reality such a being as Mr. Fuseli paints him, why—'that accounts for it.'"[133] Luisa Calé has noted that this anecdote, which was republished in various papers, demonstrates how spectating women, marketed as part of the spectacle, were an important component of a gallery's success in Georgian London.[134] Yet, assuming this advertisement was intended to attract women as well as men, we can also see Fuseli's misplaced confidence in the seductive power of his art and his belief that this power inhered in an associative mechanism through which reader/viewers experience aesthetic pleasure in the imaginative fantasy that art inspires. The anecdotal woman—the beholder Fuseli wished he was attracting—recalls his earlier formulations of the sleeping novel reader, who drops the subject at hand to become the virtual heroine of their imaginative fiction.

The analogy and tension between Fuseli's formulation of the susceptible female viewer and the heroic male viewer on whom irresistible epic maxims could nonetheless be "forced" requires further elaboration. The gender politics of Fuseli's aesthetics bore heavily on his assessment of the Milton Gallery's commercial viability and theoretical merit. As literary critic William Ray has pointed out, feminized conceptions of absorptive novel-reading in the eighteenth century—such as that with which this thesis began—"were difficult to reconcile with contemporary ideals of virile self-reliance," to which Fuseli undoubtedly subscribed.[135] While I have sought to demonstrate Fuseli's intellectual and practical interest in this feminized model of aesthetic engagement, in his avowed statements, he preferred to identify with the masculinized rhetoric of epic absorption. Yet, as Fuseli's iconographic conflations of feminized novel reading and masculine catabasis have shown, a certain anxiety about the supposedly emasculating state of aesthetic "rapture" was inherent in his work.

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[133] *Morning Chronicle,* 20 June 1799; *Star and Evening Advertiser,* 20 June 1799.
[134] Calé, *Fuseli's Milton Gallery,* 187.
[135] William Ray, "Reading Women: Cultural Authority, Gender, and the Novel. The Case of Rousseau," *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 27, no. 3 (1994): 422.

(Here it's worth recalling the gendered violence of *Titania and Bottom*: the shrunken old man held on a short leash by a scantily dressed young woman and the subjugated position of Bottom himself). As literary critic Stanley Fish has identified, Milton displayed a similar anxiety in Book VII of *Paradise Lost,* when the poet represented himself in danger of being "rapt" by the celestial song of Urania, a muse who led him into heaven, beyond the "visible diurnal sphere."[136] For Milton, to be "rapt" is at once the most exalted form of aesthetic transport and a violation he fears and avoids. "To be 'rapt,'" Fish writes, "is to be taken out of oneself, to be in a rapture; it is to be carried away by force, to be ravished, possessed, raped."[137] Such is the tension in Milton's work between his "[supposedly] feminine desire for absorption and his [supposedly] masculine impulse to stand out from the crowd," an impulse revealed in the text when the narrator insists that he wants to sing his own song, rather than being subsumed into Urania's.[138] There is a remarkable analogy between Milton's (or at least his authorial voice's) ambivalence about being overcome by rapture while listening to the muse's celestial song and Fuseli's efforts to assert his artistic "genius and independence"[139] from Milton.

My purpose with this line of inquiry is not to psychoanalyse Fuseli's misogyny, but to advance an understanding of how these gendered aesthetics factored into the commercial logic of his Milton Gallery. Fuseli's anxiety about the dichotomous sexual implications of inspiration and creation, correlates to the coincidence of the two modes of viewership he proffers—passive, novelistic immersion, or active epic engagement. This appears to be a formula on which he based his hopes of success. Viewers could enjoy the seductive spectacle of an immersive viewing experience or appreciate an erudite adaptation of England's greatest

[136] Stanley Eugene Fish, "The Brenzel Lectures" in *Versions of Antihumanism: Milton and Others* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 45.
[137] Fish, "The Brenzel Lectures," 45.
[138] Fish, "The Brenzel Lectures," 46.
[139] [Unknown Writer] *Times,* June 22, 1799.

epic poem, just as the viewers of *Falsa ad Coelum* (an etching paradigmatic of this aesthetic strategy) might see pornography or an allusive game, leading them through the scholarly commentary on Virgil's ivory gates. Though alluding to social rather than absorptive viewing, one article published in the *Courier* on July 12, 1799, insinuates a similar link between accessible content and female viewership, writing, "those delightful and constructive ideas which long and laborious diligence alone can otherwise unfold to the solitary and the studious, are thus rendered the easy objects of intuitive attainment amidst the chambers of gaiety and in the cheerful hours of converse and recreation."[140] The implied gender dichotomy between "laborious diligence" and "intuitive attainment" is unmistakable. And whether this review was written by Fuseli or not, it nonetheless gestures to the artist's effort to make *Paradise Lost*—an infamously dense poem—more entertaining, "more general" as Farrington said, and therefore more commercially viable. In doing so it raises the difficulty that Fuseli was unable to overcome. The Milton Gallery was not a "chamber of gaiety," or a subject of cheerful "converse and recreation"; the gallery neither seduced its viewers, nor appealed to a popular audience.

One of Fuseli's greatest miscalculations seems to have been conflating the reputation of Milton with the popularity of Shakespeare. While Boydell was able to mobilize the curiosity of all theatre-going Londoners (a broad range of society), the hurdle of literacy alone, not to mention the "laborious diligence" required to read *Paradise Lost,* meant that no amount of novelisation, sexualization, or distillation could transform Milton into a truly popular author. The great eighteenth-century literary critic Samuel Johnson wrote in his *Lives of the English Poets* that the "perusal [of *Paradise Lost*] is a duty rather than a pleasure," that "we read Milton for instruction, retire harassed and overburdened, and look elsewhere for

[140] [Unknown Writer] *Courier,* July 12, 1799.

recreation."[141] According to Knowles, in Fuseli's copy of *The Lives* he scribbled a large annotation in the margins beside this passage: "I DO NOT."[142] Consensus, however, lay with the critic not the painter.

The next and last summer that the gallery was on view Fuseli complained that it could not compete with Robert Ker Porter's 3 ¼-circle panorama painting, *The Storming of Seringapatam*—a commercially proven form of public spectacle, based on the immediate pleasures of immersive viewing.[143] Nor could it compete with the Royal Academy's summer exhibition: "the posies of portraits and knickknacks of Somerset House."[144] Fuseli was in dire straits. Not only was his domestic landlord squeezing him for a full year's rent in advance—apparently equal to "nearly all the produce of [his] exhibition"[145]—he had also promised James Christie the exorbitant sum of £200 to rent his gallery space for the summer and was forced to apply to Roscoe to pay it.[146] There appears to have been a chilling in the relationship between the two men around this time, when Roscoe told Fuseli that the rent for the gallery space raised his total advance to £700, rendering him unable to assist further.[147] The Liverpool banker also hinted at possible legal action to recoup the loan from his friend, a suggestion that seemed to wound and offend the impecunious artist.[148] Ultimately, to Roscoe's annoyance, he had no choice but to accept repayment in paintings, which he would then seek to sell.[149]

Conclusion

[141] Samuel Johnson, *The Lives of the English Poets and A Criticism of Their Works* (London: Printed for R. Dodsley, 1795), 225.
[142] Knowles, *Life and Writings of Henry Fuseli,* 199.
[143] Richard D Altick, *The Shows of London*. Cambridge (Mass.: Belknap Press, 1978), 136.
[144] Weinglass, "Henry Fuseli to William Roscoe, 18 June 1800"*,* 212.
[145] Weinglass, "Henry Fuseli to William Roscoe, 17 July 1800"*,* 216.
[146] Weinglass, "Henry Fuseli to William Roscoe, 18 June 1800"*,* 212.
[147] Weinglass, "William Roscoe to Henry Fuseli, 21 December 1800"*,* 228.
[148] Weinglass, "Henry Fuseli to William Roscoe, 25 December 1800"*,* 229.
[149] Weinglass, "William Roscoe to Henry Fuseli, 21 December 1800"*,* 228; Weinglass, "Henry Fuseli to William Roscoe, 25 December 1800"*,* 229.

The Milton Gallery had two, slightly misaligned objectives: to make money and progress the artist's academic ambitions. Though the latter was successful, insofar as Fuseli was elected to the Professorship of Painting at the Royal Academy shortly after the gallery's collapse, the establishment remained suspicious of his literary aesthetics; Joseph Farington records a conversation with fellow Royal Academician John Bacon in which Bacon concedes that Fuseli is "a man of superior talents and qualifications" but worries that he "may in his lectures recommend to the Students that Species of design which He himself has preferred and is peculiar to him."[150] Farrington, replied that Fuseli wouldn't do such a thing—that he would "treat the subject soberly and generally." It was all well and good to have Fuseli teach students how to paint, so long as he didn't them to paint like Fuseli. The commercial failure, however, was unmitigated, deriving from the artist's plausibly tractable, but ultimately awkward appeal to a popular audience through the empyrean planes of Miltonic erudition.

When Fuseli printed the catalogue to his Milton Gallery in 1799, it included an epigraph from his guiding motif, book VI of Virgil's Aeneid: "*Igneus est ollis vigor, et caelestis Origo seminibus, quantum non noxia corpora tardant* [Fiery is the vigour and divine these source of these seeds, so long as harmful bodies do not impede them]." Thus, the ghost of Anchises, speaking to Aeneas, explains how souls are reincarnated in the material world. With this epigraph, Fuseli compared his venture to the mortal reincarnation of the Miltonic spirit and, in doing so, designated his paintings as the earthly conduits of a divine narrative, charging the viewer to decide whether they be "harmful bodies," or if, as successful readings, they maintained the "fiery vigour" of their source. Apparently, they decided not. Writing to his pupil William Lock Junior in August of 1800, Fuseli described the unsold canvases, comprising "the greater part" of the exhibition, as "the rejected family of a silly father" now

[150] Farington, *The Diary of Joseph Farington*, Vol. IV, 1243.

rolled up and confined to the corners of his study "to be seasoned for dust, the worm, & oblivion."[151]

Appendix: Incubus, Moth, Toggeli

The presence of moths and butterflies in so many of the images discussed in this thesis is not coincidental. Grouped under the Linnaean order *lepidoptera,* moths and butterflies fascinated Fuseli since his boyhood and remained a significant interest throughout his life, both as objects of scientific inquiry and signifiers in his work. For Fuseli, insects were inherently sublime creatures, a possibility granted by Edmund Burke's *Philosophical Enquiry,* which pointed out that "there are many animals, who though far from being large, are yet capable of raising ideas of the sublime, because there are considered as objects of terror."[152] For Fuseli, however, the sublimity of insects derived less from their capacity to provoke terror, than the relative impressiveness of their power. In a 1790 essay, he wrote that "the ant-hunter, the spider and the bee are surely as much nearer to man in contrivance and distinctive power than the sheep or ass, as they are farther removed from him in organization or size."[153] There was also something sublime about the study of entomology, the subject's vast depths of unearthed knowledge and the potential for scientific discovery. In his 1798 review of James Edward Smith's *Natural History of the Rarer Lepidopterous Insects of Georgia,* published in the *Analytical Review,* Fuseli wrote that "the discoveries of entomology approach immensity" and that an intrepid entomologist was liable to find themselves like a "wanderer, who, invited by the overhanging woods and wide-shading luxuriance of an opposite shore, mistakes an arm of the sea for a fordable river, enters the

[151] *Royal Academy Archives,* FU/1/1.
[152] Edmund Burke, *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful,* (London: Printed for J. Dodsley,1798), 97.
[153] *Analytical Review* (February 1790), 156.

current, and is irresistibly swept to the ocean."[154] His brother, Johann Kaspar Fuessli, was an entomologist whose *Archiv der Insectengeschite,* was republished by Joseph Johnson in 1795 and translated by the younger Fuseli as *Archives of Entomology, Containing the History, or Ascertaining the Characters and Classes of Insects not Hitherto Described, or Imperfectly Known, or Erroneously Classified.*[155] Though Fuseli was an amateur, he was a highly knowledgeable one, who reviewed the scientific literature and consulted with practicing naturalists like John Francillon.[156] His letters reveal that he regularly borrowed books and illustrated folios—such as an instance in 1792 when he asked to borrow Maria Sybilla Merian's *Surinam Insects* from his friend and patron William Roscoe, a primary backer of the Milton Gallery and the author of such popular children's poems as *The Butterfly's Ball* and *The Grasshopper's Feast*.

Fuseli's aesthetic sensibilities seemed to influence his entomological activities just as his fascination with *lepidoptera* filtered into his prints, drawings, and paintings. In 1809, in a letter to his future biographer John Knowles, Fuseli mentioned that he was rearing *Acherontia Atropos* moths in his home.[157] Nicknamed the Death's-Head Hawkmoth, the *Atropos* has a pattern on the back of its thorax resembling a skull, leading to its later appropriation by John Keats and Bram Stoker (among others) as a symbol of death. Fuseli's bit of amateur experimentalism may have been inspired, at least in part, by his painting of the Weird Sisters from *Macbeth* (fig. 29), exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1783, in which a massive *Atropos* flies at the top left of the canvas, its thorax facing the viewer.

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[154] Henry Fuseli, "Smith on the Lepidopterous Insects of Georgia," *Analytical Review* (January 1798): 1.
[155] Johann Caspar Fuessly, *Archives of Entomology, Containing the History, or Ascertaining the Characters and Classes of Insects not Hitherto Described, or Imperfectly Known, or Erroneously Classified,* Trans. Henry Fuseli (London: Printed for Joseph Johnson, 1795).
[156] Weinglass, "Henry Fuseli to John Francillon, 15 October 1807" in *The Collected English Letters of Henry,* 362.
[157] Weinglass, "Henry Fuseli to John Knowles, 1809" in *The Collected English Letters of Henry,* 369.

Representations of moths and butterflies in Fuseli's work are evidently indebted to the conventional manner of drawing entomological specimens as if seen from above, or, perhaps more aptly, as if pinned in a display case with their wings outstretched.[158] The scale of many of the lepidoptera in print versions of Fuseli's paintings demonstrates their affinity with such aesthetics as they often occupy a similar amount of space on a folio page as individual specimens might in the plates of Johann Rudolph Schellenberg, the illustrator of J.C. Fuessly's *Archives of Entomology* (fig. 30, see also fig. 31). Though they were clearly an amorphous signifier for Fuseli, whose enthusiasm for entomology was largely independent from his pictorial practice, their recurrence in his depictions of dreams, dreamers, and literary scenes is not without reason.

This recurrence comes from a characteristic game of linguistic association; in Fuseli's Swiss-German dialect the word "toggeli" means both butterfly and incubus.[159] As this paper has contended, Fuseli's conception of the aesthetic object is the toggeli as such: a semi-autonomous force that can inhabit our mind and impose an imagined reality. Fuseli formulates the aesthetic object like a caterpillar, which, gestated in the chrysalis of the mind, becomes a butterfly, taking on a life of its own as it flits through the imagination. The artist implants the idea, impelling the associative power of the beholder's mind to gestate the conditions of an immersive experience. Alternatively, Fuseli's lepidoptera are like ideas, which, when seized upon by the mind procreate with its repository of aesthetic impressions, producing larvae—new images, ideas, aesthetic impressions. The aesthetic communion between artist and beholder (or, writer and reader) is allegorized as entomological sexuality: alien, grotesque, though nonetheless analogous to our own.

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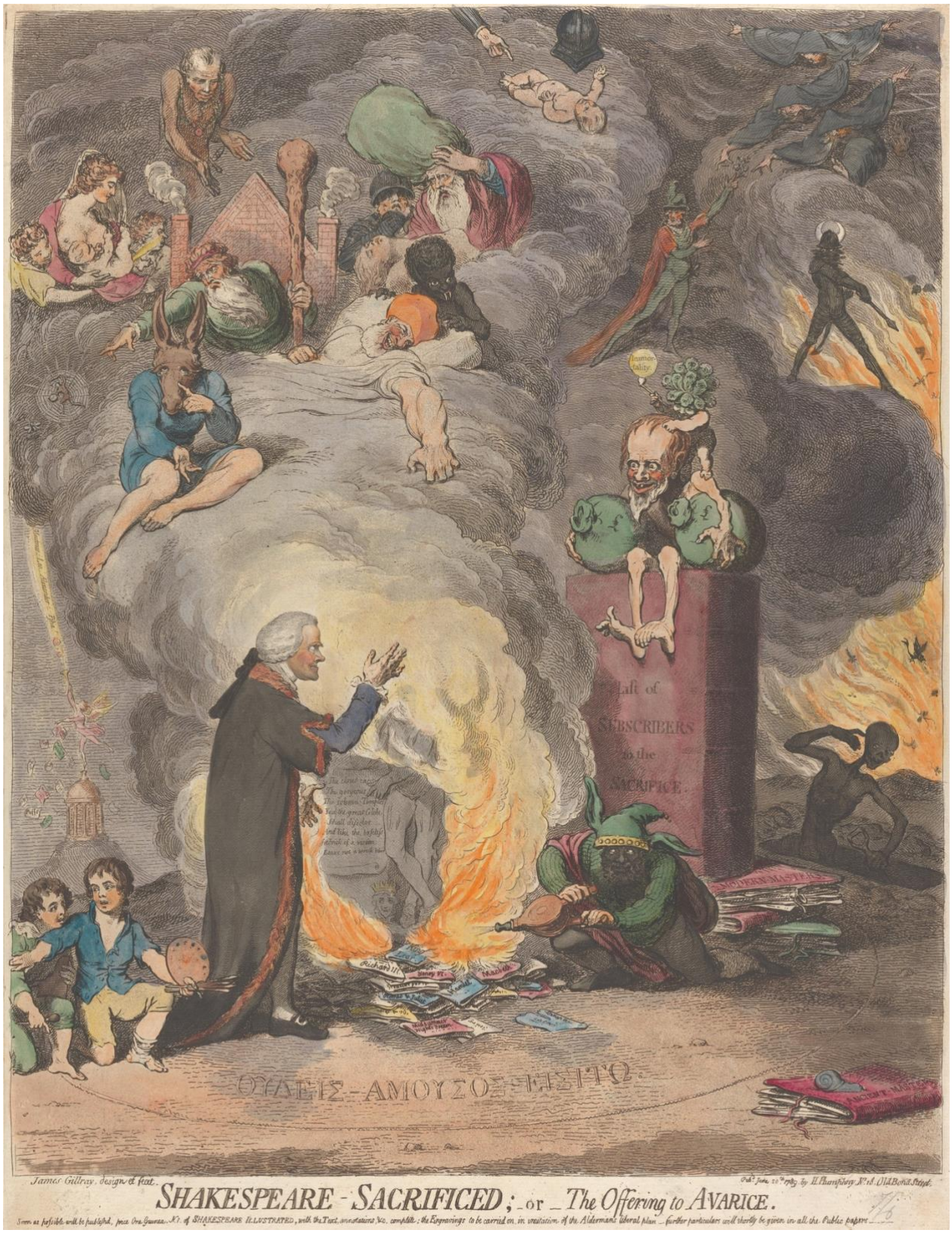
[158] On the specimen drawings of August Johann Rösel von Rosenhof (fig. 24), a miniature painter from Nuremburg, Fuseli wrote that "Rösel saw man like an insect, and insects as Michelangelo men"; Knowles, *Life and Writings of Henry Fuseli,* 123.
[159] Stuart Sillars, "Fuseli, Nature and Supernature" in *Painting Shakespeare: The Artist As Critic, 1720-1820* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 231.

In his *Remarks on Rousseau,* shortly before his warning about the moral hazards of novel reading, quoted at the beginning of this thesis, Fuseli compared sexual corruption—the "tainting" of "young ladies' flesh"—to the proliferation of "the endemic caterpillar" in a garden.[160] Comparing Fuseli's most iconic painting, *The Nightmare,* with a *Sleeping Woman with Cupid, Falsa ad Coelum,* and the *Dream of Belinda* illuminates the conceptual link between the lepidoptera populating his literary pictures, the incubus, and the sort of aesthetic encounter he increasingly posited while working for Boydell and beginning to conceive of his Milton Gallery. There is, finally, a temporal dimension to Fuseli's entomological aesthetics, a gesture to the way his literary pictures are recapitulations of a dead author's work. By inserting specimen-like creatures into his canvases, he evokes the tension between the motionless display of a lifeless source and the sense that it might spring to life and fly out of its frame. The specimen seems to possess the same uncanny potential for reanimation—in the Latin sense of the word *animus*, as in spirit, or soul—as the content of Fuseli's authorial source: dead but preserved, inert but vital.

[160] Henry Fuseli, "Emile, or On Education" in *Remarks on the Writings and Conduct of J.J. Rousseau* (London: Printed for T. Cadel, 1767), 39.

Figures:



[Fig. 1] James Gillray, *Shakespeare Sacrificed; or, The Offering to Avarice*, 1789, etching with colour on medium, Yale Centre for British Art, Paul Mellon Collection.

[Fig. 2] Henry Fuseli, *Fuseli Reading to the Hess Sisters,* 1778, pen and brown ink. Kuntshaus, Zurich.

[Fig. 3] Henry Fuseli, *Half-Length Figure of a Courtesan with a Feathered Head-Dress,* 1800-1810, graphite, pen and brown ink, brush and watercolour. Kuntshaus, Zurich

[Fig. 4] James Gillray, *Tales of Wonder!,* 1804, etching, aquatint, hand-colouring, British Museum

[Fig. 5] Henry Fuseli, *Martha Hess,* 1781, charcoal and black chalk on laid paper. Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago.

[Fig. 6] Henry Fuseli, *Milton Dictating to his Daughter,* 1793, oil on canvas. Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago.

[Fig. 7] Henry Fuseli, *The Nightmare*, 1781, oil on canvas. Detroit Institute of Arts, Michigan

[Fig. 8] Henry Fuseli, *Death of Dido,* 1781, oil on canvas. Yale Center for British Art, New Haven.

[Fig. 9] Henry Fuseli, *Queen Katherine's Dream,* 1781, oil on canvas. Lytham St Anne's Art Collection, Lancashire

[Fig. 10] Francis Wheatley, *View of the Interior of the Shakespeare Gallery,* 1790, watercolour. Victoria & Albert Museum, London.

[Fig. 11] Henry Fuseli, *Titania and Bottom,* 1790, oil on canvas. Tate Britain, London

[Fig. 12] Henry Fuseli, *Titania Awakening,* c.1790, oil on canvas. Kuntzmuseum, Winterthur

[Fig. 13] William Blake, after Henry Fuseli, *Allegory of a Dream of Love* (*Falsa ad Coelum)*, c.1790, engraving. The British Museum, London

[Fig. 14] Jiulio Romano, [detail] *Chariot of the Sun*, 1526, fresco, Palazzo del Tè, Mantua

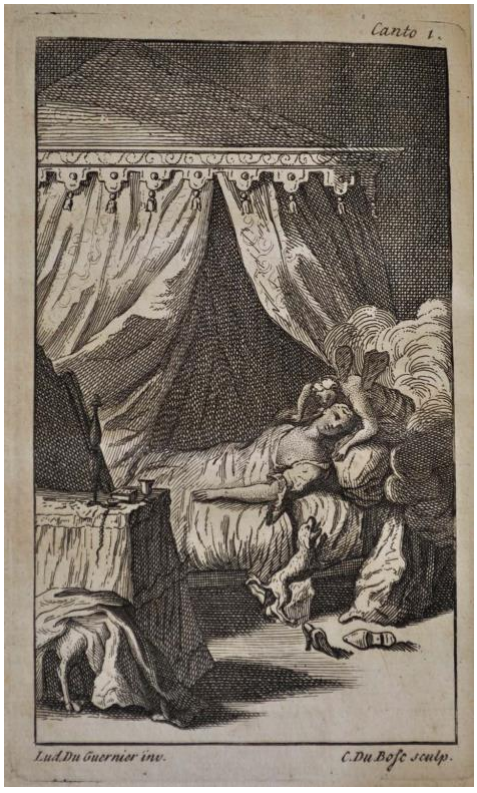
[Fig. 15] Henry Fuseli, *Sophia* [Rawlins] *Fuseli, Seated at a Table (Drawn Over a List of Fuseli's Articles for the 'Analytical Review'),* c. 1790-91, pen-and-wash drawing, Auckland Art Gallery.

[Fig. 16] Henry Fuseli, *Sleeping Woman with a Cupid* (*Hush*), 1780-90, etching. The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

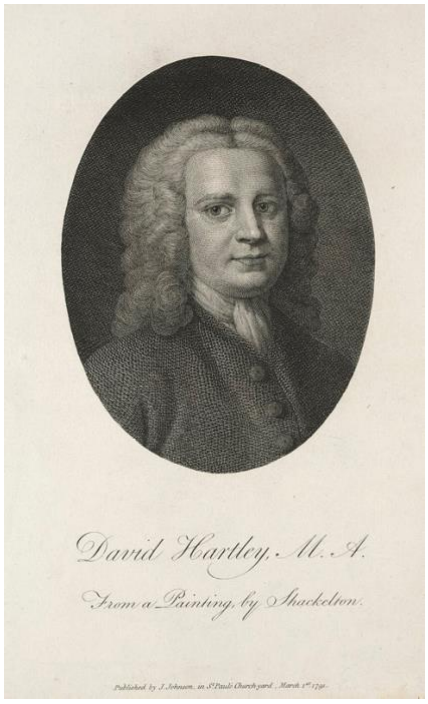
[Fig. 17] Henry Fuseli, *Macbeth Consulting the Vision of the Armed Head,* 1793, oil on canvas.

[Fig. 18] Henry Fuseli, *The Nightmare,* 1791, engraving, from Erasmus Darwin's, *The Botanic Garden,* 1791. British Library, London

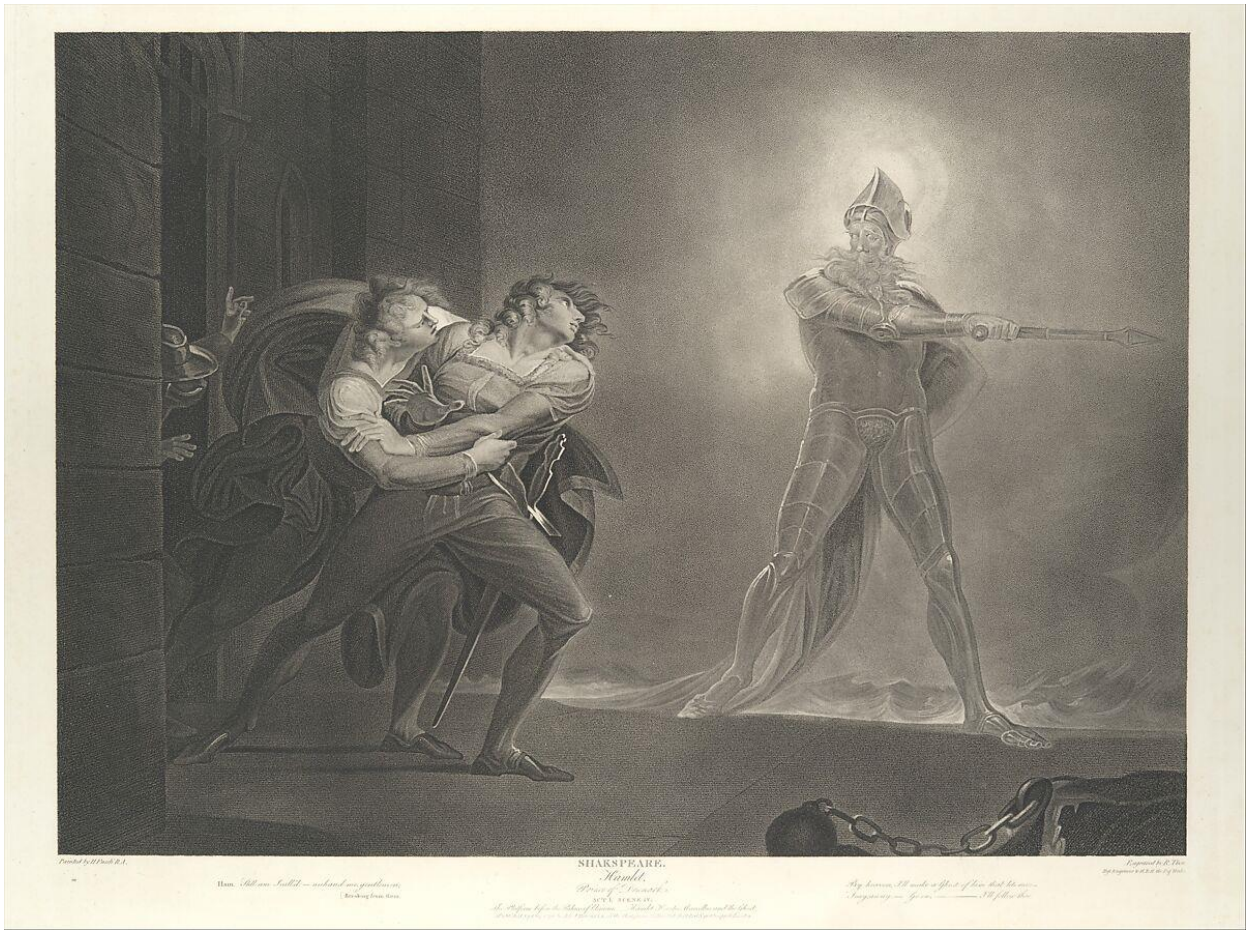
[Fig. 19] Henry Fuseli, *Dream of Belinda*, 1789-1790, oil on canvas. Vancouver Art Gallery, Vancouver



[Fig. 20] Louis du Guernier, *Illustration from Pope's Rape of the Lock,* 1714, engraving. British Library, London.



[Fig. 21] William Blake, after John Shakleton, *David Hartley,* 1791*,* engraving. Cleveland Museum of Art, Cleveland.



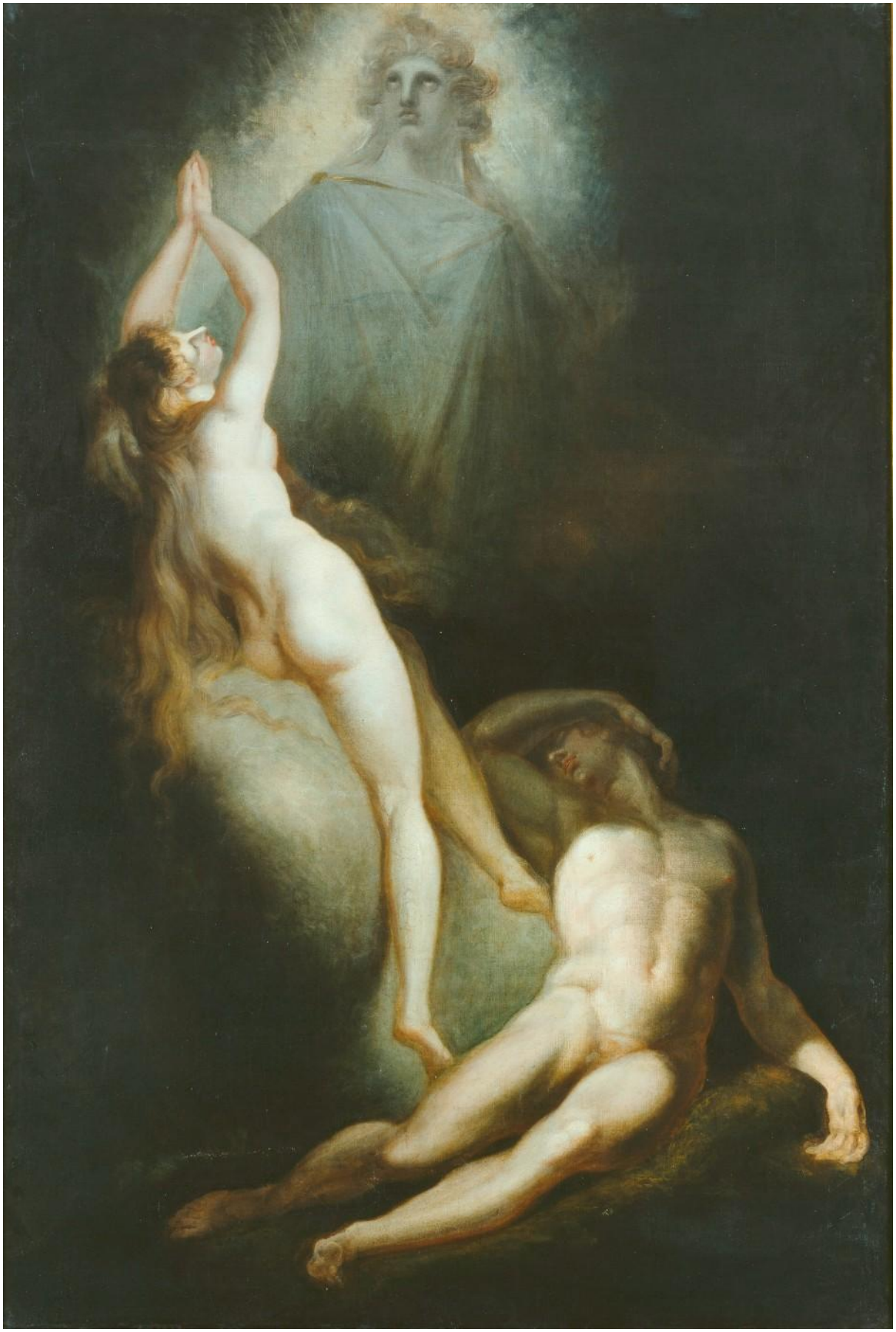
[Fig. 22] Henry Fuseli, *Hamlet, Horatio, Marcellus, and the Ghost*, 1796, engraving (after a 1788 painting). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

[Fig. 23] Circle of Leonardo da Vinci, *Leda and the Swan*, c. 1510-1520, oil on canvas. Villa Borghese, Rome.

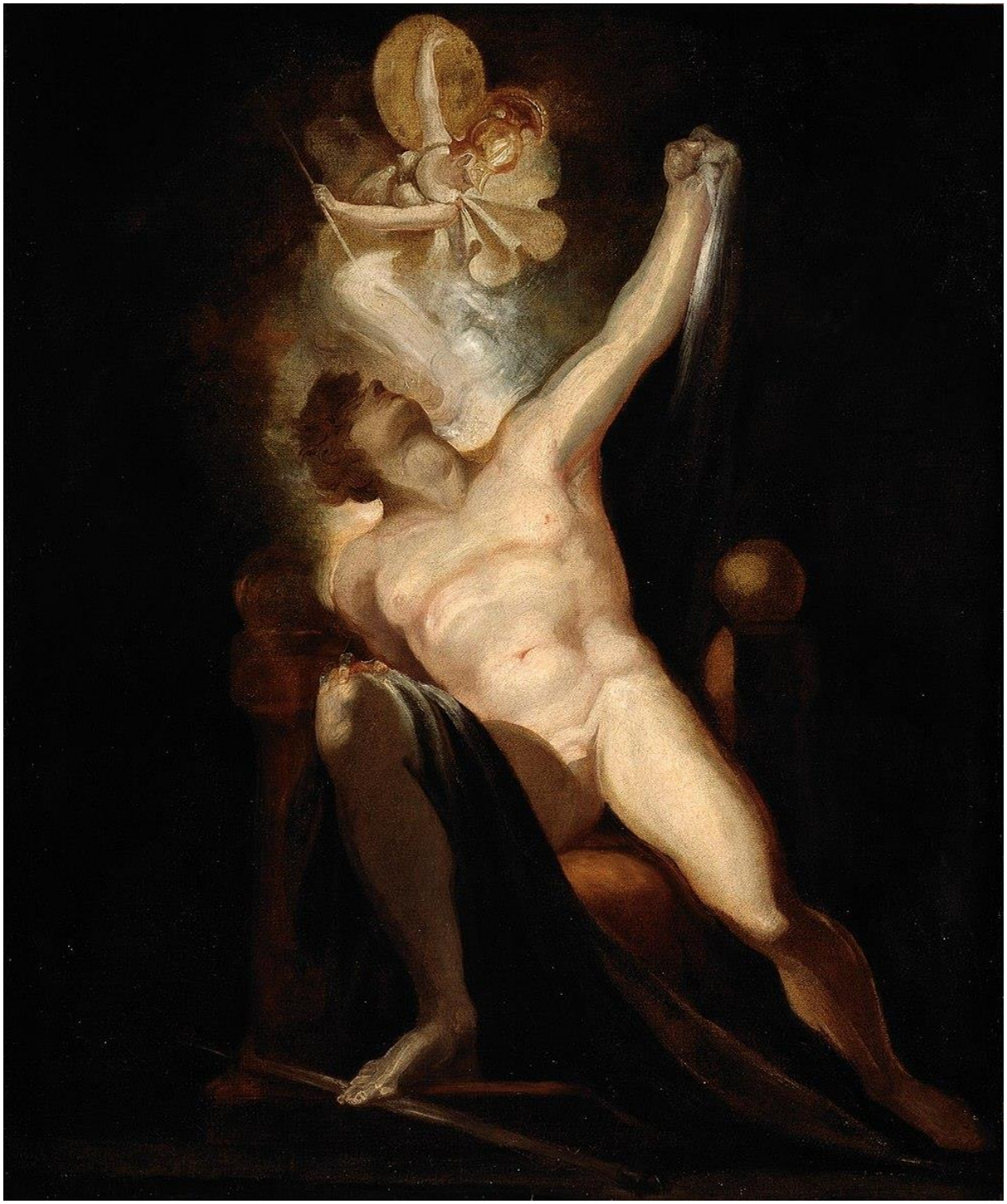
[Fig. 24] Sandro Botticelli, *Venus and Mars*, c. 1485, oil on canvas. National Gallery, London.

[Fig. 25] Henry Fuseli, *The Incubus Leaving Two Sleeping Women,* c. 1793, oil on canvas. Private collection, Paris.

[Fig. 26] Henry Fuseli, Adam and Eve Dismissed from Paradise, 1796-99, oil on canvas. The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston.



[Fig. 27] Henry Fuseli, *The Creation of Eve*, 1793, oil on canvas. Kunsthalle, Hamburg.



[Fig. 28] Henry Fuseli, *Satan and the Birth of Sin*, 1792-1799 c., oil on canvas. Dallas Museum of Art, Dallas.

[Fig. 29] Henry Fuseli, *Weird Sisters,* 1783, oil on canvas. Kunsthaus, Zurich

[Left, Fig. 30] Johann Rudolph Schellenberg (for Johann Caspar Füssli), *Lemonia Taraxaci,* 1785, Lithograph. National Library of New Zealand, Auckland.
[Right, Fig. 31] August Johann Rösel von Rosenhof, *Atropos in Insecten-Belustigungen,* 1755. Natural History Museum of France, Paris.

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