Hans von Aachen’s Allegorical Representations of the Arts, and His Newly Identified Painting Allegory of the Arts*

Ming-Ling Tsai
Department of Art History, Tainan National University of the Arts
E-mail: mling@tnhua.edu.tw

Abstract

Hans von Aachen is among the artists regarded as representative of the court of the Holy Roman Emperor Rudolf II. During the period from the late 1580s to the beginning of 1600, von Aachen created a number of works referring to the visual arts themselves, especially to the art of painting and its relationship to artes liberales.

This paper shows that Hans von Aachen occupied himself intensely with art-theoretical discourses and invented within a decennium a series of paintings and engravings with the same themes. The pictorial concepts...
of these works, as well as the language of art, reveal the influence of Italian artists and humanists, which are shown distinctly in the newly discovered painting Allegory of the arts.

**Key Words:** Allegory, Venus-Pictura, visus, art-theoretical conception, artes liberales
I. Preface

Hans von Aachen was one of the leading artists at the court of the Holy Roman Emperor Rudolf II. Von Aachen was born in 1552 at Cologne, and died on 4 March 1615, at Prague. When von Aachen was about 22 years old, he traveled to Italy, and spent almost 15 years working in its most important cultural centers, Venice, Rome, and Florence (Konecny & Vacha, 2012; van Mander, 2000: 354-361). The long stay in Italy deeply influenced von Aachen’s artistic formation, as will be discussed in this article, which explores the invention and significance of von Aachen’s allegorical representations of the arts. From the late 1580s to the beginning of the 1600s, the artist created a substantial number of compositions referring to the visual arts themselves, especially the art of painting and its relationship to the *artes liberales*. The compositions discussed here are: *Zeuxis with His Painting of a Boy with Grapes* (1589),\(^1\) *Amor fucatus* (c. 1589-1590), *Allegory of Venus and the Arts* (1590-1595), *Minerva Leading Pictura to the Seven Liberal Arts* (c. 1595),\(^2\) *Minerva Leading Pictura to Apollo and the Muses* (c. 1595), and *Allegory of Peace, Prosperity, and the Arts* (1602) (Figures 1, 2, 9, 6, 11, and 10, respectively). As discussed below, the second and fourth compositions in this list have been known chiefly from engravings by the Sadeler family.

This study has two parts. The first part focuses on von Aachen’s drawing *Zeuxis with His Painting of a Boy with Grapes*, delving into von Aachen’s conceptualization of the arts, and own basis for creating art (imitation, invention, judgment, and so on). The second part analyzes the composition of an image by von Aachen that is recorded in Raphael I Sadeler’s engraving *Amor fucatus*, and

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1 One can read the signature, location and dating information in the drawing. The inscription on the parapet reads “Hans von Aachen a[n]o 89 di 5 decemb. Ausburg.”

2 The original painting by von Aachen is thought to be lost.
identifies the model for this print as the painting *Allegory of the Arts* now in the Chimei Museum, Tainan. Due to its high quality, the painting can be attributed with confidence to Hans von Aachen. The examination of the *Allegory of the Arts* in the context of the artist’s paintings and drawings of similar subjects, broadens our knowledge and deepens our understanding of von Aachen’s conceptualization of the arts, and his allegorical representation of them.

II. The *Zeuxis with His Painting of a Boy with Grapes*

At the end of the 1500s, von Aachen worked primarily in Munich, and for the court in Prague. The courtly atmosphere in the north may have influenced his conception of the art of painting and his representations of it. This commentary will begin by considering in depth the earliest compositions from this series: the drawing *Zeuxis with His Painting of a Boy with Grapes*, dated 1589. The *Zeuxis* legend was a well-known subject throughout the Renaissance. Artists and theorists of the time used the story of Zeuxis to demonstrate the superiority of the arts over nature (Mansfield, 2007; von Rosen, 2003: 240-244), and eventually as a means to enhance the status of artists themselves, as demonstrated by the well-known anecdote regarding Apelles and Alexander the Great. Scholars have noted that in this drawing, von Aachen illustrated only the first part of the story, describing the competition between the two celebrated classical painters Zeuxis and Parrhasius. Pliny the Elder recounted the anecdote in his *Naturalis Historia*

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3 Joachim Jacoby has mentioned that a drawing titled “Apelles and Campaspe” exists in the library of the University in Würzburg. This drawing is known to be a copy of von Aachen’s original. From the similarity of the themes, one can assume that Hans von Aachen probably also produced the Würzburger drawing around 1589, and thus that “Apelles and Campaspe” and “Zeuxis painted a boy with grapes” may have functioned as pendants. Both drawings refer to the important art theory of the sixteenth century, the idea of love, the electio and imitatio (2000: 38, n. 40).
In a contest between Zeuxis and Parrhasius to decide who was the better painter, Zeuxis painted a basket of grapes, in which the fruit seemed so real (verisimilitude)\(^4\) that birds flew at the painting to pick the grapes. At the same time, Parrhasius created a painting of a curtain so realistic it tricked Zeuxis, causing him to demand “that the curtain should be drawn aside to let the picture be seen” (Pliny the Elder, 2004: 330). Upon realizing his mistake, Zeuxis proclaimed Parrhasius the victor, because, while Zeuxis’s art deceived nature (in the form of the birds), Parrhasius’s art managed to deceive even his fellow artist.

According to a related anecdote, Zeuxis once painted a boy holding a basket of fruits. The subject is present as a Bild im Bilde (image within an image) in von Aachen’s drawing. As the crowd observing this scene exclaimed their surprise at the marvellous painting and its effect, Zeuxis himself was disturbed, saying: “I have surely painted the grapes better than the child, for if I had fully succeeded in the last, the birds would have been in fear of it” (Pliny the Elder, 1855). Around 10 years after creating Zeuxis with His Painting of a Boy with Grapes, von Aachen made further reference to this classical literary topic in his painting A Boy with Grapes (Figure 3). The Zeuxis drawing and this painting, though created at different times, indicate that von Aachen knew these ancient legends and their theoretical implications well.

Returning to the Zeuxis drawing, it is notable that von Aachen set the scene behind a parapet. Two prominent male figures stand behind the parapet and turn their heads toward one another. Behind these two protagonists are three more figures. In the background, branches and a flying bird are lightly sketched. Another bird is perched on the frame of a painting, trying to pluck at the counterfeit

\(^4\) The idea verisimile or verisimilitude can be traced back to Aristotle’s Poetics and has been integrated in the mimesis theory since the sixteenth century (Aristoteles, 1982); see also Grassi’s introduction to the terminology verisimile (1994c: 1046-1048).
grapes. Two inscriptions are present in the drawing, which are discussed below. The protagonists’ bold gesticulations indicate a vigorous discussion, the subject of which presumably concerns the picture in front of them. One of the figures, who wears a phrygian cap and points with his left hand at the picture, surely represents Zeuxis. His right hand is above the parapet, upon which a palette, brushes, and compass lie. Their prominent position accentuates the theoretical discourse regarding the art of painting, because palettes and brushes are among the items long established as representative of painting.

Noteworthy in the Zeuxis image is the primacy of the palette, protruding into the viewer’s space. Through the palette’s position, von Aachen seemingly transcends the two dimensional limits typically found in drawings and paintings, and bridges the space between the image and the real world (space of the spectator). This idea of exceeding limits (Grenzüberschreitung) can be linked to perception theory. In his Zeuxis drawing, von Aachen established

5 A phrygian cap, sometimes called a liberty cap, was a symbol of freedom and the pursuit of liberty since ancient Rome due to confusion of it with the pileus. Here, it may imply the spiritual and conceptual liberty of artists and assumes the free status of creativity.

6 In German speaking countries, the term “Grenzüberschreitung” denotes a kind of seeing experience in which the boundary between vision and imagination, as well as that between fiction and reality, was regarded as obsolete. By the Middle Ages, there were already various paintings showing this effect and also various theories aimed at exploring this seeing process. For more details about the terminology, see also the research of Stoichita (1998), and Klein’s article (2007: 166-187).

7 The term Grenzüberschreitung is part of the aesthetic, philosophical concept of art that was also used in literature, theater, music and other critical fields. Alexander G. Baumgarten was the first one to deal with the problem of aesthetic Grenzen (boundaries) and their Überschreitung (excess) in his writing Aesthetica. In the discourse and in the practice of art one can speak of numerous ways of using the expression, Grenzüberschreitung. Based on Gerald Raunig, Anna-Lena Wenzel introduces “eight ways of Grenzüberschreitungen” in her book Grenzüberschreitungen in der Gegenwartskunst: “Neben der erwähnten Debatte um die Kunst und Nichtkunst nennt sie Überschreitungen von Grenzen der einzelnen Künste, die Auflösung von Werkgrenzen, die Veränderung des Bilstraums, Erweiterung der künstlerischen Materialien bzw. Formen, Ausweitung der künstlerischen
a carefully considered visual strategy. The parapet appears on the one hand to separate the fictive space (the drawing itself) from the real sphere where the viewer stands, such that the beholder’s perception of the border is reinforced and the *trompe l’oeil* effect is brought into consciousness. In doing this, the image also intensifies the viewer’s awareness of his or her own process of observation. Such artifice was widely known through miniatures and portraits, especially in early sixteenth-century Venice, as in Titian’s painting *La Schiavona*. On the other hand, von Aachen used the palette and the outstretched right hand of the artist, which cross the boundary of the parapet, to unite the two spaces, i.e. the real and fictive spaces. The *Grenzüberschreitung* announces at the same time the perfection of the illusionistic effect of the representation itself, and also the skill of von Aachen as an artist. The image invites active participation by the beholder, one with which the artist has consciously reckoned. Thus, the illusionistic effect of the image was one of the criteria, indeed, the essential criterion, by which it engenders aesthetic reflection.

Another art-theoretical consideration is reflected through the device of the *Bild im Bilde*, which alludes to Zeuxis’ self-criticism in particular, and artists in general. As noted, one Zeuxis legend concerned his failure to represent a human figure with sufficient realism, such that birds were not afraid to pick at the painted grapes in the presence of a painted boy. Von Aachen chose this legend as the subject matter for his *Bild im Bilde*, a choice which may have been intended to demonstrate that nature itself was the one and only *exemplum* for artists. Since the time of Leon Battista Alberti, art theory has emphasised the significance of nature in the creation of art. Nature serves not only as a role model for artists, but also functions as critique and barometer of a given artistic creation, just as the painting by Zeuxis was judged by natural creatures—the birds. The concept of *mimesis* as representative of the relationship to nature—"Handlungszone, Verschwinden des Gedankens eines ‘Genie-Künstler’ sowie die Verwischung zwischen ‘Antikunst und Nichtkunst’" (Acil, 2017: 21, n. 37). For more details about the terminology, see also the research of Wenzel (2011).
between nature and art formed the foundation of art theory during the entire Renaissance. As such, there is no doubt that von Aachen was familiar with these theoretical ideas during his long stay in Italy. The *Bild im Bilde* may also indicate a hierarchical idea, concerning the superiority of human subjects in comparison with representations of other subjects. This idea was bound to notions regarding the dignity of human beings and the difficulty of representing human *vivacità*. Alberti wrote in his *Della pictura* that *historia* was the most graceful and dignified theme and the main purpose of artistic creation (Alberti, 2002: 116-123; Patz, 1986: 269-287). From this time on, the actions of humans (*Handlung*) was regarded as the noblest theme of artistic representation. This view also implied that the ability of a painter who had mastered the human figure was such that he could perfectly represent all objects seen in the world. Most centrally, through the device of *Bild im Bilde*, von Aachen alluded intentionally to the essential characteristic of painting (*Medialität*) and thus brought “media theory” to the discourse of the drawing.

The Zeuxis story contains two significant ideas, the first being the sublimation of the invention and vivid skill of painters, the second being the diligence and judgment of artists. Ancient artists like Phidias and Polyclitus, Zeuxis and Parrhasius, and, above all, Apelles were extolled as exempla for modern artists to emulate or surpass in terms of their *ingenium*. The topics of contests with

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8 For the artistic concept of vivacità, see the introduction of Pepe (1994c: 1065-1067) and the article of Fehrenbach (2003: 222-227).
10 The medium graphic mainly used abstract lines to visualise its concept, similar to the manner in which compasses and squares are presented using lines (broadly speaking the geometry), so the Zeuxis drawing may also refer to the theoretical concept of disegno and colorito. For more details about the medium theory, see also the research of Genz and Gévaudan (2016), Borsò’s (2009: 113-140), and Febel’s discussion (2004).
11 The idea of *ingenium* originates in the Antiquity, but it was not until the fifteenth century that the term was considered together with arts. Filippo Villani was
nature itself and contests between ancient artists were frequently depicted during the whole of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Those classical anecdotes thus served not only as means of encouraging modern artists to vie with the great artists of antiquity, but also as a basis by which the literati could formulate and establish art theory. For example, the famous paragone debate was founded on the ancient concept of the agon (contest).  

Although the contest between Zeuxis and Parrhasius was known throughout the Renaissance period, it was commonly discussed in terms of its meaning in art theory, with pictorial representations of it only coming relatively late, and being far rarer. In fact, to the best of my knowledge, the drawing by von Aachen may be the earliest surviving representation of this legend. Subsequently, in the seventeenth century, other images representing the contest between Zeuxis and Parrhasius were produced, such as the Dutch painter Leonaert Bramer’s The Grapes of Zeuxis and Zeuxis and Parrhasius (1683) by Johann Jacob von Sandrart (after Joachim von Sandrart). In comparison with these prints, one can notice that Hans von Aachen’s drawing implicates both the contest between Zeuxis and Parrhasius and the self-criticism of Zeuxis, yet

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12 Works of classical literature such as Naturalis Historia or Imagines were and are an important inspiration for many artists who sought to recreate famous ancient art, as Botticelli did in his Calumny of Apelles. In other cases, they inspired artists to transform motifs like the curtain to enhance the theoretical discourse or dimensions of their works, with well-known examples including the Sistine Madonna of Raphael or Rembrandt’s Holy Family with a Curtain.

13 For more information on Paragone, see the primarily treatise of Varchi (1549/2013), and Baader’s article (2003b: 261-265, esp. 261) and the introduction of Pepe (1994b: 642-647).

14 27.3 x 19.68 cm. Brush and gray and brown ink on cream laid paper Signed. The Grapes of Zeuxis (MutualArt, n.d.).

at the same time, it is also different from the other works that presented the story in a literal manner. Von Aachen extended the theoretical discourse by showing the painting- and mathematics-related instruments. He did not present the story in a narrative mode. In his image, the protagonists are not actually engaged in any substantial action, but rather are simply making expressive gestures, such that with his pictorial arrangement, von Aachen accentuated the critical and pregnant moment (fruchtbare Augenblick) in which the crowd was astonished by the painting, a reaction somewhat in opposition to Zeuxis’ own judgment of his creation.

*Giudizio del’occhio* (Summers, 1981: 368-379) is a sixteenth-century art theory that emphasises the judgment of the artist. According to the theory, elements such as measurement, size, quantity, and proportion were assessed in order to create beautiful works. This was consistent with the belief held by the humanists of that time, that *giudizio dell’occhio* was a gift from God, and the only way through which we can perceive and understand the visible world and the order within it (Baader, 2003a:122-126; Grassi, 1994a: 359-360). In this context, Giorgio Vasari even used the terminus of *giudizio universale*. Apart from the art theory of Italy, it is known that the art-theoretical concepts of Albrecht Dürer also exerted a great influence

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16 The term fruchtbare Augenblick is invented by Gotthold E. Lessing, see the treatise of Lessing (1964).
17 For the idea of Giudizio and Giudizio dell’occhio, see the introduction of Hutson (2016), esp. Summers’ discussion (1981: 368-379).
18 So wrote Vasari in his Le Vite: “Perché il disegno, padre delle tre arti nostre architettura, scultura e pittura, procedendo dall’intelletto cava di molte cose un giudizio universale simile a una forma overo idea di tutte le cose dalla natura, la quale è singolarissima nelle sue misure . . . e perché da questa cognizione nasce un certo concetto e giudizio, che si forma nella mente quella tal cosa che poi espressa con le mani si chiama disegno, si può concludere che esso disegno altro non sia che una apparente espressione e dichiarazione del concetto che si ha nell’ animo, e di quello che altri si è nella mente imaginato e fabricato nell’ idea.” (1981, Vol. 1: 168-169). For the terminology of disegno, see also Kemp’s article (1974: 219-240), and the introduction of Pepe (1994a: 360).
on von Aachen’s ideas regarding art. The giudizio was the prerequisite for the recognition of beauty, and Dürer essentially expanded upon this concept to assert the idea that the definition of beauty depends upon the judgment of the artist. Dürer considered beauty to be part of the God-given natural law, and to be based on the ratios of measurements, numbers, proportions, and weights. Dürer understood the divine order as a holistic condition in which measurements, in the sense of proportion, are also enrolled as the means of measuring human behavior itself. The divine order is therefore also syncretised with a moral dimension. The measurement of numbers is thus united with the criterion of human action, and through proportional and formal perfection in both the mathematical and moral sense, it would thus be possible to restore the full equilibrium of the world system. The allusion to mathematics and giudizio was one of the fundamental ideas in von Aachen’s Zeuxis drawing, as indicated by the compass laid out for use as a piece of painting equipment.

The compass was usually used to refer to architectonic planning, as it enabled a builder to give his design the appropriate proportions to ensure the beauty as well as the stability to his work. It was considered to be one of the most important tools of artisans, and was used in art as a symbol for proper proportions since antiquity. In Cesare Ripa’s Iconologia (1992), the personification of disegno holds a compass in his hand. Disegno, as padre delle tre arti (father of the three arts), signified the idea referred to as the creative power (invenzione) of artists. Along with the square, the compass is also the most identifiable symbol of Freemasonry. Both the square and compass are architects’ tools and are used in

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19 Albrecht Dürer has developed his own concept of Giudizio in his theoretical treatise (1525, 1528, 1966).
20 With the three arts, Vasari meant the art of architecture, sculpture and painting. See note 18 of this article.
21 For more information on ingenium/ingegno, see pages 8-9, note 11 of this article.
masonic rituals as emblems to teach symbolic lessons regarding the virtue of being a Freemason. The free status and emphasis on the virtue of stonemasons and cathedral builders have served since the Middle Ages as a way to legitimize the art of architecture and sculpture. The compass is also the main attribute in personifications of geometry. Since von Aachen drew this measuring instrument with other tools regarded as representative of painting, the image denotes not only the close relationship between painting and geometry, one of the *quadri
divium* in the liberal arts, but also refers to the virtues and humanism of artists as the seven liberal arts do. With this reference to geometry, Hans von Aachen has ennobled painting insofar as geometry was recognised by the ancients as one of the liberal arts, due to its noble essence according to the ancient division of the good into the useful, the pleasant, and the noble (Augros, n.d.). The liberal arts were regarded as noble because those arts “make their possessors noble, that is, they make their possessors to be good human beings” (n.d.), and “aim chiefly at noble things or things which perfect the human mind” (n.d.). The idea of perfecting the human mind was also related to the concept of geometry and to the conception of virtue that played an essential role in the theorization process of the fine arts since the sixteenth century. In

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23 Freemasonry evolved from the guilds of stonemasons and cathedral builders of the Middle Ages. A master masons were considered freemen who could travel as they wished to work on the projects of the patrons and could operate as self-employed craftsmen and train apprentices. During the Renaissance, the stonemason’s guild admitted members who were not stonemasons, and eventually evolved into the Society of Freemasonry. Whether Hans von Aachen belongs to the Freemasonry or not, there is still no definite evidence yet.

24 For more information on painting and geometry, see also the study of Borgo and Schirra (2013), for more classical treatises about science and art see also Barocchi’s book (1977).

25 “Geometry, on the other hand, is both an ‘art’ and a ‘science’ according to the ancient senses of these terms. It is a ‘science’ because it begins from self-evident and necessary truths, and reasons forward to their logical consequences. But it is also an ‘art’ because it teaches us hoe to make certain things, certain constructions” (Augros, n.d.). See also the study of Borgo and Schirra (2013) and the research of Rupprich (1966).
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fact, von Aachen’s prominent countrymen, Albrecht Dürer, provided the first geometry instruction regarding the human body in German speaking countries (Dürer, 1525). His treatise on the subject was widely disseminated in Italy too, and was well known by the humanists and by artists in general (Ebert-Schifferer & Fiore, 2011).

Hans von Aachen used the compass to indicate geometry as the mathematic principle underlying painting and to assert that perspective was an aspect of painting rooted in mathematics. In this way, von Aachen effectively legitimated the art of painting by depicting it as something substantiated through scientific knowledge. This argumentation was not unfamiliar to art-theorists and artists since the fifteenth century; in particular, Leonardo da Vinci’s works as an artist and theorist provide ample pictorial and written evidence of the theoretical connections between painting and science. In fact, in his treatise *Trattato della pittura*, Da Vinci even indicated his belief that the art of painting was actually of higher value than the sciences (Da Vinci, 1990: 7-9).

Meanwhile as a symbolic object, the compass was regarded one of the symbols of the goddess Fortuna. In ancient Rome, Fortuna was incorporated into the figure of Dike, who in ancient Greek culture was the goddess of justice or law and embodied the spirit of moral order and fair judgment in human society. On the other hand, as one of the essential tools of builders and architects, the compass is connected with the idea of God as creator of the world. In Dürer’s 1514 engraving, *Melancholia I*, there is a winged angel holding a compass, which was considered to be a traditional symbol of God as deus artifex since the thirteenth century. As such, the

26 For Leonardo’s concept of Paragone, see also the introduction of Carrara (2019) and the study of Gebhardt (2020).

27 This idea can be traced back to Plato’s *Timaeus*, in which the demiurge is presented as the creator of the universe. Through Boethius, the ideas of the demiurge and deus artifex came into Christian conceptions.

28 In an earlier representation of the idea of deus artifex, one can see the illumination of Biblia pauperum; God is shown as the architect of the world holding a compass.
compass embodied the order of the divine creation and the system of the world, and the painter von Aachen transformed this order again in his artistic creation. This conjunction expresses not only the creativity of the artist in his efforts to achieve perfection, but also serves as a legitimization of the artist, one which even suggests that the artist has a godlike potential.

In addition to the information presented in the pictorial representation itself, von Aachen clarified the idea of the drawing by appending written information. Above the scene, the spectator can read the inscription “pictora mofo natora,” which means “painting deceives nature.” In other words, the pictorial representation achieved such an illusory effect that it could even delude natural creatures, as the Bild im Bilde showed. This trompe l’oeil effect has its recourse to the concept of imitatio (mimesis).

Hans von Aachen must have known very well the theoretical implications of these classical legends. Also, his stay in Rome had helped him to gain profound insights regarding not only into the associated theoretical discourse itself, but also its pictorial tradition. In Rome, von Aachen lived in the house of the Dutch artist and art dealer Anthonis Santvoort, and it was there that von Aachen met Hans Speckaert (c. 1540 Brussels–1577 Rome) and probably also Bartholomeus Spranger. Speckaert had profoundly influenced the earlier drawing style of von Aachen. Inspired by the Apelles legend, Speckaert had invented a composition which is now known through an engraving by Pieter Perret called Pittura. The scene is identified as Apelles Painting Alexander. In this image, however, the figure that can be recognised as Alexander the Great is the one who sits in the

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29 Since Hans von Aachen had improved his craftsmanship and worked in Italy for over 15 years, it can be assumed that Hans von Aachen knew the theoretical discourse regarding mimesis. The more comprehensive study of mimesis see Auerbach’s book (1946). Further Information see also the research of Gebauer and Wulf (1998) and the study of Halliwell (2002).

30 40.8 x 28.7 cm. Engraving. Pittura (Europeana Collections, n.d.).
right foreground. This figure is quite far from the visual range of the painter, who turns his back to the viewer and is focused on his painting. The most peculiar aspect of this representation is that Apelles is surrounded by soldiers. In the juxtaposition of the nearly naked Apelles and the armoured soldiers, it can be suggested that Speckaert intended to show the ennoblement and protection of artists via the power of the emperor.

During his stay in Rome, von Aachen had the opportunity to see the painting and discuss the invention and theoretical conception with Speckaert directly. We know that by the time von Aachen had completed the above-mentioned drawing, he had also finished a sketch depicting the Apelles legend, the so-called *Apelles and Campaspe*. The legend is the story of how, when commissioned by Alexander to complete a painting of Alexander’s mistress, Apelles fell in love with her. When Alexander noticed Apelles’ feelings toward Campaspe, he decided to grant Campaspe to Apelles. He made this decision, Alexander is said to have explained, because Apelles understood and appreciated the beauty of Campaspe better than he.

These two drawings, *Zeuxis with His Painting of a Boy with Grapes* and *Apelles and Campaspe*, were made soon after von Aachen’s arrival in Munich; therefore, one can hypothesise that the Italian art tradition still had an immense influence on von Aachen, in terms of his choices for their topics and their art-theoretical conception. In the northern regions, the recourse to anecdotes about ancient artists was first done as a form of eulogy by humanists; in 1505, Albrecht Dürer was compared with Apelles and Parrhasius. In contrast, the pictorial representations of the legends occurred much later and were rarer, frequently appearing as book illustrations or in other contexts, such as the illustration *Zeuxis and the Virgins of Croton* in Cicero’s *De inventione* or the emblem *Importuna*.

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31 For the tale of “Apelles and Campaspe,” see the tale of Pliny the Elder (2004: 331-334, esp. 332-333).

32 Miniature in Cicero, De Inventione, um 1480, Ghent, Universiteitsbibliotheek, Ms. 10, fol. 69v.
Adulatio with the representation of Apelles painting Alexander.\textsuperscript{33} Hence, von Aachen’s two drawings may mark a new beginning in the artistic confrontation with classical legends and their theoretical implications in northern Europe. Starting with those two drawings, von Aachen was frequently preoccupied with theoretical discourses about the arts, and he used his paintings as means by which to articulate his ideas regarding the art of painting.

III. The \textit{Amor Fucatus} and the \textit{Allegory of the Arts} in the Chimei Museum

The second main topic of this paper is the engraving \textit{Amor fucatus}, finished by Raphael I Sadeler in 1591. According to the inscription on the print,\textsuperscript{34} the original composition was Hans von Aachen’s, which he must have completed by 1591. The title and epigraph, of the print, meanwhile, were the invention of Raphael I Sadeler.\textsuperscript{35} In a strongly counter-reformation milieu, mythological subjects, especially those containing representations of naked figures, were often presented within moralizing frameworks. Graphic work was censured more strictly because of the direct nature of this medium, and the unique form of art that it conveyed. Since printmaking was relatively inexpensive, images were mass produced and made available to the general public. As such, prints

\textsuperscript{33} Emblem from Joannes Sambucus, \textit{Emblemata cum aliquot nummis antiqui operis} (Antwerp: Christophe Plantin, 1564). \textit{Importuna adulation} (French Emblems at Glasgow, n.d.).

\textsuperscript{34} The inscription reads: “Ioan. von Ach. Inventor / Raphael Sadeler scalpsit et excudit 1591.”

\textsuperscript{35} The epigraph reads: “Nectar in ore sapit, latet imo in corde venenum / Dum subit, & blandy syrmate fallit Amor / Sic laruis tegitur facies: sic fucus inumbrat / Corpora; sic resonas Vox imitatur odas.” The English translation quoted from Sluijter’s book (2000: 314, n. 134): “In the Mouth it taste like nectar, but poison is concealed deep within, when Amor creeps up and deceptively administers his purgative. Thus his face is covered with masks, thus his body is sprinkled with white powder, thus does he imitate melodious sounds.”
also publicised the inventions of painters, spread knowledge of new styles, and facilitated stylistic comparisons (Castor et al., 2010). Artists became widely known through reproductive prints circulated throughout Europe.

The painting by Hans von Aachen that was reproduced by Raphael I Sadeler has been regarded as lost. During my research, however, I have found a painting with an almost identical composition (Figure 4), which is now housed in the Chimei Museum, Tainan. The provenance of this painting can be traced to the collection of King Carol I of Romania (1881-1914), when it was listed in a nineteenth-century catalogue by Leo Bachelin. According to this auction catalogue, part of the collection of Carol I of Romania later passed to Prince Michael of Bourbon-Parme (1926-2018), including the painting now entitled Allegory of the Arts by Hans von Aachen. In the catalogue from 1898, this painting was entitled L’Art inspiré par l’Amour (Art inspired by Love) (Bachelin, 1898: 150), and was wrongly attributed to Frans Floris. Based on this incorrect attribution, the editors of a subsequent auction catalogue also ascribed the painting incorrectly to Frans Floris, but the title was changed to L’Allegorie des Arts (Allegory of

37 Carol I (1839-1914), born as Prince Karl of Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen, was the ruler of Romania from 1866 to 1914. He was the first ruler of the Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen dynasty, which ruled the country until the proclamation of a republic in 1947 (Bachelin, 1898).
38 “Je soussigné, Prince Michel de BOURBON PARME, demeurant 61 Bd Saint-Antoine à Versailles (78000) certifie par la présente que le tableau reproduit ci-dessous provient bien de l’ancienne collection du Roi Michel de Roumaine, puis de la mienne, qu’il est libre de tous droits, qu’il figure page 150 sous le titre «L’Art inspiré par l‘Amour» attribué à Frans Floris, dans le catalogue de la collection du Roi Charles 1er de Roumanie, 1898 par L. Bachelin,” quoted in Auction catalogue. Here I would like to thank the kindness and assistance of the Chimei Museum which provided all the documents and data to enable this research.
Finally, due to the graphic reproduction and the epigraph of Raphael I Sadeler, we can confirm with certainty that the pictorial invention shown in both the engraving and in the painting came from Hans von Aachen. A comparison with Sadeler’s engraving indicates that a section measuring about 20 cm was removed from the top of the painting, and that this section depicted a flying amoretto emerging from the curtain and holding a mask in his hands. A scientific examination has proven that this flying amoretto was originally shown in the Chimei painting (Figure 5), and that there were traces of titanium on the section where the amoretto had originally appeared in. This proved that retouching was probably carried out in the early twentieth century since titanium only began to be used in this period. The amoretto is strongly overshadowed, such that the figure looks like a silhouette, while only half of the mask is illuminated, and as a result, the mask and its meaning have been emphasized. Slight alterations can be seen in Venus’ hair decoration and in the palette that changes from oval to square. In the engraving, her hair is fastened with some kind of textile, but in the painting, it appears as if Venus wears a black headdress made of a hard material, the well-groomed hair is covered with a transparent veil decorated with pearls. She also wears oval-shaped pearl earrings. From the cooperation between Hans von Aachen and the engravers, one can know, the engravers in most cases followed the original design exactly or introduced only slight differences in minor details. Other graphic reproductions by the Sadeler family show the same working procedure. Therefore, it is unlikely that Raphael I Sadeler enriched certain pictorial details in a way that may have changed or expanded upon the meaning of the painting.

39 Fucikova presumes the master of Hans von Aachen war apprentice or assistant of Frans Floris, in order to explain the similarity between the earlier style of von Aachen and the Antwerp School. For more details about the apprenticeship, see the discussion of Fusenig (2010: 13).

40 For the scientific research report, see the appendix.
The scientific examination which was carried out by the Chimei Museum shows some earlier restorations and retouches. For example, the sharp contour of Venus’s left leg was rather disproportional; this was due to previous retouching and the darkened background too. The oil painting was already measured as being 51 by 42 cm in the 1898 catalogue. Thus, the painting must have been cut down before 1898. The painting’s style, quality, and technical evidence in the scientific reports all confirm the attribution of the *Allegory of the Arts* in the Chimei Museum to Hans von Aachen. It possesses all the stylistic features that are typical of Hans von Aachen’s painting: a fine *colorito*, delicate but rich color, enamel-like painting of flesh with transparent shadows, and sharp contours in the curtain.

The painting lacks the engraving’s moralizing tenor. It shows a female figure standing in a private room with a bed and curtain in the background, and in her left hand she holds a palette and brush, the usual attributes of the personification of painting (*Pictura*). Cupid flies on her right side, and with his hands touches her shoulders. The female protagonist turns her head slightly to the right and looks into Cupid’s eyes. Beside the protagonist, one can see a folder and some musical instruments, including a violin, lute, and clarion. Given these musical instruments, it is possible that the female figure also symbolises the art of music.

The features of the two protagonists are strongly influenced by the work of Michelangelo Buonarroti. In comparison between von Aachen’s *Allegory of the Arts* and the famous cartoon of Michelangelo’s *Venus and Cupid*, one can observe that in both paintings Cupid places his left foot in Venus’s lap, while Venus turns

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41 *Colorito*, meaning not only color but also its judicious application, was deemed fundamental to conceive painted images charged with the look of life. Typically Venetian was the process of layering and blending colors to achieve a glowing richness. For more information on the terminology of colorito (colore), see the introduction of Hills (1999: 216); esp. the study of Rosand (1981: 85-96).

42 A special thanks to the reviewer for pointing out the similarity with Michelangelo’s *Venus and Cupid*. 
her head toward Cupid. Also the mask motif appears in Venus and Cupid and in the print Amor fucatus. Von Aachen has converted Michelangelo’s horizontal composition of Venus and Cupid into vertical, which varies the seating motif of Cupid. The postures of Venus and Cupid in Allegory of the Arts resemble also closely that of the figura serpentinata, which is essentially duplicated in these two figures. The Michelangelesque figure style and the 1591 engraving make a dating of this painting at around 1590 plausible. This would have been shortly after von Aachen’s departure from Rome, when the drafts of Hans von Aachen still appeared to be greatly influenced by the Roman artists.

But who is this female figure actually? According to the attributes of the image, this female figure can be identified as a personification of Pictura, of Musica, or as a personification of the arts in general. However, her accompaniment by Cupid also distinctly marks the figure as Venus, and to the best of my knowledge, von Aachen was, therefore, the first artist to combine Venus and Pictura in one figure. With this figural combination and the musical instruments, what was it that von Aachen intended?

To answer this question, we must examine some of the other creations of von Aachen. In the engraving Minerva Leading Pictura to the Seven Liberal Arts, von Aachen had personified the art of painting. That image shows a young female figure with a bare breast holding a palette, brushes, and scale in her left hand. Except for those attributes, the personification of Pictura has a quite distinctive appearance in comparison to the protagonist in Amor fucatus, which resembles the figure of Venus in other works by Hans von Aachen, such as the Allegory or The Feast of the Gods (Figure 7) or Allegory of Sovereignty (Figure 8). The comparisons with these works made clear that the female figure in Amor fucatus must be Venus.

43 The figure of Cupid is similar to the Child Jesus in Michelangelo’s Tondo Taddei and in the statue Madonna of Bruges. They show the characteristic of Michelangelo’s masculine figure style, also the physiognomy, hairstyle and the rotation of their torso are similar.
In the drawing *Allegory of Venus and the Arts*, Venus is surrounded by Mars, Cupid, Bacchus, and Ceres. A woman is depicted on the right section of the drawing, and she turns her head toward the background, in which many figures and a circular building, probably a Greek temple (*Tholos*), are situated. She approaches Venus and holds in her left hand a sceptre with a celestial globe, while a torso is laid near her feet. Her gesture suggests that she is leading the figures behind her to Venus. This figure is *Urania*, the muse of astronomy; therefore, the other figures can be interpreted as personifications of the *artes liberales*. A female figure with an armillary sphere can also be observed in the allegorical painting *Allegory of Peace, Prosperity and the Arts*. She sits beside the personification of peace, and holds in one hand the armillary sphere and in the other hand a palette and a statue, which refer directly to the arts of painting and sculpture, respectively. The aggregation of astronomy and the fine arts may indicate the equal status of the *artes liberales* and the fine arts, which, since antiquity, were regarded as belonging to the *artes mechanicae*. Furthermore, military equipment is lying under their feet. This motif can be traced back to the iconography of Venus and Mars, and at the same time it also implies imperial iconography. A similar idea is also represented in the painting *Allegory of Sovereignty*. In that painting, the main actors are situated in a ruin-like space. To the left before a broken column sits Venus: in her left hand, she holds an arrow, and she looks down toward Cupid who seems to rush toward her as though she were his mother. Near her feet, some weapons are lying on the ground. Another female figure to the right can be identified as *abundantia* through her attribute *cornucopia*. She puts her right hand into a vase full of gold and, at the same time, turns her head to the figures in the background. They are personifications of the arts.

In this context, Venus may function as a promoter and

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44 This representation may refer to the well-known proverb “*Sine Cerere et Baccho friget Venus.*”
protector of the arts. Because of her beauty and seductive power, Venus can conquer and temper the violence of Mars, or rather, the male essence, and bring peace to humanity (earth) so that the arts can flourish again. This idea was not unfamiliar during the early Renaissance period. Sandro Botticelli and Piero di Cosimo had painted the same subject in *Venus and Mars*, while in a political-cultural context, Andrea Mantegna produced a painting titled *Parnassus* (Blum, 1936: 86-124; Gombrich, 1963: 196-198; Lehmann, 1973: 59-178). This painting depicted Venus and Mars on Mount Parnassus, which is a reference to the home of the muses who are led by Apollo. This can be interpreted as a sovereign’s display of patronage and promotion with respect to the arts.

As the goddess of beauty and love, Venus also embodies love for art and the perfection of the art, which culminate in the concept of *bellezza* (Di Felice et al., 2019). The themes of love and beauty also play an essential role in art theory. The idea of a reciprocal relationship between love and art provided the eighth and ninth books of the *Nicomachean Ethics*, in which Aristotle traced the origin of friendship and charity back to the view of beauty and discussed those concepts using the example of the *artes* (Höhfe, 2010; Price, 2010: 229-251). The topic of love also reflected on the genesis of the arts, which Pliny the Elder (2004: 336) recounted in his *Historia naturalis*, in which love acted as a catalyst for the creation of images. Later, Giorgio Vasari (1981: 218) referenced the origin legend of visual art in his *Vite*, and visualised this anecdote in his house decorations in Florence (Jacobs, 1984: 399-416; Koshikawa, 2001: 17-28). The fresco shows that the artist drew his own shadow projected on the wall. The version is slightly varied from Pliny’s report, in order to fit Vasari’s own status.

From a philosophical viewpoint, physical beauty is the first means by which to attract the viewer’s or lover’s sight, because

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45 Pliny’s statement is referenced frequently in the art-theoretical discourse of the Renaissance, such as in the treatises of Alberti, Da Vinci, Cellini, Armenini, and Borghini.
physical beauty is a reflection of the divine, and as such will lead the lover to a higher and spiritual sphere. Marsilio Ficino has described this process of ascension from a lower (corporeal) to a higher (metaphysical) domain in his translation of and commentary on Plato’s *Symposium*, and he termed these two spheres *Venus terrestrial* and *Venus celestial*, respectively. In art treatises, the artist is usually described as a lover, and by giving love to his art as though it were a beloved person, the artist can bring the beloved object to life, as we know from the Pygmalion legend, in which Venus also played an essential role.

Here, the sensual power of painting has been brought into the discussion through the personification of Venus-Pictura. The Venus-Pictura symbolises not only divine inspiration, but also implies the intellectuality of the artist. In this context, the mechanical labour which causes painting and sculpture to be classified as *artes mechanicae* will be diminished. And, based on the mathematical principles and inventions, the Pictura will be regarded as part of the *artes liberales*.

The frontality of the naked Venus-Pictura capturing the gaze of her beholders emphasises the seductive power of painting. The act of looking is also manifested in the fixed look between Venus-Pictura and Cupid. It also implies the sense of sight (*Augensinn*) (Leonhard, 2003: 380-389), which from the Middle Ages was often negatively assessed in moralizing theological writings, and found its pictorial tradition in the five senses iconography. The revaluation of the sense of sight through Neo-Platonism provided another interpretative possibility. The Visus functions as the means of recognition and understanding of physical beauty, and thus serves as a first condition for penetrating to higher notions of beauty, or *Idee*.

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46 For the platonic idea of love, see the Symposium of Platon (1998: 1-88, esp. 13-14), and Ficino’s Neoplatonism (1994: 60-65, 206-221).

47 For the tale and meaning of “Pygmalion,” see the comprehensive discussion of Stoichita (2008); further implication of the legend see also the article of Sheriff (2004), and Hersey’s study (2009: 90-110).
to use Plato’s word. By analogy with Visus-Venus, the characteristics of the painting will be demonstrated: it includes the powerful effects of painting (in both negative and positive senses) and the bellezza as the purpose of the visual representation.

The fusion of Venus, Visus, and Pictura culminates in the Visus Allegory by Hendrick Goltzius (Sluijter, 2000: 87-159). The etching was engraved by Jan Saenredam around 1598 or 1601, almost 10 years after Hans von Aachen’s invention of the Allegory of the Arts. On the left side of the picture, an artist sits in front of his painting. He looks steadily toward the kneeling model who gazes at her own image through a mirror. Cupid assists this female figure by holding the mirror. The presence of Cupid marks the female protagonist both as a personification of Visus and the goddess Venus.

In this Visus Allegory, Goltzius used many objects to represent the Visus motif, such as an eagle, a gazing cat, uroscopy, spectacles, and measuring instruments. These scientific instruments are functional for the Visus and also demonstrate its application. This idea also applies to the art of painting as an activity for those especially gifted with the sense of sight and scientific knowledge, which is demonstrated through the act of painting and the act of looking in the mirror in the foreground. The correlation between the canvas and mirror reflects on the connection between painting and nature too.

The ambivalent motif of Venus-Visus-Pictura symbolises love as an inspiring power (as Inspiratrix) and an impetus for artistic invention. The ideal beauty, which is again embodied in Venus,

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48 The mirror motif can be traced back to ancient culture, in which the mirror represented the image of the soul. In the Middle Ages in Europe, the mirror stood for manifold metaphorical meanings such as chastity, transience, or lust. It was only in the nineteenth century that the bourgeoisie reclaimed splendor and self-reflection: the mirror became an important fitment of the bourgeois dwelling. Ever since, the mirror has not lost its fascination, and the encounter with itself in the mirror remains something magical to this day. For more details about the mirror, see the comprehensive research of Hartlaub (1951); further information also see the study of Kacunko (2010) and Kuptz-Klimpel’s article (2011).
Hans von Aachen’s Allegorical Representations of the Arts

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constitutes the aim of the painting; meanwhile, the ability of painting to reproduce abstract ideas is also announced.

Another question that should be asked is why von Aachen represented the Venus-Pictura together with the musical instruments. European society had been undergoing a major alteration since the late Middle Ages. The previously subordinate position of fine arts to other liberal arts such as the music was questioned by artists like Leon Battista Alberti and Leonardo da Vinci. One of the main reasons for this questioning was the discovery of the central perspective. This discovery led to a tight linkage between art and mathematics. Pictorial composition was henceforth subject to mathematic regularity. As such, music and painting could be regarded as having the same fundamentals, that is, mathematics, harmony, and geometry. In turn, it was argued that they should have the same status, as Leonardo argued in his treatise *Il Paragone delle arti*:

Therefore, since you have put the music among the liberal arts, either you should put painting there or else take music away. . . . If you would say that the sciences are not mechanical but mental, I will tell you that painting is mental and that, just like music and geometry, it considers the proportions of continuous quantities [while] arithmetic considers discontinuous quantities, so painting considers all continuous quantities, the qualities of the proportions of shadow and lights, and distances through its [science of] perspective. (Farago, 1991: 246-247)

In the same chapter, Leonardo also made reference to the idea of the sister arts (*Schwesterkünste*) in describing the relationship between the two arts of painting and music:

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49 The high position of music was based on the philosophy of Pythagoras, who established the connection between musical theory and mathematical regularity, which were cosmologically interpreted in the Middle Ages. Together with arithmetic, geometry, and astrology, music was reckoned to be part of the quadrivium of liberal arts which are based on mathematical foundations.
Music is to be regarded none other than the sister of painting since it is subjected to hearing, a sense second to the eye, and since it composes harmony from the conjunction of its proportional parts operating at the same time. [These parts] are constrained to arise and to die in one or more harmonic tempos which surround a proportionality by its members; such as harmony is composed not differently from the circumferential line which generates human beauty by its [respective] members. (Farago, 1991: 240-241)

Hans von Aachen had finished the two compositions *Zeuxis with His Painting of a Boy with Grapes* and *Amor fucatus* around 1589 and 1590, respectively, when he was still living and working in Munich and Augsburg. In Munich, he worked with miniaturist and scholar Joris Hoefnagel and the engravers of the Sadeler family to issue a series of emblematic graphics. It was probably during this collaboration that von Aachen dealt intensively with art-theoretical discourses and formulated his own ideas in the graphic reproductions. Before 1592, von Aachen worked as free artist in southern Germany, as he belonged neither to a court nor to a guild. However, due to his fame, he had a close relationship with the ruling classes and other courtly circles. The free status of the artist may have led von Aachen to use the medium of graphics to actualise his own artistic concepts, and to establish his own reputation in order to secure a new patron.

Could these works refer to the patronage of Duke William V of Bavaria and also make an allusion to the Duke’s affection for poetry, music, and the visual arts? The House of Wittelsbach was famous for their cultural engagement. William’s father Albert V was a patron of the arts and a vehement collector. Joris Hoefnagel created a miniature for Duke Albert V of Bavaria in 1597. The central image of the miniature was surrounded by a grotesque frame, which referred to the patronage of the Duke. On the left side, the interrelationship between painting and nature is depicted, while on the right side, the viewer sees two ribbons which refer to two
magnificent manuscripts commissioned by the Duke. These two musical manuscripts were Cipriano de Rore’s motets and the Penitential Psalms of Orlando di Lasso (1532-1594).  

There is no evidence that von Aachen himself was either gifted at or practiced in music; however, by the time von Aachen created his concept for the Allegory of the Arts, he was familiar with the court musicians, especially Orlando di Lasso. It can thus be assumed that the depiction of musical instruments beside the figure Venus-Pictura reflected, on the one hand, the synaesthesia of music and painting, as well as the famous art-theoretical contest, while on the other hand alluding to the conception of love and harmony in painting as well as in music.

The preference for cultural activity on the part of Duke William V was inherited from his parents. Already as crown prince in Landshut, William had been a patron of the arts. This cultural activity and his spending on Church-related projects put a tremendous strain on the Bavarian treasury. This led in turn to a financial crisis, and on 15 October 1597, William V abdicated in favour of his son, Maximilian the first. Although during his stay in Munich, Hans von Aachen had received numerous commissions from the Fugger Family, Jesuits, the Duke of Bavaria, and the count Otto Heinrich von Schwarzenberg, neither the collection information nor the available documents can prove that the Duke of Bavaria commissioned Hans von Aachen to create the painting Allegory of the Arts.

It is possible that the person who commissioned von Aachen to create the painting in question was the emperor Rudolf II. In 1592,

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50 Orlando di Lasso was von Aachen’s father-in-law. In 1556, Orlando di Lasso joined the court of Bavaria. By 1563, di Lasso had been appointed as maestro di cappella, and he remained in the service of Albert and his heir, William, for the rest of his life. For more information on Orlando di Lasso’s life, see also Haar’s article (2001) and further information on Cipriano de Rore, see Owens’ article (2001).

51 The idea of harmony was usually represented as a marriage of sounds, and since the Middle Ages, the motif of marital love and union was commonly portrayed by the lute or by other musical instruments (Henkel & Schön, 1996: 1297-1301).
Hans von Aachen was appointed as official painter by Rudolf II. Von Aachen’s connection to the Prague court began before 1588, however. In fact, Rudolf II had already acquired paintings by the artist long before the emperor met von Aachen personally. Two years after the official nomination, von Aachen had been ennobled and had the right to a seal with red wax. In 1596, the artist definitely left with his wife Regina di Lasso for Prague. In 1605, the knighthood of von Aachen was not only confirmed, but he was also awarded with the civil right alongside other freedoms. Before the definite translocation of von Aachen, Rudolf II had already commissioned the artist to create some paintings. The mannerist style and the subject matter of this painting also showed a great resemblance to the pictorial topos in Rudolphian Prague (Kruse, 1988). Therefore, it is very likely that von Aachen created the Allegory of the Arts for Rudolf II.

In Prague, von Aachen continued to deal with art-theoretical concepts. Before 1597, Aegidius Sadeler II had finished the engraving Minerva Leading Pictura to the Seven Liberal Arts after von Aachen’s painting (now lost). The engraving shows Minerva and the personification Pictura (Painting) before an ancient building. The helmeted goddess holds the right hand of Pictura and walks with determination toward the personification of the seven liberal arts in the background. However, the Pictura turns her head back and draws attention to a female torso, fragments, and a hammer with chisel, a representation that implies the art of sculpture. The placement and incompleteness of the torso indicate that the sculpture does not achieve perfection, which marked the Pictura to be one of the artes liberales. A similar idea is shown in the drawing Minerva Leading Pictura to Apollo and the Muses. Stylistically, this drawing can be dated to around 1595 or 1596, so the above-

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52 One painting with the same description is 1598 in the inventory of the Munich collection of the Duke of Bavaria detectable, and was sold in 1857. Now the painting is regarded as lost. Before 1595, Hans von Aachen had already engaged with the same motif: Minerva leads Pictura to Apollo and the Muses.
mentioned, lost painting may also have been created around this time. In contrast with Sadeler’s engraving of 1597, in which Minerva led the personification of painting to the liberal arts, in this drawing she leads Pictura to Apollo and the muses. Apollo sits in the foreground with his lyre and looks toward the newcomer. The motif of a flying Cupid who brings glory and victory, symbolised by a palm branch and a laurel crown, to Pictura is identical in both the engraving and the drawing.

The topic of Minerva with the arts was also manifested in an opus by Bartholomaeus Spranger. Around 1591, a few years before Hans von Aachen created his images of Minerva and Pictura, Spranger authored *Minerva Victorious over Ignorance*, which may have directly influenced Hans von Aachen’s painting. In that work, the helmeted and armoured goddess of wisdom triumphs over the donkey-eared personification of ignorance. Minerva puts her foot on the neck of ignorance, and has been awarded by two *amoretti* with a laurel wreath and palm branch. The gesture of Minerva is similar to the representation of Christ’s resurrection and the victorious archangel Michael, which can be traced back to the medieval virtue-vice iconography and thus effectively converges the ancient goddess with Christian moral ideas of virtue. Minerva is surrounded by muses and allegorical figures. To the right behind the muse Clio, the muse of history, there are personifications of Pictura, Sculptura, and Architectura. Unlike Spranger’s image, in which the visual arts in the context of the imperial iconography play a subordinate role, Hans von Aachen represented Pictura and Minerva next to each other. Therefore, the image of Hans von Aachen accentuates the ennoblement of painting and simultaneously the protection and patronage of the monarch. It cannot be a coincidence that Hans von Aachen created these images around those years, when, in 1595, Rudolf II had ennobled the art of painting itself.

The topic of Minerva and the arts shows a tendency which was affiliated with Federico Zuccari’s cycle, and indicated the close connection between the new demands of artists and the recourse to
the goddess of wisdom Minerva. In 1566, Federico Zuccari worked on the decoration of Villa Farnese in Caprarola, and painted a fresco with the Hermathena presiding over the dome, while the crests are instruments of science and the arts. Von Aachen might have become familiar with the motif of Hermathena already, either in Cologne through the Dutch artist Willem Danielsz. van Tetrode or in Prague through Spranger. In the years around 1585, Spranger had executed a ceiling fresco in the White Tower of the Prague Castle, in which was shown a depiction of Mercury and Minerva on clouds. Both act as patrons and protectors of the arts and artists, an idea which already had a long art historical and iconographical tradition. The opposing characteristics expressed through stillness and movement also feature in an engraving produced after 1589, an engraving produced by Aegidius Sadeler after an earlier piece by von Aachen. The print belongs to a tripartite engraving set which contains occasio, cursus, and praemium. The concept came from Joris Hoefnagel. The second print, titled CVRSVS and HERMATHENA, had been invented by von Aachen (Figure 12). The inscriptions indicate life playing craps (a game of dice) and postulate the overcoming of the accidental, that is to say, nature, through art. Furthermore, the Hercules statue in the engraving Minerva Leading Pictura to the Seven Liberal Arts also demonstrates the protective function of Hercules guarding the artist against adversaries. The deeds of Hercules and the myth of the choice of Hercules (via virtutis) refer to the virtues of the hero, and already attested the possibilities of allegorical reflection of the virtues of exercise, diligence, and patience as prerequisites for achieving the status of Pictor doctus. In the drawing Hercules Triumphs over the Vices

53 The exchange of such pictorial concepts in the north was carried out by artists such as Willem Danielsz van Tetrode, who worked in Italy from 1549 to 1567 with, among others, Cellini and Bartholommeo Ammannati. And, at the beginning of the 1570s, he left the Netherlands forever and settled permanently in Germany. From 1574 to 1575, he worked in Cologne for the Archbishop and Elector of Salentin von Isenburg (Andratschke, 2011: 451-464).
Hans von Aachen’s Allegorical Representations of the Arts

(Figure 13), von Aachen effectively revised the Hercules topic. The drawing was probably a sketch for a painting which was listed in a 1621 inventory of an art chamber in Prague. In the middle, it shows Hercules striking with his club the personification of Discordia and avaritia. Over this scene, Minerva flies with a laurel wreath and palm branch. The topos of Hercules Musagetes is also shown in Minerva, Apollo, Hercules and the Muses (Figure 14), an image which refers to the notion that the cultivation of intellectual pursuits rests secure under the guardianship of strength and courage.

In this drawing, which can be ascribed to Spranger’s circle, one will notice that its creator has infused in it a theme of love (including love as the inspiration for creating art, and the love of art) and weaved in the elements represented by Minerva and Mercury. The painter, whose chest has been injured by the arrow of Cupid, and the model on the right side, can be seen as referring to the legend of Apelles and Campaspe. At the end of the sixteenth century, it can be seen that, with the Rudolphine artists, especially Spranger and von Aachen, the depictions of Pictura and the concept of sister arts return to northern Alpine art again for the first time since the works of Frans Floris and Cornelis van Dalem.

Von Aachen discussed the art of painting in terms of its overall aspects and demonstrated that painting is a virtuous activity and equal to or surpasses the liberal arts. This view was also illustrated in the engraved portrait of Hans von Aachen finished in 1601 by Jan

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55 Hercules Musagetes, or leader of the choir of Muses, shown here playing a lyre, was known in Greece under that name, and his worship was often associated with that paid to the nine virgin goddesses of poetry and civilization. It has been reasonably supposed to indicate, by an allegory, that the cultivation of intellectual pursuits rests secure under the guardianship of strength and courage, and that the heroic genius of Hercules can be worthily proclaimed only through the influence of the Muses (Roma Numismatics Limited, n.d.). The topos of Hercules musagetes originated in antiquity and in the 16 century many graphics were reproduced based on its iconographical tradition. For more information on this topos, see also the study of Richardson (1977).
Saenredam after Pieter Isaacsz’s design, who was *allievo* of von Aachen (Figure 15). The oval portrait of the artist is flanked by Hercules and the personification of Pictura, and each figure grasps one of the tresses of the personification of *Fortuna-Occasio*. The vignette below the portrait shows how Hercules chooses the rocky path at the crossroads, and as a reward, it leads him to the *mons virtutis*. The representation of Hercules and the inscription *VIVIT POST FVNERA VIRTUS* (The virtue lives on after death) betoken the virtue of von Aachen, who was able to grasp opportunity and to achieve immortal glory through his *diligentia* and *inventione*. Soon after his return from Italy, Hans von Aachen began to work systematically on the Pictura project. From the earlier drawing of the Zeuxis story referring to the ancient contest, von Aachen had explored with this set of prints the relationship between nature and art, the definition of the art of painting and its exceptional characteristics, and finally the virtues of the painter and the ennoblement of his art. Isaacsz’s design made clear that the idea of virtues as the main essence of the painter and the art of painting was well known in von Aachen’s circle. The esteem of Rudolf II for von Aachen was particularly characterised by the familiarity between the patron and the painter, and by the ennoblement of von Aachen through Rudolf II, which was also symbolised in this engraved portrait.

The above analysis shows that von Aachen occupied himself intensely with art-theoretical discourses and invented within a decennium a series of paintings and engravings with the same themes. The pictorial concepts of this series, as well as the language of art, revealed the influence of Italian artists and humanists, which are shown distinctly in the newly discovered painting *Allegory of the Arts*. As a court painter, von Aachen sought to improve the status of the artist and the art of painting, a goal which he achieved through the ennoblement of his own status in 1594 and again in 1605, and through the legitimation of painting by Rudolf II in 1595. Therefore, this series of artistic creations can be read as a visual expression and documentation of Hans von Aachen’s art-theoretical conceptions.
Figure 1 Von Aachen, H. (1589). *Zeuxis with His Painting of a Boy with Grapes* [Drawing], Collection Frits Lugt-Fondation Custodia, Inv. 7186, Paris (Fusenig, 2010: 74).

Figure 3 Von Aachen, H. (1590). *A Boy with Grapes* [Painting]. Kunsthistorisches Museum, Inv. 2504, Vienna (Fusenig, 2010: 211).

Figure 4 Von Aachen, H. (1589-1590). *Allegory of the Arts* [Painting]. Chimei Museum, 0007838, Tainan, Taiwan. Photographs courtesy of Chimei Museum.

Figure 7 Von Aachen, H. (c. 1590). *Allegory or Feast of the Gods* (Stammbuchblatt) [Drawing]. Handschriftenabteilung, cod. Hist. 4º 298, fol. 142r, Württembergische Landesbibliothek, Stuttgart (Fusenig, 2010: 79).

Figure 8 Von Aachen, H. (1598). *Allegory of Sovereignty* [Painting]. Staatsgalerie, Inv. 2130, Stuttgart (Fusenig, 2010: 80).
Hans von Aachen’s Allegorical Representations of the Arts


Figure 10 Von Aachen, H. (1602). Allegory of Peace, Prosperity and the Arts [Painting]. Hermitage, Inv. ГЕ 695, St. Petersburg (Fusenig, 2010: 227).
Figure 11 Von Aachen, H. (c. 1595). *Minerva Leading Pictura to Apollo and the Muses* [Drawing]. Moravska galerie, Inv. B 3222, Brno (Fusenig, 2010: 174).

Figure 13 Von Aachen, H. (c. 1598). *Hercules Triumphs over the Vices* [Drawing]. Kunstsammlungen der Georg-August-Universität, Inv. H 510, Göttingen (Fusenig, 2010: 81).

Figure 14 Von Aachen, H. (c. 1584). *Minerva, Apollo, Hercules, and the Muses* [Drawing]. Kloster Strahov, Památník národního písemnictví, Prague (Fusenig, 2010: 14).
Appendix

Examination and Results for the Oil Painting “Allegory of Arts”

A. Background

The object of this examination is an oil on panel painting entitled The Allegory of Arts attributed to the German artist Hans von Aachen (1552-1615). The appearance of the painting and its accession details are provided in Figure 1 and Table 1 (below).

This series of analyses formed part of an art-historical/technical investigation of the painting.

![Image](image_url)

Figure 1 Appearance of the panel painting in reflected white light.
Table 1  Dimensions and Accession Details for the Panel Painting

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Allegory of Arts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No.</td>
<td>0007838</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Category</td>
<td>Painting (panel)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artist</td>
<td>Attributed to Hans von Aachen (1552-1615)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dimension</td>
<td>51 cm x 42 cm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Oil on panel</td>
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</table>

B. Methods

The painting was studied with three methods including (1) near infrared reflectography (Opus Instrument, Osiris camera; UK); (2) digital ultraviolet illumination photography (Honle UVASpot 400T/T-BL; USA); and (3) spatially resolved micro X-ray fluorescence (µ-XRF) (high spatial resolution µ-XRF Bruker M6 JETSTREAM equipped with a Rh-target and operating at 50kV and 600μA with silicon drift detector [SDD], Germany). The principals of the various imaging techniques are summarized below:

(A) Near infrared (NIR) reflectography

The wavelength of infrared radiation is longer than that of visible light and can penetrate more easily through certain materials. Therefore, IR light can be used to differentiate different pigments according to how well they reflect/absorb IR light. This is especially true for carbon. Using NIR reflectography to examine the organic materials it is possible to detect the charcoal or graphite sketch or under drawing beneath the paint layers. NIR images, which are recorded using an infrared-sensitive digital camera reveals the underlying images that are normally invisible to our naked eyes.
(B) Digitized ultraviolet (UV) illumination

UV is an electromagnetic wave of shorter wavelength and higher energy than visible light. Not only is it more penetrating than visible light but absorption of UV can stimulate fluorescence in some materials – i.e. they give off additional light at visible wavelengths. Different materials that present in identical colors under visible light may be stimulated into distinctive fluorescence by UV radiation. Therefore, UV can be used to visually highlight varnishes on the painting, or surface anomalies such as retouching treatments.

(C) Spatially resolved micro X-ray fluorescence (µ-XRF)

High spatial resolution µ-XRF using the Bruker M6 JETSTREAM is employed for mapping the distribution of targeted elements by rastering the X-ray source and detector across the surface of the painting. This method provides pigment analysis based on the specific elements detected and can be used to indicate the painting process and, furthermore, alteration underneath the surface due to changes in the painting’s design/layout.

C. Instrumental settings

(A) IR reflectography

Instrument: Osiris IR image system (wavelength 900-1700 nm)
Light source: halogen (500W)

(B) UV illumination

Light source: Honle UVASPOT 400T/T-BL (330-400 nm, 400W)

(C) Spatially resolved micro X-ray fluorescence

Instrument: Bruker M6 jetstream
Settings: Detailed description of settings is given in Table 2.
Table 2  Bruker M6 Jetstream Element Mapping parameters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parameter</th>
<th>Value</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Mapping Height</td>
<td>1503 pixel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pixel Size</td>
<td>300µm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Number of Pixel</td>
<td>2715921</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acquisition Parameter</td>
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<td>Tube Parameter</td>
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<tr>
<td>Filter</td>
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<td>Optics</td>
<td>Lens</td>
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<tr>
<td>Atmosphere Pressure</td>
<td>1055mbar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X-Ray Anode Target/Detector</td>
<td>Rh</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>silicon drift detector with XY motor</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

D. Results

(A) IR reflectography

1. The vertical trace across the middle, as well as the specks around the thigh and knee of Venus, have a brighter reflectance and reveal that these materials are different from the original. It is speculated to be a conservation material.

2. A darker shade shape like a wing could be seen on the top right of the painting which is unseen under the visible light. Thus it is concealed beneath later painted layers.
1. The surface fluorescence in greyish-blue evenly indicates that the varnish was applied thick and evenly.

2. Several black and dark blue anomalies can be seen in the UV image, which suggests a retouching treatment with two different materials or in different layers. For example, the outside of Venus’s knee appears black without fluorescence, whilst a streak on her right shoulder to belly shows in dark blue fluorescence.

3. A large area treatment appears on the top right of the painting.
(C) Spatially resolved micro X-ray fluorescence (µ-XRF) Pb-Łα (lead L-alpha line)

1. The lighter shades in this image correlate with a higher lead signal.
2. The black specks with a sharp outline indicate the paint layer loss (i.e. there is no significant lead in the retouching material) mainly at the vertical line near center and the bottom border of the painting.
3. On the top, a wing vaguely appears from the background as shadow on the curtain. This is more easily to recognized in the iron distribution map below.
Fe-Kα (Iron K-alpha line)

1. The Fe Kα distribution map for iron presents the hidden figure clearly, which is a putto with wing facing the viewer and arms raised.
1. This image is rather complementary to the Pb map.
2. Use of two different calcium materials was detected:
   (1) Dark color pigment used by the artist, corresponding to the painted graphic.
   (2) Calcium-based filler for conservation treatment was shown in the white line and specks with sharp outline.
3. The torso of the second putto shows up more clearly in this map.
1. The titanium is speculated to be the material used for retouching treatment on the bright colored area. Comparing with the Pb distribution map showing paint layer loss, it is clear that the retouching on Venus’ leg was excessive and covered the whole skin part much more than was required.

2. The partial shape of the second putto appears in the top right corner and the Ti Kα map shows the light colored drapery overpainting and replacing the putto.
E. Interpretation

(A) Alteration

The results of NIR reflectography and UV illumination reveal local retouching treatment as well as partial unclear alteration on the background drapery. The results of the $\mu$-XRF mapping, especially the distribution of the lead (Pb) and iron (Fe) (associated with the pigments lead white and iron oxides) show parts of another putto figure in the area of the drapery. The upper part of this second putto was cut-off and covered by the composition that is visible today. The presence of titanium (Ti) located at the second putto’s wings is reasonably assumed to correlate with the light colored paint of the drapery, covering half of the remain putto. The detection of Ti also provides information to the probable date for this alteration, since titanium white was first used as an artist’s pigment after the early 20th century.

(B) Previous treatment

Aside from the alteration, multiple paint layer losses could be seen in the $\mu$-XRF elemental distribution map for Pb. The phenomenon of the paint layer loss can be roughly sorted into three parts: (i) the substrate panel was jointed together from two pieces, and the variation of shrinkage movements between these two pieces led to a vertical crack running from bottom to top; (ii) the bottom border of the painting was damaged more severely which includes the outline between Venus’ left knee and her garment; (iii) two vertical damages at the top right corner of painting were found.

Complementary to the $\mu$-XRF element distribution mapping of Pb, the mapping of Ca presents the restoration treatment as the calcium-based filler for the paint layer loss. And the mapping of Ti indicates titanium (oxide) was used as a retouching paint on light color area. The fact that UV fluorescence photography (Figure 4(2) exhibits two different shades of retouching treatment is also indicative that two retouching treatments, either located in different
layers or using different materials, were used—although the time intervals between these two interventions is unknown at present.

F. Conclusion

The examination revealed a major modification of the composition that a second putto figure on the top of the painting was covered and replaced by the drapery. The putto is highly suspected to be cut-off but no direct evidence of cutting trace was found in this examination.

The elements distributions show the outline of Venus’ left knee had lost. The appearance visible today is highly possible a renovation from the previous restoration work.

Due to the present of titanium, both the modification of the second putto and the restoration treatment on Venus’ left knee are possible to be dated after 20th century.
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**Grenzüberschreitung im Mittelalter** (pp. 166-187). De Gruyter. https://doi.org/10.1524/9783050049892


Hans von Aachen’s Allegorical Representations of the Arts


Die Anfänge der theoretischen Studien; 
Das Lehrbuch der Malerei: Von der Maß der Menschen, der 
Pferde, der Gebäude; Von der Perspektive; Von Farben; Ein 
Unterricht alle Maß zu ändern. DFG.
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und Malerei (M. Burioni, Ed.; V. Lorini, Trans.). Klaus Wagenbach. (Original work published 1568)


漢斯·馮·亞琛藝術寓意題材的再現與新發現的繪畫作品《藝術的寓言》

蔡敏玲
國立臺南藝術大學藝術史學系
E-mail: mling@tnhua.edu.tw

摘 要

漢斯·馮·亞琛身居神聖羅馬帝國皇帝魯道夫二世宮廷代表藝術家，從1580年代後期到1600年初期，馮·亞琛創作了許多關於視覺藝術題材的作品，尤以涉及繪畫藝術及其與自由藝術間的關聯。

本篇論文將揭示漢斯·馮·亞琛對當時代藝術理論的深入瞭解，並在10年內創作一系列相關議題的繪畫與版畫作品，以此來論述他對繪畫藝術的概念與想法。這些作品所呈現的繪畫藝術意涵及其藝術語言，說明義大利藝術家們和人文主義學者群對馮·亞琛創作及藝術概念的影響，這一理念在近期新發現的繪畫作品《藝術的寓言》中再度得到體現。

關鍵詞：寓意、維納斯－繪畫、視覺、藝術理論概念、自由藝術