

Roman Wall Painting and the Art of Vision

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ABSTRACT

This study uncovers ways in which the Roman obsession with the sense of sight is translated into its visual culture. The dissertation has two main goals: to examine the pictorial language of internal viewers in mythological wall paintings from ca. AD 20-79 and suggest ways in which these representations could interact with their audience, provoking or initiating reactions. Although the presence of and emphasis on internal gazes in Roman paintings has been repeatedly noted in prior scholarship, this motif has occupied a marginal place in the wider study of wall painting, which has focused primarily on the representation of supernumerary, or spectator figures, as compositional signposts. This study departs from earlier work in examining multiple types of viewers and treating these motifs as more than meaningless formal elements. An iconographic approach is used to look at the behavior, context, and gestures of the internal audience to identify and distinguish different types of viewers while concurrent cultural notions of vision help inform the potential reception of these images. Drawing from both art historical evidence and ancient scientific theory on optics and catoptrics, this study offers further insight into how Romans visualized different ways of seeing and potentially interacted with these representations.

Representations of sight and viewing experience are found in a variety of mythological scenes and the accompanying catalogue includes over 200 examples. Based on the evidence, there appear to be three overarching motifs: spectators; reflections, mirrors, and the figures who look at them; and lovers. Each of these motifs is distinguished by a formulaic iconography including gesture, relationship with other figures, and physical position within the composition. In addition, the motifs are

discussed in relation to the contemporary scientific theories of optics and cultural traditions of spectatorship to suggest ways in which these internal figures may act as more than compositional signposts. In accordance with the first century AD trend towards more active spectators as well as the noted popularity of tactile, physical vision, one can argue that the painted internal viewers, reflections, and lovers offer different modes of meaning for the external viewer not connected to mythological narrative. Based on this conclusion, the wall paintings and the motif of internal viewers signal new methods of visual communication which blur the divide between painting and viewer, virtual and real space.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Ancient authors and texts are abbreviated according to the conventions of the Oxford Classical Dictionary, 3rd edition. Abbreviations for periodicals and standard reference works follow the guidelines of the American Journal of Archaeology. Below is a list of the most common additional abbreviations.

<i>ABV</i>	John Beazley, <i>Athenian Black-Figure Vase Painters</i> . Oxford University Press, 1956.
<i>ABFV</i>	John Boardman, <i>Athenian Black Figures Vases, A Handbook</i> . London, 2003.
<i>ADS</i>	Archivio dei Disegni della Soprintendenza Archeologica di Pompei
<i>AFS</i>	Archivio Fotografico della Soprintendenza Archeologica di Pompei
<i>ARV</i>	John D. Beazley, <i>Attic Red-Figure Vase-Painters</i> . 2 nd ed. Oxford University Press, 1963.
<i>BAPD</i>	Beazley Archive Pottery Database http://www.beazley.ox.ac.uk/index.htm
DAIR	Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, Berlin
Elsner, <i>Roman Eyes</i>	Jaś Elsner, <i>Roman Eyes: Visuality and Subjectivity in Art and Text</i> . Princeton University Press, 2012.
<i>EVP</i>	John Beazley, <i>Etruscan Vase Painting</i> . Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1947.
Fiorelli	Giuseppe Fiorelli, <i>Descrizione di Pompei</i> . Tipografia Italiana, 1875.
<i>LIMC</i>	<i>Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae</i>
Ling, <i>Roman Painting</i>	Roger Ling, <i>Roman Painting</i> . Cambridge University Press, 1991.

- Lorenz, *Bilder machen Räume* Katharina Lorenz, *Bilder machen Räume: Mythenbilder in pompeianischen Häusern*. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2008.
- MANN Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Napoli
- Hodske, *Mythologische Bildthemen* Jürgen Hodske, *Mythologische Bildthemen in den Häusern Pompejis: die Bedeutung der zentralen Mythenbildern für die Bewohner Pompejis*, (Ruhpolding: Franz Philipp Rutzen, 2007)
- OCD *Oxford Classical Dictionary*
- PAH Giuseppe Fiorelli, *Pompeianarum Antiquitatum Historia*. Vols. 1, 2, Naples: Napoli, 1860
- Peters, *Landscape* W.J.Th. Peters, *Landscapes in Romano-Campanian Mural Painting*. Van Gorcum, 1963.
- Pittura Pompeiana* Valeria Sampaolo and Irene Bragantini, *La pittura Pompeiana*. Napoli: Museo Archeologico, 2009.
- PPM *Pompei: Pitture e Mosaici*. Roma: Istituto della encyclopedia Italiano, 1990-2003.
- PPP Irene Bragantini, et.al. *Pitture e Pavimenti di Pompei*. Roma: Ministero per I beni culturali e ambientati, 1981.
- Richardson, *Figure Painters* Lawrence Richardson, *A Catalog of Identifiable Figure Painters of Ancient Pompeii, Herculaneum, and Stabiae*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000.
- Richardson, *Dioscuri* Lawrence Richardson, *Pompeii: the Casa Dei Dioscuri and Its Painters*. Rome: American Academy in Rome, 1955.
- Guida A. Ruesch, *Guida del Museo di Napoli*. Naples, 1908.

Helbig, *Wandgemälde*

Wolfgang Helbig, *Wandgemälde der vom Vesuv verschütteten Städte Campaniens*. Leipzig: Breitkopf und Härtel, 1868.

Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*

Karl Schefold, *Die Wände Pompejis: Topographisches Verzeichnis der Bildmotive*. deGruyter, 1957.

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INTRODUCTION

“Pompeian painting provides a considerable corpus of *visual alternatives* that need to be studied so as to understand a general history of viewing.”
 --Katharina Lorenz, *The Ear of the Beholder*.¹

This dissertation traces the belief that ancient Rome was a ‘visual culture’ whose obsession with the sense of sight is reflected in its visual evidence, specifically wall paintings. Its purpose is to examine the representations of internal viewers and visual experiences in art using Roman wall paintings as the primary evidence. With first century AD paintings as the primary evidence, and ancient theory on optics as supporting evidence, this study explores the “visual alternatives,” that is, the different ways in which the ancient Romans represented the sense of sight and act of seeing in mythological depictions. The goal is not to illustrate a text or support a thesis using visual evidence, but rather to explore a figural, pictorial language and, where applicable, suggest possible ways in which it was understood by those who viewed it.² By doing so, this study provides a deeper understanding of a history of viewing in the Roman period.³

Paintings as Evidence

Although executed in a fresco technique, wall paintings are a relatively fragile form of evidence and survive only in controlled conditions.⁴ The largest, surviving body

¹ Katharina Lorenz, *The Ear of the Beholder: Spectator Figures in Roman Painting*, 680. The italics are mine.

² Françoise Frontisi-Ducroux, “Eros, Desire, and the Gaze,” in *Sexuality in Ancient Art: Near East, Egypt, Greece, and Italy*, ed. Natalie Kampen (Cambridge University Press, 1996), 82.

³ For an anthropological approach to senses across cultures consult Constance Classen, *Worlds of Sense: Exploring the Senses in History and Across Cultures* (New York: Routledge, 1993).

of Roman paintings come from the Campanian region of Italy. Upon their discovery as early as the sixteenth century, paintings were treated as treasures resulting in a large body of well-preserved, albeit selective, material in museums. Wall paintings have often been privileged in the study of Roman art because of their frequent mythological subjects, fine materials, or aesthetic beauty. But wall paintings occupied a unique space in Roman culture: created by artisans, commissioned by wealthy patrons, and viewed by diverse audiences—they were not strictly aesthetic creations, entirely passive decoration, or fully functional utilitarian objects or spaces. Like other forms of domestic decoration, wall paintings played many roles, for example, portraits or historical paintings represented actual life or events, complex mythological programs provoked conversation during dinner parties, or large-scale scaenographic paintings transformed a space into a Hellenistic palace or set of one of Euripides' plays.⁵ By the late Republic and early Empire, wall painting was a well established form of decoration in homes and other spaces. Paintings were not only decoration, but also indicators of personal taste, interest, or experiences of a specific patron and in some cases served to establish or elevate the individual's identity.⁶ Paintings could also communicate meaning through both materials

⁴ Fresco was the primary technique for wall paintings, although fresco secco (dry fresco) was used to add detail, see A. Duran et al. find traces of organic binder using FTIR and PY-CG/MS indicating that secco technique was used, consult "Determination of Pigments and Binders in Pompeian Wall Paintings Using Synchrotron Radiation, High Resolution X-Ray Powder Diffraction, and Conventional Spectroscopy Chromatography," *Archaeometry* 52.2 (April 2010): 286–307; John Clarke, "Landscape Paintings in the Villa of Oplontis," *Journal of Roman Archaeology*, 9 (1996): 81–107 discusses fresco secco details in fourth style landscape paintings; an additional type of painting—encaustic—which uses wax as a binder, was not used at all in wall paintings, but Pliny mentions its use on wood, particularly for boats and it was certainly used in Egypt, P.T. Nicholson and Ian Shaw, *Ancient Egyptian Materials and Technology* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

⁵ For portraits see Barbara Borg, "The Face of the Elite," *Arion* 8 (2000): 63–96; for programmatic painting consult the early sources: Mary Lee Thompson, "The Monumental and Literary Evidence for Programmatic Painting in Antiquity," *Marsyas* 9 (September 11, 1961): 36–77; Karl Schefold, *La Peinture Pompeienne: essai sur L'evolution de la signification. edition revue et augmentee* (Latomus, 1972).

(e.g., rich pigments) and subjects (e.g., carefully crafted mythological programs). In many instances, painted panels were strategically selected and created—their physical features as important as the mental image they created in the mind of those who viewed them.

Most literally, painters created the physical object. They applied plaster to the wall surface followed by pigments in chosen designs.⁷ Roman wall painting was largely an artisan tradition in which trained and skilled craftsmen applied materials to walls according to the prescription of their patrons.⁸ The artisan model relied on collective creation, copying, and the division of labor in the form of workshops, which Lawrence Richardson and Eleanor Leach have shown were often regional, exhibiting noticeable formal traits.⁹ Painters and their workshops did not operate alone, but were employed and directed by patrons who were generally, at least moderately, wealthy members of society. Very little textual or visual evidence survives to elucidate completely the

⁶ Roman wall paintings have precedent in both Greek and Etruscan painting. On Etruscan painting see Massimo Pallottino, *Etruscan Painting*, transl. M.E. Stanley and Stuart Gilbert, (Geneva: Skira, 1952) and Stephan Steingräber, *Abundance of Life: Etruscan Wall Painting* (Los Angeles, CA: J. Paul Getty Museum, 2006); on Greek painting consult Vincent J. Bruno, “Antecedents of the Pompeian First Style.” *AJA* 73 no. 3 (1969): 305–317.

⁷ Vitr., *De arch.*, VII.1; for an overview of materials and techniques consult the chapters in H. Béarat, *Roman Wall Painting: Materials, Techniques, Analysis and Conservation. Proceedings of the International Workshop, Fribourg, 7-9 March 1996* (Fribourg University: Institute of Mineralogy and Petrography, 1997); for plaster analysis see P. Baraldi, A. Bonazzi, N. Giordani, F. Paccagnella, and P. Zannini. “Analytical Characterization of Roman Plasters of the 'Domus Farini' in Modena,” *Archaeometry* 48, no. 3 (2006): 481–499.

⁸ For the suggestion that Roman painters held a different status than earlier, classical painters see Jeremy Tanner, *The Invention of Art History in Ancient Greece: Religion, Society, and Artistic Rationalisation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press and Harvard Divinity School, 2006), 278.

⁹ Lawrence Richardson, *A Catalog of Identifiable Figure Painters of Ancient Pompeii, Herculaneum, and Stabiae* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000); Lawrence Richardson, *Pompeii: the Casa dei Dioscuri and its Painters* (Rome: American Academy in Rome, 1955); Eleanor Leach, “Patrons, Painters, and Patterns: the Anonymity of Romano-Campanian Painting and the Transition From the Second to the Third Style,” in *Artistic Patronage in Ancient Rome*, ed. Barbara K. Gold (Austin, TX: University Of Texas Press, 1982), 135-136; The most famous example of an elite painter is Fabulus Pictor, a member of the aristocratic Fabii family and mentioned by Pliny for his paintings in the Temple of Asclepius in Rome in the fourth century B.C. Plin. *HN.*, 35.7.4.

relationship between patron and painter, but it seems that the patron was clearly in charge of a room's general decorative appearance. Pattern books or some other form of model almost certainly existed, allowing patrons to select themes, motifs, and compositions that suited their tastes and goals.¹⁰ Although the patron ultimately selected both the style and overall thematic choices, the painter tailored the standardized works to their patron's taste. In a sense, the patron provided the inspiration while the painter executed the end result.¹¹

The vivid colors, familiar mythological subjects, and overall beauty of wall paintings made them popular collectors' pieces in the early excavations when they were frequently removed from walls and placed in royal collections.¹² When serious scholarly study of the panels began in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, individuals were preoccupied with cataloguing and describing paintings based on style and subject. The most influential early work was August Mau's 1882 study of Pompeian painting, *Geschichte der decorativen Wandmalerei in Pompeji*, in which the author categorizes paintings into the Four Styles based on their use of illusionism.¹³ Mau was concerned

¹⁰ Bettina Bergmann, "Greek Masterpieces and Roman Recreative Fiction," *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 97 (September 11, 1995): 79–120; Elaine K. Gazda and Anne E. Haeckl, *Roman Art in the Private Sphere* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1995), 135; Elizabeth Bartman, *Ancient Sculptural Copies in Miniature* (Leiden: Brill, 1992); Elaine K. Gazda, "Roman Sculpture and the Ethos of Emulation," *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 97 (September 11, 1995): 121–156; Miranda Marvin and J. Paul Getty Museum, *The Language of the Muses* (Los Angeles, CA: Getty Publications, 2008), 197; Not only do paintings and mosaics survive with almost identical compositions (figs. 1 and 2) from Pompeii, but also the precedent of copying existed in ancient Greece and continued in the Roman period in other art forms, particularly sculpture; Pliny gives the example of patrons providing florid pigments to 'personalize' their space (*HN.*, 35.12.30) and traces of florid pigments have been found throughout homes in Pompeii, Duran, "Determination of Pigments," 296–297.

¹¹ Tanner, *Invention of Art History*, 279 outlines a dramatic change from the Hellenistic artist as creative genius and the Roman artist as adapter.

¹² For early excavations at Pompeii and in the region see Pedar Foss, "Rediscovery and Resurrection," in *The World of Pompeii*, eds. John J. Dobbins and Pedar Foss (New York: Routledge, 2007), 30.

¹³ August Mau, *Geschichte der decorativen Wandmalerei in Pompeji* (Berlin: G. Remier, 1882), 383–385.

with classifying all painting and establishing a coherent chronology of stylistic development.¹⁴

Although researchers still debate the fine points of chronology and Mau's Four Styles remain the dominant framework for the field, scholars today ask questions about patronage, materials and technique, architectural context, and imagery, among others.¹⁵ Since the 1950s, scholars have approached paintings as parts of complex systems of meaning, informed by culture, space and identity. Researchers identified programmatic cycles within rooms and houses as well as the relationship among painting, mosaic, stucco, and other decoration within one space.¹⁶ A major change in scholarship came in the 1980s when interest turned to the way in which paintings and other decoration were used to structure the social space of a house and articulate the occupant's status. Scholars began to consider the ways in which paintings are evidence of social life. The genesis of this change is perhaps Andrew Wallace-Hadrill's volume, *Houses and Society in Pompeii and Herculaneum*, in which the author posits a relationship among decorative sumptuousness, types of paintings, and a room's function (public versus private; grand

¹⁴ See Eleanor Leach's commentary on Mau's work within its eighteenth century scholarly context of evolution-driven concerns, "Patrons, Painters, and Patterns," 135-136; the first study of pigments at Pompeii was S. Augusti, *I Colori Pompeiani*, (De Luca, 1967).

¹⁵ Each of the Four Styles has had a major scholarly volume see Anne Laidlaw, *The First Style in Pompeii: Painting and Architecture* (Rome: G. Bretschneider, 1985); Hendrick Gerard Beyen, *Die Pompejanische Wanddekoration Vom Bis Zum Vierten Stil* (Haag: M. Nijhoff, 193); F. L. Bastet, *Proposta per una Classificazione del Terzo Stile Pompeiana* (Gravenhage: Ministerie van Cultuur, recreatie en Maatschappelijk Werk, 1979); William Archer, "The Paintings in the Alae of the Casa Dei Vettii and a Definition of the Fourth Pompeian Style," *AJA* 94, no. 1 (1990): 95-123.

¹⁶ Relationships between floors, ceilings, and walls are addressed by Daniela Scagliarini Corlàita in "Spazio e decorazione nella pittura pompeiana," *Palladio* 23 25 (1974): 1976; scholarship on programmatic themes in rooms and houses also moved in new directions during the late twentieth century, see Jennifer Trimble, "Greek Myth, Gender, and Social Structure in a Roman House: Two Paintings of Achilles at Pompeii," in *The Art of Emulation*, ed. Elaine K. Gazda (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2002), 222-256.

versus humble).¹⁷ Shelly Hales, Eleanor Leach and other scholars build on this work to suggest ways in which paintings define hierarchy of space, identify social ritual, and confirm the occupant's identity.¹⁸

Studies of paintings and their social significance have tended to stay away from sustained analyses of the pictorial subject matter itself, instead discussing issues of genre, complexity, or quality. Recently, Jaś Elsner has called for a return to the visual imagery, noting that sustained study of pictorial themes and their representation can also contribute to our broader understanding of cultural history.¹⁹ Scholars have been somewhat hesitant to offer iconographic readings of figural panels that connect to social or individual responses finding it difficult to navigate the territory between representation and actual practice. In *Looking at Lovemaking* John Clarke interrogates sex-scenes suggesting that the depictions represent actual practice, a method that has received some criticism.²⁰ Others are less literal, reading mythological scenes as suggestive of cultural themes such as power or desire.²¹ Despite their complexity, figural paintings offer a body of visual

¹⁷ Andrew Wallace-Hadrill, *Houses and Society in Pompeii and Herculaneum*, (Princeton University Press, 1996); Wallace-Hadrill's 1996 volume is based heavily on his earlier articles, "The Social Structure of the Roman House," *PBSR* 56 (1988): 43–97; "The Social Spread of Roman Luxury: Sampling Pompeii and Herculaneum," *PBSR* 58 (1990): 145–192; "Elites and Trade in the Roman Town," in *City and Country in the Ancient World*, eds. J. Rich and A. Wallace-Hadrill (London: Routledge, 1991), 241–272; and "Houses and Households: Sampling Pompeii and Herculaneum," in *Marriage, Divorce, and Children in Ancient Rome*, ed. B. Rawson (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), 191–227.

¹⁸ Shelly Hales, *The Roman House and Social Identity* (Cambridge University Press, 2003); Eleanor Leach, *The Social Life of Painting in Ancient Rome and on the Bay of Naples* (Cambridge University Press, 2004); See Tybout, R. A. "Roman Wall-Painting and Social Significance," *JRA* 14 (2001): 33–55; also Bettina Bergmann's response to Tybout, "A House of Cards: Response to Tybout," *JRA* 14 (2001): 56–58.

¹⁹ Jaś Elsner, Review of *The Social Life of Painting in Ancient Rome and on the Bay of Naples*, Eleanor Leach. *Bryn Mawr Classical Review*, 12.33 (2004).

²⁰ John Clarke, *Looking at Lovemaking*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001); for criticism see Elsner, Review of *Social Life of Painting*.

²¹ David Fredrick, "Beyond the Atrium to Ariadne: Erotic Painting and the Visual Pleasure in the Roman House," *Classical Antiquity* 14 no. 2 (1995): 266–288.

evidence from which to interrogate issues of Roman social life and culture. Because of their unique position in Roman society—decoration, signifiers, records—figural wall paintings are a rich source of evidence for Roman visual culture, not only the things seen, but also how they were seen.

The Viewer and Viewing Experience

Merging the study of paintings with the study of vision requires tools and terms from several fields. This study is first and foremost an examination of painted representations and although it does not explicitly set out to understand the Roman viewer and his/her reaction to paintings, both of these issues are relevant and are occasionally discussed.²² A subset of cultural history studies involves the investigation of Roman viewers. Rather than focus solely on the creator (patron or painter) as the origin of meaning, these studies consider the role of the Roman viewer or collective culture. At the core of this research is the quest to understand how a Roman viewer encountered paintings, both physically in space and conceptually. Viewer-centered studies are often rooted in physical contextualization and ask questions about a hypothetical viewer's interaction with or reaction to art.

²² The most recent approach to viewer-response studies may be the self-termed field of 'neuro-arthistory' pioneered by John Onians, David Freedberg, and others, which seeks to pair the study of neuroscience with individual reactions to viewing art. While this study does not directly invoke the foundations of neuro-arthistory to understand the ancient viewer's potential reaction, it does incorporate some of the same foundations, namely, that individuals react to works of art. See Vittorio Gallese and David Freedberg, "Mirror and Canonical Neurons Are Crucial Elements in Esthetic Response," *Trends in Cognitive Sciences* 11 no. 10 (2007): 411; David Freedberg, "Memory in Art: History and the Neuroscience of Response," in *The Memory Process: Neuroscientific and Humanistic Perspectives*, ed. S. Nalbantian, P.M. Matthews, and J.L. McClelland (MIT Press, 2011), 337-358; Fortunato Battaglia, "Corticomotor Excitability During Observation and Imagination of a Work of Art," *Frontiers in Human Neuroscience* (2011): 1-6.

Addressing the question of viewing experience most literally are analyses of physical context focused on sightlines and decorative ensembles. Because paintings originally existed on walls within architectural spaces, much of this scholarship also considers houses, particularly in Pompeii and the Vesuvian region. Digital models and other reconstructions have significantly advanced work in this area making it possible for scholars to see virtually paintings in their original context as they would have been seen.²³ As John Dobbins and Ethan Gruber demonstrate in their study of the Casa del Fauno, such reconstructions are more than just high-tech exhibits and provide new questions and answers to old material.²⁴ While such studies of physical context help answer the question “what did viewers see?” they are necessarily limited to single rooms or houses and do not articulate a clear notion of a Roman viewer with specific knowledge or perspective. In her study of the Casa del Poeta Tragico, for example, Bettina Bergmann considers the frescoes within their original architectural space and suggests ways in which meaning would have changed as viewers moved through space.²⁵ Throughout her investigation Bergmann evokes a “cultural agent” or all-knowing viewer who constructs meaning using all available referential systems (i.e., visual, mythological, cultural, historical, etc.).

²³ See the Oplontis Project through University of Texas Austin works with Kings College visualization lab to create a digital version of the Villa A at Oplontis: John Clarke, “The Villa of Oplontis: A ‘Born Digital’ Project,” in *The Preservation of Complex Objects (POCOS). Volume 1: Visualisations and Simulations*, edited by Janet Delve, et. al., (Portsmouth, UK: University of Portsmouth, 2012), 54-65; ongoing projects by the Virtual World Heritage Laboratory based at Indiana University create digital models of ancient sites, buildings, or objects, especially Hadrian’s Villa and the city of Rome allowing modern viewers to better understand these ancient contexts.

²⁴ John Dobbins and Ethan Gruber, “Modeling Hypotheses in Pompeian Archaeology: The House of the Faun,” *CAA 2010 Fusion of Cultures, Proceedings of the 38th Annual Conference on Computer Applications and Quantitative Methods in Archaeology*, ed. F. Contreras, M. Farjas, and F.J. Melero (Oxford: Archaeopress, 2013), 77-84.

²⁵ Bettina Bergmann, “The Roman House as Memory Theater: the House of the Tragic Poet in Pompeii,” *ArtBull* 76, no. 2 (1994): 225–256.

The majority of scholarship tends to adopt a single, elite male as the supposed Roman viewer, however, some studies have intentionally begun to explore alternative reactions. Viewers imparted meaning to the paintings they saw and their understanding did not necessarily correspond with the patron or painter's intentions. In order to read paintings according to a patron's prescribed meaning required a knowledge of 'iconographic codes' as well as familiarity and, ideally, a mastery of mythology.²⁶ The ideal viewers read paintings with all of their knowledge at hand, skimming virtually through their recollection of myths and history in order to make connections between the complex decorative systems in any one space. Realistically, however, this knowledge was unevenly distributed and signaled one's elite education, making this viewing experience a marker of status rather than a universal response.

The following chapters periodically invoke the Roman viewer and his possible reactions, but this individual (or more precisely, individuals) is not the focus of the current study. The purpose of this investigation is to understand a pictorial language, not to hypothesize individual reactions; therefore, any references to a viewer should be understood as the idealized, educated Roman male. In the same way, questions of sight-lines or immediate viewing context are significantly muted, not only because these issues have been widely addressed in prior scholarship, but also because such an approach is naturally focused on individual examples and case studies rather than the larger body of visual imagery.

The following chapters take their cue from scholarship interested in ancient vision more broadly rather than interrogating the Roman viewer directly. The study of what Hal Foster terms vision and visibility has made a relatively recent entrance into the arena of

²⁶ Tanner, *Invention of Art History*, 248.

classical art and archaeology. Foster defines vision as the physical process of seeing and visuality as the social/cultural aspect of sight, yet both together form ‘vision.’²⁷ In her book *The Mirror of the Self: Vision, Desire and Self Knowledge*, Shadi Bartsch deftly explores the “unlikely ménage à trois” of vision, sexuality and self knowledge suggesting that the relationship among the three fields offers a suggestions of “how the ancients understood what it meant to be a person.”²⁸ Bartsch’s work relies most prominently on ancient optical theory, which permeates her discussions of literary references to vision in different forms. With a strong understanding of optical theory, its different forms, and its role in ancient Roman society, Bartsch suggests several “scopic paradigms” which she deduces from the textual writings of Seneca, Achilles Tatius, and Lucretius. Bartsch’s model—the use of ancient theory to contextualize the culture of viewing in Rome—informs the current study’s methods and goals.

Problems and Approach

Jeremy Tanner has recently observed that scholars of ancient art are faced with two overarching problems regarding their evidence, “how exactly as classical art historians are we to identify what remains (material or textual) from the past as proper objects of ‘art historical inquiry,’ and what aspects of them are...proper objects of art-historical

²⁷ The terms and these definitions are coined by Hal Foster in the introduction to his edited volume, *Vision and Visuality* (Seattle: Bay Press, 1998); see also Norman Bryson, *Vision and Painting: the Logic of the Gaze* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983).

²⁸ Shadi Bartsch, *The Mirror of the Self* (University Of Chicago Press, 2006), 1; Bartsch’s volume is just one example of more recent scholarship addressing the notion of visuality in the ancient world. See Shadi Bartsch, “The Philosopher as Narcissus,” In *Visuality Before and Beyond the Renaissance*, ed. Robert Nelson (Cambridge University Press, 2007), 1–28; Jaś Elsner, *Roman Eyes: Visuality and Subjectivity in Art and Text* (Princeton University Press, 2012).

discourse?”²⁹ Essentially, how do we define the material under study and with what methods can it be understood? These questions are not new, but have perennially occupied historians of Roman art leading to no universal answers.³⁰ Historians of ancient art attempt to define their materials in relation to archaeology and modern definitions of art, acknowledging that the ancient world produced and understood visual and material objects in different ways. It is more than a question of terminology—art versus images versus objects, among other terms—but rather an issue of how the evidence is understood and what relevant methodologies are used.³¹

The terms ‘art’ and ‘art history’ often receive resistance when applied to ancient evidence most often due to a fear of assimilating ancient practice and criticism to our own, modern habits. The Romans, of course, had their own definitions of art, at least as defined by the elite class, which valued material richness, technique, or other aesthetic factors.³² This definition did not account for all visual imagery. The post-Enlightenment conception of the term art implies a secular, consumerist culture where images are produced for their aesthetic appeal and includes only those images and objects regarded as solely artistic.³³ Certainly, many ancient artifacts, for example wall paintings or

²⁹ Jeremy Tanner, “Aesthetics and Art History Writing in Comparative Historical Perspective,” *Arethusa* 43, no. 2 (2010): 267; In the same *Arethusa* volume also see Elsner’s discussion of art in the ancient world, “Myth and Chronicle: a Response to the Values of Art,” *Arethusa* 43, no. 2 (2010): 289–307; David Freedberg, *The Power of Images: Studies in the History and Theory of Response* (University Of Chicago Press, 1991), xix.

³⁰ See especially Natalie Kampen’s essay “On Not Writing the History of Roman Art,” *ArtBull* 77.3 (1995): 375–378 which provides a historical backdrop to the question as well as current (at the time of the article’s publication) approaches based primarily on questions of identity.

³¹ W.J.T. Mitchell, *Iconology* (University Of Chicago Press, 1987).

³² Plin. *HN.*, 35–36.

sculpture, can be understood in terms of this definition of art and many scholars point to the tradition of connoisseurship and collecting that existed in ancient Rome as justification for cultural similarity. Such definitions brings with them accompanying methods of interpretation rooted in western aesthetics including universal judgments and qualitative assessments based on the tastes of specific individuals or groups. In early scholarship, this meant an emphasis on formal aspects, judging Roman painting in relation to Greek ‘originals’ or interpreting paintings as illustrations of ancient texts. Similarly, others distinguish ancient ‘art’ from other visual evidence based specifically on the presence of an “expressive-aesthetic” suggesting that what we might term ‘high art’ (painting, sculpture) has more in common with other forms of creative communication such as theater or music.³⁴ Such a definition of ancient ‘art’ requires that visual images must possess a sense of intentionality on the part of a producer as well as an accompanying meaning, which in turns means that “there is plenty of [ancient] visual culture that is not ‘art.’”³⁵

The definitions discussed so far highlight commonalities in production and consumption between the modern concept of art and ancient practice but their accompanying approaches are too narrow for the ancient world, in which visual images were created for many functions besides acting as an expressive aesthetic symbols. This naturally broadens the evidence to include such items as jewelry, pottery, metalwork, and

³³ Aesthetic here is as opposed to functional, See Verity Platt, “Art History in the Temple,” *Arethusa* 43, no. 2 (2010): 197–213; Thomas Habinek, “Ancient Art Versus Modern Aesthetics: A Naturalist Perspective,” *Arethusa* 43, no. 2 (2010): 215–230.; Raymond Williams, *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society*, Rev Sub. (Oxford University Press, USA, 1985), 32–34.; Tony Bennett, Lawrence Grossberg, and Meaghan Morris, *New Keywords* (Wiley-Blackwell, 2005), 5–8.

³⁴ Tanner, “Aesthetics and Art History,” 271–272.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 268–269.

other objects, which since Alois Riegl's study of Late Roman art, have played a significant role in histories of Roman art.³⁶ In order to shed any preconceived ideas of purpose or context, some scholars adopt the term 'visual culture' to address the variety of materials and complexity of function. The term visual culture borrows from the wider fields of art history and cultural studies, in which it can be used to describe a variety of media in the urban, modern world such as news, popular culture, advertising, consumerism and politics. Definitions of visual culture vary; for example, cultural theorist Stuart Hall defines it as artwork, architecture, and objects that are part of an equal and identical system of languages used by members of a culture to produce meaning.³⁷ In reference to modern media and design, art historians John Walker and Sarah Chaplin more succinctly define visual culture as:

“those material artefacts, buildings and images, plus time-based media and performances, produced by human labour and imagination, which serve aesthetic, symbolic, ritualistic or ideological-political ends, and/or practical functions, and which address the sense of sight to a significant extent.”³⁸

As Hall, Walker, and Chaplin all attest, visual culture can be constructed by many things—art, architecture, material objects—but it is united by a shared emphasis on the process of seeing and/or being seen. Rather than group art objects based on their perceived function, as expressive aesthetic symbols, this broader position interrogates material based on its interaction with viewers.³⁹

³⁶ Alois Riegl, *Spättrömische Kunstindustrie* (Vienna, 1927).

³⁷ Jessica Evans, and Stuart Hall, *Visual Culture* (Sage Publications Ltd, 1999), 61.

³⁸ John A. Walker and Sarah Chaplin, *Visual Culture: An Introduction* (Manchester University Press, 1997), 2.

The current study accepts that ancient paintings are art, a designation that comes with notions of aesthetic value, but at the same time acknowledges their place within the larger Roman culture of visual images. Thus, images and objects that might be considered art because of their aesthetic appeal are in the same category as architecture, jewelry, pottery, textiles, mirrors, or other items of visual culture. While this distinction may seem unnecessary when the only items under consideration are wall paintings, items that are normally bracketed under the category of ‘art,’ it changes the way in which paintings should be studied—not just as aesthetic decoration created by an individual with one intended meaning, but as visual imagery, itself active within ancient culture.⁴⁰

Turning to the second problem: how should we approach the broadly defined field of Roman art? No longer wedded strictly to aesthetic concerns, art historians traditionally approach art as a reflection of the society in which it was produced, with a “ ‘compulsion to recover a *certain something* long since forgotten or lost’ ..things such as provenance, individual intentions, physical settings, and so on.”⁴¹ The predominance of contextual studies in the 1980s, treated images and objects as illustrative of social and political conditions, foregrounding and blurring the relationship between art history and

³⁹ It also must be noted that Visual Culture Studies, as a more defined field, specifically addresses the modern period, see Evans and Hall, *Visual Culture*, 2; Norman Bryson, Michael Ann Holly, and Keith Moxey, eds. *Visual Culture: Images and Interpretations* (Hanover and London: Wesleyan University Press, 1994); Joanne Morra and Marquard Smith, *Visual Culture: What is visual culture studies?* (Taylor and Francis, 2006); For objections to Visual Culture Studies as a field of inquiry see Svetlana Alpers et al., “Visual Culture Questionnaire,” *October* 77 (July 11, 1996): 25–70 particularly Thomas Crowe’s response that Visual Culture Studies is a “de-skilling of art history”, 35–36.

⁴⁰ Jennifer Trimble, *Women and Visual Replication in Roman Imperial Art and Culture* (Cambridge University Press, 2011). Trimble terms her evidence “visual imagery” and “visual culture” similarly, David Freedberg uses the term “images” to refer to the wide range of visual evidence he deliberately examines in *The Power of Images*.

⁴¹ Claire Farago and Robert Zwijnenberg, *Compelling Visuality: The Work Of Art In And Out Of History* (Univ Of Minnesota Press, 2003), vii quoting Michael Ann Holly, “Mourning and Method,” *Compelling Visuality: The Work Of Art In And Out Of History*, eds. Claire Farago and Robert Zwijnenberg (University Of Minnesota Press, 2003), 160; Freedberg, *Power of Images*, 22.

archaeology. The traditional division between the formal concerns of art history versus the contextual concerns of archaeology no longer hold true as both fields seem to operate on a spectrum.⁴² In her study of the Herculaneum Women sculpture group, art historian Jennifer Trimble outlines a new method for integrating the formal analysis of early art history scholarship with the contextual emphasis of more recent scholarship. Trimble terms her method one of ‘relational aesthetics’ meant to,

“consider the aesthetic in terms of its relationships to historical situations, ideas, space, agency, and reception in a way that continues to illuminate the complex and powerful relationships between people and their visual cultures.”

By understanding Roman art in this way, it is possible to acknowledge and appreciate formal aspects while at the same time agreeing that images and objects often served more functional roles within a culture.⁴³

Many individuals were involved in the physical creation of Roman wall paintings as well as the construction of their meaning and intended response. Rather than focusing solely on creators (either patrons or painters) as the generators of expression, this study treats the paintings as parts of a larger Roman visual culture and therefore as both recipients and generators of meaning. Trimble articulates this relationship as one in which images

“do not simply reflect a reality created elsewhere[...]They also shape that world in turn by constructing experience, intervening in human relationships, engaging with existing concepts and expectations, and stimulating a range of reactions[...]”⁴⁴

⁴² For an excellent discussion see Natalie Kampen. “On Writing Histories of Roman Art,” *ArtBull* 85.2 (2003): 371-386.

⁴³ Trimble, *Replication*, 3.

⁴⁴ Trimble, *Replication*, 2, this is what Trimble terms “relational aesthetics.”

While paintings are in many ways a product of their creators, their ‘life’ continues when they are seen and interpreted by their audience. In this analysis, paintings act as both evidence of and influence on Roman cultural beliefs and practice regarding the sense of sight and viewing experience.⁴⁵ Thus, the pictorial language under discussion is not simply one of formal development, stylistic elements, or popular themes, but is deeply rooted in the larger culture of vision.

Questions, Evidence, and Methods

The presence and predominance of viewing acts within paintings has not gone unnoticed in the scholarship. Campanian paintings are frequently noted for their emphasis on internal viewers and even their relationship with external viewers, but without an extended analysis. Jas Elsner outlines the role of sight within the composition of ancient paintings stating “(different characters’ gazing, the different potential objects upon which the gaze may be focalized, the self-consciousness of representing the gaze itself being gazed at) is a central weapon in the visual mythographers’ pictorial argument...Repeatedly in Philostratus the gaze is articulated as a key mechanism for the emotional impact and hence meaning of paintings.”⁴⁶ Elsner discusses paintings that represent the scenes of Ariadne abandoned on Naxos (*fig. 8*) and Ariadne rescued by Dionysus (*fig. 9*). On Naxos, the princess is most often shown in the lower foreground, crying, as she looks longingly towards Theseus’ ship that sails off into the distance.⁴⁷ In

⁴⁵ Freedberg, *Power of Images*, xxiv-xxv.

⁴⁶ Elsner, *Roman Eyes*, 109.

some examples, she points towards the boat, further emphasizing the direction of her look and as Elsner contends, driving the pictorial narrative with her strong internal gaze.

Depictions of viewing acts do more than just organize a composition, however, they also serve a representational purpose. As Sue Blundell and Nancy Rabinowitz have shown in their survey of Athenian vase paintings that depict women engaged in viewing acts, visual depictions can reveal information on how ancient individuals may have actually performed or engaged in the otherwise ephemeral act of seeing.⁴⁸ For Blundell and Rabinowitz, the visual evidence is especially valuable for reconstructing the acts of women who are underrepresented in the literary record, but are frequently depicted in Athenian vase paintings as internal spectators, individuals denied the right to look, or figures imbued with the maternal gaze.⁴⁹ The authors understand the visual evidence as an account of how female viewers experienced sight in a distinctly gendered manner and suggest that these representations reflect an artistic and cultural awareness, if not also an anticipation, of women's actions by the painter. According to Blundell and Rabinowitz's model, the looks, glances, and gazes not only organize the internal composition, but also offer the viewer (Athenian, Roman, or otherwise) "some pictorial models of the act of

⁴⁷ Elsner, *Roman Eyes*, 91-104.

⁴⁸ Sue Blundell and Nancy Rabinowitz, "Gendered Viewing in Classical Greece," Proceedings from the Conference, *Seeing the Past: Building Knowledge of the Past and Present Through Acts of Seeing*, (Stanford University, February 2005, (<http://traumwerk.stanford.edu:3455/31/341>)).

⁴⁹ Blundell and Rabinowitz, "Gendered Viewing in Classical Greece" also identifies five other visual acts in which women appear in vase paintings; a similar approach is adopted by Eva Stehle and Amy Day with Greek sculpture, "Women Looking at Women: Women's Ritual and Temple Sculpture" in *Sexuality in Ancient Art: Near East, Egypt, Greece, and Italy* ed. Natalie Kampen (Cambridge University Press, 1996), 101-116.

viewing.”⁵⁰ The viewing women are not only reflections of female visual experience in fifth century Athens, but also influence their audience, inducing reactions or emotions.

Roman wall paintings are inherently different objects from Greek vase paintings and do not share the same context or meaning, but can be approached with similar questions. There are several specific research questions relevant to the study. How are different viewing acts represented in paintings? What, if any, formal qualities indicate, identify, or emphasize a painted viewer? Did painters attribute specific behaviors, attributes, or appearances to viewers and are these consistent? How do the painted representations relate to contemporary understanding of sight or viewing practice?

The primary method of the study is iconographic. Of the hundreds of wall paintings from the Roman period spread across the empire, this study considers examples that share one common subject—vision and the act of viewing. Following Nancy Rabinowitz and Sue Blundell, viewing acts are those physically articulated actions which rely on vision as the primary sense and thus depict individuals engaged in the act of seeing or experiencing sight.⁵¹ The figures involved in the act may also be engaged in other ways—moving, speaking, performing, hearing—but the viewing act relies primarily on visual perception and is formally articulated in the painting.

The paintings under study were chosen from a survey of mythological Roman wall paintings from the Italian peninsula and that date to the late Republic and early Empire (ca. 100 B.C.-A.D. 100). These paintings were selected because they represent the largest body of well-preserved evidence within a limited geographic and

⁵⁰ Elsner, *Roman Eyes*, 90.

⁵¹ Sue Blundell and Nancy Rabinowitz, “Gendered Viewing in Classical Greece.”

chronological range.⁵² Examples are not limited to the Campanian cities, although most come from this region with limited examples from Rome. Although the initial survey included paintings within this entire two-hundred year period, the study revealed that paintings actually fall within the narrower range of 20 BC-AD 79. The date of AD 79 is significant because of the large number of paintings from the Vesuvian region. All wall paintings were located originally in a domestic context—a Roman house, either a domus or villa. The catalogue was limited to paintings in domestic contexts because the great majority of surviving paintings are found in such locations and a domestic space suggests similar viewing conditions. Wall paintings in exclusively sacred or civic contexts, for example, would involve different audiences, viewing conditions, and social factors. The study does not offer a detailed investigation of archaeological context, which is beyond the scope of this project.

Approximately 225 paintings make up the entire corpus and analysis, but not all are extensively discussed throughout the study. Descriptions and bibliographic information for all the paintings are included in the catalogue. Additional relevant paintings are also cited throughout the text. While every effort has been made to include as many surviving representations as possible, the fragile nature of frescoes means that many do not survive or are severely damaged. For this reason, photographs of destroyed paintings are included along with drawings, in certain instances. Every effort has been made to examine the panels first-hand whenever possible.

After collecting the paintings, each catalogued entry is examined using a set of visual criteria including overall composition, and subject. Individual figures are

⁵² Roman wall paintings exist outside of Italy, for example in Turkey, M. Strocka and H. Vetters, *Die Wandmalerei der Hanghäuser in Ephesos* (Verlage d. Österr Akad. d. Wiss. In Komm., 1977).

considered for context, physical position, and appearance. Particular attention is paid to visual behavior (do figures interact, do they look away, does one look at another, etc.). While such factors as patronage, painter, materials, connoisseurship, or style are addressed when appropriate, these aspects remain subsidiary to the paintings as physical and representational objects, taking a cue from Michael Ann Holley to move beyond the questions of “Whodunnit and Whatisit?”⁵³ This is not to say that the analysis is removed from a historical or contextual framework, assuming that aesthetic response is universal or that paintings in a museum are the same as paintings on the walls of an ancient Roman house. Instead, the study utilizes historical factors to inform other questions of representation and interpretation. As Verity Platt has skillfully demonstrated in her study of viewing experience in the Casa di Octavius Quartio, any questions of ancient viewing practice or experience must be balanced with historical and cultural contextualization.⁵⁴ For this reason, the paintings are considered along with historical, literary, and other visual evidence, specifically scientific and other passages on optics and the sense of sight.

Discussion of Chapters

The present study is divided into four chapters that trace the ancient interest in vision, particularly as it manifests in visual imagery. Before discussing the imagery, Chapter 1 establishes the cultural and historical importance of the sense of sight and viewing experience in the ancient world using relevant ancient sources. The goal of the chapter is to provide the reader with a basic overview of vision’s presence and its conception in

⁵³ Farago and Zwijnenberg, *Compelling Visuality*, i.

⁵⁴ Platt, “Art History in the Temple,” 197–213; Verity Platt, “Viewing, Desiring, Believing: Confronting the divine in a Pompeian house,” *Art History* (December 20, 2002): 1–26.

antiquity as well as the many ways it manifested in everyday life. As such, the chapter presents two aspects of vision: sight and the physical process of seeing as well as the ways of experiencing vision. Although these concepts are necessarily related, they also represent distinctly different aspects of a culture obsessed with sight. The sources within this chapter are diverse and span many hundred years. In particular, the discussion of optics begins with Parmenides in the sixth-century BC while also presenting Galen in the second-century AD. These references are not meant to provide a comprehensive analysis of textual sources, but rather they have been selected to illustrate the simultaneous consistency and change in intellectual thought across these many years.

Having established the predominance of vision in the Roman world, the discussion of visual imagery begins in Chapter 2. Spectator and observer figures are represented in over 200 catalogued paintings. The appearance of these ‘supernumerary’ or sideline figures has been frequently noted by scholars of painting, yet few have devoted any serious study to their visual appearance and role in the paintings. Most often, these figures are identified as small individuals and anonymous audiences on the side and background of scenes with no role in the painting. Given their almost omnipresence in paintings, however, I question this simplistic dismissal of the figures, positing both a more significant compositional purpose as well as a more explicit visual definition. Examining the vast range of observer-figures that appear in paintings, it is argued that the terms ‘spectator’ or ‘observer’ should be extended to more than just the small, anonymous figures in the background or sidelines of paintings to include figures involved in the scene itself. Considering contemporary notions of spectatorship and observation, it is also suggested that these figures served as guides to external viewers. Furthermore, a

section of this chapter examines a distinct set of paintings that depict figures facing outward, towards the audience and argues for the external viewer's increased involvement in these paintings.

While Chapter 2 considers a type of viewer and his/her representation, Chapter 3 examines a visual phenomenon and its depiction in painting. Reflections are the result of a visual process and are a frequent subject in Roman wall painting. Like vision and the eye, reflections were a subject of interest in ancient Rome and made an appearance in both visual and textual evidence. Not entirely understood, reflections were sometimes considered magical and have been the object of much speculation and theorizing. Unlike observer figures that appear in a wide variety of scenes, reflections occur almost exclusively in four contexts: Venus at her toilette, Narcissus at the stream, Perseus and Andromeda at the sea, and Thetis in the forge. Because the discussion is limited to these subjects, an attempt has been made to collect as many examples as possible. As popular mythological subjects, most of these scenes occur in narratives where mirrors and reflections take on metaphorical status. Connecting the paintings to catoptric theory, I argue that the painted reflections are less metaphorical than often suggested and instead demonstrate that the repetitive appearance of a reflection in these mirrors lends one to reassess the focus of these paintings from the process of looking at the reflection to the mirrored image itself.

Chapter 4 considers the relationship between love and vision as it is represented in a specific set of paintings that depict mythological lovers. Although the connection between vision and love has been articulated, most often in the form of a mutual gaze the chapter explores the contemporary understanding of the erotic eye based in scientific

optical theory. Connecting these notions of the tactile, erotic eye with representations of mythological lovers, it is suggested that depictions of visual exchange between these pairs can be understood as evidence of erotic interaction and on par with other panels that display sexual encounters in the form of physical acts. Lovers and couples are so frequently represented in Roman paintings that the chapter addresses only three pairs in depth: Venus and Mars, Ariadne with her lovers (Dionysus and Theseus), and Selene and Endymion. Like the previous chapter, an attempt is made to collect as many representations as possible of these three subjects.

Vision and the experience of viewing were undoubtedly critical concepts in ancient Roman culture as is evidenced by the extant depictions and textual references. The paintings discussed in the following chapters do not represent all visual imagery or evidence to support this conclusion, but they do offer just one clue about the way in which ancient Romans displayed these interactions for others to see and, at the same time, the way in which these images affected the Roman culture of vision. By considering paintings as active contributors to this larger culture, this study suggests that meaning is not constructed solely by a patron, painter, or viewer, but relies on an interaction between an image and its cultural surroundings.

I

VISION AND VIEWING IN THE ANCIENT WORLD

The sense of sight and processes of viewing held an important place in ancient Roman culture. Writing in the first century, Varro remarks that, “I see from sight, that is, from vis ‘Force,’ since it is the strongest of the five senses. While no other sense is able to perceive something a thousand feet away, the force of the eye’s perception reaches even to the stars.”¹ Varro not only notes that sight is one among many senses, but also stresses its predominance in the hierarchy of perception. Exactly how the ancient Romans understood this visual force remains fraught with questions: did they, like later individuals, recognize that the eye was active or assume that all perception was passive? Did Romans allow any subjectivity in the process of visual reception? How did Romans articulate what they saw? It is the goal of this chapter, then, to discuss the ways in which vision manifested itself, both verbally and visually, in the ancient world and specifically among ancient Romans.² By doing so, we understand better the complex culture of vision within which paintings, and other art, existed and were experienced by their audience.

Because of the breadth and variety of ancient discourse on vision, it is helpful to consider the evidence according to two categories: scientific sources on sight as a sense

¹ Var., *De ling. lat.* 6.8 (transl. David Fredrick) for an interesting discussion of Varro’s implication in this statement as it relates to physical tactility and/or force consult David Fredrick, *The Roman Gaze: Vision, Power and the Body* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002), 1-3.

² Although it may seem obvious that sight is an important sense, the primacy of this sense in ancient Rome is different than other periods. For the study of a single sense in the medieval period—smell—see Susan Ashbrook Harvey, *Scenting Salvation: Ancient Christianity and the Olfactory Imagination* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006).

and accounts of visual experiences.³ Here, scientific sources are defined as those that discuss visual perception and the physical cause of sight, explaining non-observable entities through deductive reasoning.⁴ Conversely, discussions of visual experience demonstrate the role of vision in culture and society, particularly as it relates to viewing experience. The following questions are considered throughout the chapter: what do the sources say about sight, vision and the viewing process, why was vision important, and what role did it play in the ancient Roman world? It is clear that sight and viewing experience, articulated by a number of diverse sources, were predominant parts of Roman culture. When considered together these sources illustrate the complexity of vision as it existed in ancient Rome.⁵

Vision: Sensory Perception

There was no single theory of optics in the ancient world, instead a consistent and continuous discussion centered around the eye's role in either sending or receiving visual signals. Ancient studies of vision were primarily concerned with understanding and

³ The chapter considers western sources, for a discussion of sense perception in non-western philosophy consult J. Geanty, *On the epistemology of the senses in early Chinese Thought* (University of Hawaii Press, 2007).

⁴ This definition is somewhat crude, however, as these early writers differ greatly from one another and span enormous time periods. For a more extensive discussion of this issue see Lucio Russo, *The Forgotten Revolution: How Science Was Born in 300 BC and Why It Had to Be Reborn*, ed. Umberto Pappalardo, (Los Angeles, CA: J. Paul Getty Museum, 2000), 20-23 clearly defines science as beginning in the Hellenistic period and sees the classical (and earlier) periods as building blocks for the start of 'true' science.

⁵ The bibliography on these areas is vast: for scientific sources consult David Lindberg, *Theories of Vision From Al-Kindi to Kepler* (University of Chicago Press, 1981) with bibliography; Jaś Elsner, *Art and the Roman Viewer* (Cambridge University Press, 1997); For a brief synopsis see Bartsch, *Mirror of the Self*, to name a few.

describing the way in which individuals saw the world around them using early scientific theory and geometry.

Almost all early theories on optics and vision were overwhelmingly centered on man and his interaction with the natural world in what Vasco Ronchi has described as “anthropomorphic physics, a science in which the chief figure was a sentient man...[a] physiology of the senses.”⁶ Theorizing about optics originated in Greek philosophy and the quest to understand man, his nature, and faculties; the earliest, fragments that deal with visual perception do so as discussions of all human senses. Parmenides (b. 515 BC), Empedocles (492-432 BC), and Democritus (460-370 BC) all questioned sensory faculties, of which sight was only one factor.⁷ Because as Lucretius explains, “touch and nothing but touch is the essence of all our bodily sensations” vision was considered, along with the other senses, to be the result of a tactile force.⁸ Sight was compared to other, more physically tactile senses, in particular, touch, which involves direct contact between sensory organs (e.g., hand, foot, etc.) and the objects perceived.⁹ Accordingly,

⁶ Vasco Ronchi, *Optics: the Science of Vision* (Dover Publications, 1991), 112.; for a basic introduction to modern optics consult Craig Scott, *Introduction to Optics and Optical Imaging* (Wiley, 1997); for a history of visual theory consult Lindberg, *Theories of Vision* and Van Hoorn, *As Images Unwind Ancient and Modern Theories of Visual Perception* (University Press Amsterdam, 1972).

⁷ Parmenides’ single poem, traditionally called “On Nature,” survives in fragments and testimonia, see especially H. Diels W. Krantz, “Parmenides,” in *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker* (Berlin: Weidmannsche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 2004); and A.H. Coxon, Richard McKirahan, ed. *The Fragments of Parmenides: A Critical Text with Introduction and Translation. The Ancient Testimonia and a Commentary* (Las Vegas: Parmenides Publishing, 2009), 99-267; On Empedocles see p. 33-34 below; Theophr. *De Sensu*, 7; Democritus is considered one of the two founders of atomist theory along with his teacher, Leucippus, see p. 30-32 below; The work of Democritus survives in secondhand sources including Theophr. *De Sensu*, 49-58.

⁸ Lucr., *De rerum natura*, II.434f (transl.; Theophr., *De Sensu*, 50-55); Aristotle criticizes Democritus for this comparison *De Sensu*, 4.442a-b, Diels-Krantz, 68A119.

⁹ For more on these comparisons consult David Howes, *Varieties of Sensory Experience: A Sourcebook in the anthropology of the senses* (University of Toronto Press, 1991).

nearly every theory of vision understood some level of physical contact between the eye and outside object. In the second century AD, Galen writes of this tactility that,

“a body that is seen does one of two things: either it sends something from itself to [the eye] and thereby gives an indication of its peculiar characteristic or, if it does not send something it waits for some sensory to come to it from [the eye].”¹⁰

While nearly all ancient schools of optics agreed, to some degree, about the tactile nature of vision, they can be divided based on the prescribed role attributed to the eye. The distinction between the eye’s role as passive acceptor or active sender forms the primary debate surrounding the mechanics of vision. Is vision the result of objects communicating their appearance to the eye, does the eye actively seek out objects, or is visual perception some combination of both? Consequently, ancient study of sight can be very broadly divided into the intromissive and extramissive theory.¹¹

Because visual theory was primarily concerned with the tactile relationship between the eye and visual objects—a relationship that was believed to occur primarily outside of the eye—very few questions arose concerning the eye’s anatomy and its affect on visual perception. It was the eye’s composition that seemed to make it suitable for vision as Empedocles (490-430 BC), a physician, reports that “what is in the eye is fire and water and surrounding it is earth and air through which light enters to start the fire.”¹² Likewise, the early Greek medical writer and scientist Alcmaeon (530-490 BC), reasons that vision is due to the transparent nature of the watery eye and Democritus cites the

¹⁰ Galen, *De plac. Hipp. Plat.* VII 5, (transl. Philip De Lacy 1978-84).

¹¹ Note that these distinctions are not set in stone or accepted by all. See Bartsch, *Mirror of the Self*, 59 for example groups theories into five categories: intromission, extramission, Plato, Aristotle and the Stoics.

¹² Diels-Krantz, 1B84; Aristotle questions Empedocles’ position on a fiery eye, *De Sensu* 1, 437b9-14.

eye's moist porosity as the factor enabling the reflection of images and thereby vision.¹³

Aside from these limited discussions of the eye's physical properties by early Greek philosophers, Galen, in the second century AD, was the first to seriously consider the eye's anatomy and its role in visual perception.¹⁴ Study of the eye's anatomy was eclipsed by the ancient interest in the tactile force of vision.

The Passive Eye

Intromission theory, a belief in the passive eye, was first associated with the ancient atomists Leucippus and Democritus, and later Epicurus.¹⁵ Intromission theory explained vision as a process in which tiny particles, termed *simulacra* (Greek: *eidola*), moved from the object of vision towards the eye, interacting with the organ's surface and causing vision. According to the atomists, sensory objects constantly emit *simulacra*, which retain the form or likeness of the sensory object from which they originate. communicating an object's appearance or physical form to the eye. Epicurus defines *simulacra* as the particles or films that are constantly released from the surface of objects.¹⁶ He specifies that emissions retain the form and likeness of the original object

¹³ John Beare, *Greek Theories of Elementary Cognition from Alcmaeon to Aristotle* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1906), 10-11; Aristotle criticizes Democritus' notion that watery eye and reflection is what causes one to see questioning why other things in which images are reflected do not also see (*De Sensu*. II. 438a110-12); Alcmaeon was a medical and philosophy writer, only fragments of his text survive: Diels-Kranz, I. (210-216); Theophr., *De Sensu* 7.

¹⁴ R.E. Siegel, *Galen on Sense Perception: His Doctrines, Observations, and Experiments on Vision, Hearing, Smell, Touch, and Pain, and Their Historical Sources* (Buffalo, NY: Karger, 1970).

¹⁵ David J. Furley, *Two studies in the Greek atomists* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1967); Cyril Bailey, *The Greek atomists and Epicurus* (New York: Russell & Russell Publishers, 1964); Paul Cartledge, *Democritus* (London: Routledge, 1997); R.W. Sharples, *Stoics, Epicureans and Sceptics* (London: Routledge, 1996), 5-10; George Malcolm Stratton, *Theophrastus and the Greek Physiological Psychology Before Aristotle* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1917), 109-115; For fragments consult H. Diels, *Doxographi Graeci* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1879), 497-527.

describing them as “particles composing films [that] retain the same position and relative order that they had while on the surface.”¹⁷ Lucretius later compares *simulacra* to other natural phenomena writing that visible things:

“throw off bodies, sometimes loosely diffused abroad, as wood throws off smoke and fire heat, sometimes more close-knit and condensed, as often when cicadas drop their neat coats in summer, and when calves at birth throw off the caul from their outermost surface, and also when the slippery serpent casts off his vesture amongst the thorns; since these things happens a thin image must also be thrown off from things, from the outermost surface of things.”¹⁸

Lucretius’ passage evinces the atomist preoccupation with explaining visual perception through a comparison with the physical world and, oftentimes, the tactile sense of touch. Like a calf’s caul or a snake’s skin, an Epicurean *simulacra* possessed inherent properties of its original object and was therefore a faithful representation of the object from which it came.

The intromissionist belief in corpuscular *simulacra* accounted for only part of the relationship between the visual object and the eye. While the atomists and later Epicureans agreed on the physically embodied nature of the particles streaming towards the eye, different ideas circulated regarding the exact nature of interaction between *simulacra* and the eye. For senses such as touch or taste, the means of physical contact is obvious, but for hearing or sight, it is less clear exactly the way in which sensory organs interact with sensory objects.¹⁹ Ancient writers debated whether the particles enter the

¹⁶ Democritus writes of simulacra (or more precisely *eidola*) as films made of thin layers of atoms that constantly leave the surface of objects and fly through the air, entering the eye only when they shrink to a small enough size.

¹⁷ Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of the Eminent Philosophers* x.46a (transl. C.D. Yonge); On this see R.D. Hicks, *Stoic and Epicurean* (New York: Russell and Russell, 1961), 231.

¹⁸ Lucr., *De rerum natura* 4.54-64 (transl. W.H.D. Rouse).

¹⁹ Taste is not discussed directly by Epicurus, but by Lucr., *De rerum natura* IV.615-72.

eye, physically touching the pupil to cause sensation, imprint on the surface of the eye, or involve in an additional interaction outside of the eye to result in vision. For the atomists, any sort of sensory perception was firmly rooted in the sense organ's physical contact with an outside object.²⁰ Very generally, the *simulacra* were believed to imprint themselves on the eye, however, in *De Sensu* 50-55, Theophrastus problematizes the atomist position on penetrability when he discusses an earlier Democritean theory of *deikela* and effluxes.²¹ Rather than *simulacra*, emitted by object and directly penetrating the eye, Democritus describes air imprints (*deikela*) that form as a result of effluxes from the eye *as well as* effluxes from the object of vision. The pressure from the simultaneous effluxes imprints the air between the two, as if moulding wax, resulting in the *deikela*.²² The air imprints stream towards the eye and are received by the pupil whose watery composition is ideal for receiving images.²³ According to this model, the eye is still physically penetrated, however, the contact occurs between *deikela* rather than *simulacra*. Because *deikela* are not corpuscular, like *simulacra*, their effect is one step removed.²⁴

²⁰ This is rooted in the atomist principles of bodies and voids, which contends that the universe is composed of bodies made up of atoms in empty space (voids), Diog.Laert., *Lives* 10.54; 10.72-73; Cyril Bailey, *Greek Atomists*, 238; Lucr., *De rerum natura* II.434ff.

²¹ Theophr., *De Sensu*, 50-51; Diels-Krantz, 68A135; Aristotle *De Sensu* 4.442a-b; For more on Democritus' two theories see Walter Burkert, "Air Imprints or Eidola: Democritus' Aetiology of Vision" *Department of Classics University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign* (April 6, 2009): 1-13; Richard W Baldes, "Democritus on Visual Perception: Two Theories or One?," *Phronesis* 20, no. 2 (1975): 93-105; Theophrastus also criticizes Democritus for suggesting that simulacra always cause a similar perception, but Democritus does account for differences in perception when he talks about color.

²² Van Hoorn, *As Images Unwind*, 52; Theophr., *De Sensu* 51.134; Here, it is important to recognize that Democritean/atomist effluxes are different from eye-emitted rays which will be discussed in the following section on extramission theory.

²³ For an excellent summary of Theophrastus consult Van Hoorn, *As Images Unwind*, 53; Also see the discussion and commentary in Aristotle *De Anima*. 419a.

²⁴ At the same time, Democritus' theory is much less passive than that of Plato, for instance.

In contrast, Epicurus and others reference a more direct interaction between the eye and the object in which particles enter the eye and also the mind.²⁵ Epicurus suggests that *simulacra* penetrate the surface of the eye and he harshly criticizes theories that suggested the utility of voids (e.g., air),

“We must also consider that it is by the entrance of something coming from external objects that we see their shapes and think of them. For external things would not have stamped on us their own nature of colour and form through the medium of the air which is between them and us, or by means of rays of lights or currents of any sort going from us to them, so well as by the entrance into our eyes or minds of certain films coming from the things.”²⁶

The corpuscular *simulacra* of which Epicurus speaks, originate at a visible object and maneuver *through* the void, air, as they make their way to the eye. The *simulacra* do not impress themselves on the air, for this would result in an intermediary, and in Epicurus’ opinion an unnecessary step. While Democritus concedes that the eye and emissions could *both* contribute to the creation of *deikela*, which in turn caused vision, Epicurus contends that the eye plays a strictly passive role, only receiving images. Visual perception, or really any sensory perception, relies on the relationship between *simulacra* and sensory organs in which these particles leave sensory objects to penetrate the sensory organ.²⁷ Unlike Democritus who argued for the role of air imprints, Epicurus argues that

²⁵ Although both Epicurus and Democritus’ theories were based on intromission, they did not entirely agree, consult Pamela Huby, “Epicurus’ Attitude to Democritus.” *Phronesis* 23.1 (1978): 80–86.

²⁶ Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of the Eminent Philosophers*, 49 (transl. R.D. Hicks); Diogenes Laertius cites the text of three letters by Epicurus: the *Letter to Herodotus* describing his physical theory, is most relevant for the current study. For more on this passage and Epicurus’ critical mention of earlier theorists see Norman DeWitt, *Epicurus and His Philosophy* (University of Minnesota Press, 1999), 204; Bailey, *The Greek Atomists*, 406; Not only does Epicurus criticize Democritus, whom he finds too passive, but also the light rays of Plato, which will be discussed below.

²⁷ Taste is not discussed directly by Epicurus, but by Lucr., *De rerum natura* IV.615-72.

only atoms are capable of delivering or receiving sensory stimulus—voids (such as air or its bi-products, air imprints) cannot perceive *or* cause stimulation.

Despite a lack of consensus among the sources regarding exactly how *simulacra* interact with the eye, it can be broadly understood that intromission theory assigned the active role in the visual process to the sensory objects leaving the eye, and by default the human, a passive object. Although both Democritus and Epicurus offer compelling yet divergent explanations for the precise means by which this interaction occurs it seems that even in antiquity major questions persisted, for example, how could *simulacra* of very large objects fit into the eye or why doesn't one see all sides of an object at one time?²⁸

The Active Eye

The tactile nature of the eye was also of central concern for extramission theory.²⁹ Like the atomists, Empedocles, the Pythagoreans, and others, were concerned with the physical interaction between the eye and particles, however, the relationship was understood to operate in the opposite direction. Extramission theory held that the eye did not receive *simulacra* or particles, but instead sent forth rays or particles, a model that Van Hoorn has termed the “eye-emitted ray paradigm.”³⁰ Rather than accept imprints or penetration from corpuscular bodies, the eye in this model actively pursues the object of vision. The eye, and by extension the human, initiates visual interaction with the world.

²⁸ Galen raises some of these issues, eventually discounting intromission theory in favor of an active eye, *De plac. Hipp. plat.* 7.5.

²⁹ For general summaries of extramission theory see Lindberg, *Theories of Vision*, 14-15; Van Hoorn, *As Images Unwind*, 43-48.

³⁰ Van Hoorn, *As Images Unwind*, 43.

The Pythagoreans were the first to conceive of a model in which the eye alone sends forth particles that emanate from its internal fire; these particles flow towards the object of vision, eventually hitting its surface, and causing perception.³¹ Although the Pythagoreans attributed sight exclusively to the eye, later authors recognized a more fluid process in which the eye's role in vision did not necessarily negate activity on the part of the object.

Empedocles, for example, understood both the eye and the object to play a role in the visual process.³² For visual perception to occur, light rays from the eye were required to interact with emissions—a constant stream of corpuscular *simulacra*—from the object. As in the Pythagorean model, Empedocles suggests that the eye is like a fiery lantern emitting visual rays from its interior. The rays intermingle with the emissions from the sensory object that enter the eye's surface.³³ According to John Beare, Empedocles espouses a theory that

“all [sensory organs] have passages (poroi)...and from all emanations or effluences (aporroiai) come, and enter into the said pores or passages...Emanations from what we may call the percipendum, or object, enter into the pores of the percipiens, or percipient organ.”³⁴

³¹ Pythagoreans here refers to groups of philosophers active in the fifth and fourth centuries BC whose connection to the Greek philosopher Pythagoras (ca. 570-490 BC) is unclear. Alcmaeon, Empedocles, and Parmenides are often mentioned in association with these Pythagoreans, however, are often considered distinct for their own individual contributions. For a short description of the Pythagoreans see Ronchi, *Optics*, 15.

³² Empedocles was the first to suggest the four elements (earth, air, fire, and water) as the basis of all form as well as his statement that ‘like perceives like’ i.e., earth perceives earth. Empedocles fr.10; Beare, *Greek Theories*, 14.

³³ Theophr., *De Sensu* 7.25-26.

³⁴ Beare, *Greek Theories*, 14; Theophr., *De Sensu*, 7.22-23.

The eye is equipped with pores that receive the emanations from objects. Beare explains that, “these emanations, to result in perception, must be ‘symmetrical’ with the pores” meaning objects must also physically fit into the pores of the sense organ for which they are destined.³⁵ Pores in the eye only perceive visual objects while pores in the nose only perceive olfactory objects. Particles cannot simply penetrate the surface of the eye, but they must be made for that purpose.³⁶

As an early contributor to the debate surrounding the eye’s role in the visual process, Empedocles’ comments demonstrate just one possible way in which the eye and object were imagined to participate together in the visual process. He imagines vision to be simultaneously “something passive (to receive impressions) and active (to be directed towards the objects).”³⁷ Other writers articulated the eye’s active and tactile nature in both literal and metaphorical ways including Hipparchus in the second century BC who compares the eye’s rays to a human hand and Hero in the first century AD whose theory of reflection emphasized the visual ray’s physical nature.³⁸ Eventually, Euclid adopted similar notions of an eye-emitted ray in articulating his geometric theory of optics. The eye emitted ray promoted by theories of extramission became a more prominent feature

³⁵ Theophr., *De Sensu* 7.22-23.

³⁶ For more on the ‘like by like’ model, see R. Kamtekar, “Knowing by Likeness in Empedocles,” *Phronesis* 54.3 (2009): 215-238; Modern theorists have also been perplexed by Empedocles’ apparent contradictions and have been unable to agree on what exactly he meant. For a complete discussion of the many opinions and abundant scholarship on the subject consult Lindberg, *Theories of Vision*, 4. Aristotle also criticized Empedocles Aristotle, *De Sensu*, 437b 23-438a 5.

³⁷ W.J. Verdenius, *Empedocles’ Doctrine of Sight*, (Amsterdam: North-Holland, 1948), 162.

³⁸ Hipparchus says that “the rays from each of the eyes extended out to their limits as with the touch of the hands, grasp external bodies and return an apprehension of them to the sense of sight,” Aetius 9 4.13.8-12 in Diels 1965, 404 (transl. Bartsch); see also Morris Cohen and I.E. Drabkin, *A Source Book in Greek Science* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1958), 261-262; Lindbergh, *Theories of Vision*, 7-8; on Hero of Alexandria see K. Tybjerg, “Hero of Alexandria’s Mechanical Geometry,” *Apeiron: a Journal for Ancient Philosophy and Science* 37.4 (2004): 29-56.

in later optical theory and is perhaps most important for the agency that it grants to the human viewer.

The Medium

While ancient theories on vision can be somewhat easily divided into either the intromissionist or extramissionist category, these modern divisions do not account for the many subtleties and overlap in theories. Ancient thinkers primarily understood vision as a result of the physical interaction between bodies (films, simulacra, or rays) and the eye or object of vision, assigning agency to one or the other, however, several variations incorporated elements from both intromission and extramission to propose a central medium as the driving force. Plato, Aristotle, and the Stoics all emphasized a medium between the object and eye, a notion that, David Lindberg explains, means that “visual perception does not occur by the actual emanation of pieces of the visible object to the eye, but by qualitative changes produced by the object in a medium suitably prepared to receive them.”³⁹ Like Empedocles, these theorists suggest that the eye and object do not interact directly.

Plato (429-347 BC) conceived of sight as a tactile process, but involved a new and important medium: light.⁴⁰ Instead of *simulacra* penetrating the eye, Plato describes a unique interaction between bodies of light, which eventually enter the eye to cause vision.⁴¹ Like the earlier Pythagoreans and Empedocles, Plato describes a fire within the

³⁹ Lindberg, *Theories of Vision*, 10.

⁴⁰ Plato seems to draw ideas from the earlier theory of Empedocles as well as intromission and extramission theory more broadly. He articulates his ideas on sight in several different places including *Republic* 6.507d-508c; *Timaeus* 45b-d.

eye that issues forth streams of light. Once outside of the eye, this light mixes with daylight from the sun to form "into one single homogeneous body in a direct line with the eyes."⁴² This single, resulting body of light acts as the intermediary in the process of visual perception:

in whatever quarter the stream issuing from within strikes upon any object it encounters outside. So, the whole, because of its homogeneity, is similarly affected and passes on the motions of anything it comes in contact with or that comes in contact with it, throughout the whole body, to the soul, and thus causes the sensation we call seeing."⁴³

For Plato, the newly created homogeneous body of light stretched from the eye to the object in order to cause perception. Instead of direct physical contact between corpuscular *simulacra* and the eye, the light medium took this place. The medium was affected by all sensory bodies it touched: when particles encountered the ray of light they caused motion.⁴⁴ Any motions of the visible object were passed through the light medium back to the soul, thereby causing a sensation, or vision. Plato's theory in some ways assigned passive roles to both the eye and the object—neither body is directly responsible for visual perception because the body of light touches the eye and engages in the tactile component of the visual process.

Aristotle (Athens, 384-322 BC) also identified and defined a medium between the viewer and sensory object that took the place of any other particles or rays. Unlike Plato

⁴¹ Plato presents his ideas on the intraocular fire and light medium most fully in the *Tim.* 45b-d, trans. Francis M. Cornford, *Plato's Cosmology: the Timaeus of Plato* (Hackett Publishing, 1937), 152-158.

⁴² Plato *Tim.* 45b-d, (trans. Cornford); for a discussion of the later impact of this see Silvia Berryman, "Euclid and the Sceptic: a Paper on Vision, Doubt, Geometry and Drunkenness," *Phronesis* 43.2 (1998): 176-196.

⁴³ Plato *Tim.* 45b-d. (trans. Cornford).

⁴⁴ Plato *Tim.* 67c-d (trans. Cornford); Lindberg, *Theories of Vision*, 4-5; For Theophrastus' confusion over whether the eye sends or receives particles see Theophr. *De Sensu* 26.

who seemed to adopt some earlier ideas from Empedocles and other, Aristotle vehemently rejected prior theories of vision, even arguing against Plato's light medium.⁴⁵ Against notions of extramission he is particularly clear saying, "in general it is unreasonable to suppose that seeing occurs by something issuing from the eye; that the ray of vision reaches as far as the stars, or goes to a certain point and there coalesces with the object, as some think...and how could the light inside coalesce with that outside?"⁴⁶ Instead, Aristotle almost entirely denies the tactility of visual perception arguing for a nearly completely passive process that relies on the central medium.

Aristotle defines a central medium as the force that actually causes vision. Vision occurs only when the medium becomes transparent, a process that is enabled through medium's interaction with objects of vision.⁴⁷ Objects are seen when they move and this movement is transmitted through the transparent medium back to the sensory organ.⁴⁸ According to Aristotle, the eye's surface is not the sensory organ, but merely part of a complex process. Instead, he conceives of a center of sensory perception located inside

⁴⁵ The scholarship on Aristotelian visual theory is far too vast to fully explore in this study. For more on the subject consult Beare, *Greek Theories*, 56-92; T.J. Slakey, "Aristotle on Sense Perception," *The Philosophical Review* 70.4 (Oct. 1961): 470-484; Irving Block, "Truth and Error in Aristotle's Theory of Sense Perception," *The Philosophical Quarterly* 11.42 (1961): 1-9; Harold Fredrik Cherniss, *Aristotle's Criticism of Presocratic Philosophy* (Hippocrene Books, 1971), 313-320; S. Gaukroger, "Aristotle on the Function of Sense Perception," *Studies in the History and Philosophy of Science* 12.1 (1981): 75-89; and Joseph Magee, "Sense Organs and the Activity of Sensation in Aristotle," *Phronesis* 45.1 (2000): 306-330.

⁴⁶ Aristotle *De Sensu* 2.438ba26-439b2 (trans. W. S. Hett); Aristotle does articulate a more moderate view towards extramission in other work (*De generatione animalium* 5.1.78036-781 8) however the common thread throughout all of his writings is that vision does not occur through an eye-emitted ray.

⁴⁷ Aristotle *De Anima* 418b 5-9; the state of this medium and its relationship with movement and/or light was discussed by later commentators who disagreed whether the medium actually changed states or was altered, see S. Sambursky as in *The Physical World of Late Antiquity*, (London: Routledge, 1962), 112.

⁴⁸ For a more comprehensive discussion of Aristotle's notion of transparency and its relationship to earlier ideas of the eye's composition, particularly Democritus, see T.K. Johansen, *Aristotle on the Sense Organs* (Cambridge University Press, 1997), 45-50.

the eye.⁴⁹ Aristotle's limited anatomical mention of the eye confirms its composition as watery and transparent meaning there was a constant link between the object, transparent medium, and eye leading eventually to the soul where the actual perception finally occurred.⁵⁰

Plato and Aristotle were not alone in their attention to the central medium between the eye and object. Their theories were similar to later ideas advanced by the Stoics. Although Stoicism was a separate, distinct philosophy and not specifically an intellectual descendent of Aristotle there are noticeable similarities, particularly with regards to did vision's tactile nature and a central medium. Stoic writers emphasized the role of the medium or void in between the sensory organ and the visual object. Vision was believed to occur when this central medium, or *pneuma*, strikes the mind.⁵¹ The *pneuma* is not simply a passive void, but rather an active-agent composed of air and fire and originating in the eye. When light excites this *pneuma* it stretches to reach the mind, thereby causing perception. Thus, the *pneuma* is essentially a constant from the eye to the object—similar to Aristotle's medium stretching from object to eye or Plato's dual-light medium. Unlike Plato and Aristotle, however, the Stoics stress that the air itself becomes percipient through illumination and is thus like an extension of the human eye.⁵² In this

⁴⁹ Aristotle *De Sensu* 438b8-9.

⁵⁰ For an overview of Aristotle's ideas on sensory perception and sense organs, see Richard Sorabji, "Aristotle on Demarcating the Five Senses," *Philosophical Review* 80 (1971): 55-79; for an excellent discussion of Aristotle and his influence on later theories of vision, particularly related to art, consult David Summers, *Vision, Reflection, and Desire in Western Painting* (The University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 60.

⁵¹ The primary sources of the Stoic interest in vision are Alexander of Aphrodisias (third century AD) and Aetius (2nd century AD); See Jean-Baptist Gourinat, *Les stoïciens et l'âme*. (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1996), 37-45; S. Sambursky, *Physics of the Stoics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1959), 1-11.

way, the Stoics offer a more tactile and active version of vision than Plato and Aristotle and their influence was particularly pertinent to later versions of extramission theory.⁵³ Galen, who is most often noted for his anatomical explorations into the human eye, later revised the Stoic theory of optical-pneuma in *De placitis Hippocratis et Platonis*.⁵⁴ Here, he emphasizes the role of the intervening, percipient air, which he suggests transforms into a visual agent. Galen described the process in which optic-pneuma was sent through the brain and optic nerves and out the eye eventually impacting the outside air.⁵⁵

Geometric Optics

Ancient theory about vision changed dramatically with the advent of geometric optics during the Hellenistic period. Although the major figures, Euclid, Ptolemy, and Hero, continued to champion the earlier extramissionist notion of an active eye, their major contributions came with the application mathematical principles. During the Hellenistic period Alexandria and Syracuse burgeoned as the centers of intellectual, and especially scientific, thought where the diverse cultural influences were incubators for new theories. Investigations into sight took a new turn as well incorporating mathematics.⁵⁶ Although vision was still considered a physically tactile process in which particles were sent forth

⁵² Cicero quoted by Sambursky, *Physics of the Stoics*, 28. Aristotle and Plato conceived of the central medium/light as distinctly separate from the eye, although integral to the process of sight and, particularly in Aristotle's case, continuous from eye to object and back again.

⁵³ Sen., *QNat.* 1.3.7 for example talks about the emission of rays from the eye; Cicero *Att.* 2.3.2 also discusses extramission in his explanation of narrow aperture.

⁵⁴ Galen *De placitis* 7.4.

⁵⁵ For more on Galen's ideas of sense perception see Siegel, *Galen on Sense Perception*, 37-40; Siegel, "Principles and Contradictions of Galen's Doctrine of Vision," *Sudhoffs Archiv: Zeitschrift für Wissenschaftsgeschichte* 54 (1970): 261-76.

⁵⁶ See chapter 2 in G.E.R. Lloyd, *Greek Science After Aristotle* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1973).

to encounter visual objects, geometric optics focuses on carefully and intentionally describing the process of interaction using mathematical rules and postulates.

Euclid was the first to incorporate geometrical principles into the study of vision with his *Optica* from ca. 300 BC.⁵⁷ The earliest Greek manuscript of the work dates to the tenth century AD, although J.L. Heiberg has demonstrated that there are actually two versions of the treatise: one which is original to Euclid and another that incorporates fourth century AD additions by Theon of Alexandria.⁵⁸ Euclid's new, geometrical approach to vision set the stage for rigorous optical studies in medieval and early modern periods.

Euclid's purely mathematical approach to vision ignores the psychological and physiological aspects that had been the focus of perception for several centuries prior. Rather than question how man perceives the outside world, Euclid was concerned with defining the visual process in a rigorous manner using deductive reasoning based on his seven postulates:

- “1. Let it be assumed that lines drawn directly from the eye pass through a space of great extent;
2. and that the form of the space included within our vision is a cone, with its apex in the eye and its base at the limits of our vision;
3. and that those things upon which the vision falls are seen and that those things upon which the vision does not fall are not seen;
4. and that those things seen within a larger angle appear larger, and those seen within a smaller angle appear smaller, and those seen within equal angles appear to be of the same size;

⁵⁷ Although most consider there to be two separate individuals writing under the name of Euclid, this is not for certain and Mark Smith, for example, in his thorough study of Ptolemy and ancient sources contends that Euclid wrote both the *Elements* and *Optics*, Mark Smith, *Ptolemy's theory of visual perception: An English translation of the Optics with introduction and commentary* (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1996), 16.

⁵⁸ J.L. Heiberg, “Euclidis Optica,” in *Euclidis Opera Omnia*, ed. J.L. Heiberg and H. Menge, vol. VII (Leipzig: Teubner, 1895). The first English translation was only made in 1945 by H.E. Burton Harry Edwin Burton, “The Optics of Euclid,” *JOSA* 35.5 (1945): 357; This translation is of the apparently original Euclidean text.

5. and that things seen within the higher visual range appear higher, while those within the lower range appear lower;
6. and, similarly that those seen within the visual range on the right appear on the right, while those within that on the left appear on the left;
7. but that things seen within several angles appear to be more clear.”⁵⁹

Most significantly, he defines the visual process in terms of geometry as opposed to psychology or physiology, which allowed, in Euclid’s mind, a rational discussion of visual phenomena. In Postulate 1, Euclid defines visual rays as straight, rectilinear lines allowing him to formulate a geometric explanation for sight that assumes that objects are seen when they are encountered by visual rays. Postulates 4-6 go further in explaining actual mechanics of vision and Postulate 7 offers an explanation of perceptual acuity. From these initial postulates, Euclid proceeds to develop 58 propositions explaining the particularities of vision, all built upon geometry. Most of the postulates deal with perspective—defined as an object’s appearance within its spatial environment and its relationship to the observer—which Euclid explains using rectilinear lines and angles. For example, in proposition 1 Euclid suggests that an object is never visible in its entirety at one time because of the spaces between visual rays, not every surface of an object can be encountered at all times. Similarly, he accounts for objects being too far from an observer in Proposition 2 explaining that an object can be removed to a location at which it will be no longer visible because it is between adjacent rays.

While Euclid’s treatise marks the beginning of a new type of study into vision, there are several aspects he ignores and ways in which his theory is distinctly different from earlier Greek science. For instance, Euclid is not concerned with *how* the eye, soul, or mind understands what it sees or even whether the eye, soul, or mind is the center of

⁵⁹ Euclid, *Optica* transl. Burton, “Optics,” 357.

perception. He does not concern himself with the anatomy of the eye or the role of external light in the visual process. More noticeably is the issue of Euclid's visual rays, which are distinctly not light rays as previously defined by Plato or Empedocles, although he does not offer any suggestion of their material composition or makeup.⁶⁰ Despite his neglect of the visual rays' composition in favor of their behavior, Euclid does subtly argue that the rays originate in the eye and thus favors an active role for the sensory organ. This opinion places him among the earlier extramissionists or even Platonic school, however, it is more fruitful to understand Euclid's theories on visual perception as a separate category, with different goals. Although he certainly advocates the emission of rays from the eye, rather than the opposite, Euclid is chiefly concerned with offering a rational explanation for the behavior of these rays, which happen to be emitted by the eye. Perhaps Euclid's contribution is most effectively summarized by Berryman when she says that "Euclid may have helped promote a view of perception as something reconstructed from information received, not as a mere form transferred into the eye" and he does this through his rationally argued, methodical theorems and postulates.⁶¹

Euclid's geometric approach to vision was continued and extended by several followers, but most notably Ptolemy of Alexandria (127-148 AD).⁶² Ptolemy's *Optics* was composed sometime between 160 and 170 AD and marks a more developed version

⁶⁰ Russo, *Revolution*, 385. For more on Euclid's visual rays consult Lindberg, *Theories of Vision*, 13 and Giuseppe Ovio, *L'ottica di Euclide* (Milano: U. Hopeli, 1918), 15. Euclid's visual rays, which are distinctly not visual rays as previously defined by Plato or Empedocles, although he does not offer any suggestion of their material composition or makeup.

⁶¹ Berryman, "Euclid and the Sceptics," 176.

⁶² Certainly there were developments between Euclid's *Optics* of 300 BC and Ptolemy's second century AD treatise, most notably the Pseudo-Euclidian *Catoptrics* and Hero of Alexandria's work of the same name from the mid-first century AD. Although both of these works are counterparts to studies of mathematical optics, they are left out of the current section and are discussed in Chapter 3, 168-172.

of Euclid's earlier take on geometric ray theory. The *Optics* does not survive in either Greek or Arabic, but only a twelfth century Latin version, which was translated from Arabic in Norman Sicily.⁶³ Ptolemy refines Euclid's mathematically-based visual-ray optics, and also considers psychological and physical aspects of the visual process.⁶⁴ While Euclid did not address the role of external light or color, issues which had coincidentally plagued earlier theorists such as Aristotle and Plato, Ptolemy pushes both to the forefront concluding that vision is a result of visual rays interacting with color, and an external light source.⁶⁵

Ptolemy understood vision not as mono-causal, but as relying on the visual ray, external light source and color all acting together. Like Plato before him, Ptolemy acknowledged that external light must exist in order for things to be seen saying "luminous compactness (*lucida spissa*) is what is intrinsically visible, for objects that are subject to vision must somehow be luminous."⁶⁶ Although visual rays encountered objects that were illuminated by external light, these factors alone were not enough to cause vision. In order for objects to actually be seen by the sensory organ (eye) there must be a proper object of vision, matched solely to that sensory organ and "since light and visual flux strike the surface of bodies together, it is quite appropriate that the first

⁶³ Smith, *Ptolemy*, 17; Additionally, this copy lacks the entire first book. The most comprehensive translation was made in 1956 by Albert Lejeune who created a critical Latin edition with accompanying French text, Albert Lejeune, *L'optique de Claude Ptolémée* (Leiden: Brill, 1956); an English translation was produced by Mark Smith in 1996; See also, Albert Lejeune, *Euclide et Ptolémée: deux stades de l'optique géométrique grecque* (Louvain: Bibliothèque de l'Université, Bureaux du "Recueil," 1948).

⁶⁴ Ptolemy's notion that visual rays are emitted from the eye in bundles rather than single strands has an effect on how objects are seen: since there is no longer any space between visual rays, it means that objects can be seen at a glance.

⁶⁵ For an interesting position on the presence of Euclid's discussion of physical aspects of vision, see Lindberg, *Theories of Vision*, 15-16.

⁶⁶ Ptolemy *Optics* II.4; Mark Smith, "Ptolemy's Theory of Visual Perception," 71.

thing to be sensed in all visible objects is the characteristics of their surfaces.” Like Aristotle, Ptolemy understood color to be an inherent property of objects’ surfaces and thus the proper object of vision. Color “...truly inheres in these objects and belongs to them by nature, and it is seen only when light and visual rays combine to make it effective.”⁶⁷ According to Ptolemy, inherent surface color was *what* was seen and external light combined with the visual ray were the *how* of the visual process, “color is not seen unless light cooperates.”⁶⁸ He uses geometry to further explain how visual rays behave to encounter objects, however, in acknowledging the presence and role of both light and color Ptolemy advanced a more developed theory of visual perception than Euclid.

The study of vision and optics does not end with Ptolemy, but really just begins. Little textual evidence survives from the period AD 200-850, however, this is not to say there was no activity. In the ninth century, Arab translations of Greek texts resulted in a renewed interest in the subject as well as Ya’qub al-Kindī’s treatise *De aspectibus*, based in Euclidean geometry.⁶⁹ The progress made by al-Kindī was followed by mathematician Ibn al-Haytham (Latin, Alhazen) who authored the treatise *Kitāb al-Manāẓir*. Al-Haytham built significantly on Ptolemy’s *Optics*, but also considered Galen’s anatomical studies.⁷⁰ Interestingly, although he integrated Ptolemy, Galen, and other earlier theorists,

⁶⁷ Ptolemy *Optics* II.12 and II.16 (transl. Smith).

⁶⁸ Ptolemy *Optics* II.16 (transl. Smith).

⁶⁹ Al-Kindi has received comparatively little attention in the study of optics, Lindberg, *Theories of Vision*, 19-23 and Nicholas Wade, *A Natural History of Vision* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1998), 14.

⁷⁰ Al-Haytham, *The Optics of Ibn al-Haytham: Books I-III: On Direct Vision*, trans. A.I. Sabra (London: University of London, 1989); A.M. Smith, “Al-Hazen’s Debt to Ptolemy’s *Optics*,” *Nature, Experiment, and the Sciences* (1990): 146-164; Interestingly, although he integrated Ptolemy, Galen and other earlier

Al-Haytham actually believed in intromission and posited that light itself was an independent element, visible in its own right.⁷¹ Al-Haytham's treatise was soon translated into Latin and became a starting point for much medieval and Renaissance studies of optics, which were focused on the mathematics of optics and especially perspective, essentially ignoring early questions of perception and the senses.⁷²

Augmenting Sight with Tools and Magic

Along with the documented interest in the mechanics or phenomenon of sight, from Aristotle to Plato to later Roman authors, actual tools survive that were used to enable, enhance, or manipulate the process of seeing. Ophthalmological diseases or deficiencies were common in Rome including swelling of the eyes, blurred vision, and myopia and hyperopia (nearsightedness and farsightedness).⁷³ Tools, such as lenses, were used to relieve these and other conditions, however, their forms and applications are not always based in scientific principles, particularly geometric optics. Instead, methods of augmenting and manipulating sight demonstrate the myriad ways in which scientific principles were translated into actual practice, and in many cases, completely ignored.

theorists, Al-Haytham actually believed in intromission and posited that light itself was an independent element, visible in its own right.

⁷¹ Smith, *Ptolemy*, 162-3. For a thorough examination of later studies into optics and vision consult David Summers, *Vision Reflection and Desire*, 16-42.

⁷² See Roger Bacon, *Specula mathematica: in qua, de specierum multiplicatione, earundemque in inferioibus virtute agitur* (Francofurti: Typis Wolffgangi Richteri, 1614) and David Lindberg's critical translation *Roger Bacon's philosophy of nature: a critical edition, with English translation, introduction, and notes, of De multiplicatione specierum and De speculis comburentibus* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983); Max Herzberger, "Optics From Euclid to Huygens," *Applied Optics* 5.9 (1966): 1383-1393.

⁷³ Plin., *HN*. 11.142 mentions instances of nearsightedness and farsightedness but explains some of them to the sun's brightness. Inflammations of the eye (*lippitudo*) are mentioned by the Hippocratic authors and Gal., *de re medicina* 6.6; 7.7. On eye disease in Rome see G. Penso, *La médecine romaine* (Paris 1984), 397-404.

Objects identified as lenses exist from as early as the Bronze Age in rock crystal form although later Graeco-Roman lenses were made of glass.⁷⁴ Ancient lenses are very small, ranging from approximately 14-25mm and are shaped into small lentoids with one flat and one shaped side. Lenses were either plano-concave or, more often, plano-convex, the latter of which were better for magnification.⁷⁵ Lenses are classified according to their “optical quality” or level of magnification. Many ancient lenses seem to have had little to no optical quality, although the surfaces are frequently scratched or damaged making analysis difficult. Dimitris Plantzos also reminds us that many lentoids were not optical lenses although excavations have frequently listed bone, rock, or opaque glass pieces as lenses when they very clearly lacked the ability to magnify.⁷⁶

Although not all lentoids have optical qualities, the power of magnification was known in antiquity. Seneca reports that “all objects seen through water appear enlarged. Writings, small and indistinct as they are, appear larger and more legible when seen through a glass ball filled with water.”⁷⁷ Plantzos argues that it was not until Late Antiquity and the early medieval period that lenses incorporated geometric optics to effectively alter vision in glasses or other optical aids, but even without mathematical explanations, lenses were thought to help magnification because they shared properties with both water and glass. Roman lenses were typically made of glass, which, being man-

⁷⁴ The corpus of Bronze Age lenses is made up of approximately 40 rock crystal examples from Troy, only recently published, V. Tolstikov and M. Treister, *The Gold of Troy: Searching for Homer's Fabled City* (London, 1996) nos. 176-212, 230. See Dimitris Plantzos, “Crystals and Lenses in the Graeco-Roman World,” *AJA* 101.3 (July 1, 1997): 452; H.C. Beck, “Early Magnifying Glasses,” *AntJ* 8(1928): 327-330; J.D. Cooney, *Catalogue of Egyptian Antiquities in the British Museum: Glass*, (British Museum Department of Egyptian Antiquities, 1968), no. 1804 and 1817.

⁷⁵ D. G. Hogarth, *Excavations at Ephesus: The Archaic Artemisia* (London, 1908) pl. 46.

⁷⁶ Plantzos, “Crystals and Lenses,” 457.

⁷⁷ Sen., *Q.Nat.* 1.6.507

made, was less costly than rock crystal. Glass was formed by a combination of silica, lime and an alkali melted together to form a liquid that became solid at very high temperatures.⁷⁸ Glass was considered to share the same qualities as rock crystal and Pliny actually characterizes it as a rock.⁷⁹ Although primarily interchangeable, rock crystal did have a higher index of refraction than glass (1.54 vs. 1.46) meaning it offered 1.2 times more magnification.⁸⁰

Lenses and other stones without optical properties were believed to augment vision and help the eyes because of their physical composition and magical powers.⁸¹ Pliny and Theophrastus both cite emeralds (*smaragdus*) as beneficial for poor eyesight because of both its color and physical properties.⁸² Pliny writes that emeralds are soothing because of their transparent nature, which allows the vision to penetrate its surface and the typically concave shape of the stones were used to “concentrate vision.”⁸³ Such a statement seems to suggest that Pliny is familiar with the basic rules of geometric optics in which concave lenses (or mirrors) converge rays of light, or in this case vision. The mild green color of emeralds was also considered soothing for sore or sick eyes and Theophrastus recalls that people wore emeralds in their rings so as to always have one near for healing purposes.⁸⁴

⁷⁸ Plantzos, “Crystals and Lenses,” 455.

⁷⁹ Plin., *HN*. 36.190-99.

⁸⁰ George Sines and Yannis Sakellarakis, “Lenses in Antiquity,” *AJA* 91.2 (1987): 193.

⁸¹ Plantzos, “Crystals and Lenses,” 463.

⁸² Sen., *Q. Nat.* 1.6.5; Plin. *HN.*, 37.63 and Theophr. *On Stones*, 24.

⁸³ Plin., *HN*. 37.63, 37.64.

⁸⁴ Theophr., *On Stones*, 24.

Scholars have often suggested that lenses were used primarily by gem and seal stone cutters who carved tiny scenes on small surfaces and would have required magnification to properly see their work. Pliny's reports that gemstone engravers complained of eyestrain and glass and rock crystal lenses have been found in several spaces designated as engravers' workshops including the a house along the Via Stabia in Pompeii.⁸⁵ In a 1965 study, however, Gorelick and Gwinnett explore the notion that gem cutters did not use lenses because their myopic eyes could magnify objects. Because myopic eyes have a shorter than average focal length, viewers bring objects closer to their eyes resulting in a larger image on the retina.⁸⁶ The authors go on to suggest that because gem cutting was a family craft, passed on through generations, myopic eyes were also inherited meaning most gem-cutters were able to see without the help of lenses. Myopia was a known condition in ancient Rome and it seems likely that individuals would have used this genetic magnification to their advantage. If not only used for magnification, lenses were appreciated for many of their physical properties: Pliny reports that glass balls filled with water had the ability to set clothes on fire, recognizing the ability of lenses to concentrate light.⁸⁷ Many lenses likely acted as burning glasses to help kindle fires.

Like lenses, that were thought to enhance vision, mirrors and reflective devices survive from the Roman world. Roman mirrors were silver, bronze or glass with a metal

⁸⁵ See Sines and Sakellarakis, "Lenses in Antiquity," 193-5 for a discussion of this house which they name the "House of the Engravers"; Plin. *HN*, 20.135; Petri Flinders, *Tanis*. Pt. 1 (London, British Museum 1889,) 49.

⁸⁶ L. Gorelick and A.J. Gwinnett, "Close Work without Magnifying Lenses?" *Expedition* 23:2 (1981): 28-29. Also see J. Boardman, *Greek Gems and Finger Rings* (London 2001), 382 who disagrees with the idea that magnifying lenses were used by craftsmen.

⁸⁷ Plin., *HN*. 36.199; At. Aristophanes, *Clouds*, 766-768.

backing and are similar in form to examples known from as early as the sixth century B.C. throughout Greece and Italy, particularly abundant in Etruscan burials. Less well-studied and more diversely located than their Etruscan counterparts, Roman mirrors have simple decoration, lacking the ornate figural scenes typical of Hellenistic and Etruscan incised and cast mirrors.⁸⁸ Unlike ancient lenses, which did not incorporate mathematical optics, mirrors made use of at least a basic level of catoptrics—the science of mirrors.⁸⁹ For example, transparent glass was invented in Syria in the early first century B.C., but was only made in quantities large enough to create very small mirrors (1-2 cm surface space). In order to enlarge the reflected image, these small glass mirrors had convex surfaces.⁹⁰ Roman mirrors demonstrate an interest in catoptrics as well as the act of looking at oneself or others, and personal preparation and adornment. Mirrors were most commonly used for toilette, the process of personal preparation and hygiene usually involving jewelry, makeup, oils or perfumes. Much of the evidence for ancient toilette is visual and material, with both painted, sculptural, and mosaic examples of seated women assisted by their attendants who typically hold boxes of jewels, fans or other preparatory articles.⁹¹ A painting from an unknown house in Herculaneum, now in the Museo

⁸⁸ Rabun M. Taylor, *The Moral Mirror of Roman Art* (Cambridge University Press, 2008), 9-11; Nancy De Grummond, *A Guide to Etruscan Mirrors* (Tallahassee, FL: Archaeological News, 1982), 155-157.

⁸⁹ Catoptrics, the science of mirrors, was of interest to many philosophers and early scientists beginning with Euclid's treatise: *Catoptrics*.

⁹⁰ G. Lloyd-Morgan, "The Typology and Chronology of Roman Mirrors in Italy and the North Western Provinces with Special Reference to the Collections in the Netherlands." (PhD diss., University of Birmingham, 1977); G. Lloyd-Morgan, "Catalogue of Roman Mirrors" *BMMA, New Series*, 32, 5 (1973-1974): 97-128; G. Lloyd-Morgan, "Two Roman Mirrors from Corbridge," *Britannia* (April 4, 1977): 1-6; Plin., *HN*. 36. 193.

⁹¹ For sculptural and mosaic examples consult Elsner, *Roman Eyes*, 200-224; For a discussion of toilette and adornment in ancient Rome see Ria Berg, "Wearing Wealth. Mundus Muliebris and Ornatus as Status Markers for Women in Imperial Rome," in *Women, Wealth and Power in the Roman Empire* (Rome: Institutum Romanum Finlandiae, 2002), 15-73.

Archeologico Nazionale di Napoli, depicts a seated woman surrounded by a retinue of female attendants. The attendants hold various tools of adornment including jewelry, perfume and a mirror into which the woman gazes as she prepares herself to be seen by others (Figure 4). Actual toilette articles survive as well. In addition to mirrors, perfume bottles and jewelry boxes exist as well as the large numbers of actual gems and jewelry.

Romans also theorized a potentially harmful aspect of vision, the evil eye, as well as methods of defending against it. Romans believed that the evil eye was an instrument of envy, harmful spirits, and judgment.⁹² Ancient writers disagree on exactly how the evil eye inflicted its power, but most suggest that the eye actively emitted corpuscular particles towards the innocent victim's body.⁹³ These dangerous particles traveled to the victim, causing sickness or death. The evil eye was especially dangerous because its particles not only entered through the eye, but could also penetrate pores throughout the remainder of the body, and according to Plutarch, could even be spread from infected individuals via breath or speech.⁹⁴ Mosaics sometimes depict a corporeal, human eye under attack by a phallus, swords, sticks, and other sharp objects as on a pavement from the corridor from the House of the Evil Eye at Antioch (*fig. 1*).⁹⁵ The penetrative eye is in

⁹² For an anthropological treatment of the evil eye see the edited volume by Clarence Maloney, *The Evil Eye*, (Columbia University Press, 1983).

⁹³ Plin., *HN*. 7.17.

⁹⁴ See Bartsch's discussion of this *Mirror of the Self*, 145-46; Plut., *Quaest. Conv.* 5.7; Ov., *Rem. Am.* 615.

⁹⁵ Doro Levi, *Antioch Mosaic Pavements*, (*Antioch Mosaic Pavements*. Roma: L'Erma di Bretschneider, 1971), 33; Fatih Çimok, *Mosaics of Antioch* (Istanbul: A Turizm Yayinlari, 2005), 37; for more on the iconography of this and other pavements see K. Dunbabin and M.W. Dickie, "Invida rumpantur pectora: The Iconography of Phthonos/Invidia in Graeco-Roman Art," *Jarhbuch für Antike und Christentum* 26 (1983): 7-37.

this case also penetrated, reducing its power and protecting the inhabitants of the house.⁹⁶

Thus, the evil eye was understood as a penetrative, antagonistic force and the Romans took pains to avert its damaging, tactile powers.

To counter the hostile gaze, Romans utilized a range of apotropaic strategies to protect themselves. Although Romans were constantly in danger of encountering the evil eye, certain locations were particularly dangerous including liminal spaces—corridors, doorways, stairways—and spaces that invited judgment, including baths.⁹⁷ These spaces required extra protection in the form of paintings or mosaic as in a pavement in the corridor of the House of the Boat of Psyche at Antioch.⁹⁸ The pavement depicts an ithyphallic dwarf along with the Greek inscription *καὶ σὺ* (“and you”).⁹⁹ The evil eye could also be kept away from individuals. Young boys often wore small phallic amulets, or *fascinum*, because they were thought to be particularly susceptible to the dangers of the evil eye.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁶ For more on the symbolism of the penetrative phallus in this and other representations of the evil eye see Bartsch, *Mirror of the Self*, 147; for the notion of evil directed against evil see also S.R. Wilk, *Medusa: Solving the Mystery of the Gorgon* (Oxford University Press, 2000).

⁹⁷ John Clarke, *Looking at Laughter: Humor, Power, and Transgression in Roman Visual Culture, 100 B.C.-A.D. 250* (Berkeley: University Of California Press, 2007), 64, 67; Carlin A. Barton, *The Sorrows of the Ancient Romans* (Princeton University Press, 1995), 95-96, Barton discusses Rome as a “culture of envy.”

⁹⁸ Levi, *Antioch Mosaic Pavements*, 183; For other apotropaic mosaics consult Katherine Dunbabin, *Mosaics of the Greek and Roman World* (Cambridge University Press, 1999), 312-313.

⁹⁹ Levi, *Antioch Mosaic Pavements*, 183; Aileen Ajootian, “The Only Happy Couple: Hermaphrodites and Gender,” in *Naked Truths: Women, Sexuality and Gender in Classical Art and Archaeology*, eds. A. O. Koloski-Ostrow and C. L. Lyons (London: Routledge, 1997), 231-233. Barbara Kellum, “The Phallus as Signifier: The Forum of Augustus and Rituals of Masculinity,” in *Sexuality in Ancient Art*, ed. Natalie Kampen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

¹⁰⁰ The use of the phallus as an apotropaic weapon against the evil eye is the subject of much scholarship including Bartsch, *Mirror of the Self*, 143-145; Kellum, “Phallus as Signifier,” 172-174 where it is generally read as a signifier of power.

As the most frequently represented apotropaic device, the phallus appears in many forms of visual evidence including mosaics, amulet, and sculptural relief all to ward off evil spirits. An explanation for the phallus' efficacy is not entirely clear, however, John Clarke suggests that these apotropaic images coupled with the depiction of unusual, even uncomfortable looking figures, such as the dwarf in the House of the Boat of Psyche pavement, induced laughter.¹⁰¹ Paintings in the apodyterium of the Suburban Baths at Pompeii, for example, depict naked couples engaged in sexual acts and would have incited laughter from those individuals who entered the room to undress for the bath.¹⁰² Laughter may have been a method of protection against evil spirits and demons and "silly" images or situations encouraged laughter amongst viewers.

Viewing: Looking at Art and Architecture

The current section discusses vision and art. More succinctly, these sources attest to the viewing experience rather than the physical process or cause of seeing. Moving beyond the mechanics of vision or the anatomy of the eye, this section discusses ways in which Romans manipulated, experienced, and understood vision, in order to look at art and architecture. Scholars of Roman visual culture have mined the textual sources for mention of displaying, making, or looking at art and often used this to explain or understand art and architecture.¹⁰³ This section does not collect or analyze all sources that

¹⁰¹ Clarke, *Looking at Laughter*, 63-64.

¹⁰² John Clarke, "Look Who's Laughing at Sex: Men and Women Viewers in the Apodyterium of the Suburban Baths at Pompeii," In *The Roman Gaze: Vision, Power, and the Body*, ed. David Fredrick (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002), 149-181; Clarke, *Looking at Laughter*, 65.

¹⁰³ Francesca Tronchin, "Roman Collecting, Eecorating and Eclectic Practice in the Textual Sources," *Arethusa* 45.3 (2012): 333-345; Alexandra Bounia, *The Nature of Classical Collecting: Collectors and Collections, 100 BCE-100 CE* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2004); Miranda Marvin,

document the experience of viewing art or architecture, but instead discusses several observations that arise from an overview of the material. Although there was not one cohesive theory of visual reception, Romans developed ways to change vision, articulated the things they saw and the way in which they were seen, and adapted their material environment to take make the most visual impact. The following sections demonstrate divergent viewing experiences: an awareness of spatial relationships, a sense of awe and wonder, carefully planned ekphrastic experience, and the manipulation of vision. What these various sections have in common, however, is a conscious awareness of sight and the intentional guiding or manipulation of viewing experience. The discussion is divided into three sections that each explore a different aspect of viewing experience: ekphrasis, illusionism, and relationships with space. Each of these issues highlights significant ways in which the sense of sight and, more importantly, the experience of viewing manifested themselves as important aspects of the Roman culture of vision.

Most literary sources on viewing practice are dated during the period 100 BC- AD 100, although the *Imagines* of Philostratus post-date this period and is nonetheless discussed, albeit briefly, for what they offer about viewing in relation to art. As might be expected of elite sources, sight and the process of seeing are frequently discussed in relation to a certain way of life and individual priorities: a lifestyle enabled by wealth and luxury with little interest in the concerns of working-class individuals and their specific point of view.¹⁰⁴ In many instances, the elite viewpoint takes the form of writing about

“Copying in Roman Sculpture: the Replica Series,” *Retaining the Original: Multiple Originals, Copies and Reproductions, Studies in the History of Art* 20 (1989): 29–45.

¹⁰⁴ For the problems in relying on elite, male sources consult Sarah Levin-Richardson, *Roman Provocations: Interactions with Decorated Spaces in Early Imperial Rome and Pompeii* (PhD Diss. University of California Berkeley, 2009); Lauren Hackworth-Petersen, *The Freedman in Roman Art and*

art and architecture, perhaps more appropriately termed décor and domestic space.¹⁰⁵

Evidence of viewing experience is not limited to literary evidence. Visual and material culture also attest the importance and various themes of sight and viewing.

The familiar accounts of Philostratus, Pliny and even Statius record opinions regarding the organization and decoration of domestic space and how one encounters or sees their surroundings, in many cases functioning as guides to their readers. In writing their accounts, the authors surely had specific purposes in mind for their words, whether letters to friends, poems for emperors, or instructions for a younger generation, and did not expect they would one day be mined by art historians for information on the viewing experience. Nonetheless, these sources do provide information on how Roman individuals articulated the notion of sight, its importance and its role in Roman culture and life. These authors all come from similar backgrounds and write for similar audiences, however, their perspective on the viewing experience is surprisingly varied. J.J. Pollitt identifies five ways of describing art that appears in the ancient sources, but these are only part of the viewing experience and serve to highlight the extreme variety among ancient writers.¹⁰⁶ More interesting is the lack of cohesion amongst the authors: there seems to be no consistent articulation of viewing experience or way in which individuals looked at art and architecture. Instead, the evidence demonstrates that viewing in its many forms was a mainstay of Roman life

Art History (Cambridge University Press, 2006), and Natalie Kampen, *Image and Statue: Roman working women in Ostia* (Berlin: Mann, 1981).

¹⁰⁵ Tronchin, "Eclectic Practice in the Textual Sources," 336.

¹⁰⁶ J.J. Pollitt, *Art and Experience in Classical Greece* (Cambridge University Press, 1972), 1-3.

Ekphrasis and Experience

Mythological narratives are the most frequent subject amongst Roman wall paintings. Scholars have studied mythological, narrative paintings in many ways, but this section is more concerned with the questions that Eleanor Leach poses in her study of mythology and response, “how did Roman viewers experience mythological paintings?” which, in turn, tells us something about the way in which Romans viewed their art.¹⁰⁷ To understand how Romans may have pieced together the myriad mythological paintings as well as the individual panels, literary descriptions of art as well as the process of looking at art can be used. Pliny the Elder reports the materials, properties and style of paintings as well as famous painters and dates, however, he provides only one small mention of reception when he describes the painted shields displayed throughout the temple of Jupiter for public viewing. Besides this, Pliny is silent on how Roman audiences actually encountered or experienced their paintings.

Mythological paintings, like other items of visual culture, were not simply taken at face value, but represented, depicted, imitated, or alluded to actual mythological traditions, particular literature. As Jeremy Tanner has suggested, Roman art, like Greek art before it, relied on its audience’s ability to understand a code of meanings and references supposedly learned by educated individuals.¹⁰⁸ The classic example of an uneducated freedman is Trimalchio whose only partial understanding of Homeric epic leads to a jumbled version of the Trojan War at his famed dinner party.¹⁰⁹ Explanations of

¹⁰⁷ Eleanor Winsor Leach, “Imitation or Reconstruction: How did Roman Viewers Experience Mythological Paintings?” in *Myth: a New Symposium*, ed. Gregory Schrempp and William Hansen (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002), 183.

¹⁰⁸ Tanner, *Invention of Art History*, 270-271.

¹⁰⁹ See Leach, “Imitation or Reconstruction,” 190-191.

mythological paintings have historically sought answers in textual sources, suggesting that only a truly educated individual could understand a painting's meaning and, consequently, a painting's meaning is fixed in its textual source. While mythological paintings certainly represented and alluded to greater meaning, to consider only their textual basis ignores the subtleties of viewing.¹¹⁰

Perhaps the most often cited description of art viewing in the Roman world, is Philostratus the Elder's *Imagines*, which models the act of looking at mythological paintings. The *Imagines* is dated to the second century AD and, although slightly later than the date of the paintings that constitute this study, the *Imagines* is valuable for its discussion of art viewing.¹¹¹ The text has been studied countless times and is a useful starting point for discussions of Roman art viewing because it is an example of professional rhetoric and demonstrates one way in which art was described and potentially seen in a specific context.¹¹² Philostratus' describes a clear viewing environment—a picture gallery in Naples, close to the sea, with free-standing panel paintings, or *pinakes*—and he devotes sections to individual paintings, rather than focusing on the gallery as a whole or the order in which he approaches the panels. The paintings that Philostratus describes are mythological, but as he explains the purpose of

¹¹⁰ This also brings up the debate between image and text and the need to use words to justify or explain images. See Svetlana Alpers, *The Art of Describing* (Chicago: University Of Chicago Press, 1983); W.J.T. Mitchell, *Picture theory: Essays on verbal and visual representation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 3.

¹¹¹ Elsner, *Roman Eyes*, 143-146; The *Imagines* should also be considered within the larger context of rhetorical ekphrasis in the Second Sophistic, see Barbara Cassin, *L'effet sophistique* (Paris: Gallimard, 1995) 493-512; Graham Anderson, *The Second Sophistic: A Cultural Phenomenon in the Roman Empire* (London: Routledge, 1993).

¹¹² Previous studies of the work include Graham Anderson, *Philostratus: Biography and Belles Lettres in the Third Century AD* (London: Croom Helm, 1986); S.M. Beall, "Word Painting in the 'Imagines' of the Elder Philostratus," *Hermes* 121 (1993):350-63; Diana Shaffer, "Ekphrasis and the Rhetoric of Viewing in Philostratus' Imaginary Museum," *Philosophy & Rhetoric* 31.4 (1998): 303-316.

the *Imagines* is “not to deal with painters nor yet with their lives; rather...to describe examples of paintings in the form of addresses which [he] has composed for the young, that by this means they may learn to interpret paintings and to appreciate what is esteemed in them.”¹¹³

Philostratus’ careful descriptions of mythological paintings have been compared to Campanian mythological paintings, however, as Michael Squire has pointed out, their format as panel paintings was inherently different.¹¹⁴ Similarly, scholars have traditionally sought to prove the reality of Philostratus’ picture gallery as well as understand a programmatic plan of the paintings, most famously Karl Lehmann Hartleben’s architectural layout of the gallery that proposed a thematic arrangement of the panels.¹¹⁵ Such attempts are based in the notion that paintings adhere to a programmatic theme, motif, or pattern that would have been apparent and understood by the audience.¹¹⁶ Instead, Philostratus’ account describes individual paintings and focuses not on the physical factors (paint, composition, style), but on interacting and understanding the scene. The *Imagines* is a guide, not to Roman painting, but to one way of *looking at* Roman painting.

¹¹³ Phil., *Imag.* I.11-14.

¹¹⁴ Michael Squire, *Image and Text in Graeco-Roman Antiquity*, (Cambridge University Press, 2009), 341.

¹¹⁵ Karl Lehmann-Hartleben famously related Philostratus’ gallery to an actual architectural setting in 1941 attempting to explain his the physical layout and provide a program of paintings, “The *Imagines* of the Elder Philostratus,” *ArtBull* 23.1 (1941): 16-44.

¹¹⁶ To this tradition belongs Thompson, “Monumental and Literary Evidence,” 36-77; Squire, *Image and Text*, 352-353 suggests subtle connections between the individual descriptions that would have still allowed readers to decide the order of the proposed paintings.

The *Imagines* are a form of ekphrasis or “descriptive passage[s] which brings the subject that is portrayed before one’s view with visual vividness.”¹¹⁷ In antiquity, ekphrasis not only described art, but also people, landscapes, and other objects, however, modern study has often focused on its context in the art-viewing world.¹¹⁸ The uses of ekphrasis to scholars has varied. While most individuals read the texts as accounts of viewing, some adopt a more literal approach, maintaining that the descriptions reconstruct actual art. A. S. Murray, for example, reconstructed the shield of Achilles based on the Homeric account.¹¹⁹ More often, ekphrastic accounts are acknowledged as literary descriptions of visual phenomena, appreciated for the vivid way in which they would have brought to mind visual objects through the poet’s words.¹²⁰ First and foremost, these ekphrastic accounts are texts that would have been read, bringing to mind the objects or visual processes described by the speaker. Michael Squire suggests,

¹¹⁷ Theon., *Prog.* 118.7, quoted from Squire, *Image and Text*, 143; J. Palm, “Bemerkungen zur Ekphrasis in der griechischen Literatur,” *Kungliga Humanistiska Vertenskaps-Samfundet i Uppsala* 1 (1956): 108–211; F. Graf, “Ekphrasis: Die Entstehung der Gattung in der Antike,” in *Beschreibungskunst-Kunstbeschreibung: Ekphrasis Von Der Antike Bis Zur Gegenwart*, ed. G. Boem and H. Pfothner (Munich, 1995), 143–155; Paul Friedländer compiled all ancient instances of verbal description of art in 1912 (which he calls *Kunstbeschreibungen*), see P. Friedländer, *Johannes von Gaza und Paulus Silentiarius: Kunstbeschreibungen justinianischer Zeit* (Leipzig: BG. Teubner, 1912); Jaś Elsner, “Introduction: The Genres of Ekphrasis,” *Ramus: Critical Studies in Greek and Roman Literature* 31.1 (2002): 3–9.

¹¹⁸ Ruth Webb, “Imagination and the Arousal of the Emotions in Greco-Roman Rhetoric,” *The Passions in Roman Thought and Literature* (1997): 112–127; Ekphrasis is not a term limited to classical antiquity. For studies of the ekphrastic tradition in more modern art see B. Wolf, “Confessions of a Closet Ekphrastic: Literature, Painting, and Other Unnatural Relations,” *Yale Journal of Criticism* 3.2 (1990): 181–203; Murray Krieger, *Ekphrasis: The Illusion of the Natural Sign* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992); Mack Smith, *Literary Realism and the Ekphrastic Tradition* (University Park: Penn State Press, 2008); The term is also used by scholars interested in the theoretical relationship between word and image, see Alpers, *The Art of Describing*; Michael Baxandall, *Patterns of Intention* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985); W.J.T. Mitchell, *The Language of Images* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980); W.J.T. Mitchell, *Iconology*, 1–4.

¹¹⁹ A. S. Murray, *A History of Greek Sculpture* (London, 1883), 44–46; See also, Mark Stansbury-O’Donnell, “Polygnotos’s Nekyia: A Reconstruction and Analysis,” *AJA* (1990); Mark Stansbury-O’Donnell, “Polygnotos’s Iliupersis: A New Reconstruction,” *AJA* (1989): 1–14.

¹²⁰ Kathryn Gutzwiller, “Art’s Echo: The tradition of Hellenistic Ekphrastic Epigram” in *Hellenistic Epigrams*, ed. M.A. Harder, R.F. Retguit and G.C. Wakker (Leuven: 2002), 86.

however, that they also offer clues to visual experience because “responses to [ekphrasis] were also mediated by images themselves; by the same logic; ecphrastic [sic] descriptions might actively alter the way in which viewers responded to images.”¹²¹ More pointedly, ekphrasis not only vividly describes images, but also “directs viewing as a social and intellectual process” thus offering clues to ways in which individuals may have actually looked at the art around them.¹²²

Philostratus describes mythological paintings with what Jaś Elsner has termed a process of “appropriation and assimilation.”¹²³ In section I.1 Philostratus describes a painting of the River Scamander and instructs his pupils to look away from the composition in order to recall the Homeric events upon which it is based.¹²⁴ The viewer appropriates the image into his own prior knowledge of myths or history and then assimilates the painted image into his prior knowledge, and then understands the painting based on this comparison. In the case of the Scamander painting, Philostratus is prompting his pupils to become more discerning viewers and recognize any differences between the text and painting; the painting is not simply an illustration of the text.¹²⁵

As becomes evident from Philostratus’ accounts, formal analysis and visual description play a secondary role to individual experience, personal recollection, and careful observation when properly viewing mythological scenes. Philostratus’ invokes a

¹²¹ Squire, *Image and Text*, 146.

¹²² Simon Goldhill, “What Is Ekphrasis For?,” *Classical Philology* 102, no. 1 (January 1, 2007): 2.

¹²³ Elsner, *Art and the Roman Viewer*, 36.

¹²⁴ Phil., *Imag.* I.1.

¹²⁵ Leach, “Imitation or Reconstruction,” 199; See also Leo Steinberg, *The Sexuality of Christ in Renaissance Art and in Modern Oblivion* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984), 330 who discusses the primacy of texts to images in the field of art history, “where no text exists, interpretation is in vain.”

particularly striking case of naturalism in as passage from *Imagines* 1.2.8—the hunters—in which he is momentarily fooled into thinking the painting is real and part of his own environment (or that he is part of the painting’s environment). He spends the first several paragraphs questioning the painted figures as if they are in front of him. He involves his pupils in this disillusion saying,

“How I have been deceived! I was deluded by the painting into thinking that the figures were not painted but were real beings, moving and loving—at any rate I shout at them as though they could hear and I imagine that I hear some response—and you did not utter a single word to turn me back from my mistake, being as much overcome as I was and unable to free yourself from the deception and the stupefaction induced by it.”¹²⁶

While obviously a rhetorical device, Philostratus’ own conviction is enough to make any viewer (or reader) question whether the paintings are real or at the very least suggest that appropriate viewing technique involves deep, personal absorption in paintings, to the point where one cannot tell the difference between paint and life. This further illustrates the way in which viewers were meant to fully invest themselves in the paintings, going beyond the surface. The convincing reality of the painting is also a testament to the danger of viewing, particularly if it is none executed in the correct way.

Philostratean description suggests an involved, but directed method of looking at mythological, narrative art, in which meaning is not predetermined by a text alone. Instead, Philostratus describes a way of looking at paintings in which viewers interact with paintings emotionally, verbally, and mentally. Ekphrasis, however, is still primarily textual and as Richard Brilliant writes, “ekphrastic descriptions are largely dependent on verbal, rather than visual, modes of representation..[they] do not have to, nor can they,

¹²⁶ Phil. *Imag.*, 1.28

“look like” what they represent.”¹²⁷ Just as they are not descriptions of actual paintings, the *Imagines* also do not describe one individual’s real experience, but instead “produce a viewing subject.”¹²⁸ Just as ekphrases resemble rather than reflect the objects they describe, the *Imagines* suggest a way of viewing art, but do not prove its practice.¹²⁹

Deceiving the Viewer with Illusionism

Illusionism simultaneously aides in the creation of more naturalistic paintings and orchestrates careful, even intentional, viewing experiences for Roman audiences. By imitating a material surface or the real world, illusionism manipulates what the viewer sees, tricking him into seeing what is not really present or believing, like Philostratus, that the painted image is part of the real world. Roman art is characterized by an emphasis on naturalism, in which forms are based in nature and the real world. With precedents in Hellenistic Masonry Style paintings and naturalistic Greek history painting, Roman paintings achieved a high degree of naturalism—a characteristic of all Roman art. According to Vitruvius wall paintings are meant to mimic reality perfectly as “representation[s] of a thing which really exists or which can exist.”¹³⁰ In their depictions

¹²⁷ Richard Brilliant, *Visual Narratives: Story-Telling in Etruscan and Roman Art* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998), 57.

¹²⁸ Goldhill, “What is Ecphrasis for?” 2.

¹²⁹ Diana Shaffer, “Ekphrasis and the Rhetoric of Viewing in Philostratus’ Imaginary Museum,” *Philosophy and Rhetoric* 31.4 (1998): 314.

¹³⁰ Vitr., *De arch.* VII.5.1; M.L. Anderson, *The Villa of P. Fannius Synistor at Boscoreale* (The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin, 1988): 17-36; Bettina Bergmann, Stefano De Caro, et al. *Roman Frescoes from Boscoreale: the Villa of Publius Fannius Synistor in Reality and Virtual Reality* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010); Frank Müller, *The Wall Paintings from the Oecus of the Villa of Publius Fannius Synistor in Boscoreale* (Amsterdam: J.C. Gieben, 1994).

of figures and landscape, Roman paintings take great care with details and precision, representing the world as it appears.¹³¹

Wall paintings emphasize visual precision even further using illusionism, an attempt to manipulate and enhance the viewing experience by equating the painted scene with the real world and real space, creating walls that mimic the actual walls of the room, and making the viewer feel as if the painted space merges with the real world. Illusionism is achieved using the formal conventions of shadow, highlight, scale, overlap, foreshortening, and eventually perspective—all of which work to imitate the real world, collapsing the space between viewer and painting. Even First Style painting is rooted in principles of illusionism, attempting to mimic real stonework with stucco and paint thus elevating the status of less glamorous materials. Illusionistic stone masonry painting was followed by more complex architectural compositions and eventually figural scenes, usually involving myth.

Illusionism is not only a formal convention to create more realistic paintings, but it also indicates a Roman awareness of the relationship between viewer and painting and the attempt to reconstruct a specific visual experience. Illusionistic painting recreates the natural world for the benefit of its viewers. As the most basic of Roman painting styles, First Style masonry painting employed illusionism to masquerade simple painted stucco as more expensive marble or stone. The convention became more complicated in Second, Third, and Fourth Style paintings which embraced figural and architectural motifs amidst complex backgrounds that opened up the wall in varying degrees. Perhaps the best

¹³¹ See Elsner, *Art and the Roman Viewer*, 51-58 for a discussion of the naturalistic mode of viewing during the Classical period; For more on this distinction between naturalism and the embrace of fantasy, consult David Summers, "The Archaeology of Appearance as Paradox," in *Paradoxes of Appearing: Essays on Art, Architecture and Philosophy*, eds. Michael Asgaard Anderson and Henrik Oxvig, (Lars Mueller Publishers, 2009), 50-55.

illustration of Roman illusionism are the large Second Style architectural panels, an example of which is found in triclinium 14 in Villa A at Oplontis (*fig. 2*).¹³² The paintings of the triclinium are sumptuous in color and design, filling every surface of the walls with a clearly articulated architectural composition that appears to recede into space.¹³³ The illusion of receding space is created on this optical plane through overlapping architectural elements, the closest layer being that of an “architectural screen” created by the two rows of thick, gold columns, which support an entablature.¹³⁴ The walls of this front layer of architecture are decorated with bronze kantharoi. On each wall, connected by the continuous podium and colonnade, there is a distinct central composition focused on the architectural motifs. Multiple layers of architectural elements including pilasters, entablatures and columns all supported by a continuous painted podium at the bottom of the wall, provide a sort of stage for the painted virtual space.¹³⁵ The artist utilizes light, dark and color to carefully model the forms, apparently alluding to a source of light and definite space. The columns are modeled with light to appear round and the central gateway demonstrates subtle highlighting. Although not visibly depicted in the paintings, the light source emanates from the south, open portion of the room. In both the east and west walls, shadows are visibly cast to the north. Additionally,

¹³² The main source of information is the Oplontis Project directed by John Clarke and Michael Thomas of the University of Texas. For all relevant bibliography and resources consult the project website <http://www.oplontisproject.org>. See also Alfonso De Franciscis, *The Pompeian Wall Paintings in the Roman Villa of Oplontis* (Recklinghausen: Verlag Aurel Bongers, 1975); on the well-tread notion that these Second Style paintings were based on stage painting see H.G. Beyen, “The Wall-Decoration of the Cubiculum of the Villa of P. Fannius Synistor Near Boscoreale in Its Relation to Ancient Stage-Painting.” *Mnemosyne* 10.2 (1957): 147–153.

¹³³ David Summers, *Real Spaces* (London: Phaidon Press, 2003), 309-310.

¹³⁴ Ludovica Bucci De Santis, “On the Reconstruction of the Spatial Representations in Certain Roman Wall Paintings,” in *The Splendor of Roman Wall Painting*, ed. Umberto Pappalardo, (Los Angeles: The J. Paul Getty Museum, 2009), 226.

¹³⁵ The term virtual space here refers to David Summers’ use of the word in *Real Spaces*, 431-432.

the gem-encrusted front columns exhibit aggressive highlighting, once again alluding to a light source and an actual space.

Amidst this multi-layered architecture appears an early form of perspective that further organizes the virtual space according to principles of geometry. Roman painters began experimenting with linear perspective in the early first century BC (ca. 80-60 BC), but initial instances utilize what is termed asymmetrical perspective. Coined by J. Engemann to refer to late First and early Second Style paintings, asymmetric perspective exists in rooms, which have a continuous colonnade, but have only one fixed vanishing axis or vanishing point in the entire room, located on the wall directly facing the axis of entry.¹³⁶ Asymmetrical perspective requires the viewer to stand in the center of the room and directs all viewing towards the back wall. Later Second Style paintings (ca. 60-20 BC) adjust the perspective, granting a separate vanishing point to each individual wall and allowing more flexible viewing patterns.¹³⁷ Triclinium 18 at Oplontis conforms to this later form of perspective, but does not have one single vanishing point. Panofsky terms this use of illusionism as “axial perspective” in which the orthogonal lines are not centered on one single point on the wall, but rather on a central axis, as demonstrated by an example from the House of the Labyrinth at Pompeii (*fig. 3*).¹³⁸ In this case, there are several vanishing points within the composition, all of which lie on a primary, central axis. Along the east and west walls at Oplontis, the central axis runs vertically through the tholos in the center of the wall and the two vanishing points are located at the bottom

¹³⁶ J. Engemann, *Architekturdarstellungen des frühen zweiten Stils, illusionistische römischen Wandmalerei der ersten Phase und ihre Vorbilder in der realen Architektur* (Heidelberg: Kerle, 1967), 67.

¹³⁷ John White, *The Birth and Rebirth of Pictorial Space* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Pr, 1987), 263-265.

¹³⁸ Erwin Panofsky and Brack Walker, *Perspective as Symbolic Form* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1925), 130-157.

of the tholos and in the center of the wooden gate (*fig. 4*)—at approximately eye level of a standing person.¹³⁹ Like asymmetrical perspective, these points assume, or even demand, a static viewer who stands or sits in the center of the room, observing the panel from a fixed location in real space. In order to fully appreciate the complex perspective, the viewer would be required to sit, stand, or at least pause in the assigned position for the full visual experience. The composition is governed by the symmetry of vertical and horizontal divisions, which regulate the viewer's position relative to the paintings. Because the triclinium was a functionally determined space whose viewers were essentially static, a perspective that relies on fixed viewers is appropriate and it is only through this fixed perspective that naturalistic illusion is achieved.

Vistas and Sightlines in Domestic Architecture

Roman houses were places of presentation and display offering a wealth of opportunities for sensory perception. The Roman poet Statius (45-96AD) expresses the overwhelming nature of these spaces when, in marveling at the richly decorated villa of Manilius Vopiscus, he wonders, “what shall I sing to begin with or halfway, on what ending shall I fall silent? Shall I wonder at gilded beams or Moorish doorposts everywhere or marble lucent with colours or water discharged through every bedchamber?”¹⁴⁰ Statius perhaps presents a viewer who is visually overwhelmed and unable to process his surroundings.¹⁴¹ To account for viewers and visitors, Roman

¹³⁹ Such practice can be compared to the work on the oecus at Oplontis by De Santis, “Reconstruction of the Spatial Representations,” 222–232.

¹⁴⁰ Stat., *Silv.* 1.3.34-37.

¹⁴¹ Statius is noted for his descriptions of luxury that were counter to earlier, imperial poetry that specifically targeted the villa as a location of decadent consumption, See Carole Newlands, *Statius; Silvae*

organized their space. In his exploration of Roman architecture, Frank Brown suggests that, “the architecture of the Romans was, from the first to the last, an art of shaping space...”¹⁴² Spaces can be shaped in many ways, with physical walls, through the movements of their inhabitants, or with color as a codified sign and Romans took great pains to intentionally shape and construct the space around them to signal an activity, indicate status, or form an identity.¹⁴³ Controlled, constructed, and heightened visual patterns and experiences were just one powerful tool in the Roman home owner’s arsenal with which to shape a given space and provide a way for visitors, such as Statius, to understand a given space.

Roman houses were spaces with intentional viewing patterns and constructed experiences. Archaeological evidence has long emphasized the important presence of axial orientation and the resulting architectural vistas as an organizing element of Roman domestic space. The domus of Pompeii are paradigms of axial orientation, in which the space is oriented around a central axis from the street side entrance at the fauces to the rear of the house.¹⁴⁴ Vitruvius names the rooms and proportions of the domus, whose

and the Poetics of Empire (Cambridge University Press, 2002), 122-123. Newlands suggests that the *Silvae* represent a change in attitude towards luxury, one that is more accepting.

¹⁴² Frank Brown, *Roman Architecture*, (New York, 1961), 9.

¹⁴³ The Roman house as a social space has been the focus of an abundance of new research since the late twentieth century. Several seminal publications (with bibliography) include, Wallace-Hadrill, “The Social Structure of the Roman House;” Hales, *The Roman House and Social Identity*; Leach, *The Social Life of Painting in Ancient Rome and on the Bay of Naples*; Also see a criticism of these methods by Tybout, “Roman Wall-Painting and Social Significance.”

¹⁴⁴ For vistas in the Roman house see Wallace-Hadrill, *Houses and Society in Pompeii and Herculaneum*, 44-50; John Dobbins, “The Roman Houses at Antioch,” In *Antioch: the Lost Ancient City*, ed. Christine Kondoleon (Worcester Art Museum, 2000), 51-61.

plan is known from the excavated examples the Casa di Sallustio in Pompeii which follows a typical domus plan.¹⁴⁵

The domus' central axis is most often discussed in architectural and ritualistic terms. In his discussion of the social structure of Roman domus in Pompeii and Herculaneum, Andrew Wallace-Hadrill describes the accompanying axis as running "the depth of the house from the door through fauces, atrium with impluvium in its centre, tablinum with wide opening on the atrium and often also a wide window on the peristyle garden behind."¹⁴⁶ Similarly, John Clarke recounts the "number of compelling architectural forms that emphasize the axis" including the built space of the fauces, impluvium, and compluvium.¹⁴⁷ The architectural features supported the ritual of the daily salutatio in which visitors came to talk and discuss matters with the paterfamilias, following the house's axis to the tablinum. While the domus' axis was architectural—formed by a series of connected rooms—it was also visual. Visitors could see from the fauces all the way to the tablinum, or if present, the peristyle. The vista granted access to the anterior spaces of the house without physical entrance: individuals could see, but not enter. The visual vista provided visitors access to space without requiring movement or physical presence; it organized and connected rooms, providing a sense of unity and organization.

Individuals experienced the domus according to the constructed vista, which dictated exactly what was seen, how much was visible, and in what order—the vista

¹⁴⁵ Vitruvius, *De arch.* VII.5; *PPM* V, 80-141; Dwyer, "The Atrium House," 32-34.

¹⁴⁶ Wallace-Hadrill, "The Social Spread of Roman Luxury," 167. See also Wallace-Hadrill, "The Social Structure of the Roman House," 43-97.

¹⁴⁷ John Clarke, *The Houses of Roman Italy 100BC- AD 250: Ritual, Space, and Decoration* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), 4.

organized both the space and the visitor's experience. Pliny the Younger recounted visual vistas between rooms in his description of his Laurentine villa, emphasizing the connection both between rooms within the home and with the outside world.¹⁴⁸ Villas have a distinctly different architectural plan than domus, but maintain an emphasis on vistas and sightlines as organizing elements. Pliny's descriptions, written in the form of letters, do not focus on the villa's plan, decoration, or exact arrangement of rooms.¹⁴⁹ Unlike Vitruvius, who carefully details the plan and dimensions of architectural spaces, Pliny guides his reader through the villa beginning from the setting and approach to the house, through the entrance and progressing through individual rooms while emphasizing the views and visual relationships between each of the spaces.¹⁵⁰ Pliny does name several room-types and their approximate location in relation to other rooms (ie: the cubiculum is next to the corridor and the triclinium is located in the rear, looking onto the sea), but it seems nearly impossible for a reader to actually construct a plan of the house in their mind. He emphasizes the importance of looking through the house, between rooms *and* out into the landscape.

Individual rooms were also shaped by specific viewing patterns. Triclinia, for example, were spaces imbued with social ritual and vision was a tool to shape individual

¹⁴⁸ Plin., *Ep.*, II.XVII.1-5.

¹⁴⁹ Since the Renaissance, architects, archaeologists and artists have been interested in discovering the villa's location and decoding its true plan based on Pliny's account. Castell, *The Villas of the Ancients Illustrated* (London, 1728), pl. 126-127; Seventeenth century drawings of the villa belong to Vincenzo Scamozzi, *L'Idea dell'Architettura Universale* (Venice, 1615), 266-269, reproduced in H.H. Tanzer, *The Villas of Pliny the Younger* (New York, 1924); Eighteenth century drawings include Felibien des Avaux and Robert Castell, *The Villas of the Ancients Illustrated* (London, 1728), pl. 126; See also, Pierre de la Ruffiniere du Prey, *The Villas of Pliny from Antiquity to Posterity* (University of Chicago Press, 1994); Detailed architectural descriptions might be expected from someone like Vitruvius or perhaps accounts of Cicero, but we must remember Pliny authors letters.

¹⁵⁰ Andrew Riggsby, "Pliny in Space (and Time)," *Arethusa* 36.2 (2003): 169-70. Riggsby describes Pliny's narration as 'linear' in which he jumps from point to point.

experience. Social hierarchy was physically articulated in triclinia: guests reclined in specific positions on the klinai corresponding to their social rank.¹⁵¹ John Dobbins has emphasized that the *summus in imo* was also afforded supreme views of water features or mythological mosaic pavements located outside of the room.¹⁵² Not only did this honored guest receive the best space at the table, but also the best viewing experience. Cases of planned sightlines abound among the houses of Roman Italy, where intentionally superior views are granted of the seascape, paintings, mosaics, or decoration in order to heighten a visitor's experience or shape their impression of the space.

Eleanor Leach, and others have shown that paintings and other decoration are themselves tools for shaping a space and these elements are frequently in conversation with their architectural space to guide an individual's experience. In the garden peristyle of the Casa della Venere in Conchiglia, for example, a large painting of Venus covers the entire back wall of the house (CI.1, fig. 5).¹⁵³ Venus reclines in the half shell, positioned in the sea foam, and surrounded by several small amorini riding sea-horses. The painting is visible from the fauces and, at first, Venus seems to stare out at the audience who would have approached from the house's central axis. Upon moving closer, however, it is clear that she actually looks slightly to her left towards a doorway that enters into the garden from the east portico; she greets her audience.

¹⁵¹ For evidence regarding the social hierarchy of the triclinium see Lise Bek, "Questiones Convivales: The Idea of the Triclinium and the Staging of Convivial Ceremony from Rome to Byzantium," *Analecta Romana Instituti Danici*, 12 (1983): 81-107; on the banquet under the Principate see John Donahue, *The Roman Community at the Table During the Principate* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2004), 65-90; On viewing and power see Carlin Barton, "Being in the Eyes," in *The Roman Gaze: Vision, Power, and the Body*, ed. David Fredrick (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002), 216.

¹⁵² Dobbins, "The Roman Houses at Antioch," 51-61.

¹⁵³ *PPM*.III, 140-141.

The importance of constructed visual experience is perhaps most evident in room 5 of the Villa dei Misteri at Pompeii. The famous room is part of a suite formed with a smaller space, room 4, to its west. The rooms are most often considered ‘female rooms’ but bear no distinguishing features of a feminine space.¹⁵⁴ They do share limited decorative elements: the painting in room 4 is a simplified Second Style architectural motif with small Dionysiac vignettes that correlate thematically with the megalographic, Dionysiac frieze of the neighboring room 5. The larger room is typically entered through a large door on the west wall, which provides a full view of the painted frieze that encircles the room. While such a straightforward viewing experience could certainly have been intended, a second door offers an alternative. On the north wall, small doorway leads from the neighboring room 4 to room 5. When a visitor walks through this small doorway, he is greeted by a painting on the south wall of room 5: a seated woman at her toilette (CI.2, fig. 6) who stares directly out from the wall, looking intently at the approaching visitor.¹⁵⁵ The placement of this painting in relation to the doorway is proof of the intentional and careful planning of this space that takes into consideration the viewer and his/her movement.¹⁵⁶

Vistas not only shaped interior spaces, but also the a house’s relationship with the exterior environment. As urban townhomes, domus were located in city blocks and

¹⁵⁴ Clarke, *Houses of Roman Italy*, 98-100.

¹⁵⁵ The woman’s identity has been the subject of debate. For various opinions see Amedeo Maiuri, *La Villa dei Misteri* (Roma: Istituto Poligrafico e zecca dello Stato, 1931), 187-191; Clarke, *Houses of Roman Italy*, 96-104; A.M.G. Little, *A Roman Bridal Drama at the Villa of the Mysteries* (Maine: Star Press, 1972), 13-15; Reinhard Herbig, *Neue Beobachtungen an Fries der Mysterienvilla in Pompeji: Ein Beitrag zur römischen Wandmalerei in Campanien* (Baden-Baden, 1958); Gilles Sauron, “Nature et signification de la mégalographie dionysiaque de Pompéi,” *Compte rendus séances de l’Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres* (1984); Gilles Sauron, *La grande fresque de la villa des Mystères a Pompéi: memoires d’une devote de Dionysos* (Paris: Picard, 1998).

¹⁵⁶ For a house that incorporates this intentional view see John Dobbins and Ethan Gruber, “Modeling Hypotheses in Pompeian Archaeology,” 80-85.

focused on their interior space, but villas opened up to the outside, stressing their often bucolic settings. Pliny describes his Laurentine villa as having extensive views of the sea-coast, but also a sight of meadows and woods.¹⁵⁷ Based on the coastal view, Annalisa Marzano classifies the house as a maritime villa, one located on the coast, possibly with a small fish farm or other maritime industry.¹⁵⁸ Ancient sources mention the plethora of elite villas along the Campanian coast, a veritable vacation spot for the wealthy of Rome, whose country estates were luxurious reflections of their wealth and social status.¹⁵⁹ Archaeological evidence for such villas survives throughout southern Italy, the well-preserved Villa A at Oplontis being a superb example, and provide an idea of what Pliny and his guests may have experienced as they looked out from the house's rooms towards the sea.¹⁶⁰ Pliny repeatedly mentions the superior views offered from various rooms out to the sea and surrounding landscape as well as the view from the roads leading to the villa. In fact, Pliny describes the rooms of his villa in terms of their visual relationship with other spaces, in all directions. In speaking of the rear triclinium that faces the sea, Pliny describes the views writing that "it seems to look out onto three seas and at the back has a view through the inner hall, the courtyard with the two colonnades, then the

¹⁵⁷ Plin., *Ep.* II. XVII. 5-6.

¹⁵⁸ Pliny's villas have garnered significant scholarly attention. A.W. van Buren, "Pliny's Laurentine Villa." *JRS* 38.1-2 (1948): 35-36; Indra Kagis McEwan, "Housing Fame: in the Tuscan Villa of Pliny the Younger." *RES: Anthropology and Aesthetics* 27 (1995): 1-15; on the Roman villas of central Italy consult Annalisa Marzano, *Roman Villas in Central Italy: a Social and Economic History* (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 1-12.

¹⁵⁹ Cicero mentions Marius, *Letters to Atticus* II 8.2. See also John D'Arms, "The Campanian Villas of C. Marius and the Sullan Confiscations," *The Classical Quarterly, New Series* 18.1 (May 1968): 185-188 and John D'Arms, *Romans on the Bay of Naples: A Social and Cultural Study of the Villas and Their Owners From 150 BC to AD 400* (Harvard University Press, 1970).

¹⁶⁰ Although Villa A is a maritime villa, the portion of the house that would have faced the sea no longer survives due to the construction of the Sarno Canal, Michael Thomas and John Clarke, "The Oplontis Project 2005-6: Observations on the Construction History of Villa A," *JRA* 17 (2007): 223-232.

entrance-hall to the woods and mountains in the distance.”¹⁶¹ In this statement, Pliny not only emphasizes the view looking out from the room, but also back through the house demonstrating the way in which looking, and specifically following visual vistas, was an essential component of Roman life. Like domus, villas shaped their internal space using vistas and they also villas emphasized a connection to the outside landscape.¹⁶²

Roman domestic spaces, domus and villa alike, utilized planned vistas, intentional sightlines, and constructed experiences as tools for shaping space. Roman houses were already visually appealing and overwhelming spaces with their decorative programs that conveyed social, political, or personal messages. Using vistas and viewing patterns, Romans controlled the way in which these spaces were seen, and potentially experienced. While Statius was overwhelmed with the luxury and decadence of the homes he described, confessing that “my eyes draw me one way, mind another,” the Roman house was equipped with several prescribed visual paths that conveyed specific messages about the space, its owner, or the activities that occurred there.¹⁶³

¹⁶¹ Plin., *Ep.* II. XVII. 5-6.

¹⁶² For more on the notion of bringing the outside landscape into a villa consult Paul Zanker, *Pompeii: Public and Private Life* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1998), 137. Zanker even posits the influence of villa culture and structure on later townhouses, such as those in Pompeii and Herculaneum meaning the archaeological evidence from these sites could represent the influence of villas; for an example of the landscape brought into a domus see the Casa di Fabio Rufo, Pompeii.

¹⁶³ Stat., *Silv.* 1.3.38; Luxury object and decoration are one way of presenting self and also shaping a space around personal identity or wealth/status. For more on Statius’ descriptions and their reflection of the luxury culture see K. Sara Myers, “Docta Otia: Garden Ownership and Configurations of Leisure in Statius and Pliny the Younger,” *Arethusa* 38 no. 1 (2005): 103–129; Newlands, *Poetics of Empire*, 122; See also R.G.M. Nisbet, “Felicitas at Surrentum (Statius *Silvae* II.2),” *JRS* 68 (1978): 1-11; Newlands suggests that Statius’ response to the luxury of the Roman house is indicative of the patron’s wealth, status, and moral fortitude, Newlands, *Poetics of Empire* 2002, 122-123 and Carole Newlands, “Statius and Ovid: Transforming the Landscape,” *Transactions of the American Philological Association*, 134.1 (2004): 133-155; Stat., *Silv.* 1.1, 1.3, 1.5, 2.2, 3.1, 4.6; Plin., *Ep.* 2.17.1-5;

Conclusions

There is a long tradition and recognition of sight in the ancient world both in the scientific exploration of optics and sensory perception and the non-scientific visual experience, primarily regarding art and architecture. From this knowledge alone it is possible to conclude that the sense of sight was prominent in ancient and particularly Roman culture as it was the subject of studies, treatises and personal writings. Even more compelling is the sheer variety of these sources. While scientific writings at least offer a somewhat collective emphasis on the physical connection between eye and object seen, they still vary tremendously in their actual approach and method. Even further diversified are the non-scientific sources, which do not seek to answer a common question, but offer snippets of the awareness of sight and vision in the early empire as well as attempts to manipulate and enhance its power. Although clearly not exhaustive, the literary and material sources discussed in this chapter suggest that viewing experience, the understanding of sight, and the manipulation of the sense was not monolithic in the Roman world. Instead, their variety demonstrates that sight was a provocative, if somewhat elusive and confusing, notion.

To make sense of the scientific and non-scientific sources on vision requires further questions and considerations: do these sources in any ways inform one another and what do they say about Roman sight? It is clear that vision and viewing were mainstays of Roman life, due to the number and variety of discussions. From the sources, it is impossible to distinguish one clear response to vision; it seems appropriate only to say that writers were aware of the sense of sight and this awareness was manifest in many ways. For some, sight was a physical process (the atomists and intromissionists), for

others it was primarily emotional (Statius) and still others focused on the carefully calculated personal experience (Philostratus). Although diverse, the sources share some perspective on vision. In describing his villa, for instance, Pliny emphasizes the way in which architectural vistas relate a viewer to the space surrounding him—whether outside or in. These vistas parallel the optical eye-emitted ray paradigm championed by the extramissionists and particularly Euclid's geometric optics, which articulates a relationship between eye and anything in its path. Pliny's emphasis on straight vistas through his house may in fact be an echo of this larger cultural milieu, indirectly reflected in his own writings, and attesting to the Roman awareness of vision on many levels.

An equally important question for the present study is what these written sources do *not* tell us about sight. Knowing that sight and viewing experience were significant issues, but recognizing that the existing sources offer limited answers, it is necessary to look elsewhere in order to reconstruct a fuller picture of Roman visual practice.

II

REPRESENTING OBSERVATION: SPECTATOR FIGURES

This chapter considers Roman notions of observation and display through an examination of spectator figures in Roman wall painting. Such depictions are common among Roman paintings: two paintings of Theseus illustrate the subject's variation. A painting of Theseus Triumphator from the Casa di Gavius Rufus depicts a crowd of onlookers standing to the hero's left side, gesturing with their arms and surprised faces toward the dead Minotaur—a composition that is unusual for this story and does not derive from the myth (**CII.1**, *fig. 7*). Earlier representations of this episode do not incorporate these onlooker figures and instead focus on Theseus and even the Athenian youth.¹ A second painting involving Theseus from the Casa dei Vettii depicts a much different scene: Ariadne stranded on the island of Naxos (**CIV.41**, *fig. 8*). Having just awoken, Ariadne props herself up with her arm and looks over her right shoulder at Theseus' ship preparing to cast off for its voyage. She raises her right hand to her mouth in a gesture of shock, sadness, or despair as she realizes her fate: abandoned on the island by Theseus. This exact scene is repeated over twenty times at Pompeii alone and Jaś Elsner rightfully recognizes the role that Ariadne's directed gaze plays in focalizing the composition's emotion and meaning.² These paintings have little obviously in common besides a shared mythological origin, but both depict instances of spectatorship, looking in, or watching someone or something who does not look back. The current chapter

¹ For Theseus battling the Minotaur in Greek vase paintings see BAPD 310424: Harvard Univ. Sackler Museum, 1960.312, black-figure neck amphora, in the style of the Antimenes Painter, 575-525 BC, in Beazley, *ABV*, 148.

² Elsner, *Roman Eyes*, 101.

explores the way in which these two paintings, and others, depict spectatorship. Members of the crowds associated with Theseus and tearful Ariadne are certainly engaged in different acts of viewing and, they share features that, when examined collectively, are characteristic of Roman observation.

Scholarly notice of internal gazing in wall paintings has primarily focused on peripheral spectator figures, frequently termed ‘supernumerary’ figures, as formal devices.³ In past research, the figures were not assigned a narrative role and were considered meaningless compositional elements that establish setting, create depth, or fill space and were disregarded because they did not contribute to the mythological narrative.⁴ Dorothea Michel, in her 1982 article *Bemerkungen über Zuschauerfiguren in pomejanischen sogenannten Tafelbildern*, was the first to address these figures as an individual motif. She asserts that painters or patrons intentionally added the figures to Greek-inspired compositions as a mark of Roman innovation and design.⁵ Rather than disregard the figures because of their departure from Greek templates, Michel privileges their presence and suggests that the Roman painters intended the figures as signposts to alert audiences to their own, generalized act of viewing. John Clarke later compared the spectators in Fourth Style theater compositions to actual Roman theater-goers whose

³ Elsner, *Roman Eyes*, 82.

⁴ R. Bianchi Bandinelli compared the Theseus painting to a similar example from the Basilica at Herculaneum, concluding that the Pompeian version is a Romanized copy of the earlier, more Greek panel,” *Tradizione ellenistica e gusto Romano nella pittura Pompeiana*,” in *Storicità dell’arte classica* (1950), 157.

⁵ Dorothea Michel, “Bemerkungen über Zuschauerfiguren in pomejanischen sogenannten Tafelbildern,” *La Regione sotterrata dal Veusvio: studi e prospettive, atti del convegno internazionale, 11-15 novembre 1979*, (1982): 538.

popularity was a result of the Neronian theatricality that subsumed many aspects of first century AD culture.⁶

In reality, spectator figures serve many of these purposes—create depth, communicate a patron or painter’s intentions, reflect their cultural conditions—and, as Michel suggests, are meant to be noticed by the audience.⁷ The following chapter expands both Clarke’s and Michel’s conclusion that spectator figures are meaningful compositional elements, contending that they play an important role in both the meaning of paintings and the response from viewers. By interrogating the painted spectator through an iconographic and cultural lens, it is clear that spectator figures are active, intentional contributors to the viewer’s experience and therefore, to a painting’s meaning.

The discussion examines the way in which spectators are depicted in a body of paintings in order to better understand both the prevalence of the motif in wall paintings as well as its visual characteristics, in a sense defining an iconography of observation. Though Michel focused on the connection between supernumerary figures and the external viewer, these are not the only spectator figures depicted in paintings. Rather than draw conclusions from one example, I provide a broad evidentiary basis with which to understand the representation, repetition, meaning, and interpretation of this motif, defined as the act of spectatorship or the state of observing a scene from the outside as an onlooker. As it quickly becomes clear, Roman painters or patrons are obsessed with

⁶ Clarke examines a specific group of figures who appear amidst scaenographic panels rather than mythological scenes, see, “Living Figures Within the Scaenae Frons: Figuring the Viewer in Liminal Space,” In *I Temi Figurativi Nella Pittura Parietale Antica (IV Sec. a.C.-IV Sec. D.C.)*, ed. Daniela Scagliarini (Bologna, 1997), 43–45; Clarke, *Art in the Lives of Ordinary Romans*, 136–142; For references to theater and the correlation between theater and scaenographic painting see Steven Cerutti and L. Richardson, “Vitruvius on Stage Architecture and Some Recently Discovered Scaenae Frons Decorations,” *JSAH* 48 no. 2 (1998): 172–179.

⁷ Michel, “Zuschauerfiguren,” 539.

representing observation, a motif which, I argue, can be attributed to the Roman cultural obsession with performance, visibility, and display—a trend that contributes both to the paintings’ appearance and their relationship with the audience. The discussion begins with a brief introduction to real spectators and the practice of spectatorship in the late Republic and early Empire before turning to the painted, visual evidence. The paintings are analyzed focusing on the figures depicted as spectators and their unique representations.

Spectators and Observers in the Roman World

To understand the predominance of painted spectator figures, it is necessary to establish the place of real observers and spectators in the Roman world along with the practices of spectatorship. The term ‘spectator’ is used here in a broad sense to describe individuals who watched, observed, and looked at others. It is not limited to the audience at public performances, although these individuals offer some of the most accessible evidence of behavior and actions. The Roman spectator was culturally distinct from those of the modern world and while it is easy to assume ancient individuals practiced the same viewing behavior, it is important to recognize the vast differences.⁸

Rome of the late Republic and early Empire valued visibility as a test of personal honor or *virtus*, meaning to subject oneself to the eyes of others was a constant, but necessary, risk.⁹ In this model, outside viewers—spectators—held the ultimate power; their visual behavior, evaluation, and subsequent response helped to shape a person’s

⁸ On the spectator, observer, or viewer in relation to art in the modern period see Jonathon Crary, *Techniques of the Observer: On Vision and Modernity in the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1990), 1-24.

⁹ On this see Barton, “Being in the Eyes,” 227.

identity. The Roman observer was not necessarily a single person or set of eyes. Shadi Bartsch has discussed the Roman viewing public of the first century BC in terms of the collective gaze that emanated from many institutional bodies—plebs, senate, elites, etc—and was responsible for punctuating most rituals and habits of life.¹⁰ The incredible emphasis on visibility rendered Rome not only a place of personal display and self-construction, but also one of constant observation in which individuals played the role of spectator. As Solimano surmises “Rome appears as a city full of eyes that watch and desire, that spy...and evaluate.”¹¹ As understood by Bartsch and Solimano, Roman spectators were not simply on the outside, separated from the objects of vision that they observed, but actually wielded the power.

Roman spectators can be partially understood through the activities and events they observed: spectacles. Public visibility and display are most evident in what Robert Beacham has called “spectacle entertainments”—triumphs, animal hunts, gladiator games, and others—that occurred in the Roman public sphere.¹² With a noticeable emphasis on entertainment, these events are united by their “shared aesthetic values...” or visual appeal to the audience. Recently, however, spectacle has been understood more broadly as any circumstance, event, or interaction that is a “feast[s] for the eyes” and demands an outside viewer.¹³ More subtle than planned public performances were the

¹⁰ Bartsch, *Mirror of the Self*, 119-124.

¹¹ Giannina Solimano, *La Prepotenza dell'occhio: Riflessioni sull'opera di Seneca*, vol. 131, (Università di Genova: Facoltà di lettere, 1991), 35 transl. Bartsch, *Mirror of the Self*, 117, fn. 6.

¹² Richard C. Beacham, *Spectacle Entertainment of Early Imperial Rome* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1999), xi.

¹³ Jonathan Edmondson, “The Cultural Politics of Public Spectacle in Rome and the Greek East, 167-166 B.C.,” in *The Art of Ancient Spectacles. Studies in the History of Art*, eds. Christine Kondoleon and Bettina Bergmann (Washington: National Gallery of Art, 1999), 78.

multitude of everyday interactions between individuals and the basic act of presenting oneself to the world. Personal spectacles were everyday events or interactions that drew individuals to “stop, look, and engage.”¹⁴ The simple act of adorning oneself for the day, in the case of women, or walking to the Forum, in the case of men, held important implications for their willingness or unwillingness to be exposed to the penetrating, judging gaze of others.

In discussing Roman spectacle and sport, Donald Kyle demonstrates the essential need for a viewer stating that spectacles “were things seen in public, spectacular things in scale and action, things worth seeing and meant to be seen” emphasizing the importance of both the process of looking at these events as well as their visual appeal to the audience.¹⁵ While these features are present in the events and interactions of everyday life they are most obviously evident in the lavish spectacle entertainments staged by the state and wealthy patrons, they are also present beyond the realm of public performance. The following sections elucidates the position and behavior of the spectator focusing on public spectacle entertainments as examples.

Public Spectacle Entertainment: Tradition and Practice

Often planned by the state as part of official festivals or holidays public spectacle entertainments were large-scale and formulaic in nature, habitually punctuating the Roman calendar on designated days each year.¹⁶ Such events include public games,

¹⁴ Bettina Bergmann describes spectator behavior in this way, emphasizes not only the everyday occurrence of spectacles, but also the need for activity on the part of the spectator, Bettina Bergmann and Christine Kondoleon, eds., *The Art of Ancient Spectacle* (Washington DC: National Gallery of Art, 2000), 12.

¹⁵ Donald G. Kyle, *Sport and Spectacle in the Ancient World* (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2001), 35.

individually sponsored *munera*, and triumphs—all large affairs held in specifically designated spaces throughout the city.¹⁷ These events were well-established and expected aspects of Roman culture at which spectators knew their roles and performed them on cue. In their earliest Republican versions, Roman spectacles took the form of public performances that were part of official, community events attached to religious festivals honoring gods and goddesses, but during the late Republic and Empire, these earlier practices were continually adapted, based on their political function and audience appeal, leading to a number of public performances all with different official functions. Regardless of time period or form, spectacle entertainments always relied on visual appeal to attract their audience, the Roman public, and maintained a strict distinction between the performers (whether actors, gladiators, or athletes) and spectators.

Early Roman public spectacle entertainment traditions arose in the fourth century BC when games were first associated with traditional religious festivals (*feriae*), honoring gods or goddesses and presented on behalf of the entire community.¹⁸ The earliest events consisted of chariot races and other circus games (*ludi circenses*), which were held in the Circus Maximus, but by the third and second centuries BC the Romans began augmenting the traditional events with new and more visually appealing features that emphasized visually appealing entertainment. Stage performances (*ludi scaenici*)

¹⁶ See Diane Favro, “Meaning and Experience: Urban History from the End of Antiquity to the Early Modern Period,” *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 58.3 1(999), 205 for spectacle as one aspect of cultural performance, the others being ritual and festival.

¹⁷ Brill’s *New Pauly* 9.300-305 (s.v. ‘munus, munera’ M. Corbier).

¹⁸ Beacham, *Spectacle Entertainments*, 2; Kyle, *Sport and Spectacle*, 258; Tac., *Ann.* 14.21.2 says Romans adopted this practice from the Etruscans; See John Donahue, “Towards a Typology of Roman Public Feasting,” *American Journal of Philology* 4 (2003): 432-441; Roman spectacle entertainments have many ties to Greek and especially Etruscan traditions, Livy (7.2) writes about Roman borrowing of Etruscan stage shows and sport; see also Kyle, *idem.* 27-47 and Wolfgang Decker and Jean-Paul Thuillier, *Le sport dans l’Antiquité Egypte, Grèce, Rome* (Paris: Picard, 2004).

were first held at the *Ludi Romani* in 363 BC and by 214 BC occupied four whole days of the festival.¹⁹ These new, more exciting games were so prominent that by the end of the third century BC there were approximately 50 days of official performance per year. By 200 BC, the form and frequency of the most prominent Roman games were mostly established which in addition to the *Ludi Romani* included the *Ludi Plebeii*, begun in 220 BC and held in the Circus Flaminius; the *Ludi Megalenses*, started in 204 BC to honor Cybele and held near the temple on the Palatine; the *Ludi Florales*, founded in 241 BC for the goddess Flora; and the *Ludi Ceriales*, begun in 202 BC to celebrate Ceres.²⁰

The widespread occurrence of spectacle entertainments only increased during the Empire with 65 days of games under Augustus, 93 under Claudius, and 135 under Marcus Aurelius.²¹ In addition to the many days of official festival games, there were also the triumphal games following successful campaigns as well as *munera*, unofficial games, sponsored and funded by private, individual citizens on the occasion of their deceased relative's funeral. The individual events held at these games could be relatively similar to official games.²² Between state-sponsored games, triumphal processions and

¹⁹ Livy 24.43.7; On the *Ludi Romani* see H.H. Scullard, *Festivals and Ceremonies of the Roman Republic* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1981), 183-87; Mary Beard, John North and Simon Price, *Religions of Rome* (Cambridge University Press, 1998), I: 40-41, 66-67, II:137-139.

²⁰ Eric Csapo and William J. Slater, *The Context of Ancient Drama* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1995), 207; Beacham, *Spectacle Entertainments*, 2; On the *Ludi Plebeii*, see Scullard, *Festivals and Ceremonies*, 196-198; also Beard, North and Price, *Religions of Rome*, I: 40-41, 66-67; These festival continued into the fourth century, see Michele Salzman, *On Roman Time: the Codex Calendar of 354 and the Rhythms of Urban Life in Late Antiquity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 120-130.

²¹ Kyle, *Sport and Spectacle*, 301.

²² Liv., *Ep.* 16 reports that gladiatorial games were introduced to Rome in 264 BC as funeral games; Kyle, *Sport and Spectacle*, 327 holds that gladiatorial combat was reserved for funeral games, however Welch disputes this claim; During the Principate Augustus reformed all games instituting imperia *munera*. Thomas Wiedemann, *Emperors & Gladiators* (New York: Routledge, 1992), 8-10, 22; Edmondson, "Dynamic Arenas," 88-90, 102-103.

accompanying events, and *munera* the Roman public had almost constant opportunities to act as audience members at a spectacle performance.

Defining Spectators: Purpose, Positions, Behaviors

Although never identical, public spectacle entertainments were somewhat formulaic in format: gladiators performed the role of ferocious fighters, athletes offered a glimpse of Greek culture, charioteers delivered the thrill of the race, actors delivered a narrative. Viewers knew what to expect, but still wanted to be surprised. Entertainment was for the audience's benefit, but their presence was required---without an audience to watch, judge, and interact the performance was only partially complete. Ultimately, the spectator's role was more active than passive, something that became increasingly common in the early empire. Given the diversity of entertainment types, the ancient audiences' role varied depending on the event---spectatorship was not a universal action though it had shared characteristics including distinction between performers and observers---most often physical separation-- a one-way visual relationship, and other means of interacting including gesture and comments.

First and foremost, spectators were judges, either approving or disapproving of events and, by extension, the individuals involved in their production. Perhaps the most popular form of Roman entertainment were blood sports, the beast hunts (*venationes*) and gladiatorial games that began as parts of the animal hunts as well as games and funerals in the Republic but eventually evolved into gigantic whole-day affairs during the Empire.²³ The beast hunts and especially the gladiatorial shows introduced a level of

²³ The first staged hunt in Rome was at the votive games of M. Fulvius Nobilior, in which lions and leopards engaged in a hunt; Livy. 39.5.7-10, 39.22.2, 44.18.8; See also Plin., *HN.*, 8.19.53; 8.16; 8.17.64;

violence not present in other public entertainments—crowds flocked to the shows. By 22 BC Augustus systematized the events to consist of morning beast shows, noontime executions, and afternoon gladiatorial shows.²⁴ Although the public could jeer and gesture in the same way at gladiator games and *venationes* as at the theater or circus, the blood sports granted an additional element of visual power: judgment. Both beast hunts and gladiatorial shows were instances in which the performers' lives or futures were at stake. The animals died, but the gladiators could be spared with the help of the audience. Gladiators could fight to the death, but always maintained the opportunity to be spared by the audience.²⁵ Augustus granted even more power to spectators when he instituted the rule that fights must not be *sine missione*, or the gladiators must fight until a decision is required: life or death? By requiring a decision, Augustus insured that the fights remained interesting and, most importantly, involved the public as judges.

In order to occupy this position of power viewers were distinguished from the performers. In the earliest scenic shows, Etruscans performed for Roman audiences.²⁶ Similarly, Greek athletes displayed their prowess, and exotic beasts were paraded and

8.36; Valerius Maximus 2.4.7 cited by Welch, *Roman Amphitheater*, 30. Welch has shown that gladiator spectacles have a more complicated origin than simply deriving from funeral games, but are actually connected to Roman military activity.

²⁴ The origins of gladiator games is disputed with those who believe they have Etruscan origins (Wiedemann, *Emperors & Gladiators*) based on sixth century Etruscan tomb paintings and the majority who believe they are based on Campania (Sabellian/Samnite) rituals based on tomb paintings. For further discussion see Beacham, *Spectacle Entertainments*, 14; Kyle, *Sport and Spectacle*, 45, 298; Livy 9.40.17; Dio 54.2.3-4; Marcus Junkelman, "Familia gladiatorial: The Heroes of the Amphitheatre," in *Gladiators and Caesars: the Power of Spectacle in Ancient Rome*, ed. Ralph Jackson (London: British Museum Press, 2000), 35-37.

²⁵ On the complexity of death versus survival in the arena see Donald Kyle, *Spectacles of Death in Ancient Rome* (London: Routledge, 1998), 53-57, 90-95.

²⁶ Livy 7.2.4 "...without any singing, without imitating the action of singers, players who had been brought in from Etruria danced to the strains of the flautist and performed not ungraceful evolutions in the Tuscan fashion." (transl. William Heinemann).

pitted against one another. Roman culture held that individuals of a certain status could not participate in the games, as more than spectators—a rule that even Augustus could not successfully change when the Senate overturned his decision to put those of the equestrian class in theater and gladiatorial games.²⁷ Besides importing performers from around the Empire, the Romans distinguished the audience from the performers using space and intentionally designed structures. First century BC Campana plaques represent spectators sitting high up in towers as they watch beast hunts in the Circus Maximus.²⁸ The theater and later Roman amphitheater are excellent examples of purpose-built architecture. Roman scenic performances (*ludi scaenici*) were based on earlier Greek models, and Romans adopted the basic form of the Greek-style theater as well.²⁹ The earliest structures were temporary wooden facilities, put up and taken down for the annual *ludi*.³⁰ Although little to no archaeological evidence survives for the design of Roman wooden theaters, they seem to have shared basic features with their Hellenistic precedents found throughout southern Italy and Sicily including a raised stage area for performers; a scene building behind the stage with doors for actors to enter and exit; and

²⁷ Suet., *Aug.* 44.2.

²⁸ For more representations of spectators consult Richard Lim, “‘In the Temple of Laughter:’ Visual and Literary Representations of Spectators at Roman Games,” in *The Art of Ancient Spectacle. Studies in the History of Art*, eds. Christine Kondoleon and Bettina Bergmann (Washington: National Gallery of Art, 1999), 343–365; Late third century AD North African mosaic pavements represent spectators watching wild beast hunts. These observers are depicted as undifferentiated crowds of viewers.

²⁹ On the Roman theater see Frank Sear, *Roman Theatres: An Architectural Study* (Oxford University Press, 2006); see especially Margarete Bieber, *The History of the Greek and Roman Theater* (Princeton University Press, 1939); J.R. Green, *Theater in Ancient Greek Society* (New York: Routledge, 1994).

³⁰ For a discussion of the evidence on temporary theater structures consult A. Rumpf, “Die Entstehung des Römischen Theaters,” *Mdl* 3 (1950): 40-50; Peter Rose, “Spectators and Spectator Comfort in Roman Entertainment Buildings: a Study in Functional Design,” *Papers of the British School at Rome* 73 (2005): 99–130; On temporary theater structures and the effect on actual performance conditions see C.W. Marshall, *The Stagecraft and Performance of Roman Comedy* (Cambridge University Press, 2006), 31-35.

a separate area for the audience to sit.³¹ By the early first century BC, temporary structures were no longer sufficient for a society obsessed with lavish and frequent displays of performance and permanent theaters were finally built, the first structure being the Theater of Pompey in 55BC.³² These buildings followed the same general form as their temporary antecedents, but became more lavish with highly articulated *scaenae frons* backdrops—creating a specialized space for watching performances with a uniquely Roman visual appeal.

The Roman theater separated the viewers from the performers, which aided in the visual dynamics.³³ The theater's structure allowed the audience to watch the show, but only from a distance. Actors and other performers played out their roles on the raised *scaena* while the audience watched from their seats. The Roman theater is infamous for its intentional stratification of society and, as Holt Parker has said, acted as a “space for the drama of Roman society.”³⁴ Besides dividing the actors and observers the theater further sectioned the crowd: the senators sat on the floor of the orchestra; the knights sat in the first fourteen rows of the cavea; and the general public crowded into the remainder

³¹ Richard Beacham, *The Roman Theatre and Its Audience* (Harvard University Press, 1996), 57-65; For a look at the original Roman aspects of theaters that go against Vitruvius' ideals see David B. Small, "Studies in Roman Theater Design," *AJA* 87 (1983): 55-68; Frank Sear, "Vitruvius and Roman Theater Design," *AJA* 94 (1990): 249-258; Roman amphitheaters also evolved from non-permanent to permanent structures, but Welch suggests their origin was not in the south, see Katherine Welch, "The Roman Arena in Late-Republican Italy: a New Interpretation," *JRA* 7 (1994): 59-79.

³² On the architecture of the Theater of Pompey see M.C. Gagliardo and James Packer, "A New Look at Pompey's Theater: History Documentations and Recent Excavations," *AJA* 110 (2006): 93-112; James Packer, et al. "Looking Again at Pompey's Theater: the 2005 Excavation Season," *AJA* 111.3 (2007).

³³ For performance space in ancient Greece, see David Wiles, *Greek Theatre Performance: An Introduction* (Cambridge University Press, 2000), 104-110.

³⁴ Holt Parker, "The Observed of All Observers: Spectacle, Applause, and Cultural Poetics in the Roman Audience," in *The Art of Ancient Spectacle*, eds. Christine Kondoleon and Bettina Bergmann, (Washington: National Gallery of Art, 1999), 163.

of the seats.³⁵ This inter-audience division created complex levels of viewing: senators watching actors, the plebeians watching the senators, and the entire audience looking at one another, but the most important division was that between the performers and the audience.³⁶ Although the theater prevented the audience from physically intervening in the spectacle, they participated visually in the action and fulfilled their role as a collective, viewing body. The audience occupied the place of power in the visual relationship, objectifying the performers with their judging gazes.

Spectators participated in events by reacting to the performance or spectacle. Even when physically separated from the events, as in the theater, spectators involved themselves by responding with gestures and vocal noise. Chariot races, for example, (*ludi circenses*), were extremely popular and drew large crowds of spectators to the Circus Maximus.³⁷ Spectators at these events were known for being rowdy and loud as well as extremely passionate about the sport itself, Juvenal claims to have been able to hear the crowds cheering from anywhere in Rome.³⁸ Both the charioteers and spectators were divided into factions: teams identified by a specific color with groups of loyal

³⁵ For more on this social and physical distinction consult Parker, "Observed of All Observers," 164.

³⁶ The complexity of this social division has been repeatedly discussed in modern literature. For several different approaches consult: Shadi Bartsch, *Actors in the Audience: Theatricality and Doublespeak From Nero to Hadrian* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1994), 10-15 who discusses theatricality in the first century AD; Carlin A. Barton, *The Sorrows of the Ancient Romans*; William Slater, ed., *Roman Theater and Society: E. Togo Salmon Papers I (Salmon Conference Papers)* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1996); Beacham, *The Roman Theatre and Its Audience*, 199-202.

³⁷ Chariot racing was believed to have both Etruscan and Greek origins. For Greek influence see Tac., *Ann.* 14.21.2 and Dion., *Hal. Ant.Rom.*, 7.73.1-3; For Etruscan roots see Elizabeth Rawson, "Chariot-Racing in the Roman Republic," *PBSR* 49 (1981): 1-2 who suggests the Etruscans learned the custom from the Greeks; R.C. Bronson, "Chariot-Racing in Etruria," *Studi in onore di Laisa Banti* (Rome, 1965), 89.

³⁸ Plin., *HN*.7.53.186 reports that an adoring fan threw himself on the funeral pyre of a deceased charioteer; Juvenal claims to have been able to hear the roaring crowds from anywhere in Rome (11.193-204).

fans.³⁹ Fans passionately cheered for their color as they watched the race from the stands, shouting and placing wagers on their factions. The experience of watching a chariot race, however, was dictated by the circus structure itself. Originally, races were held in the Campus Martius, but the Circus Maximus was built during the Republic with raised spectator stands to increase visibility. Although the fanatic spectators identified with their faction waving colored pieces of cloth, they were distinguished, not only by action, but also by location: fans in the stands and charioteers in the circus. Much like modern horse-races, spectators at chariot races may have been physically separated from the action, but participated with their voices, gestures, and emotional response.

Spectators were not always physically separated from the objects and individuals they watched. In one of the earliest forms of spectacle, the triumphal procession, the Roman public participated as active audience members.⁴⁰ Unlike games, which were regularly scheduled events with performers and observers in specially designated—often constructed—spaces, triumphs were moving events with somewhat permeable boundaries. The ceremony was a processional rite to honor a victorious general and also his city. The general rode in his high chariot through the specifically designated triumphal route: in Rome from the Campus Martius, along the Via Sacra, through the Forum, and ending at the Temple of Jupiter Optimus Maximus on the Capitoline Hill. The general was not alone, however, but accompanied by his children, performers, and

³⁹ Alan Cameron, *Circus Factions: Blues and Greens at Rome and Byzantine* (Oxford University Press, 1976), 7.

⁴⁰ Origins of triumph are disputed, but most often believed to have some Etruscan influence; For discussion of the origins see Beacham, *Spectacle Entertainments*, 20 who suggests that the Romans were unaware of these ritualistic functions; For a summary of proposed theories see H.S. Versnel, “Red (Herring) Comments on a New Theory Concerning the Origin of the Triumph,” *Numen* 53.3 (2006): 290-326; For visual imagery of these Etruscan processions see P.J. Holliday, “Processional Imagery in Late Etruscan Funerary Art,” *AJA* 94 (1990): 73-93.

his soldiers who marched at the end of the procession chanting victory songs about their victor.⁴¹ All the while, spectators surrounded the street not only watching the event, but participating as they applauded and shouted “To triumphe,” themselves forming part of the spectacle.⁴²

The spectators role changed even further in the mid first century AD when the previously strict delineations between audience and performers began to break down in venues such as the theater. In addition to tragedy and comedy, mime became a prevalent form of theater entertainment by the late Republic and particularly during the Empire. Mime was regularly performed at the scenic games in Rome by 173 BC as part of the *Ludi Florales* and soon rivaled comedy and tragedy because of its obscenity and caricature of everyday life.⁴³ Mime was wildly popular because it portrayed much more varied and licentious themes than theater including adultery, kidnapping, and even some lighter, mythological subjects. Apart from this difference in subject-matter, however, mime also had a distinctly different visual effect since performers were mask-less, taking away one additional level of separation between the audience and actors. Mimes did not act out culturally conditioned scenes, but instead engaged in acrobatics, dancing,

⁴¹ For the traditional assumption that the triumphator was understood as a god consult H.S. Versnel, *Triumphus: an inquiry in to the origin, development, and meaning of the Roman triumph* (Leiden: Brill, 1970), 66-70; For an interesting look at representations of and for this ritual performance see, P.J. Holliday, “Roman Triumphal Painting: Its Function, Development, and Reception,” *ArtBull* (1997): 1–19; For the view that triumphs were street performances see, Mary Beard, “The Triumph of the Absurd: Roman Street Theatre,” in *Rome the Cosmopolis*, eds. Catharine Edwards and Greg Woolf (Cambridge University Press, 2005-6), 21-43 and Beard, *The Roman Triumph* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2009).

⁴² Beacham, *Spectacle Entertainments*, 21; For a vivid description of the triumph and the triumphator’s role see Mary Beard, “Roman Triumph,” 219-250.

⁴³ Mime was officially introduced at the *Ludi Florales*, but had existed before this; Beacham, *Spectacle Entertainments*, 9. See Bodel on the *Ludi Florales*; For the continued tradition and evolution of mime in late antiquity see Ruth Webb, *Demons and Dancers: Performance in Late Antiquity* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2008), 101-108.

juggling, and other sensational moves creating a jovial atmosphere. The emperors appreciated the visual appeal of mime as well as its mass audience appeal. Suetonius records instances in which Nero encouraged Roman patricians to take part in the staged activities—breaking the physical divide between spectator and performer.⁴⁴

Spectatorship and the larger culture of viewing changed dramatically under Nero whose reign saw the unprecedented participation of the emperor in theatrical performance. Whereas in earlier periods the emperor occupied a role of observer, like the rest of the viewing body, this shift reassigned visual roles and subsequently the dynamics of viewing and power. As a performer, Nero did not simply ignore his audience, but looked back at them rupturing the previously established model of objectivity. By looking at his audience, Nero placed this collective viewers under his own surveillance and made them simultaneously observers and performers. With Nero as a performer and viewer, the audience was placed in the precarious, and even dangerous, position of passing judgment and responding to his actions. As Shadi Bartsch explains, “as if the spectators were the performers here, their every gesture comes under scrutiny as Nero gauges their reactions...”⁴⁵ Nero famously delivered punishment for undesirable responses, ensuring that his ‘actors’ delivered acceptable performances. The ever-watchful gaze of Nero compels the audience to react in specific ways.⁴⁶

From state-sponsored, exotic spectacle performances to the simple act of preparing oneself to walk outside on a daily basis, Romans were engaged in acts of

⁴⁴ Suet., *Nero*, 11; See also Dio 63.14.2-3.

⁴⁵ Bartsch, *Actors in the Audience*, 5.

⁴⁶ On theatricality in Nero’s reign outside of the actual theater and stage performance see Bartsch, *Actors in the Audience*, 11-14 with further bibliography.

spectatorship on a daily basis.⁴⁷ Spectacles were complex social and cultural activities that were constantly altered and refined to reflect current cultural trends, political needs, and personal motivations—whether on a large or small scale. As viewers, observers, or audiences, Romans participated in a culture preoccupied with looking at one another and averting one another’s look.⁴⁸ Initially, this act relied on a distinction between viewer and viewed (spectator and performer; observer and observed), a space of observation (public and private; stage and seating), and a one-way visual interaction, but gave way to more fluid models of viewership under Nero.

Observers, Spectators, and Onlookers in Paintings

The spectator-observer appears frequently as a motif in Roman wall paintings. Internal spectator figures first appear with consistency in Third Style paintings dated to the first half of the first century AD. Figural panels of this period have a relatively standardized composition in which the figures occupy a shallow space in the center of the painting. Figures stand on one ground line with little to no overlap or spatial recession. There is no setting and the background is closed by landscape, architecture, or a flat color plane. Spectator figures are small in number and accompany the other figures in the scene. Such is the case in a painting of Pan and nymphs from the Casa di Giasone (**CII.10**, *fig. 9*) where Pan sits in the center of the panel looking towards a nymph who walks in his

⁴⁷ On the staging and performance of the triumph as part of daily spectacle see also Bartsch, *Mirror of the Self*, 120-121.

⁴⁸ For a darker side of public ‘performance’ and the blurring of boundaries between performance and execution see Kathleen Coleman, “Fatal Charades: Roman Executions Staged as Mythological Enactments,” *JRS* 80 (1990): 44–73.

direction.⁴⁹ The figures are darkly outlined against a white surface, which consists of two buildings. On the left, two unidentified females sit on a rock or ledge watching the scene, but not distracting from the focus. Spectator figures are more prevalent in later Third Style paintings. The Augustan classicism of the earlier Third Style (ca. 20 BC—1 BC) gives way to more illusionistic, three-dimensional panels that take advantage of spatial effects including overlap and perspective.⁵⁰ Figures are larger and increase in number, to fill the open space at different levels within the composition.⁵¹ A painting of Aeneas in the Casa di Laocoonte, for example, presents Polyphemus in the foreground while Aeneas stands slightly behind him creating the effect of spatial recession (**CII.3**, *fig. 10*). Five small spectators peak their heads out from behind Aeneas and in the far background, and three additional observers create an additional level of depth. These spectator figures are anonymous with no identifying visual characteristics.

Paintings of the late Third and early Fourth Style incorporate spectator figures, but in reduced numbers. Panels continue to emphasize spatial recession and scenes often take place in architectural settings that are no longer just backdrops to the scene; figures now occupy and move through the space of the panel. Scenes become more intimate in nature and tend to focus on the interaction between two or three figures in the foreground while relegating other figures to the background. A painting of Medea from the Casa dei Dioscuri, for example (**CII.34**, *fig. 11*) depicts the female protagonist in the foreground

⁴⁹ A white ground is also found in two other Third Style paintings from the Casa di Giasone, Europa, (**CII.24**) and Jason, (MANN inv. 111436) in Hodske, *Mythologische Bildthemen*, cat. 739; Pan is both the son of a nymph, Dryope, and a companion of nymphs. It is not unusual to find him pictured with nymphs, including Echo and Syrinx in Roman art, *LIMC*.VIII, “Nymphe Suppl.,” 33-35; for Pan’s parentage see Nonnus, *Dionysiaca* 14.92.

⁵⁰ For a discussion of ground-lines, overlap, highlighting and other formal devices as creators of space and depth, see Summers, *Real Spaces*, 439-454.

⁵¹ Ling, *Roman Painting*, 118-120.

looking down towards her children while in the background a single male figure stands in a doorway watching the scene.⁵² A corollary to the reduction of figures is the changing identity of spectator figures to fit in this more intimate space. While in the earlier Third Style paintings spectators were anonymous, Fourth Style paintings relegate identified individuals to the position of observer. A painting of Pirithous and Hippodamia from the Casa di Gavius Rufus (**CII.35**, *fig. 12*) for example, represents the king greeting the centaurs in the foreground while Hippodamia watches from the background.⁵³ This change in spectator figures, from unrelated, anonymous figures to mythological characters results in a dramatic increase in the frequency of paintings that represent internal spectators from the Third to the Fourth Style.

Spectator figures appear in a wide variety of mythological contexts and are not limited to specific narrative scenes. In the current catalogue, over fifty different myths are represented, demonstrating the enormous variety and widespread appearance of internal spectators.⁵⁴ There is no obvious correlation between the figures and a painting's context, either within a room or the house.

Various scholars mention spectator figures as a motif in Roman painting, but little attention is paid to their universal appearance or behavior and there has been no attempt to clarify their visual representation or iconographic features.⁵⁵ Recent scholarship

⁵² Compare this to an earlier Third Style painting of Medea with an architectural backdrop, but less spatial recession in Pompeii IX.5.18, Casa di Giasone, (MANN inv. 114321) in Hodske, *Mythologische Bildthemen*, cat. 737.

⁵³ Ling, *Roman Painting*, 137 also notes a tendency to turn participants into observers, as in the painting of Alcestis and Admetus in the House of the Tragic Poet, **CII.11**.

⁵⁴ Consult Appendix I, Table 1 for a breakdown of the myths and their frequency.

⁵⁵ The general historiography of spectator figures includes Bianchi-Bandinelli, "Tradizione ellenistica e gusto Romano," 157; Michel, "Zuschauerfiguren," 537-541; Ling, *Roman Painting*, 118-134; Clarke, *Art in*

regards the figures as part of what Elsner has called a “theater of gazes,” however, there has been no critical distinction or evidence to suggest just who among the painted figures are part of the audience and who are part of the performance.⁵⁶ Furthermore, there is no consensus on what constitutes a spectator, its appearance, behavior, or purpose. Roger Ling, representing the traditional viewpoint, describes spectators as the small supernumerary figures on the backgrounds and sides of paintings, which he deems unnecessary to the composition and indicative of Roman innovation.⁵⁷ According to Ling, spectator figures decrease in frequency with the simplified compositions of the Fourth Style. Recognizing the inherently broad definition of the term ‘spectator’ Katharina Lorenz argues that the designation should be more widely applied saying that, “it is difficult to differentiate figures which are only subsidiary internal spectators of a mythological scene, and those which act in it.”⁵⁸ A systematic study of spectator figures might help to solve this dilemma, or at least contribute solid visual evidence to the discussion. Do Roman paintings represent spectator figures solely as supernumerary figures or are there other pictorial variations? What follows is a discussion of spectator figures in Roman wall paintings in an attempt to identify the ways in which these figures are represented and to establish a visual vocabulary for discussing them.

The paintings under consideration are diverse in subject, location, and date. The imagery is divided into two groups based on the figures’ positions: the primary observers,

the Lives of Ordinary Romans, 136-142; Elsner, *Roman Eyes*, 81-101; and Katharina Lorenz, “The Ear of the Beholder: Spectator Figures and Narrative Structure in Pompeian Painting,” *Art History* 30 no. 5 (2007): 665–682

⁵⁶ Elsner, *Roman Eyes*, 91 uses this phrase in reference to the Casa di Gavius Rufus painting of Theseus.

⁵⁷ Ling, *Roman Painting*, 124.

⁵⁸ Lorenz, “Ear of the Beholder,” 677.

or supernumerary-like figures who stand on the sidelines and background, and the secondary observers, who are more directly involved in the scene. Within each section they are further subdivided according to types, such as Dionysiac figures and female attendants. The figures are discussed according to three criteria: 1) position, 2) behavior, 3) context. Spectators are distinguished based on their position, actions, and relationship with the other figures in the scene. The paintings are not discussed here according to chronology unless their date or style is relevant to the discussion.

Primary Observers

Primary observers are spectator figures that stand in the background or periphery of a scene. They are physically separate from the central action, most often appear in multiples, and have consistent features. In the vast majority of known examples in which spectators appear, they are partially obstructed by architecture, landscape features, or other figures; the figures crowd in the background and peak through doorways and passages, a compositional feature that indicates a scene's physical setting and emphasizes the painter's awareness of illusionism and spatial depth, both important features of Roman painting and integral to a viewer's experience. Most often, primary observers are depicted as an audience or a crowd of onlookers. Primary observers focalize the composition with their gazes. The figures watch the scene, but do not engage or participate, actively driving the narrative. These spectators are non-essential members of the central scene, offering little or nothing to the overall narrative. Their peripheral positions also recall an audience and create a spectacle, or event appropriate for watching and judging.

I. Anonymous Human Crowds

Large groups of spectators have a relatively consistent representation. Painted crowds or groups most often appear in public settings where the depicted event is staged, performed, or dramatic; they are not present in intimate or private scenes. Groups appear in the background, are typically scaled down in size, and lack detailed features or modeling because of their position. The frequently cited spectators in the aforementioned painting of Theseus from the Casa di Gavius Rufus, display an informative example of such a crowd—a group of unidentified viewers physically separated from the protagonist on the edge of the composition.⁵⁹ As has been previously established, a group of eight spectators stand slightly behind Theseus’ as he basks in the glory of victory, having just slain the Minotaur.⁶⁰ Although no physical barrier prevents the crowd from approaching the hero, they remain on the sidelines only gesturing towards the scene as if reverence or fear prevents them from getting too close. The group’s size is suggested by a row of heads as well as three individualized figures in the foreground: an old man, woman, and young boy. The members of the family group in the foreground have individualized facial features and expression, a characteristic unusual for spectators. An old man rests his left hand on the young boy’s shoulder, leans down, and points with his right hand as if narrating the scene to his son. Behind the man, a woman, presumably his wife, rests her right hand on the man’s shoulder as she looks toward Theseus. The painter has taken care to distinguish these three figures with gestures, facial expression, and interpersonal communication, however, they have no clear identity or relationship to the narrative.

⁵⁹ See another example of this composition in the Villa Imperiale, also with spectators, **CII.2**.

⁶⁰ Clarke, “Figures Within the Scaenae Frons,” 43–45; Elsner, *Roman Eyes*, 90–91.

The position of spectator figures in the background and sidelines seems relatively standardized. Three paintings from the ala of the Casa del Menandro illustrate the way in which large crowds of spectators are positioned in relation to the primary scene.⁶¹ Painted in the early Fourth Style, these paintings represent three episodes of the Iliad: the death of Laocoön, Cassandra's prophecy, and the fall of Troy.⁶² Like audiences at a public event, crowds of spectators are always separated from the protagonists and any mythological narrative. They are almost always positioned in the background or sides of paintings. In the first panel from the east wall of the ala, Cassandra protests the Trojan horse as she forewarns of the destruction of Troy (**CH.4**, *fig. 13*).⁶³ The composition is divided in half, almost exactly, by the wall of the city. On the right are shown events from the myth while on the left is a group of observers. The prophetess appears on the right in a dynamic scene: she wears a light, flowing chiton and mantle, her face and body are in partial profile, and she turns to take a step forward with her left foot. At the same time she reaches forward with her left hand to push away the wooden horse. Behind her, a youthful male grabs her right elbow and hand to pull her back, preventing Cassandra from smashing her hammer into the horse. These figures constitute the whole of the action, their movement, gesture, and position make them the focus of the panel.

⁶¹ Roger Ling, Penelope M. Allison, and Paul R. Arthur, *The Insula of the Menander at Pompeii* (Oxford University Press, 2007), II: 74, 95, pl. 66.

⁶² For more on the continuous narrative between the three panels consult Ling, *Menander*, 72-73; and for continuous narrative in Roman art more broadly see Richard Brilliant, *Visual Narratives*, 67-69; for Trojan cycle paintings in Pompeii consult Mariette de Vos, "La fuga di Enea in pitture del I secolo d.C.," *KJ* 24 (1991): 23; Karl Schefold, "Die Trojasage in Pompeji," *Wort und Bild* (Basel, 1975), 129-134.

⁶³ Cassandra appears elsewhere in paintings, but not in this exact scene, see **CH.8** and Pompeii I.2.6 Casa degli Attori (MANN inv. 109751) in Hodske, *Mythologische Bildthemen*, cat. 5.

The left half of the painting is filled with a crowd who observe the dramatic interaction between Cassandra, the youth, and the Trojan horse. A row of three children stand in front of the crowd along with two men who bend to pick up the rope leading the horse, a detail specifically mentioned by Virgil.⁶⁴ A row of three additional figures stand behind these men holding the rope and leaning backwards as they use their weight to pull the horse into the city. The bulk of the audience is composed of two rows of approximately fifteen Trojans, identified by their Phrygian caps, who stand in the background at a slight diagonal facing Cassandra.⁶⁵ Unlike the fine detail and care given to Cassandra's dress, the individuals in the crowd are more simply illustrated, little attention is paid to their clothing, implements, or facial features. Each wears a simple tunic in varying colors and some wear Phrygian caps. Figures in the front rows have a nose, eyes and a mouth that is lightly drawn through highlight and shadow, but no individualized facial features or expressions are visible. Many of the individuals in the back rows have no visible facial features emphasizing their position farther from the foreground as well as their anonymity and subsidiary role in the painting's narrative. This crowd is not specifically part of the mythological narrative, but it does appear in earlier representations of the scene. Third Style depictions such as a small vignette from Pompeii IX.7.16, illustrate Cassandra with crowds of tiny observers standing behind her (*fig. 14*), creating the same distinction between spectators and protagonist figure.⁶⁶ In the much later Menandro painting, the figures are larger and occupy half of the composition,

⁶⁴ Virg., *Aen.* 2.235-6, 238-9.

⁶⁵ For more on these figures see Wolfgang Helbig, *Wandgemälde Der Vom Vesuv Verschlütteten Städte Campaniens* (Leipzig: Breitkopf und Hartel, 1868), no 1326; Christopher Dawson, *Romano-Campanian Mythological Landscape Painting* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1944), 86, no. 13; *PPM.VII*, 214, fig. 7; Amadeo Maiuri, *Roman Painting* (Geneva: World Publishing Company, 1953), 76.

⁶⁶ See a second example in MANN inv. 120176 in Dawson, *Landscape Painting*, 85, no. 12.

but they are still anonymous and subsidiary because of the strict separation between the two sides of the compositions and their generalized features.

Spectators in crowds do not have individual features, but they do often relate to the scene's subject or theme through their generalized attire, adornment, or attributes. On the north wall of the ala, (CII.5, *fig. 15*), the central panel represents the fulfillment of Cassandra's prophecy at the sack of Troy. Priam stands in the center watching Ajax pull Cassandra away from the Palladium while behind him in a separate scene, Menelaus grabs Helen by her hair.⁶⁷ Ling has questioned whether this unusual conflation of two significant scenes in one painting was an adaptation by the Menandro artist in an attempt to emphasize the importance of the overall Trojan situation, an explanation that seems likely given the absence of any other instances of this combination.⁶⁸ Behind Helen and Menelaus, a crowd gathers to observe the scene. The spectators do not have individualized features, but their clothing provides a general identification. On the left, stands a group of three soldiers wearing colored drapery and crested helmets, characteristic of Greek soldiers.⁶⁹ To the right of this group, three Trojan soldiers appear, this time identified by their Phrygian caps. All groups of spectators are represented as communal, non-individualized groups, however, they relate to the scene through their dress.

Groups of spectators emphasize a scene's impact or drama, often using gesture or expression. On the south wall of the same ala, the central panel depicts the death of

⁶⁷ The scene of Cassandra and Ajax has a long tradition, although the addition of the audience seems to be a Roman innovation, see the scene in Greek vases, *LIMC*.I "Aias II," 58-69 and also A.D. Trendall and T.B.L. Webster, *Illustrations of Greek Drama* (London: Phaidon, 1971), 139.

⁶⁸ For this suggestion see Ling, *Menander*, 75.

⁶⁹ For an overview of the basic elements of Greek warfare including the helmets see Paul Cartledge, "Hoplites and Heroes: Sparta's Contributions to the Technique of Ancient Warfare," *JHS* 97 (1977): 13-16.

Laocoön (**CH.6**, *fig. 16*).⁷⁰ Like the painting of Cassandra and the Trojan horse, this scene portrays a group of Trojan spectators watching the central action: Laocoön's death by serpent. Laocoön has fallen to his knees on a platform in the center of the composition, overpowered by the purple snake that is wrapped around his waist. Laocoön's two sons are in the foreground, the first lies dead in the center while the second tries to fight off a snake. Three crowds stand watching the dramatic events of Laocoön's death unfold. A group of Trojan spectators stand on the right side of the scene behind the bull and two separate observers appear in the center of the scene in the background. The figures are painted in white and do not wear Phrygian caps, but rather what Ling suggests are Persian tiaras, although the evidence is no longer visible to support or refute this conclusion.⁷¹ Even if they are not Persian, the third group of viewers is anonymous, non-Trojan viewers. An earlier, Third Style depiction of this scene from the Casa di Laocoonte, Pompeii (**CH.7**, *fig. 17*) represents a small group of spectators on the right side of the painting who are depicted anonymously, with no distinguishing characteristics.⁷² As is characteristic of Fourth Style paintings, the spectator figures in the Menandro painting relate to the central scene through their appearance and actions. Three additional figures stand behind Laocoön and the slithering snake in the painting's left hand corner. The crowd is separated from the protagonist, standing behind a wall or other

⁷⁰ Virg., *Aen.* II. 199-227; Laocoön appears frequently in art where he is shown writhing as the serpent ensnares his body. The most famous representation is the Vatican Belvedere group, inv. 1059, see H.H. Brummer, "The Statue Court in the Vatican Belvedere," *Stockholm Studies History of Art* 20 (1970): 73-110; *LIMC*.VI, "Laokoon," 8-9.

⁷¹ Ling, *Menander*, 75-76; For a discussion and drawings of the Persian tiara type see John Young, "Commagenian Tiaras: Royal and Divine," *AJA* 68 (1964): 29-34.

⁷² This earlier painting also differs in its setting, the figures stand on a plain, white ground, see Maiuri, *Roman Painting*, 40-4; Ling, *Menander*, 73.

structure and wearing Phrygian caps. The tiny figures wave and point their arms animatedly at the scene before them, indicating their excitement, despair, or general reaction to the spectacle before them.⁷³

The correlation between crowds of spectators and dramatic events, may not be entirely coincidental, but rather part of an established visual vocabulary. Painted crowds of spectators show visible similarities with scenes that commemorate *ludi* and *munera*.⁷⁴ Richard Lim has collected visual evidence depicting spectators at games including coins, plaques, mosaics, and ivories. Spectators are shown as identical rows of seated bodies, often packed into an amphitheater or circus, an effect meant to emphasize a specific event's size, magnitude, or popularity.⁷⁵ Certain Roman representations reduce spectators to tiny, abstract images, the best example being a sestertius struck by Titus to commemorate the Flavian amphitheatre in which tiny dots representing audience members fill the interior of the amphitheater.⁷⁶ Wall paintings do not *fully* reduce spectators to an abstract representation as in coins or some other visual representations, but do use a sort of shorthand to indicate large groups or crowds in an effort to emphasize a scene's importance or action. In a painting of Dionysus and Ariadne from an unidentified Pompeian house, a crowd of observers is indicated in the background

(CIV.34). Five individuals stand in the rocky landscape of Naxos, painted in the same

⁷³ Ling, *Menander*, 194 indicates that they are located behind a podium. The condition of the painting does not permit first-hand analysis to verify this statement and photographs do not provide clear documentation.

⁷⁴ Lim, "Temple of Laughter," 346. From a limited survey of visual evidence, Lim concludes that patrons are more often represented than spectators.

⁷⁵ See terracotta Campana plaque Museo Nazionale, Rome in Claude Domergue, Christian Landes, and Jean-Marie Pailler, *Spectacula: Gladiateurs Et Amphithéâtres* (France: Presses du CNRS, 1990).

⁷⁶ Domitian (AD 81-82), sestertius, 32mm, 24.48gm, struck at Rome; obv-colosseum; meta sudans left; porticoed building right; rev-DIVO AUG T DIVI VESP F VESPASIAN S C, Divus Titus seated left on curule chair, holding branch, see RIC II, vol. 1, 131.

grey and white tones as the rocks and sky. The figures blend into the background and are barely visible except for the delicate highlighting, reminiscent of Third Style vignettes and landscape paintings.⁷⁷ The spectators in this paintings are unusual; most often figures are more naturalistic, however, the tendency to group figures together is perhaps alluding to spectacle entertainments.

Wall paintings may allude to public games or events, but do not necessarily depict *actual* public games or other spectacle entertainments.⁷⁸ Instead, the inclusion of crowds or groups of spectators emphasizes any scene's dramatic, epic, or performative nature. One such example is a painting in the Casa dei Vettii that displays a rare mythological spectacle entertainment: a wrestling match between Pan and Cupid (CIL.9, fig. 18).⁷⁹ The Fourth Style painting pictures and illusionistic interior space in which the figures are pressed close to the audience. The painting is arranged in a pyramidal composition: Dionysus and Ariadne sit in the center and look down towards a small, makeshift arena where Cupid and Pan circle one another in the early throes of a fight. Dionysus and Ariadne, spectators of the battle, are themselves watched by a group of observers in the background. A crowd of five spectators stand behind Dionysus. The individuals push

⁷⁷ See the small figures in landscape panels from the Villa di Agrippa Postumo in Eugenio La Rocca, *Roma La Pittura di Un Impero* (Geneva: Skira, 2009), 184; also Irene Bragantini and Valeria Sampaolo, *La Pittura Pompeiana* (Rome: Electa, 2010), nos. 188-202; On Third Style landscape painting see Karl Schefold, "Origins of Roman Landscape Paintings," *ArtBull.* 42 (1960): 87-96; Roger Ling, "Studius and the Beginnings of Roman Landscape Painting," *JRS* 67 (1977): 1-16.

⁷⁸ The famous painting of the Pompeian amphitheater is an exception, however, this is not mythological, but historical and does not represent spectators, but records an event; For the painting-Casa della Rissa nell'Anfiteatro I.3.23, peristyle, MANN inv. 112222, Karl Schefold, *Die Wände Pompejis, topographisches Verzeichnis der Bildmotive* (Berlin: W. de Gruyter, 1957), 12; *PPM.I*, 77-81; Alix Barbet and Paola Miniero Forte, *La Villa San Marco a Stabia* (Napoli: Centre Jean Berard; Ecole française de Rome, Soprintendenza archeologica di Pompei, 1999), 49; Bragantini and Sampaolo, *Pittura Pompeiana*, 292.

⁷⁹ See a similar paintings from Herculaneum MANN, inv. 9262, Helbig, *Wandgemälde*, nos. 404, 406, and MANN inv. 9124; Examples in other media include a mosaic from the Casa di Bacco e Arianna at Ostia LIMC.VIII, "Ariadne," 241.

their way through one another in order to get a glimpse of the action—Pan and Eros in the foreground—from which they are physically and visibly separated. The figures in the front row, possibly a man and woman, stand with their heads up and arms raised in front to express their excitement at the competition. With their expressive gestures and facial features, these figures emphasize the interior spectacle. With these reactions and gestures, the figures offer reactions to the events that are depicted within the panel.

The large, anonymous crowds that appear in paintings seem to depict an audience or group of spectators as they watch a specific and contained event. Their representation is similar to that of a Roman audience attending a performance: the figures are separated from the primary action, are in large groups, and display expressions or gestures that implicate them in the spectacle. This specific visual vocabulary parallels the Roman culture of spectatorship in which observers and performers occupied specific locations and roles at spectacle events. Like observers at Roman spectacle events, these painted figures do more than simply watch from the sidelines. The figures also participate with gesture, facial expression, and their gaze that connects them to the main narrative scene. Although they may not be direct players in the central narrative, the figures provide meaning within the composition beyond a simple retelling of sequential events.

II. Typological Figures: Cupid and Amorini, Nymphs and Female Attendants, Dionysiac Figures

Typological figures are minor characters that relate to a scene's theme, motif, or subject, but are anonymous, filling only a generalized role. These figures help define a major figure or motif and provide context for the narrative. Cupid and amorini, female attendants and nymphs, and Dionysiac figures can be identified by their distinct dress,

attributes, and gestures, which are characteristic features of their group identity. Although these figures are found in a many mythological contexts, they are often found behaving as observers or spectators. Unlike the crowds of anonymous spectators, typological figures appear in specific mythological contexts based on their collective characteristics. Because these figures have standardized physical appearances and contexts, the following section analyzes their positions within the painted composition and their behavior to identify instances of spectatorship.

a. Cupid and Amorini

Cupid and amorini are found in paintings that depict Venus, other female figures, and lovers. Cupid, the personification of love and the son of Venus, is a common subject in Pompeian painting where he performs a number of roles, including as a spectator, where he can be found either standing on the sidelines, backgrounds, or hovering near the protagonist figures.⁸⁰ As an observer, Cupid plays a minor role: he watches scenes from the sidelines without direct interaction with the protagonist figures.

In Greek art, Eros was depicted as an individualized god with specific powers, however, nearly all Roman representations of Cupid depict him as a more generalized god and often shown in multiples referred to as amorini.⁸¹ Unlike the Greek and

⁸⁰ Cupid, and his Greek counterpoint Eros, has a complicated origin. Hes., *Theog.*120 says that he is an attendant at the birth of Venus; Sappho in the 7th century BC first mentions that he is Aphrodite's son; Plat., *Symp.* 203b2-c1 says he was conceived at the feast celebrating the birth of Aphrodite, his parents Poros and Penia; Cupid is not the only son of Venus, but is by far, the most frequently represented; Anteros appears in a painting from the Casa dell' Amore Punto, VII.2.23, MANN inv. 9257, see Helbig, *Wandgemälde*, no. 826; Hodske, *Mythologische Bildthemen*, cat. 434; Braggantini and Sampaolo, *Pittura Pompeiana*, 262.

⁸¹ I follow L. Richardson in adopting the term 'amorini' to refer to multiple, anonymous figures of this type and 'Cupid' to refer to the single, individualized figure, however, terminology varies with some authors preferring to use 'Eros' and 'erotes' see Richardson, *Figure Painters*; For amorini see LIMC.III, "Eros/Amor, Cupid" 449, 456, 474, 476, 527-545; in Greek art Eros appears alone, for an overview of his different representations in Greek art consult Nicholas Stampolidis and Yorgas Tassoulas, *Eros: From*

Hellenistic Eros who is shown as a grown youth, Roman Cupid is always a child, perhaps signaling what Christine Kondoleon interprets as a more playful attitude towards the god.⁸² He appears as a chubby child, most often nude, and he occasionally wears light drapery or jewels.⁸³ Roman artists depict Cupid as an active deity who inflamed amorous feelings between human and divine figures by shooting his arrows, lighting his torch or simply guiding lost lovers.⁸⁴ Cupid does appear in his own narrative contexts, for example with Psyche, but more often he is a symbol of love.⁸⁵ In paintings, Cupid is shown in a number of small genre scenes where he performs daily tasks such as producing oil or making perfume from roses as in several panels in the Casa dei Vettii, where amorini appear in several vignettes where they are shown producing perfume and wine.⁸⁶

As spectators, Cupid and amorini are found in two types of scenes: female adornment and meetings between lovers. Both types of scenes are private and intimate, the exact opposite of the spectacles and events accompanied by large crowds of viewers. No matter their context, Cupid and amorini have standardized visual appearances—they

Hesiod's Theogony to Late Antiquity (Athens: Museum of Cycladic Art, 2009); See also Nicole Blanc and Françoise Gury's commentary in *LIMC*.III, "Eros/Amor,Cupid," part 1, 950-951.

⁸² Christine Kondoleon, ed. *Aphrodite and the Gods of Love* (Boston: MFA Publications, 2011), 126.

⁸³ *LIMC* III, "Eros/Amor, Cupid" 690.

⁸⁴ *LIMC* III, "Eros/Amor, Cupid," no. 29; Also MANN inv. 8984; Seneca *Phaedr.* 186ff; *Ov.*, *Met.* I.468.

⁸⁵ Cupid and Psyche are known first from Apul., *Met.* 6.23 in the second century AD, however Cupid does appear earlier in visual sources as early as the second century BC; For painted representations of Cupid and Psyche see Bragantini and Sampaolo, *Pittura Pompeiana*, 279a-b; for Psyche alone see a panel from Villa di Arianna at Stabiae, (MANN inv. 9169), see Bragantini and Sampaolo, *Pittura Pompeiana*, 276; for a painting of Eros and Anteros from Casa dell'Amore Punito (MANN inv. 9257) in Pompeii see Hodske, *Mythologische Bildthemen*, cat, 434 and Helbig, *Wandgemälde*, no. 826.

⁸⁶ Casa dei Vettii VI.15.1 atrium, Curtius *WP* 127, fig. 85; for the paintings in room q-see Reinach, *RepPeint* 91, 3; See similar scenes of amorini in the Casa della Parete Nera in La Rocca, *Pittura di un Impero*, 220; For a glass intaglio with this imagery dated to the first century AD in the Museum of Fine Arts Boston, 98.746, see Kondoleon, *Aphrodite*, no. 66.

are youthful, winged males, are nude, and often carry a bow and quiver or a torch.⁸⁷ As Venus' son, Cupid accompanies the goddess in many contexts or even alludes to Venusian themes when no figural deity is depicted. Frequently, amorini surround Venus in marine scenes or hover over couples in lovemaking scenes, however, a distinct group of paintings represent Cupid as an observer.⁸⁸ In these paintings, Cupid and amorini are positioned on the sides of a scene, flanking the protagonist, who, not unexpectedly, is most often Venus.⁸⁹ The figures do not usually physically interact with the goddess when she is alone, but instead stand or playfully wrestle near her feet or occasionally hover at her shoulder.⁹⁰

Cupid actively watches Venus adorn herself in toilette compositions. One such scene is shown in a delicate painting from the Villa della Farnesina now in the Palazzo Massimo alle Terme (**CIII.7, fig. 19**).⁹¹ The figures appear on a white ground with no indications of setting, a characteristic of Augustan classicism of the late first century BC, that emphasizes the scene's intimate and private nature. A bejeweled Venus sits on a throne in the center of composition as a female attendant stands behind her placing a

⁸⁷ A strange exception to this iconography is a pair of paintings depicting what may be more adolescent amorini surrounding Venus or Hermaphroditus, **CII.15** and **CII.16**.

⁸⁸ For Cupid and Marine Venus in painting see **CI.1**.

⁸⁹ The first representation of Aphrodite and Eros together appears on the Parthenon frieze; For the notion of Amorini as personifications of Eros, Himeros, Pothos, Anteros, Hermaphroditos, and Priapos see H. Alan Shapiro, *Personifications in Greek Art* (Zurich: Akanthus, 1993), 43 (Anteros), 110-124 (Himeros and Pothos).

⁹⁰ See Kondoleon, *Aphrodite*, 114-116 on Eros' boyish qualities. See also a gold ring from the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, see Christine Kondoleon, *Art of Late Rome and Byzantium in the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts*, exh. cat. (Richmond: Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, 2004), cat. 3.

⁹¹ On this painting and the Villa see A. Mau, "Pitture della casa antica scoperta nel giardino della Farnesina," in *Annali dell'Istituto di Corispondenza Archeologica*, 57 (1884): 308; Rachel Kousser, "Augustan Aphrodites: The Allure of Greek Art in Roman Visual Culture," *Brill's Companion to Aphrodite*, eds. Amy Smith and Sadie Pickup (Leiden: Books and Publications, 2010).

golden crown on her head. A youthful Cupid stands at Venus' feet, casually crossing his right leg over his left and resting his right arm on his hip. With his face in profile, Cupid looks up at Venus who averts her gaze and looks instead at an ornament that she holds in her right hand. Cupid's position and behavior is repeated in other examples, for example, the south wall of room 5 in the Villa dei Misteri where Cupid is accompanied by a second amorino. Cupid stands in front of the seated woman and looks straight up at her as he offers a mirror towards her face.⁹²

Amorini frequently observe lovers: Mars and Venus, Venus and Adonis, Paris and Helen, Ariadne and Dionysus, or, love lost: Narcissus and Ariadne with Theseus.⁹³ Amorini most often appear with Mars and Venus and do not always observe the couple. They can also be simply symbols of love, for example, in a painting from the Casa dell'Ara Massima (**CIV.102**) where two, plump amorini playfully wrestle in the foreground.⁹⁴ The chubby figures hover over the floor as one grabs Mars' shiny helmet off of the other's head. The figures are completely engaged in their game and pay no attention to Mars and Venus.

In other instances, amorini observe intimate scenes between Mars and Venus from the sidelines, peering in at the two lovers and providing a glimpse of an otherwise secluded event. The almost voyeuristic role assigned to these amorini is evident in a

⁹² On the Cupid and his actions in the Villa dei Misteri see John Henderson, "Footnote: Representation in the Villa of the Mysteries," in *Art and Text in Roman Culture* ed. Jaś Elsner (Cambridge University Press, 1996), 243, 260.

⁹³ For representations of amorini with Narcissus see **CIII.13, CIII.20, CIII.21, CIII.23, CIII.25, CIII.26, CIII.31, CIII.34, CIII.35, CIII.38-CIII.41**; and with Ariadne and Theseus, see **CIV.64, CIV.68, CIV.69, CIV.71-CIV.74**.

⁹⁴ Cupid and amorini engaging in games or playful competition can be found in other media as well, for example a first-century AD cornelian in which Cupid plays the hoop, *LIMC*.III, "Eros/Amor,Cupido," 257.

painting from the Casa di Meleagro (**CIV.99**, *fig. 20*).⁹⁵ Mars and Venus sit in the center of the composition in an intimate embrace. Venus leans back towards Mars and turns her upper torso and head to her right while Mars reaches his arms around her, and caresses her right breast with his right hand. He has let his guard down: his shield rests on a wall behind him while his spear leans against his stool. The amorous scene is made more intimate by the closed composition: a shallow, foregrounded stage surrounds the lovers on both sides with two close walls. Despite all indications of seclusion, two amorini witness the scene, unnoticed by the protagonists. To Venus' left a Cupid stands holding a box, presumably a jewelry box for Venus.⁹⁶ He looks up towards the goddess whose gaze is firmly fixed on her beloved. A second Cupid stands to Mars' right, holding the god's helmet, and looks up at the god. Nearly identical paintings come from the Casa dell'Amore Punito (**CIV.96**) and Casa dei Epigrammi (**CIV.101**), where amorini gaze, from a distance, at Mars and Venus.⁹⁷

When amorini watch amorous couples other than Mars and Venus, they most often maintain physical distance and do not interact. In a painting in the Casa di Adone di Ferito (**CIV.115**, *fig. 21*) three amorini watch an intimate scene between Venus and her consort Adonis.⁹⁸ This large painting originally decorated the entire length of the viridarium with large, oversize figures situated in a colonnade. Venus and Adonis occupy

⁹⁵ LIMC II, "Ares/Mars," 547, no. 377.

⁹⁶ Cupid carries the jewelry box which he sometimes holds up to show to Venus, as in a painting in Pompeii VI.9.2.13, Casa di Meleagro, see Ria Berg, "Lo specchio di Venere. Riflessioni sul mundus muliebris nella pittura pompeiana," in *Atti del X Congresso Internazionale Association Internationale pour la Peinture Murale Antique*. Napoli Settembre 2007 (Napoli, 2010), fig. 5.

⁹⁷ See also the drawings for paintings that no longer survives Pompeii VII.3.8 **CIV.109**.

⁹⁸ For more on this and other scenes of Venus and Adonis see Chapter 4, 263-266; Katharina Lorenz, *Bilder machen Räume: Mythenbilder in pompeianischen Häusern* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2008), 173-182; LIMC.I, "Adonis," 226, 428-429.

the center of the surviving panel, in a pose very similar to that of typically held by Mars and Venus. Adonis leans back towards the goddess, tilting his head back to look into her eyes, and she returns his gaze. Several amorini watch the couple from the side and background. The faint outlines of two amorini are visible to Adonis' right: one small figure hovers in the air, lightly holding Adonis' arm; a second figure kneels on the ground looking up towards Adonis. Helbig identifies an additional amore peeking out from behind Aphrodite's shoulder, however, it is not visible in the painting's current state.⁹⁹ A final amorino watches the couple from the background. Located in the top of painting, peering out from a piece of architecture or rock, a small amore looks down towards the lovers, part of the painting, but not actively participating in the scene.

In some instances, Cupid plays a slightly more active role as seen in a painting of Paris and Helen that survives in the Casa degli Amorini Dorati (**CIV.3**, *fig. 22*). Helen, Cupid, and a female attendant stand facing Paris who reclines on a sofa. Here, Cupid is a slightly older youth, but still wears his wings. He hovers near Helen and turns his head and looks up at her while simultaneously gesturing with his right hand towards Paris. Helen does not meet his gaze, but instead follows his outstretched arm towards Paris, across the room.¹⁰⁰ Cupid connects the lovers: he stands between them as the personification of love and his gesture directs Helen to Paris. At the same time, he looks away from the scene's focal point—Paris—and instead towards Venus.

⁹⁹ Helbig, *Wandgemälde*, no. 89; consult Richardson, *Figure Painters*, 91 for a discussion of the painter's style. The author credits the Casa di Adone Ferito with dozens of Fourth Style paintings throughout Pompeii and Herculaneum.

¹⁰⁰ For another painting of this scene in which Cupid does not appear see **CIV.2**.

While the appearance of Cupid and amorini with lovers is not unexpected, consistencies in their visual behavior are found. Unlike anonymous crowds of figures whose collective gaze focalizes a scene and heightens one's awareness of spectatorship, the consistent direction of Cupid's gaze towards Venus, Mars, or other lovers seems to suggest an emphasis on the relationship between two lovers in a scene. While the figures provide a glimpse into an otherwise private and intimate world, their directed gaze indicates intention. Could Cupid's gaze, like his arrows, be a tool to ignite, or at least persuade, love?

b. Female Figures: Nymphs and Attendants

Female figures are among the most common supernumerary figures in Roman paintings. Ling names these anonymous, silent figures as a "leitmotif" noting their especially frequent appearance among Third Style paintings.¹⁰¹ Small, unidentified women fill the background and sides of paintings and although occasionally acknowledged in scholarship as either nymphs or attendant figures there is no consensus on their identification or purpose, most likely due to the tendency to privilege the central myth.¹⁰² Jennifer Larson points out, in her discussion of the Greek nymphs in texts, that there is a "taxonomic dilemma" in distinguishing mortal females from nymphs, particularly given the many roles and representations of the nature spirits.¹⁰³ This dilemma is equally persistent in the visual material. In paintings, nymphs can be partially distinguished from other female attendant figures, although these remaining figures are

¹⁰¹ Ling, *Roman Painting*, 130.

¹⁰² Richardson, *Figure Painters*, 11; Michel, "Zuschauerfiguren."

¹⁰³ Jennifer Larson, *Greek Nymphs: Myth, Cult, Lore* (Oxford University Press, 2001), 1.

not necessarily human and any identifications rest almost entirely on mythological context. As minor nature spirits or deities, the nymphs are often associated with their own myths, physical localities, or attributes.¹⁰⁴ The almost identical appearance, position, and behavior of nymphs and female attendants suggests that a distinction was either not intended, was subtly indicated, or belonged to the viewer's discretion.

Both nymphs and other female attendants have similar dress and other physical features; both are usually represented as young maidens and wear long, draped chitons. Nymphs do not have a consistent iconography in Roman art and are typically shown as beautiful young maidens, sometimes half nude, and often alone.¹⁰⁵ The literary sources offer some inconsistent clues to a nymph's physical appearance: Ovid imagines nymphs to have sea-colored hair while, later, Philostratus the Elder describes scenes in which painted nymphs resemble their function, for example, Nereids drip with water and Anthoisi (flower nymphs) have flowers in their hair.¹⁰⁶ Fantastical descriptions have no apparent corollary in the surviving paintings or other visual evidence because these figures cannot be distinguished from female attendants by their physical appearance. Nymphs and other female attendants are also positioned in the same ways within compositions. Both groups stand in the background and sides of compositions and they frequently, though not always, appear in group of two or more with individualized features. Both nymphs and female attendants generally have a relationship with the other

¹⁰⁴ For the domain of the nymphs see Hom., *Od.* VI.123, XII.318, XX.8, XXIV.615; For the oracular power of nymphs see Paus., IV.27, IX.3;

¹⁰⁵ For nymphs in Greek sculpture where they have a more characteristic appearance see *LIMC*.VIII Suppl. "Nymphae," 1-5.

¹⁰⁶ Ov., *Met.* V.432; Phil., *Imag.* 2.11; Larson, *Greek Nymphs*, 4-7; Walter Burkert, *Greek Religion* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1987), 173-174; for the different types of nymphs see Hes., *Theog.* 346ff; 176ff.

figures with whom they appear in painted compositions. Female attendants and nymphs gaze at scenes from the outside, in some examples offering possible emotional reactions and in almost all examples providing a view into a very intimate scene. The most recognizable difference between nymphs and attendants is their context: the mythological setting and the accompanying figures.

Unnamed nymphs either accompany named counterparts or appear in paintings representing a known myth, such as Hylas's abduction by the naiads, many of which have watery connotations (**CII.12**).¹⁰⁷ Most often, nymphs accompany, attend, or surround named nymphs including Galatea, Echo, Daphne, Callisto, the Hesperides, and Thetis.¹⁰⁸ The unidentified, accompanying nymphs stand or sit in the background as seen in a painting from the Casa di Paccius Alessandro where a nymph sits behind Thetis—a nereid—in the forge of Hephaestus (**CIII.53**, *fig. 23*). The figure bears no distinguishing attributes of a nymph, but accompanies Thetis who is herself a nereid. A similarly non-distinct example is a painting of Polyphemus and Galatea from an unknown house at Pompeii where a nymph stands behind the nymph, Galatea (**CII.17**, *fig. 24*). Water nymphs, either nereids or naiads, are the most common spectators, although other types of nymphs do appear with equally varied appearances and attributes.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁷ For Hylas' abduction by naiads see Stat., *Silv.* 3.4.42; for Hylas in Pompeii see Roger Ling, "Hylas in Pompeian Art," *MEFRA* 91 (1979): 773-816; Prop., *Eleg.* 1.20; also consult Larsen, *Greek Nymphs*, 166-175 for a discussion of this myth as one that contributed to the nymphs' reputation as kidnappers; this composition is also found in later mosaic pavements, see Ling, "Hylas," pls. 9-11.

¹⁰⁸ For named nymphs represented in their own scenes see the following: Callisto: **CII.18**; Galatea: **CII.17**; the Hesperides in Casa dell'affresco di Spartaco, Hodske, *Mythologische Bildthemen*, cat. 31; Echo: **CIII.16**, **CIII.33**; Daphne: **CIV.18-CIV.27**.

¹⁰⁹ For the nymphs' common association with water and water sources consult G. Becatti, "Ninfe e divinità marine, Ricerche mitologiche, iconografiche e stilistiche," *StudMisc* 17 (1971): 17-39; Brenda Longfellow, "Roman Fountains in Greek Sanctuaries," *AJA* 116 (2012): 133-155; Neptune and Amphitrite at Herculaneum, V.7 in Dunbabin, *Mosaics of the Greek and Roman World*, 245; Nereids appear in paintings

Although relegated to the background, nymphs do react to scenes with gestures or facial expressions. A painting from the Casa di L. Cornelius Diadumenus (**CII.18**, *fig. 25*) portrays two nymphs with Callisto, herself an Arcadian nymph.¹¹⁰ In the foreground, Callisto reluctantly reveals her pregnant belly to Artemis, an emission of her illicit affair with Jupiter. The two anonymous nymphs stand behind Artemis, their bodies crowded together and the figure in the back leans her head to the left in order to secure a better view. The nymphs have identical dress: both wear green garments and crowns. Unlike the nymph who accompanied Thetis in the former painting, these onlookers are not entirely passive spectators. They react to the scandalous events raising their right hands to their faces in gestures of shock.

Although similar in appearance, female attendants sometimes occupy more active roles than nymphs. These figures stand in the painting's periphery where they either passively watch a scene without interacting with other figures or assist with minor duties such as dressing or fixing hair. In a painting of Mars and Venus from the Casa del Piano Superiore two attendants dress the goddess who adorns herself (**CIII.11**, *fig. 26*).¹¹¹ One figure stands behind Venus styling her hair while a second stands in front of the goddess holding a mirror. The smaller attendant in the front looks at Venus, but her back is to the audience as she looks straight towards the goddess. When actively assisting Venus,

that have a water motif. They are usually alone and riding a sea-horse, for example Bragantini and Sampaolo, *Pittura Pompeiana*, no. 238, 238b; for the origins and parentage of the Nereids see Hes., *Theog.* 240; Virg., *Aen.* 5.825ff; Ov., *Met.* II.10; Thetis, Echo, and Galatea are nereids while Daphne is a naiad. Amphitrite, another nereid, also appears, but is not discussed in this section see **CIV.29**, **CIV.30**.

¹¹⁰ Callisto is characterized as both a nymph and a hunting companion of Artemis. Ovid classifies her as a nymph *Met.*, 2.409-531 and *Fasti* 2.155ff.

¹¹¹ This is an especially interesting position for the female attendant to take in relation to the external audience and is somewhat rare for painted figures to have their back facing outward. An even more overt visualization of this can be seen in a painting of Daedalus and Pasiphae in the Casa dei Vettii, **CII.21**, where Daedalus faces completely away from the external audience.

attendants stand obliquely in front of the goddess as in the painting from the Casa del Piano Superiore or, more often, behind her as in an example from the Casa di Arianna (CIII.1).

Instead of accompanying nymphs female attendant figures are found in intimate scenes involving Venus or other women who sit in their private chambers including Helen, Dido, Iphigenia, Hermaphroditus, and Omphale. Attendant figures can be found assisting Hermaphroditus in a large-scale painting in the Casa di Adone Ferito (CII.22) as well as Helen in the Casa dell'affresco di Spartaco (CIII.1). An attendant also assists Dido in a painting from the Casa di Meleagro (CII.19, *fig. 27*). Although not a adornment or adornment scene, Dido is situated in a private setting and surrounded by female figures who: on her right stands an attendant holding an ivory rhyton, on her left stands a second attendant and a third female figure stands behind Dido, her body blocked by the queen's throne. Olga Elia identifies the three figures as personifications of the continents, from left to right: Africa, Asia, and Europe.¹¹²

In less intimate scenes female attendant figures do not assist or perform a specific duty, but passively stand or sit in the background like other supernumerary figures. Instead of looking at the goddess or other women with whom they are associated, they look in the same direction as the female protagonist, drawing even more attention to the scene's narrative.¹¹³ These figures may even offer a visible reaction or gesture, but with no consistency. A painting from the Casa di Caecilius Iucundus (CII.20, *fig. 28*) of

¹¹² Olga Elia, *Pitture murali e mosaici nel Museo Nazionale di Napoli* (Roma, 1932) n. 146; See also F. Parise Badoni, "Arianna a Nasso: la rielaborazione di un mito Greco in ambiente romano," in *DialA VIII*, 1 (1990): 73-87 who offers a more thematic interpretation of the painting focusing on the element of abandonment and loss.

¹¹³ These attendants are shown attending many women and are particularly evident in several examples of Omphale, CII.8, CII.9; and a painting of Penelope, CII.25.

Iphigenia in Tauris depicts four females standing behind the protagonist in the temple of Artemis.¹¹⁴ Only the female figure standing next to Iphigenia is fully visible as the bodies of the three other observers are obscured by a column and Iphigenia herself. One woman's head is only partially visible because she peeks around from behind a column to sneak a look at the scene. Iphigenia stares in front of her at the partially preserved male figure in the lower left corner of the painting who Bragantini and Sampaolo identify as Orestes.¹¹⁵ The late Third Style painting renders the attendants' individualized, but similar faces with soft highlighting and shadow showing their gazes also directed towards Orestes.¹¹⁶ Directing their gazes towards the central protagonists, these female figures may also offer expressions or simple gestures to indicate emotions or reactions. A particularly expressive attendant appears in a painting of Pasiphae and Daedalus in the Casa dei Vettii (**CII.21**, *fig. 29*).¹¹⁷ Two female attendants sit in the background, behind the seated queen. Both attendants react to the scene, but the figure on the left is especially expressive as she opens her mouth in surprise or shock, reacting to the scene or perhaps foretelling future events that will unfold because of the interaction presented in the foreground.

Although both attendants and nymphs are found in the background and periphery of compositions, it seems that the placement, articulation, and action of nymphs and

¹¹⁴ Two other paintings represent this scene, but lack the depth and focus on background spectator figures: Pompeii I.4.25, Casa del Citarista (MANN inv. 9111), in Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 16; also Pompeii IX.8.3, Casa del Centenario, in Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 278-279.

¹¹⁵ Bragantini and Sampaolo, *Pittura Pompeiana*, no. 110.

¹¹⁶ For the style of these paintings, and those in the rest of the house see Richardson, *Figure Painters*, 55-56.

¹¹⁷ An earlier, Third Style painting of Pasiphae and Daedalus with the bull does not picture these female attendants in the background or any other figures, see the panel from VII.4.48 (MANN inv. 8979) in Helbig, *Wandgemälde*, no. 1206 and Bragantini and Sampaolo, *Pittura Pompeiana*, 151.

attendants was not always standardized within a single mythological context. Echo, the only named nymph who is represented as a spectator figure, appears in six known paintings among the current catalogue.¹¹⁸ A nereid, Echo is always shown watching Narcissus, but with significant variation in appearance and behavior.¹¹⁹ Depictions of Narcissus have relatively consistent compositions, but Echo's role and position varies. In a painting from the Casa dell'Argenteria (**CIII.16**, *fig. 30*) Narcissus lounges in a dense landscape with trees and other vegetation surrounding him in both the background and foreground. Narcissus sits in the center of the composition, his usual position, but Echo hides in the rocks to his left. The rocky landscape and tall branches obscure her pink skin and yellow garment as she spies on the youth from her covert position. She looks squarely at Narcissus rather than his reflection, and seems to embody her role as jealous lover. In a painting located in the Casa dell'Efebo (**CIII.33**, *fig. 31*), Echo is more connected to the scene. Rather than hide in the distance, she stands directly behind Narcissus and looks over his shoulder at either his reflection or the youth himself—the direction of her gaze is not entirely clear.¹²⁰ Whether she looks at Narcissus the boy or Narcissus the reflection, her presence and act of observation is less imposing due to her position right next to the youth. Her appearance is also different. In the Efebo painting, Echo wears a green garment around her waist and legs, but her breasts are bare. She is no longer hidden by landscape or clothing, which makes her act less secretive and imposing.

¹¹⁸ Echo appears in **CIII.16**, **CIII.18**, **CIII.21**, **CIII.25**, **CIII.33**, **CIII.35**, **CIII.40**.

¹¹⁹ Echo is mentioned in Ovid's version of the Narcissus myth Ov., *Met.* III.359-401; Echo appears in a mosaic of Narcissus in Antioch, where she is identified by an inscription, House of the Buffet Supper (Antakya Arch Mus. 938) in Levi, *Antioch Mosaic Pavements*, 136-137.

¹²⁰ Also note the lack of landscape or setting in this painting where the figures appear on a flat white background.

The differences between the representations of Echo in the Efebo and Argenteria paintings demonstrate the variety in both her appearance as well as her role as a spectator. Because her appearance and position are not standardized she, like the anonymous nymphs, Echo can be identified only because of her mythological context.¹²¹

This brief survey of visual evidence is enough to reveal some patterns in the representation of nymphs and female attendant figures. Groups of attendants and nymphs have inconsistent appearances, positions, and behavior, with no apparent pattern or explanation for variations. Although these figures do not generally appear in large groups or crowds they are frequently portrayed in pairs or small groups that bear collective features. In several instances, however, members of the group act individually as seen an example from the Casa del Principe di Montenegro (**CIV.8**, *fig. 32*).¹²² In this painting, Omphale gazes down toward Hercules who lays on the ground in the lower right corner of the painting. The female attendant to Omphale's right echoes her gaze, staring down at Hercules while also leaning in towards her mistress and lightly touching her shoulder. In contrast, the maid on the left looks at Omphale. She casually leans against the back wall with her right hand raised to her chin, as if pondering the situation. Their separate actions complicate the composition and its narrative offering what Elsner recognizes as multiple focal-points: one attendant focuses on Hercules—the obvious center of the narrative—while the other offers an alternative focus on Omphale.¹²³ Such

¹²¹ Even this mythological context in some instances makes identification difficult, for instance, **CIII.18** and **CIII.21** represent two female figures in the background with no specific identifying features. They are sometimes identified as Echo and this seems like a plausible identification, but the figures do not engage in any way with the central scene or bear any distinguishing features.

¹²² Lorenz, "Ear of the Beholder," 672-674.

¹²³ For a discussion of these multiple focal points in relation to other mythological contexts see Elsner, *Roman Eyes*, 99-102.

a distinction does not occur in all representations of multiple attendants. In fact, it does even occur repeatedly in paintings of the same myth as is evident in a slightly later painting of the same subject from the Casa di Sirico, where Omphale again looks down at Hercules, but this time both of the attendants echo her gaze from the background (CIV.6, *fig. 33*). The entire composition is focused on Hercules.

c. Dionysiac Figures

Dionysiac figures make up the smallest group of typological spectators. Dionysiac figures include silenoi, satyrs, and maenads all of whom are identified based on their dress, physical features, behavior, and context. Dionysus is one of the most frequent subjects in Roman paintings, not only in figural form, but also in compositions that suggest his many attributes including theater, drinking, revelry, or dining.¹²⁴ Silenoi, satyrs and maenads appear in a wide variety of narrative contexts, genre scenes, and decorative panels where they have distinct physical features and contexts, but are almost strictly subsidiary figures. With the exception of the Villa of the Mysteries frieze, only named satyrs—Pan or Marsyas—and Pappasilenus feature prominently in narrative contexts.¹²⁵ Dionysiac figures usually perform prescribed rolls: dancing or creating mischief, but in several instances they also act as an audience to observe the central action. As observers, these figures are found on the sides and in the background of compositions where they do not interfere or interact with the main figure, instead observing from the sidelines.

¹²⁴ For Dionysus in the art of Pompeii see Shelley Hales, “Dionysos at Pompeii,” *British School at Athens Studies* 15 (2007): 335–341.

¹²⁵ On the satyrs in the Villa of the Mysteries frieze see P.B. Mudie Cooke, “The Paintings of the Villa Item at Pompeii,” *JRS* 3 (1913): 167–169.

As attendants of Dionysus, maenads, satyrs, and silenoi have standardized and recognizable appearances. Maenads are shown as young maidens in a state of ecstatic frenzy, often dancing or spinning and sometimes carrying a thyrsus.¹²⁶ They are usually nude, or wearing minimal drapery, and wear ivy wreaths on their head. In a painting in the tablinum of the Casa di Marco Lucrezio Frontone, the maidens dance around Dionysus, as he parades in triumph (**CII.27**).¹²⁷ The maidens' state of frenzy is indicated by their bodies, which twist and turn in a constant state of motion around the god and his donkey. The women raise their arms and step on their tiptoes to reach Dionysus. Their wild behavior is not limited to his presence. Maenads are also depicted without the god, usually in decorative panels and medallions, such as several panels from the Villa di Cicerone at Pompeii where the maidens float, suspended in the air, on flat colored side panels. Although the panels are devoid of any setting or context, the maidens are still ecstatic, their bodies twisting and dancing as their draperies swirl around them.¹²⁸ Like maenads, satyrs have distinguishing features and behaviors: they are composite creatures who in Roman art are depicted as half human and half goat. Their torsos resemble humans while they have goat's hooves, tails and horns. Satyrs are shown drinking, dancing, or chasing women, which emphasizes their mischievous and licentious nature.

Four panels from the Villa di Cicerone near Pompeii depict a series of small, dancing

¹²⁶ Maenads are also defined as nymphs in some contexts, however, in Euripides 'Bacchus' he defines bacchantes as human maidens. For a discussion of the distinction between maenads and nymphs see Guy Hedreen, "Silens, Nymphs, and Maenads," *JHS* 14 (1994): 47–69; and Tyler Jo Smith, *Komast Dancer in Archaic Greek Art* (Oxford University Press, 2010), 80-82.

¹²⁷ Compare these maenads to the female attendants in a painting of Europa in the Casa di Lucius Betutius, **CII.23**.

¹²⁸ See paintings of dancing maenads or unknown provenance, MANN inv. 9295, 9297 in Bragantini and Sampaolo, *La Pitture Pompeiana*, cat. 20a, 20b. See also maenads and satyrs in flight MANN inv. 9299 from the Casa del Naviglio in Maria Luisa Nava, Rita Paris, Rosanna Friggeri, *Rosso Pompeiano: la decorazione pittorica nelle collezioni del Museo di Napoli e a Pompei* (Milano: Electa, 2007), 122.

satyrs.¹²⁹ The figures are silhouetted in red, white, blue and yellow, but their yellow tales and faint green vegetal crowns are visible. Each of the satyrs engages in an activity: one plays the diaulos, three carry katharoi, and one holds a kantharos and a rhyton for wine.¹³⁰ The remainder of the satyrs hold thyrsoi. The beasts' mischievous nature is emphasized in a small, Third Style painting from the Casa di Fabio Rufo where a satyr surprises a maenad from behind, grabbing her breast and kissing her her lips.¹³¹ In a roundel, also from Casa di Fabio Rufo, the figures sit motionless, staring out at the audience, but both figures wear ivy wreaths and the satyr sips wine from a kantharos.¹³²

Silenoi, elderly spirits also in Dionysus' retinue, have similar features to satyrs.¹³³ Most often Pappasilenus is depicted who is old, has a round pot-belly, and a tail. He can be seen with a white beard and goat's horns or pointed ears. These features are visible in a painting from the peristyle of the Casa di Meleagro where the old Silenus stands over Pan and Eros who wrestle in the foreground.¹³⁴ In this instance, Silenus wears a rose-

¹²⁹ See MANN inv. 9163, 9118, 9121, 9164 in Bragantini and Sampaolo, *Pitture Pompeiane*, cat. 19a-d; See also opus sectile pavements in the Casa dei Capitelli Colorati, VII.4.31/51 (MANN inv. 9977) and inv. 9979 in Maria Rosaria Borriello, *Le Collezioni del Museo Nazionale di Napoli* (Napoli: de Luca Editore, 1986), cat. 56 and 54.

¹³⁰ Satyrs are also associated with the theater because of the satyr play. E. Leach emphasizes the importance of the satyr play and representations of these figures in "Satyr and Spectators: Reflections of Theatrical Settings in Third Style Mythological Continuous Narrative Painting," in *I Temi Figurativi Nella Pittura Parietale Antica (IV Sec. a.C.-IV Sec. D.C.)*, ed. Daniela Scagliarini, (Bologna, 1997), 81-84.

¹³¹ See SAP inv. 86077 in Masanori Aoyagi and Umberto Pappalardo, *Pompei: Insula Occidentalis, Regiones VI-VII* (Napoli: Valtrend Editore, 2006), I: 242; Also MANN inv. 9260 in Nava, *Rosso Pompeiano*, 127.

¹³² See a painting also from this house in which a satyr peeks from behind Dionysus to watch an intimate encounter between the god and Ariadne in Aoyagi and Pappalardo, *Occidentales*, 128; B. Conticello, ed., *Rediscovering Pompeii* (Rome: L'Erma di Bretschneider, 1990), no. 164.

¹³³ For the iconography of Silens, specifically, see Erika Simon, *LIMC*.VIII, "Silenoi," 11108-11133 ; for a reading of the figures that stresses their association with the theater see Guy Hedreen, *Silens in Attic Black-Figure Vase-Painting: Myth and Performance* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1992).

colored garment draped over his left arm, but his chest remains bare, no indication of a potbelly is visible. He is pictured with a bald head, patches of white hair peeking over his pointed ears, and a long, scraggly white beard. In his hand he holds a slender thyrsus. A more characteristic depiction of Silenus is a painting from an unnamed Pompeian house VI.7.17, (**CIL.28**, *fig. 34*). Silenus stands on the far left with a long white beard and wears an ivy crown while the satyr remains youthful.¹³⁵ Silenus is often accompanied by maenads and other figures. In a painting in the Casa di Fabio Rufo, Silenus stands next to Dionysus who is flanked on his other side by a maenads.

Because of their consistent physical appearances and thematic contexts, Dionysiac figures are easy to identify, however, they are less prominent in mythological scenes. Like amorini, attendants, and nymphs, they exhibit extremely varied viewing behavior. Maenads, satyrs, and Silenus can most often be seen as spectators in one specific mythological scene: Dionysus' discovery of Ariadne on Naxos.¹³⁶ This particular episode is represented at least 22 times in Roman paintings of the first century AD and is especially common from the year 45 AD onwards. A Fourth Style painting in the Casa dei Postumii e i suoi annessi, exhibits the typical behavior and positions of the Dionysiac audience (**CIV.40**, *fig. 35*). A large group of satyrs and maenads follow behind Dionysus in the background while Silenus stands next to the god in a pose that is echoed in Roman relief and metalwork.¹³⁷ In paintings, the figures do not look up towards Dionysus or

¹³⁴ Fiorelli defines their interaction as “oscena” *Pompeianarum Antiquitatum Historia* (Naples: Neapoli, 1860), 2.234; See **CIL.9** for another depiction of this scene.

¹³⁵ See also a painting of Silenus from Herculaneum, MANN inv. 9270 in Nava, *Rosso Pompeiano*, 124; or with Hermaphrodite from Pompeii V.1.26 MANN inv. 112213 in Nava, *Rosso Pomeiano* 126.

¹³⁶ For a discussion of this motif see Chapter 4, 240-245.

twirl around in a drunken state, instead they all look at Ariadne. Their rows of bobbing heads resemble the crowds of Trojan soldiers in the paintings from the Casa del Menandro, however, they are led by a larger, more individualized maenad whose back faces the audience as she turns toward her followers in the midst of a dance.¹³⁸ She, like the other maenads, wears a gauzy chiton and an ivy wreath on her head. Silenus stands in front of the crowd, identified by his white beard and robust potbelly. Next to him stands a satyr playing a diaulos and seven additional figures file behind him. The painting's current state does not permit a visual analysis of these figures, however, Helbig identifies them as a mix of satyrs and maends.¹³⁹ Dionysus and all of the other figures look down towards Ariadne.

There does not appear to be a standardized gesture or behavior assigned to the Dionysiac audience even within this single mythological episode. A painting from an unknown Pompeian house demonstrates the variation among similar compositions with its fairly standardized depiction of Dionysus on Naxos in the Casa dei Cubicoli Floreali (**CIV.32**).¹⁴⁰ Like the painting from Casa dei Postumii e i suoi annessi, Silenus stands next to Dionysus and both figures look down at the sleeping princess. Silenus even exaggerates his view with a gesture: he raises his hand up to exclaim his surprise.¹⁴¹ In a painting of the same subject from the Casa di Arianna the figures stand in nearly identical

¹³⁷ See for example, and also a third century Etruscan mirror, Musueum of Fine Arts Boston inv.13.2875a-b in Kondoleon, *Aphrodite*, cat. 97.

¹³⁸ See this retinue in **CII.5**.

¹³⁹ Helbig *Wandgemälde*, no. 262.

¹⁴⁰ The other standardized mythological context in which maenads or bacchantes play a major roll is the scene of Pentheus, however, this is not frequently repeated. See **CII.29**.

¹⁴¹ For a similar representation of the two figures see **CIV.31**.

positions looking down at Ariadne (**CIV.37**). In this example, Silenus ignores the sleeping princess and fights with a satyr behind him.¹⁴²

III. Miscellaneous Figures

Many spectators who stand in the backgrounds of paintings follow the visual patterns of one of the aforementioned groups—large crowds, amorini, nymphs and attendants, or Dionysiac figures—but many others are completely anonymous and show no consistent pattern besides their physical separation from the main scene and lack of clear, or specific, identity. These figures observe the scenes, but bear no noticeable identity or relation to the central myth. In many cases, the spectators are alone or in small groups and have differentiated features, personalities, and responses.

It is impossible to review all appearances and variations of individual, unidentified spectators and their many features, but several examples illustrate the variety of the figures' appearances as well as the way in which these figures change the overall composition. A painting of Perseus and Andromeda from the Casa del Principe di Montenegro depicts two unidentified spectators in the top left corner (**CII.30**, *fig. 36*). The focus of the painting is Perseus who, having just slain the ketos, rescues Andromeda from her rocky perch. The protagonists stand in the foreground while amidst the surrounding landscape two, small observers sit watching the scene: a woman and what Katherina Lorenz identifies as a female satyr.¹⁴³ A painting of the same subject from the palestra in Herculaneum represents a similar audience, but this time only depicts a female

¹⁴² *PPM*.VI, 1090.

¹⁴³ Lorenz, "Ear of the Beholder," 668. Lorenz makes a case for a female satyr, however, the gendering of this figure is tenuous. Regardless, it is certainly a satyr from the pointed ear.

observer sitting on the rocks.¹⁴⁴ A later painting from the Casa dei Dioscuri (**CII.31**, *fig. 37*) represents the episode with no spectators: Perseus and Andromeda are alone with only the dead ketos in the background.¹⁴⁵ The formulaic nature of the composition overall as it is repeated in these three panels suggests a common source or tradition.¹⁴⁶ The painter has chosen to either insert or omit the observers.

Small variations among paintings of the same subject occur in other instances. In two separate paintings from Pompeii, one from House V.2.14 (**CII.32**, *fig. 38*) and a second from the Casa del Poeta Tragico, Helen prepares to board the ship for Troy while two attendants stand at her side (**CII.33**).¹⁴⁷ In the V.2.14 painting, Helen looks up toward the ship while all other figures in the composition gaze towards her. A young girl and boy stand at her right and left. The girl, possibly an attendant, holds her hand while the boy gently guides her onto the plank. Both figures look up towards Helen, the girl with a slight look of hesitation or surprise. Two soldiers, identified by their helmets, stand in the background facing the main scene. They too are positioned towards the main scene. A similar, but simplified, painting comes from the Casa del Poeta Tragico. As is

¹⁴⁴ For this painting (MANN inv. 8993) see Helbig, *Wandgemälde*, no.1188; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 123; Bragantini and Sampaolo, *Pittura Pompeiana*, no. 8.

¹⁴⁵ Additionally, a second tradition Third Style paintings represents this episode in continuous narration, see examples in the Casa dell'affresco di Spartaco, see W.J.T. Peters, *Landscapes in Romano-Campanian Mural Painting* (Van Gorcum, 1963), *fig. 77* and Boscotrecase (Met. 20.192.16); see Elfriede Knauer, "Roman Wall Paintings from Boscotrecase: Three Studies in the Relationship between Writing and Paintings," *Metropolitan Museum Journal* 28 (1993): 28-29, *fig. 37*.

¹⁴⁶ On pattern books see John Clarke, "Model-book, outline-book, figure-book: new Observations on the Creation of Near-Exact Copies in Romano-Campanian Painting," *Atti del Congresso Internazionale Associazione Internazionale Pour la Peinture Murale Antique (AIPMA) 2007*, edited by Irene Bragantini, 203-214, (Napoli, 2010).

¹⁴⁷ In the Casa del Poeta Tragico, the figure was originally identified as Chryseides, see Nava, *Rosso Pompeiano*, 103; This identification has been disputed by later authors including L. Kahil in *LIMC* IV, "Helene," 498-572; Bergmann, "Memory Theater," 232 based on the other Homeric paintings in the house and the other representations of Helen's abduction, see a 2nd century AD relief Vat.Mus. 9982.

typical in paintings from the mid first century AD, the scene has fewer, but larger figures. Helen stands in the center and a young girl stands to Helen's left looking up with a hesitant expression. The young boy from the former painting is replaced here by an older youth who stands to Helen's right and adjusts her drapery, fixated on his task. The collective group of soldiers in the background is replaced by a single soldier who looks straight at Helen. Rather than focalize a more crowded and complicated composition with multiple internal viewers—a female attendant, young boy, and group of soldiers—this second painting instead has one single observer: the soldier. Both paintings represent individualized viewers, but with slightly different appearances and behaviors.

Still other paintings depict spectators whose identification alludes modern interpretation. That is not to say that the figures were unidentified in antiquity. The best example of these unknown spectators occurs in a painting of Mars and Venus from the Casa di Marco Lucrezio Frontone (**CIV.95**, *fig. 39*) as well as an almost identical painting of the same scene from the Casa dell'Efebo (**CIV.97**, *fig. 40*).¹⁴⁸ In both paintings Venus sits while Mars hovers behind her. The couple is watched by five onlookers plus Cupid who stands in the center with his bow and quiver. The two seated females on the right as well as the two in the back are unidentified and most likely represented female attendants of Venus. Also in the back stands a figure with a pair of wings sprouting from his head, clearly individualized with this unique characteristic. Ludwig Curtius originally interpreted this figure as Mercury, arguing that this scene took place in *Hephaestus*'s forge while other scholars have suggested it is Hymen, the god of

¹⁴⁸ For the Casa di Marco Lucrezio Fronto see *PPM*.III, 1012-1016 and W.J. Th. Peters, ed. *La casa di Marcus Lucretius Frontone e le sue pitture* (Amsterdam: Thesis Publishers, 1993); for Casa dell'Efebo see *PPM*.III, 989-1000.

marriage, or even Hypnos.¹⁴⁹ As this exact scene has no clear basis in myth and the painted figure bears no clear attributes or other distinguishing features, he eludes certain identification. This ambiguity may have been intentional, however, as Clarke notes “perhaps it was enough for the patron that the painting include allusions to the love between [Mars and Venus] without specifying the details of the story....”¹⁵⁰ Considering Clarke’s observations in relation to the other anonymous observers, perhaps it was enough to include allusions to spectators, rather than specify the identity of the figures and their individual point of view.

Secondary Observers

Although primary observers are the most noticeable and standardized spectator figures—physically separated, multiple, typified—one can also identify other types of figures that observe the central action. Primary observers are easily categorized because of their somewhat standardized positions, behaviors, and appearances coupled with the fact that they actually look like and behave in the same manner as real-life audiences. Building on Lorenz’s challenge to look beyond these sideline figures, one notices spectator figures represented in different ways within the painted composition. These figures are often named, individualized figures that look at and observe other figures while they also participate in the central plot. Because their first purpose in the composition is narrative, I designate these figures as ‘secondary observers.’ Particularly

¹⁴⁹ Maiuri, *Notizie degli Scavi* (1929), 362-364; Ludwig Curtius, *Die Wandmalerei Pompejis, Eine Einführung in Ihr Verständnis* (Hildesheim: G. Olms, 1929), 250-251; Clarke, *Houses of Roman Italy*, 157.

¹⁵⁰ Clarke, *Houses of Roman Italy*, 158.

in Fourth Style paintings, figures are shown as both participant and observer.¹⁵¹ Most secondary observers do not fit any standardized visual or contextual model; they have unique identities and individualized features because, unlike primary observers, they are not anonymous. Because of the immense variation among these figures, it is difficult to establish consistent patterns. The figures can be identified by their mythological context and, in some cases, their appearance and attributes. In some instances, these figures stand in the background or sidelines, like primary observers, where they watch the central scene. More often, they are participants in the central plot. A painting from the Casa di Gavius Rufus depicts Hippodamia watching the meeting between Pirithous and Eurytos the centaur (**CII.35**, *fig. 12*).¹⁵² As is typical of Roman painting, the scene is a quiet moment before the battle. A crowd of wild centaurs look on from the far background, their features barely visible, but Hippodamia also watches the interaction as she stands behind Pirithous. She is integral to the narrative. The battle only occurs because she is abducted, but she plays no active role in the composition, only watching the events unfold. Hippodamia is positioned on a plane behind the protagonist figures and her features are not as detailed; a lighter palette is used to create the effects of distance. Similarly, in a painting from the Casa di T. Dentatius Penthera Queen Stheneboia watches as Bellerophon approaches King Proitos' throne, but she does not interact and is not individualized (**CII.36**).¹⁵³ Like Hippodamia, the Queen stands in the background and is painted with a lighter palette, creating a sense of atmospheric perspective.

¹⁵¹ See Michel, "Zuschauerfiguren," 363-70; Michael Behen, "Who Watches the Watchman? The Spectator's Role in Roman Painting," *AJA* 99 (1995): 346; Lorenz, "Ear of the Beholder," 677.

¹⁵² *PPM*.VI, 567; Ov., *Met.*12.210ff describes the battle of the Lapiths and centaurs, but focuses on the battle itself rather than this quieter moment before the actual event.

I. Lovers and Admirers

Lovers and other admirers are often depicted in paintings where they gaze longingly at their beloved who is either unaware of their gaze, is engaged in another activity, or simply chooses not to return the look. Scenes of both mythological and non-mythological couples are common in Roman painting, but mythological couples tend to be depicted with more physical restraint.¹⁵⁴ Amorous mythological lovers do not engage in erotic or overtly sexual behavior; instead they sit in close proximity, possibly touching, or embrace.¹⁵⁵ Significantly, lovers are identified because of their physical proximity, their mythological context, as well as their visual interaction. Specific lovers and their beloved are discussed at length in chapter four, but because they make up the largest group of internal, secondary spectators their general, visual characteristics are also outlined briefly below.

The majority of lovers and admirers are male including Mars, Apollo, Dionysus, Paris, Polyphemus, Actaeon, Zeus, and Achilles. They are easily identified based on their individualized, standardized appearances and attributes as well as their mythological context. Each of these figures appears with a consistent female counterpart who is known from mythological sources: Mars with Venus, Apollo with Daphne, Dionysus with Ariadne, Paris with Helen, Polyphemus with Galatea, Zeus with Hera and Ganymede,

¹⁵³ *PPM*.IX, 17; Richardson notes a second instance of this scene in a painting from Pompeii I.VIII.8 in the storerooms of Pompeii, *Figure Painters*, 41.

¹⁵⁴ The Romans were certainly not averse to graphic representations of love or lovemaking and literature on the erotic paintings, sculpture, and other objects in Roman art is vast. Consult Rome, AC inv. AC 13694 in Stampolidis and Tassoulas, *Eros*, cat. 195; the erotic vignettes in room of the Casa dei Vettii in Myerowitz, "Domestication of Desire," fig. 7.1; the erotic fresco in cubiculum f of the House of the Restaurant, A. Varone, *Eroticism in Pompeii* (Los Angeles: Getty Museum, 2001), fig. 55; and fragmented Arrentine ware in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston inv. 13.109 and RES 08.33e in Kondoleon, *Aphrodite*, cat. 102, 103.

¹⁵⁵ See an extended discussion of mythological love scenes in Chapter 4.

Pyramus with Thisbe, Diana with Actaeon, and Achilles with Briseis. Female lovers as spectators are less commonly represented, but do appear in three repeated instances.¹⁵⁶

Ariadne gazes at Theseus, Selene at Endymion, and Omphale at Hercules.¹⁵⁷ Like their male counterparts, these figures are identified based on their appearance and mythological context.

II. Gods or Goddesses

In several paintings, gods or goddesses appear in the background or sidelines watching the central scene. The appearance of gods, and particularly goddesses in the periphery of compositions is not new to art and occurs in Greek and earlier Roman art. The figures are positioned in the same way as crowds or anonymous figures, however, their identity is clear from the mythological narrative. The paintings in which these figures occur, depict stories in which a god or goddess is personally invested, for example arranging the outcome or being connected to one of the protagonists. Although their position is not central, knowledgeable viewers would presumably piece together their role in the narrative and assign an appropriate perspective. An example is seen in a unique painting from the Casa di Sirico that depicts the healing of Aeneas (**CIL.38**, *fig. 41*).¹⁵⁸ This is the only known representation of this subject in Roman painting. Virgilian themes in general are relatively scarce.¹⁵⁹ Aeneas stands in the foreground with his thigh

¹⁵⁶ For painted female gazes as an upheaval of the Roman power structure see Beth Severy-Hoven, "Master Narratives and the Wall Painting of Pompeii VI.15.1.27, Casa dei Vettii," *Gender and History* 24, no. 3 (October 24, 2012): 540–580.

¹⁵⁷ Also the instance of Pyramus and Thisbe, which is discussed in Chapter 4, 236-237, **CIV.10-CIV.13**.

¹⁵⁸ Virg., *Aen.* XII.383-467.

¹⁵⁹ For Aeneas in Roman painting see V. M. Strocka, "Aeneas nicht Alexander! Zur Ikonographie des 'Römischen Helden in der Pompejanischen Wandmalerei,'" *Jarbuch des Deutschen Archäologischen*

wounded as Iapheya kneels in front of him, unsuccessfully attempting to heal the injury. Venus hovers in the background with her garments swirling around and her hair flowing wildly around her face indicating her frantic movement towards her son. She gazes down at him and he looks back, however the other figures are unaware of the immortal presence. Venus' close proximity to Aeneas and their visual contact is unusual for paintings in which meddling gods appear to observe their handiwork. A more characteristic case of a meddling goddess is found in a painting from the Casa del Poeta Tragico which depicts the sacrifice of Iphigenia (**CII.39**, *fig. 42*).¹⁶⁰ Here, the sacrifice takes place on a stage in the foreground while Artemis is shown hovering in the sky above. She is identified by her crescent-moon crown, which appears in other paintings and representations of the goddess.¹⁶¹ An accompanying nymph floats beside her riding on a deer.¹⁶² Artemis, to whom the sacrifice is being offered, raises her right hand to her face and turns her head to look toward her companion, perhaps seeking confirmation of her feelings. The nymph, riding on a stag with billowing garments, looks down toward the tragic scene below. The two spectators remain unseen by the mortals and do not physically or visually interact. Helbig describes only one other instance of this painting, which no longer survives, and mentions no voyeuristic goddesses or other spectator figures.¹⁶³

Instituts 121 (2006): 269-315; for Aeneas in paintings more broadly see Mariette de Vos, "La fuga di Enea in pitture del I secolo d.C.," *KJ* 24 (1991): 23.

¹⁶⁰ Ov., *Met.* XII.8ff.

¹⁶¹ Artemis is also shown wearing a crescent-moon crown in the painting of the goddess with her nymphs in the Casa di L. Cornelius Diadumenus, **CII.18**; *LIMC*.I, "Artemis," 170-175, 618-619.

¹⁶² For figural representations of Artemis and a deer see *LIMC*.I "Artemis," 642-643, 648, 651.

Athena is also shown as a spectator figure in two paintings of Ariadne on Naxos. As Theseus' protectress, Athena is not entirely out of place in a mythological context that focuses on the young hero, however, she occupies the role of observer or audience and does not actively participate in the scene.¹⁶⁴ The first example from the Casa del Poeta Tragico captures the episode in which Theseus abandons Ariadne as she sleeps (**CIV.55**). In the upper left corner of the composition, a tiny Athena sits in the sky, surveying the scene. Her features are only somewhat visible because of her far off position in the background, but she shields the sun from her eye using her hand, thereby securing a better view of the events. Athena's appearance in these scenes is particularly interesting because she orchestrates the series of events, ordering Theseus to abandon Ariadne on Naxos. Athena appears in a second painting of the same subject from the Casa di Cornelius Diadumenus, VII.12.26 (**CIV.44**).¹⁶⁵ On this occasion, Ariadne is awake watching Theseus sail away in his ship. Athena is again tucked into the clouds in the upper left-hand corner. Her tiny eyes look down towards Ariadne.

Popularity, Patterns, and Purpose

The variation among figure-types and subjects makes it difficult to establish one consistent iconography of spectatorship, however, it is possible to notice common features among the different types of figures who are shown as spectators. There was

¹⁶³ Helbig, *Wandgemälde*, no. 1304 and 1305; Pliny describes a similar painting by the 4th century BC painter Timanthus, (*HN*. 35.73) which has led others to believe this painting may be based on that Hellenistic panel, find a discussion in Bragantini and Sampaolo, *Pittura Pompeiana*, no. 149.

¹⁶⁴ Elsner, *Roman Eyes*, 101 observes the strange occurrence of Athena only in the painting in the Casa di L. Cornelius Diadumenus and also notes the lack of any mythological source for her direct presence in the scene.

¹⁶⁵ For N. LaVolpe's nineteenth century drawing of this partially preserved painting consult *PPM* documentazioni, 715-717.

certainly repetition among Roman paintings, as demonstrated by the frequent appearance of particularly popular mythological subjects and motifs such as Mars and Venus or Narcissus, however, compositions are not always identical and spectators, especially, display variation in representation. Although the contexts in which these spectators appear varies as does the figures' identities, the figures themselves do display several consistent visual characteristics. The visual evidence suggests that spectators are distinguished from other figures by four general factors: position, size, appearance, and behavior. While the figures can display other patterns, such as gesture or facial expression, these features are an exception rather than the norm.

Position: Within a painted composition, spectator figures can be identified by their position, nearly all are positioned in the backgrounds or sides of compositions. Even if the spectator is an identified character in a myth, the individual is often relegated to the background as an observer. The primary exception to this are amatory scenes in which one lover gazes longingly at his/her beloved who is often positioned near him/her. Primary observers are always located in the backgrounds and sides given that their main purpose in the painting is to function as audience members. Secondary observers, who sometimes hold multiple roles, may interact with other figures.

Size: Spectator figures are often smaller than the protagonists. Crowds of humans, groups of satyrs, or pairs of nymphs are almost always small delicate figures. This characteristic holds true primarily for Third Style paintings while in Fourth Style paintings, spectator figures can be found that are larger and even the same size as the main figures.

Appearance: Spectator figures as a whole, do not have distinguishing features, however, certain groups have common visual characteristics. Most noticeable are the crowds of anonymous figures who are shown as identical figures with few details or features. Other groups, such as amorini, nymphs, or female attendants, also share visible characteristics.

Actions & Gestures: Perhaps the most distinguishing feature of spectator figures is their visual behavior. The figures always look at the main figures or central, narrative action. In the case of small crowds and audiences the gaze is implied by the group's presence and communal activity. Spectator figures are frequently shown gesturing or with visible facial expressions in response to a scene, behavior that is similar to real spectators at a public event.

Looking at Spectators

Because of the immense variation in mythological context, spectator figures play unique roles in particular scenes. They not only contribute to the contained composition, but also relate to the external viewer, offering a point of entry for the external Roman audience.¹⁶⁶ The following section explores how the Roman viewer—trained as a spectator himself—may have understood and subsequently responded to these paintings. The acts of looking at others, judging the scene, and generating response were mainstays of Roman life, and the paintings present different ways for viewers to respond.

¹⁶⁶ Michel, "Zuschauerfiguren," 537-73 originally suggested the purpose of these figures as subtly heightening the Roman viewer's awareness to his own act of viewing, however, she did not go further to offer specific meaning.

Viewers as Audience: The Fall of Icarus

Icarus and Daedalus appear in a series of ten paintings that can serve as a case study to demonstrate that both primary and secondary observers are important elements of mythological paintings and affect narrative, meaning and response. Icarus and Daedalus are represented with remarkable consistency in this series of large landscape panels from the first quarter of first century AD (late Third-early Fourth Style). The paintings represent Icarus' tragic fall from the sky when, ignoring his father's advice, he flies too close to the sun.¹⁶⁷ There are ten known paintings that depict Icarus' fall: four extant paintings from known find spots (**CII.40, CII.43, CII.45, CII.47**), two paintings from unknown locations in Pompeii (**CII.46, CII.48**), and four paintings that are now destroyed and known only from drawings, watercolors or written descriptions (**CII.41, CII.42, CII.44, CII.49**). Although Icarus' flight and subsequent fall appear frequently in paintings of the mid-first century AD, the episode is not found widely in other Roman visual art.¹⁶⁸ The rare depictions of Icarus' story are less dramatic, choosing the moment before flight as seen in an early first century AD cameo where Daedalus adjusts his son's wings.¹⁶⁹ Dawson and Blanckenhagen suggest this particular scene, focusing on the dramatic fall and death of Icarus, is a Roman innovation.¹⁷⁰ Scholarly discussion of these

¹⁶⁷ The story is certainly known before the first century BC as short references in texts and plays demonstrate, however, the fullest account is provided by Ovid *Met.* VII.183-259; For a basic, but concise summary of Icarus in antiquity and the modern world consult Karl Kilinski II, *The Flight of Icarus Through Western Art* (Lewiston: Edwin Mellen Press, 2002).

¹⁶⁸ For a bronze disc relief of the scene see C. Bérard, "Une représentation de la chute d'Icare à Lousonna," *ZAK* 23 (1963/64): 109 pl. 1; for the scene on Roman gems see *LIMC*.III, "Daedalos et Ikaros," 45.

¹⁶⁹ MANN inv. 25838, in Kilinski II, *Flight of Icarus*, frontispiece.

¹⁷⁰ Dawson, *Romano-Campanian Mythological Landscape Painting*, 140-141;

panels has almost exclusively focused on their representation of myth or the unique Roman composition.¹⁷¹

The panels demonstrate stylistic and compositional features that are representative of other late Third and early Fourth Style mythological landscape paintings.¹⁷² The large, vertical panels are arranged in horizontal registers. The top register usually consists of a broad expanse of sky and Daedalus in flight; the middle depicts Icarus, the sea, Knossos, rocky landscape, and various spectators; and the bottom illustrates the seashore, spectators, and Icarus dead on the shore.¹⁷³ The paintings do not use consistent perspective, as is evident in the painting from the Casa dell'affresco di Spartaco (**CIH.40**, *fig. 43*) where the figures in the foreground are same size as the flying Icarus and the tiny figures of Icarus and Daedalus on the seashore are considerably smaller despite their proximity to the viewer. Knossos looms in the background, but it is rendered from an aerial view and with remarkable detail considering its implied distance. In his survey of figure painters, Lawrence Richardson actually attributes five of the paintings to a single artisan: the Boscotrecase landscape painter.¹⁷⁴ Although it seems unlikely that the same painter created all of these panels due to the long time span over which they were produced, the paintings share the same composition, use of perspective, and treatment of

¹⁷¹ Eleanor Leach, *The Rhetoric of Space: Literary and Artistic Representations of Landscape in Republican and Augustan Rome* (Princeton University Press, 1988), 349.

¹⁷² Schefold, "Landscape Painting," 87-96.

¹⁷³ Leach, *The Rhetoric of Space*, 349 suggests that the city does not represent Knossos but instead Icarus' view of the flight as seen from above; F. Parise Badoni, "Ikaros, raffigurazione di un mito Greco in ambiente Romano," in *I Temi Figurativi nella Pittura Parietale Antica, Atti del Convegno Internazionale sulla Pittura Parietale Antica*, edited by Daniela Scaglarini Corlàita (University Press Bologna, 1997), 103-106.

¹⁷⁴ Richardson, *Figure Painters*, 36-44; these include the Casa dell'affresco di Spartaco (**CIH.40**), the Casa di Cubicoli di Floreali (**CIH.45**), the Casa dei Gladiatori (**CIH.47**) as well as MANN inv. 9506 (**CIH.46**) and British Museum inv. 1867, 0508.1355 (**CIH.48**).

figures. Only a painting from the Villa Imperiale (**CII.43**, *fig. 44*) differs significantly in style and composition.¹⁷⁵ The painting maintains the vertical composition seen in the earlier examples, however, the extensive landscape is gone and there are only faint indications of setting. The scene focuses on the human figures rather than the landscape. Unlike the mythological landscapes, the Villa Imperiale painting utilizes a more consistent perspective in which the figures are unified in size.

The ten paintings form the basis of Peter von Blanckenhagen's 1968 article, "Daedalus and Icarus on Pompeian Walls," in which the author, using connoisseurship, analyzes the paintings' faithfulness to a supposed Hellenistic model.¹⁷⁶ Blanckenhagen focuses on the use of continuous narration in these (and other landscape) panels as a device in which the patron or painter conveys his intentions through specific details and thus holds the key to all meaning and content. Unlike earlier Hellenistic representations of Icarus and Daedalus, these Roman scenes focus on a more dramatic moment: Icarus' deadly fall.¹⁷⁷ He divides the group into two categories based on the exact moment in the episode that is depicted: Icarus either falling from the sky or dead on the ground.¹⁷⁸ Paintings of the first group show Icarus dead on the shore, for example a painting from an unknown house now in the Naples Museum (**CII.46**), and have a consistent perspective

¹⁷⁵ Richardson, *Figure Painters*, 56.

¹⁷⁶ Peter von Blanckenhagen, "Daedalus and Icarus on Pompeian Walls," *Römische Mitteilungen* 75 (March 6, 1968): 106–145; These paintings also form the core of von Blanckenhagen's later work on continuous narration in Third Style landscape panels, "Narration in Hellenistic and Roman Art," *AJA* 61, no. 1 (January 1, 1957): 78–83; Dawson, *Mythological Landscape*, 112–117.

¹⁷⁷ The focus on dramatic moment is in contrast to the focus on pre/post action seen in later, Fourth Style paintings.

¹⁷⁸ Blanckenhagen, "Daedalus and Icarus," 114.

that unifies the composition.¹⁷⁹ In the second group of paintings, Icarus tumbles from the sky as seen in an example from the Casa del Fabbro (**CII.42**) but lack consistent perspective with “incidental” figures and landscape elements depicted in varying sizes throughout the composition.¹⁸⁰ For Blanckenhagen, the paintings of group one—with their more naturalistic representation of landscape and figures—more closely resemble a presumed Greek prototype, but also contain less Roman innovation. Group two, with its continuous narration, is a step away from earlier templates but marks a Roman patron or painter’s attempt to include personal details and design, including spectator figures.¹⁸¹

The Icarus and Daedalus panels may represent a Roman compositional innovation, however, Blanckenhagen’s explanation does not probe far enough. Of the paintings that survive with adequate documentation, all portray at least one spectator and seven of the ten panels depict two or more figures.¹⁸² These figures have not gone unnoticed, however, they have also not been explained or considered for what they contribute to the paintings. Blanckenhagen charts and compares the frequency and position of the various figures as a way to track the Roman innovation of this mythological subject.¹⁸³ For Blanckenhagen, these figures are proof of an independent

¹⁷⁹ The other paintings of Blanckenhagen’s first category are those in the Villa Imperiale (**CII.43**); IX.7.16 (now destroyed) (**CII.49**); MANN inv. 9245 (**CII.44**); and Casa dell’affresco di Spartaco (**CII.40**), which crosses over into both groups.

¹⁸⁰ The other paintings of group two come from Casa dell’affresco di Spartaco (I.7.7); V.2.10 (now destroyed), **CII.41**; Casa di Cubicoli Floreali, **CII.45**; Casa dei Gladiatori (now destroyed), **CII.47**; and an unprovenanced painting from the British Museum, **CII.48**.

¹⁸¹ On the addition of figures to Hellenistic-inspired composition, particularly in the Third Style, see Ling, *Roman Painting*, 130.

¹⁸² The paintings from the Casa dei Gladiatori, Casa della Paccis, and IX.7.16 are too badly damaged to analyze and there are no drawings or photographs, therefore they are not included in the following table and resulting discussion.

¹⁸³ See the chart in Blanckenhagen, “Daedalus and Icarus,” 115.

Roman patron and artist, however, he does not consider, or acknowledge, their role in the painting or their perception by the viewer. How would these figures have been perceived and integrated into the larger scene by the Roman viewer? Certainly, an individual looking at the painting did not ignore the figures or, like Blanckenhagen, count their presence as a mere indication of the patron or painter's clever break from Hellenistic precedents.

Instead, the painted spectators may offer clues to the way in which Roman viewers related to particular scenes. The figures could have some basis in Ovid's account: he mentions a fisherman who mistakes Icarus and Daedalus for gods.¹⁸⁴ The remaining observers have no known source. Furthermore, the paintings are not drawn exclusively from Ovid's account of the story: nowhere does Ovid mention Icarus' dead body, yet four of the paintings represent his corpse on the shore—perhaps a visual aid to the audience, enhancing the scene's dramatic ending.¹⁸⁵ With this discrepancy in mind, the remaining spectator figures can also be considered as more than just 'incidental' figures and probed for what they actually add to the painting's composition or communicate to the audience.

Table 2. Primary and Secondary Spectator Figures

Painting	Daedalus	Women	Men in Boats	Fisherman	Helios	Total Figures
<i>I.10.7 Casa del Fabbro</i>	x	1	2	X		5
<i>I.7.7 Casa dell'affresco di Spartaco</i>	(destroyed)	2	7 +	X	X	12+
<i>I.IX.5 Casa di</i>	x	3		X		5

¹⁸⁴ Ov., *Met.* 8.217-20; Ov., *Ars Am.* 2.77-8.

¹⁸⁵ Ov., *Met.* 8. Daedalus finds a wing floating in the water as evidence of Icarus' death.

<i>Cubicoli Floreali</i>						
<i>IX.6.4-5 MANN inv. 9245</i>	x	2				3
<i>Unknown Location MANN 9506</i>	x		2	X (?)		4
<i>Unknown Location British Museum</i>	x	2	2	X		6
<i>Villa Imperiale</i>	x	1 (plus 2)				3

In all of the paintings, at least two different types of spectator figures are represented and their positions, appearances, and behavior generate points of emphasis within the scene while also mirroring the role of a real Roman spectator: looking, witnessing, reacting, and judging. This occurs most obviously in the painting from the Casa dell'affresco di Spartaco where the spectator figures' gazes help clarify and guide the continuous narration. Two groups of spectators observe the first episode, Icarus' fall.¹⁸⁶ Two female figures stand on the sidelines, on the seashore, in the lower left foreground looking straight up at Icarus as he falls from the sky. Both women point upwards towards the boy, highlighting the direction in which they look. Their gesture and viewpoint signals the first stage in the narrative: Icarus' fall. An external viewer is easily drawn to these women who are the largest and most clearly rendered figures in the painting. Icarus' fall is also emphasized by a second group of spectators: two boats full of sailors are shown in the middle of the painting. Seven sailors abandon their rowing and raise up their arms in alarm as they look up to see Icarus falling towards them. The second episode in the story

¹⁸⁶ The lower left corner of this panel is destroyed, however, Blanckenhagen notes in his descriptions that "rudiments of design and color preserve the lower part of a group of two standing female figures" in this portion, but I am unable to decipher the same figures from photographs of the painting. Blanckenhagen, "Daedalus and Icarus," 107.

is indicated by the much more sober figures on the shore: Icarus' body and a small fisherman. The fisherman looks down at Icarus, marking the story's sad ending. Although these figures are the closest to the external viewer in the foreground, they are still small and hastily rendered. Curiously, the two females who are positioned only a small distance from Icarus' body take no notice of this scene indicating that two separate episodes are occurring simultaneously.

With their clear and intentional gazes, the anonymous spectator figures mark Icarus as the focal figure within the narrative, but at the same time their actions create an unstable viewpoint. The spectators are not the only observers in each painting. Daedalus appears in the center of each composition and unlike the anonymous spectators, he is part of the narrative—a secondary observer—who is partially responsible for the events and who is himself the object of observation. In several paintings that depict Icarus falling, Daedalus is shown watching helplessly, as in the painting from the British Museum (CII.48, *fig. 45*). Alternatively, in paintings that depict Icarus already dead on the shore Daedalus mourns his dead body, as seen in the Villa Imperiale painting. Whether Daedalus looks at Icarus in the sky or on the ground, the surrounding spectators follow his gaze and highlight his emotional response, either anxiety or sorrow. The object of Daedalus' gaze, and by extension also those spectators around him, is always Icarus. The painting stages a group of primary observers—anonymous women, fishermen, sailors—who watch a secondary observer—Daedalus—engaged in his own act of viewing. This multiplication and differentiation of internal spectators and viewpoints results in what Elsner describes as a “deliberate problematization of the observing focalizer” whereby the gaze and process of looking is objectified so that external viewers question what point

of view they themselves will apply to the scene.¹⁸⁷ With the inclusion of these spectators—both primary and secondary—the painting becomes not so much about Icarus’ fall, but about the process of watching, understanding, and responding to the event. By emphasizing the spectators and their reactions, the paintings favor emotion and response in addition to the narrative content.

With their individual and typological positions, reactions, and behaviors the spectators provide potential reactions, points of emphasis, and meaning that is not bound up in the established narrative.¹⁸⁸ In the Spartaco painting, for example, Icarus’ fall is presented through the reactions of the onlooker figures and their gazes. While all external to the myth, the figures offer differing directions and viewpoints, making the potential Roman viewer question which he (or she?) will choose. The women and sailors visualize the drama of Icarus’ fall while the fisherman’s concerned gaze articulates the tragedy of the event. The identity of the individual viewers does not particularly alter their reactions in the current situation—their identities are not emphasized. The sailors in the boats represent a communal, group reaction. They are surprised, shocked and concerned at the figure falling towards them. As has been demonstrated above, the appearance of such crowds of figures connotes a dramatic or historical event. Their position and gaze parallel that of an audience or group watching a performance or even looking at a painting and

¹⁸⁷ In *Roman Eyes*, 100 Elsner applies this method of reading to paintings of Ariadne; Here the term ‘focalizer’ is deliberately drawing on Mieke Bal’s use of the term in “Visual Analysis,” in *A Mieke Bal Reader* (University of Chicago Press, 2006), 269; Also see Bal’s discussion of the term in “Narratology and the Rhetoric of Trashing,” *Comparative Literature* 44:3 (1992): 300; Bal, “Visual Essentialism and the Object of Visual Culture,” in *Critical Concepts in Media and Cultural Studies*, ed. Joanne Morra and Marquard Smith (London and New York: Routledge, 2006), 1:269–297.

¹⁸⁸ Wolfgang Kemp, “The Work of Art and Its Beholder: The Methodology of the Aesthetic of Reception,” *The Subjects of Art History: Historical Objects in Contemporary Perspectives*, ed. Mark Cheetham (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998), 180-196.

like such an audience, the painted figures communicate reactions. The women, however, have no clear identity; they could be mortal women, offering a rare female perspective, or nymphs.¹⁸⁹ A closer look at their appearance and position suggests they could also be nymphs or, as Blanckenhagen suggests, Aktae, the personifications of the seashore.¹⁹⁰ The women appear in nearly all of the paintings of Icarus and Daedalus where they stand, sit, or even lounge on the shore and cliffs, watching the tragic fall. Only in the Villa Imperiale painting is it possible to have a clear look at the woman's dress. She wears a light, draped garment that exposes her right shoulder. She also wears a delicate necklace and her hair is topped by a wreath. If identified by the external viewer as a nymph or other non-human figure (e.g., personification), these women offer more than just a female perspective, they are also part of the separate world of myth and therefore distanced from viewers, and slightly less accessible. Finally, the fisherman, is least visible, his form only faintly discernible as he bends over Icarus' body, here moving beyond his place in the Ovidian narrative. In each case, the painted viewer mimics the behavior, position, and action of a Roman spectator: standing on the sidelines, witnessing Icarus' fall, offering their emotional response through gesture. Most importantly, the painted spectators actually *look* at the scene.

The paintings of Icarus and Daedalus represent the moralizing story of a youth's tragic fate and self-consciously depict spectator figures engaged in the act of observing *and* use these internal gazes to focalize the narrative as well as inflect meaning and emotional response. As these painted figures stand on the sidelines watching an event

¹⁸⁹ On the potential difference between a mortal and a "supernatural" female gaze, see Lorenz, "Ear of the Beholder," 671-672.

¹⁹⁰ Blanckenhagen, "Daedalus and Icarus," 122.

unfold, they perform an action that is familiar to the Roman viewers who themselves would have been accustomed to performing the role of audience at events. Like spectators at public spectacle events or observers in Roman daily life, these painted figures contribute to a scene's meaning with their judging gaze and expressive reactions. What is more important than the identities of the observers is the directions of their gazes, the objects of their gazes, and their interactions with other figures. By representing diverse gazes, the paintings demonstrate the way in which individual spectator figures inflect meaning within paintings, even when the narrative focus is clear.

Viewer as Performer: Changing Perspectives

A final group of paintings provide evidence unique to Fourth Style paintings and complicate the visual vocabulary of spectatorship. In the current catalogue, at least twenty-six paintings depict figures that look directly out from the wall engaging with the external viewer.¹⁹¹ Rather than watch the mythological narrative or engage with their companions, these figures observe and engage with their own audience: the (Roman) viewer. This bold, active, and unexpected behavior is not limited to specific figures or myths. Venus, Narcissus, Hermphroditus, Endymion, Perseus, Io, Diana, and others all appear in one or more paintings in which they begin to look away from the other figures and instead towards the external audience. The change in perspective represents a new relationship between paintings and their audience that is focused less on the internal

¹⁹¹ In literary theory, this outward look is termed the extradiagetic gaze, which is often considered voyeuristic, for this outward gaze and in film (breaking the fourth wall) see Gerard Genette, *Narrative Discourse: An Essay in Method* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1980); see also a helpful introduction by H. Porter Abbott, *Cambridge Introduction to Narrative* (Cambridge University Press, 2002); Elkins, *The Object Stares Back*, 38 names this as the second type of gaze in relation to figurative art: "figures in the painting who look out at you."

narrative and more on the viewer's role and the more complex relationship between subject and object.

The outward directed gaze is not connected with any specific mythological context: Narcissus in six paintings; Venus in four paintings, Endymion, Hermaphroditus, Perseus, and unidentified female figures each appear twice; and the remaining subjects, Apollo, Io, Briseis, Iphigenia, Diana, Aeneas, Hera, Imeneo, Atalanta, Cyparissus, each only occur once (*Appendix I, Chart 1*). The higher occurrence of Venus and Narcissus is not surprising given these subjects are more common, particularly in Fourth Style mythological panels and the paintings of Narcissus are all dated to after AD 62.¹⁹² A similar lack of correlation is seen between the paintings and architectural space (*Appendix I, Chart 2*). Although a slightly higher number of paintings with these figures appear in tablina and triclinia, it remains uncertain whether this suggests a preferential location due to the fact that these rooms were the among the most frequently decorated in any home.

Although there is no obvious correlation between the outward directed gaze, mythological figures, or architectural spaces there is a noticeable trend in the way in which these paintings involve their viewers. Outward engagement occurs in varying degrees. A painting of Achilles and Briseis from the Casa del Poeta Tragico (**CII.50**, *fig. 46*) demonstrates the way in which the outward gaze is more subtly depicted.¹⁹³ Large

¹⁹² For Narcissus gazing out see **CIII.16-CIII.18**, **CIII.20**, **CIII.23**, **CIII.41** (Narcissus); on the dating of the Narcissus paintings see Winifried Prehn, "Der Spiegel des Narziss. Die Bedeutung sozialer Geschlechterrollen für die Narzissiconographie," in *I temi figurativi nella pittura parietale antica. IV sec. a.C.-IV sec. d.C. : atti del VI Convegno internazionale sulla pittura parietale antica (Bologna, 1995)*, ed. Daniela Scagliarini Corlàita (Bologna University Press, 1997), 107-11; for Venus see **CI.1**, **CIII.2-CIII.4**.

¹⁹³ Peters, *Landscapes*, 147; An equally directed gaze from Hera appears in a panel from the same house **CII.58**.

figures fill the composition's foreground and background. Achilles sits in the foreground and Briseis stands on the right side, her head covered with a veil, but her eyes directed out towards the external viewer. Rather than look towards Achilles or another figure in the painting, Briseis engages with the outside, an acknowledgement of the viewer's presence and invitation to interact, at least visually.¹⁹⁴ This visual connection with the audience marks a significant change in representation and viewer-painter relationship in which the painting's content and meaning is no longer self-contained, but relies on the audience's participation, similar to the more direct participation of audiences in spectacle events of the mid first century AD.

Briseis' subtle look out from the wall is nearly hidden amidst the mass of other figures, however, the outward gaze is more prevalent in other paintings that blatantly address and expect an audience. A painting of Selene and Endymion from the Casa dell'Ara Massima (**CIV.82**) illustrates one such example.¹⁹⁵ In this panel, all of the figures appear in a landscape setting as Selene swoops down towards Endymion who sits in the left corner. Instead of looking towards one another, both Endymion and Selene turn their heads conspicuously towards the external viewer—acknowledging the inevitable presence of an audience. In addition, the two figures are accompanied by a pair of internal spectators who also look out from the painting rather than at the spectacle before them. As opposed to earlier Third Style paintings with their more crowded compositions and emphasis on narration, the scene of Selene and Endymion does not retell a series of

¹⁹⁴ Later iterations of this more demanding gaze can be found in Gunther Kress and Theo van Leeuwen's distinctions between indirect and direct address, *Reading Images: The Grammar of Visual Design* (New York: Routledge, 1996), 122-125.

¹⁹⁵ Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, cat. 144; See a similar panel, **CIV.75**.

events, but instead focus on one moment. Nearly all other paintings that represent these bold viewers are also of the Fourth Style, dating to the third quarter of the first century AD. As was established in the prior sections, paintings of this period contained fewer figures. The simpler compositions focused on internal contemplation over narration so that numerous spectator figures were no longer necessary to clarify and direct a reading. Instead, the external viewer occupied the role of active spectator. Unlike the earlier Third Style landscape paintings of Icarus and Daedalus wherein internal spectators framed interpretation and directed subjectivity for the external viewer, these new types of viewers demonstrate a different, more straightforward means of interaction with the audience. The painting is no longer a frame containing other spectators with whom the viewer identifies. Here, the boundary between painting and viewer has dissolved. While crowds of spectators offered viewers an opportunity to identify with a collective, communal viewpoint within the painted panel, Briseis' pointed stare or Endymion's direct gaze blurs the boundaries between the painting and outside world. By doing so, the field of emotion, meaning, and activity is completely opened to the outside viewer.¹⁹⁶

During the course of the first century AD, paintings begin to demonstrate a self-conscious and playful awareness of their relationship with architectural space and viewers.¹⁹⁷ An early occurrence of this interaction between painted spectators, external audiences, and space occurs in room 30 of the Villa San Marco, Stabiae (**CII.51**, *fig.*

¹⁹⁶ For an example of this in Renaissance painting and a similar reading consult Paul Barolsky, "Domenichino's 'Diana' and the Art of Seeing," in *Source: Notes in the History of Art* 14 (1994): 17-20; For other mythological scenes with outward viewers see **CII.53-CII.56**.

¹⁹⁷ The Villa of the Mysteries could be cited as an earlier example of such interaction, but as it is a megalographic frieze, the scene is inherently different than these panel paintings that interact with the viewer. The painting is also alone and not repeated **CI.2**; Also **CII.57**, Marine Venus.

47a).¹⁹⁸ The southeast wall depicts an unknown woman amidst a late Third Style architectural scene. The entire wall is dominated by the architectural panel, which consists of three horizontal registers of flat color articulated into three, vertical zones by thin, unrealistically reduced columns. In the top left register, the small figure sits atop a red panel, on a faintly articulated ledge. Her body faces the back and her legs swing over the opposite side of the wall. She holds a cithara in her right arm and rests it on her thighs. A gauzy white garment is draped over her right shoulder, across her back, and over her thighs, but exposes her back and buttocks. Amidst her playing, she turns her head, for just a moment, over her right shoulder and looks directly at the viewer. Her light blondish-red hair is pulled back from her face and flows behind her neck as she twists her head. Her small face is carefully rendered, despite its size, with clear eyes, a small nose, and delicate lips; all set in a gentle, pleasant expression. This small, unidentified woman is completely alone with no indication of background or setting (*fig. 47b*). In the panel below her stands Cassandra carrying the palladium and in a panel on the facing northwest wall, Perseus stands bearing the Gorgon head in his hand (**CII.57**). Perseus and Cassandra occupy the central, red panels, which would have been located much closer to a viewer's standing or seated height.¹⁹⁹

Despite her unknown identity, small size, and remote position, this female figure is the most noticeable in the room. The small room, identified as a cubiculum, is located off of the villa's garden. It has three doors, on the east, west, and north walls (*fig. 48*). The painting is located on the southeast wall and any viewer entering from the west

¹⁹⁸ Barbet and Miniero, *San Marco*, fig. 514, 520.

¹⁹⁹ Barbet and Miniero, *San Marco*, figs. 518 and 523b.

doorway would immediately encounter the delicate, painted woman. More likely, a viewer entering from the north door and looking to his left would look directly at the figure who would return his gaze. The positioning of the tiny female, anticipates or even requires a viewer. With the multiplicity of viewpoints, this figure has been intentionally placed in this position. Rather than comment on a mythological scene surrounding her, she elicits a response from viewers, one of confusion, laughter, surprise, or even anxiety about being observed by a painting. In this instance, the painted spectator seems to comment on the real-life audience, perhaps reporting back to the invisible, painted world behind the red wall. Here, the traditional role and boundaries of a spectator have been altered. The woman is still differentiated from the viewer, both physically and conceptually, but she participates with her outwards stare.

This change in representation not only allows interaction with the external audience, but also demonstrates a new way of depicting spectators. A painting of Hercules and his consort from the Casa di Fabio Rufo depicts an intimate scene of two observers (**CII.52**, *fig. 49*).²⁰⁰ Hercules sits on the right, gazing at his consort who, on the left, ignores his gaze and turns her head over her shoulder, contemplating the external audience. Her body remains positioned towards the hero, slightly hunched and leaning over her knees, as if she only just glanced over her shoulder for a moment. There is no underlying narrative or story to tell. Instead, the audience catches a glance of a private moment, and thanks to the consort's gaze, the intimate setting is briefly made public. At the same time, the consort's look shifts the dynamics of viewing. In this brief moment, when the woman looks at the viewer, she is both an observer—looking at the audience—

²⁰⁰ Helbig, *Wandgemälde*, no. 1137; Schefold, *Die Wände Pompejis*, 209; Hodske, *Mythologische Bildthemen*, cat. 558.

and observed—watched by Hercules. The external viewer is in the same uncertain position, mirroring the object at which he gazes. Because of the consort's straightforward interaction with the audience, the external viewer is not only an observer, but is also under examination. Blurring the boundaries between painting and reality results in a world where spectators and performers (in this case painted figures) are no longer physically separated. These panels represent a change in the Roman understanding of viewership, and also perhaps storytelling. Although based in myth, the painting of Hercules illustrates an extreme move away from the practice of relaying a series of events to an outside, separated audience. The subject of this painting is the consort's act of viewing.

Conclusions

The chapter has explored a commonly referenced topic—spectator figures—demonstrating the widespread and repeated appearance of these figures in many types of Roman, domestic wall paintings. By conducting a visual analysis of these figures in a large body of evidence, it has become clear that they share several visual characteristics. Although there is enormous variation among the figures, they can be identified by their position, size, appearance, and context. These help us to expand the definition of spectator figures from the ancillary, peripheral crowds of figures, to include those involved in the central action. This conclusion, in turn, refutes the previously held view that spectator figures became less common in Fourth Style paintings when composition simplified and eliminated supernumerary figures.

The figures occur in a wide range of mythological narratives and in a diversity of room types. It is impossible to generalize about their appearance, but primary and secondary observers are distinguished based on their physical position, number, physical appearance, context, and behavior. Large crowds of anonymous figures are found in paintings that depict dramatic, historical, or entertaining events and are typically dated to the Third Style when compositions were more crowded with figures and focused on narrative events. Cupid and amorini appear in scenes involving love, lovers, and Venus, particularly Mars and Venus together, and are usually positioned in the background or periphery. Nymphs and other female attendants accompany female protagonists and assist these individuals or watch from the sidelines. Dionysiac figures, including maenads, satyrs, and silenoi accompany Dionysus. Finally, mythological paintings often designate identifiable members of the story as onlooker figures, for example, lovers, gods, or goddesses.

Spectators' appearance, however, is neither based solely on mythological narrative nor on thematic meaning. Instead, the figures and their behavior can also be understood as references to cultural viewing practice and therefore clues to the external audiences' experience or response. Spectators focalize a narrative—directing their gazes as the central action, figure, or event—but also offer points of departure for alternate meanings and response. By reading the spectator figures in terms of Roman notions of spectacle and viewership, the painted figures take on the simultaneous role of entranced audience and judging, discerning crowd. As demonstrated by the Icarus and Daedalus paintings, spectator figures allows the external viewers to piece together a narrative and, more importantly, encourages them to move beyond an understanding of the textual

narrative; through an identification with the painted observers, external viewers experience reactions, emotion, and meaning that is not explicitly stated in the myth. Like spectators at a public entertainment event, the internal viewers communicate their approval, reactions, and thoughts. As Michel suggests, painted spectator figures are not simply innovative Roman compositional elements, however, they also do more than just alert a viewer to his act of viewing. These differentiated, intentional figures direct narrative, clarify compositions, and, most importantly, interact with the Roman viewer who himself is playing the role of responsive, judging audience.

The paintings also offer insight into the Roman viewer's response, which was not standardized or guaranteed. If the relationship between the painting and its viewer is seen in terms of the larger culture of visibility, display, and performance then these paintings suggest different models of viewership. The earlier paintings, with their large crowds of primary spectators relegated to the periphery, model the more standardized and formulaic exchange seen in the late Republic and early years of the empire. The figures maintain a physical distance from the spectacle, are distinguished by their appearance, role or behavior, and offer a reaction/response appropriate to their assigned position. Similarly, the Roman viewer who looked at these paintings was separated from the contained, painted narrative, only gaining access through the internal observers. Although the audience was free to adopt individual viewpoints, the paintings carefully frame and anticipate their interaction with the audience thereby controlling the potential response and ensuing judgment that could occur. Like a carefully planned spectacle in which familiar aspects are recognizable to the audience and individualized details are carefully injected by the patron, the paintings perform their own meaning while the viewer acts the

role of audience, witnessing and judging. A different schema occurs when the painted observers look out at the audience. Instead of closing off the scene, these paintings obviously and intentionally interact with the Roman viewer. The viewer is no longer relegated to the act of passive observer, but instead is both performer and audience.

III

REPRESENTING REFLECTION: MIRRORS, MANIFESTATIONS, AND MEANING

By far the most famous and well-studied mirror from Roman art comes from the tale of Narcissus who fell in love with his own image, leading to his death. The subject is extremely popular, not only in ancient literature and art, but also among modern scholarly interpretations, which analyze the symbolic mirror's role in problematizing subjectivity.¹ Until recently, the multitude of interpretations almost always construct a version of Narcissus from literature rather than visual evidence and focus on his behavior and its consequences.² A striking image of reflection in a Narcissan context is the painting from the Casa dell'Argenteria (**CIIL.16, fig. 30**).³ It depicts a conventional Narcissus episode of the youth in a pastoral landscape complete with a small pool at his feet in which his reflection appears. Narcissus sits upright in the center of the composition and is nude. Normally Narcissus would look down at this image, captivated by his desire for the one thing he cannot have. In this painting, however, Narcissus ignores the reflection and stares directly out at the external audience. The painted mirror remains unseen by the

¹ Recent analyses of visual representations include Platt, "Seeing, Desiring, Believing"; Taylor, *Moral Mirror*; Iconographic studies include Balensiefen, *Spiegelbilde*, 50-53, 130-166, 230-233; Rafn, *LIMC*.VII, "Narkissos."

² Literary analyses of Narcissus are far too numerous to cite completely, but for an overview consult; Louise Vinge, *The Narcissus Theme in Western European Literature up to the Early 19th Century* (PhD Dissertation, Tekniska högskolan i Lund, 1967), 1-41; M. Nelson, "Narcissus: Myth and Magic," *CJ* 95 (1999-2000): 363-389; For Ovid's Narcissus in particular, consult Morris Schuller, *Watching the Self: the Mirror of Self Knowledge in Ancient Literature* (PhD Dissertation, Yale University, 1998), 138-179; Shadi Bartsch, "The Philosopher as Narcissus: Vision, Sexuality, and Self-Knowledge in Classical Antiquity," in *Visuality Before and Beyond the Renaissance: Seeing as Others Saw*, ed. R.S. Nelson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 70-97.

³ Lilian Balensiefen, *Die Bedeutung des Spiegelbildes als ikonographisches in der antiken Kunst* (Tübingen: E. Wasmuth, 1990), 233 K 32.4; Helbig, *Wandgemälde*, no. 1363; Hodske, *Mythologische Bildtheme*, cat. 216.

youth, yet its catoptric properties are clearly on display. Despite the literary evidence that Narcissus' story is built around his visual absorption with his own image, the painted tradition emphasizes other aspects, namely the mirror and its reflected image.

Mirrors and other reflective surfaces appear in Roman art where they produce reflections that are often, but not always, visible to the external viewer. These pictorial mirrors and associated reflections raise questions about their meaning, purpose, and role in the representations, negotiating a space between physical tool, magical object, and metaphorical symbol.⁴ This chapter examines such representations of mirrors and reflection in Roman wall painting. As a culture vested in vision and viewing, ancient Rome was aware of and enthusiastic about reflection, a process that was believed to have both magical and physical properties. Romans represented mirrors and reflection in art beyond the story of Narcissus and his reflective pool. The following discussion is not concerned chiefly with understanding the metaphorical value of mirrors and reflections as they appear in Roman visual culture, but instead is concerned with deducing a clear visual iconography of this model of viewership as well as ways in which this motif was understood by its audiences. By understanding the pictorial language of reflection, it is suggested here that the painted mirror and its image were not only a symbolic part of mythological narratives, but also more literal references to the act of reflection itself.

In understanding mythological narratives, and as a bi-product their pictorial depictions, the mirror can have many connotations, but is most often considered to be “not just an artefact in everyday life” and instead something more actively involved in the

⁴ The mirror gained a magical status especially in later antiquity and the medieval period. See G. Pansa, “Di uno specchio magico del secolo XV-XVI e della catoptromanzia degli antichi secondo le leggende medievali ed i racconti popolari,” *Lares* 26.3-4 (1960): 129-142.

cognitive processes of the mythological event.⁵ Rabun Taylor describes the Roman, mythological mirror as metaphoric, able to “participate in a psychological phenomenon,” when it splits off the subject from the object and initiates self-reflection.⁶ The metaphoric mirror is a signifier of the subject’s transformation. Perhaps more abundant than studies of actual mirrors and their reflections, the scholarly interest in the mirror as a metaphor dominates the field of art history, archaeology, and classics.⁷ Scholarship in this area is diverse and adopts a range of approaches heavily influenced by modern theoretical methods. Studying visual representations of mirrors and reflection, Jean-Pierre Vernant and Françoise Frontisi-Ducroux, for example, adopt a structuralist approach to question the psychology of reflection in ancient society.⁸ With a similar approach to texts, William McCarty focuses on the “catoptric metaphor” in his reading of the Narcissus story which he suggests is inherently polar, separating self and other. The outward objectification that occurs through the process of mirroring results in self-discovery, which is inherently dangerous.⁹ The metaphorical mirror is often understood to play a role in self-formation or self-knowledge because of its objectifying ability. In her recent volume, *The Mirror of Self: Sexuality, Self-Knowledge and the Gaze*, Shadi Bartsch positions the mirror as both a tool of self-knowledge and self-transformation. Bartsch

⁵ Taylor, *Moral Mirror*, 13. Here Taylor is referring to the modern, cognitive notion of reflection, i.e. to reflect on an idea.

⁶ Taylor, *Moral Mirror*, 9; These ideas are loosely based on Lacan’s initial mirror stage, “The Mirror Stage as Formative of the ‘I’ Function,” *Écrits*, transl. Bruce Fink (Norton: New York, 2002).

⁷ The literature concerning metaphorical mirrors is vast. Several general studies with bibliography include Einar M. Jónsson, *Le miroir: Naissance d’un genre littéraire* (Paris: Belles Lettres, 1995); Schuller, *Watching the Self*, 3-4.

⁸ Françoise Frontisi-Ducroux and Pierre Vernant, *Dans l’oeil du miroir* (Paris: Editions Odile Jacob, 1997).

⁹ William McCarty, “The Shape of the Mirror: Metaphorical Catoptrics in Classical Literature,” *Arethusa* 22 (1989):161–195.

contends, however, that although the ancient mirror was well equipped to reflect the viewer back to himself, this process was deeply entrenched in Roman cultural conditions, which differed drastically from the modern world.¹⁰ Accordingly, this chapter approaches the pictorial representation of mirrors in wall paintings by privileging the ancient evidence, theories, and context with an emphasis on the visual representations.

Other scholars, particularly in the world of archaeology, have focused more on mirrors as material artifacts and reflections as scientific phenomena. As physical objects, mirrors have been studied both for their physical properties and place in culture. Several generalized surveys, including Sabine Melchior-Bonnet's *The Mirror: A History* and Mark Pendergrast's *Mirror Mirror: a History of the Human love Affair with Reflection*, consider mirrors as material objects questioning the way in which their production changed from antiquity to the modern period.¹¹ Both of these volumes situate mirrors and the phenomenon of reflection in a chronological survey with a primary focus on the modern period. Mirrors are more often studied as cultural and material artifacts. Considerable archaeological and art historical analysis has examined mirrors as scientific tools and more than just beautiful objects or spaces for iconography. Eduard Gerhard's *Etruskische Spiegel (ES)* and the more recent, multi-volume *Corpus speculorum Etruscorum (CSE)* have made Etruscan mirrors the most well-studied corpus among the

¹⁰ Bartsch, *Mirror of the Self*, 17; Sen., *QNat.* 1.17.4. from which comes the famous dictum "know thyself" (*ut homo ipse se nosset*). Seneca goes on later in the same passage, however, to criticize mirrors for their luxurious, opulent, and vain nature which he understands as contributing to a cultural downfall (1.7.6.8). For more on the mirror's dual role in Roman culture see Bartsch, *ibid.*, 28-30.

¹¹ Sabine Melchior-Bonnet, *The Mirror: a History* (New York: Routledge, 2001), 9-14 on ancient mirrors; Mark Pendergrast, *Mirror Mirror: a History of the Human Love Affair with Reflection* (Basic Books, 2003), 15.

surviving material.¹² Greek mirrors have also been studied and published, but Roman mirrors remain relatively understudied.¹³ More recent scholars have begun to examine the Roman material, although the studies are still limited.¹⁴ Roman mirrors have been examined more traditionally as cultural objects by scholars such as Ria Berg who considers the object's role in female daily ritual of preparation.¹⁵

Additional scholarship focuses on representations of mirrors and reflection in art. In his study of reflection, Gustav Friedrich Hartlaub includes one chapter discussing visual representations of mirrors.¹⁶ Lilian Balensiefen discusses a broad range of mirrors and reflection in ancient art (defined as the Classical period to late antiquity) of all media, which she divides according to myth.¹⁷ Mirrors are most often mentioned when they appear as iconographic features or attributes, for instance in the myth of Narcissus, in which various media depict a pool, basin of water, or other reflective source. Not surprisingly, most recent studies of mirrors and reflection in art have moved away from iconographic or visual analyses to question the symbolic meaning of the pictorial representations. Informed frequently by the methods and models of psychoanalysis,

¹² Eduard Gerhard, *Etruskische Spiegel* (Berlin: G. Reimer, 1843); G. Zimmer, *Etruskische Spiegel: Technik Und Stil Der Zeichnungen* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1995).

¹³ For Greek mirrors see A. de Ridder, "Miroirs grecs à reliefs," *MonPiot* 4 (1897): 77-103; Karl Schefold, "Griechische Spiegel," *Die Antike* 16 (1940): 11-37; For a specific group of mirrors with female supports see Lenore O'Keene Congdon, *Caryatid Mirrors of Ancient Greece* (Mainz: 1981), 5; G. Zimmer, *Frühgriechische Spiegel: Aspekte technischer Neuerungen in der Antike* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1991).

¹⁴ Gisela Zahlhaas, *Römische Reliefspiegel* (Kallmunz: M. Lassleben, 1975); G. Lloyd-Morgan, "The Roman Mirror and Its Origins," in *A Guide to Etruscan Mirrors*, ed. Nancy de Grummond, (Tallahassee, FL: Florida State University Press, 1982), 39-48.

¹⁵ Berg, "Wearing Wealth," 15-17.

¹⁶ G. F. Hartlaub, *Zauber Des Spiegels. Geschichte Und Bedeutung Des Spiegels in Der Kunst* (R. Piper & Company, 1951).

¹⁷ Balensiefen, *Spiegelbildes*.

scholars ask how the graphical representation of the mirror or its reflected, image externalize contemporary notions of self, desire, and objecthood. In a 2009 article, for example, Verity Platt analyzes several paintings in the Casa di Octavius Quartio including a panel of Narcissus, which she reads through a self-proclaimed psychoanalytic lens suggesting that the paintings' representations of desire would have mapped onto the viewer, triangulating the desirous gaze.¹⁸

The current tendency to compare a mirror's physical properties to its metaphorical value is exemplified Rabun Taylor's recent volume *The Moral Mirror of Roman Art*, which is more accurately an account of the mirror's symbolic role in Roman myth. Discussing the major mythological narratives that involve mirrors, Narcissus, Perseus, Venus, Thetis, Taylor argues that the pictorial mirror is an active part of a visual narrative that "processes the moral, psychological, and intellectual faculties of the subject."¹⁹ Treating the mirror as a metaphorical symbol, Taylor goes on to assign moralizing properties to the varied reflective surfaces wherein the subject is changed, reformed, improved, or in other ways altered by its surface. Although Taylor offers a convincingly synthetic notion of the mirror's symbolic value, either in myth or art, his volume falls short in its analysis of the mirror as a physical object. Taylor's "mirror" is not limited to catoptric surfaces, but also includes symbolic mirrors on which no reflection actually appears, for example shields.

¹⁸ Platt, "Viewing, Desiring, Believing," 1–26; *PPM*.III.105; for the notion of triangulation see M. Bettini, *Portrait of the Lover* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 94–101, 158–159; for an approach to reflection in Greek art that invokes the metaphorical mirror see Andrew Stewart, "Reflections," *Sexuality in Ancient Art: Near East, Egypt, Greece, and Italy*, ed. Natalie Kampen (Cambridge University Press, 1996), 136–154.

¹⁹ Taylor, *Moral Mirror*, 7.

Like Taylor, this chapter focuses on representations of mirrors. Unlike Taylor, the goal here is to examine a group of Roman paintings that depict reflection and mirrors focusing on their shared visual motif. By beginning with the visual evidence, I observe new patterns of representation regarding the way in which this motif is depicted. Rather than study the paintings in terms of their textual narrative source or metaphoric nature, the chapter focuses on the painted mirrors as physical, optical objects in order to understand the pictorial language of representation. By privileging, first, the painting as a source of evidence, and, second, the mirror, as a physical object and tool I do not mean to suggest that the mirror holds no metaphoric value within the myth or that this would not have potentially affected a viewer's response. Instead, the conclusions made by Taylor and others regarding the painted mirror's metaphoric role are echoed here, suggesting that the mirror held additional paths of meaning for the viewers, ones bound more directly to the physical process of viewing oneself, performing preparation, and participating in the Roman preoccupation with examination and replication.

Creating Reflection: Surfaces, Tools, and Reactions

Roman culture was collectively fascinated by sight, as a physical sense, as well as the process of viewing, and the human manipulation of vision. As a visual process, reflection is unique in that it is a multi-step process involving a human viewer, an object of vision, and a reflective device. The fascination with reflections and viewing reflections lay in discovering the balance between the human eye, the mirror's properties, and the image. As the third party, the mirror's role in creating, directing, and manipulating reflection was often at the center of the ancient interest and obsession with the

phenomenon. Furthermore, because reflection required an exterior device, it is almost always intentional. It was not enough for simulacra to generate to/from the eyes and interact with visual objects, in order to create and encounter reflections, a mirror or other surface had to be present. Ancient interest in physical reflections manifests itself in three distinct ways: catoptric devices for creating reflection, the scientific study of reflection, and magical use of mirrors.

Mirroring Surfaces

The bulk of material and literary evidence concerns manmade mirrors and their properties, but as Rabun Taylor notes, reflections were not limited to manmade metal or glass mirrors, as is most common in the modern world, but could actually be produced from any number of shiny or polished surfaces. Certainly Romans encountered their reflection in everyday life, albeit not as frequently or with the same accuracy as a modern individual.²⁰ Vitruvius reports that stucco could be polished to a mirror surface and although this would not have produced a very accurate reflection of one's face, for example if present on the walls of a room, it would have reflected the general forms of figures creating an awesome, haunting, or at the very least, noticeable effect.²¹

A similar situation could have occurred with water, a naturally reflective substance that, like polished stucco, lacks the reflective precision of an actual mirror. Water is the most frequently represented 'tool' for creating reflection in paintings. Water was a natural, yet ephemeral, and we know of its abundant occurrence in the Roman world. Unlike manmade mirrors, water occurs naturally and in pastoral settings, however, the

²⁰ Taylor, *Moral Mirror*, 9.

²¹ Vitr., *De arch.* 7.3.11; Seut., *Dom.* 14.4 also mentions the polished surfaces throughout Domitian's palace.

Romans harnessed the power of water for many uses, in both public and private settings.²² Water was a mainstay of Roman life for practical uses such as bathing, cooking, or drinking and the Romans developed technology and infrastructure to make water accessible.²³ Despite water's ubiquitous presence and exalted status, ancient opticians did not directly address water as an optical device. Unlike manmade mirrors, water does not adhere strictly to rules of catoptrics. Because water was found in most Roman domestic and public spaces—think of impluvia located in the atrium houses of Campania or nymphaea in private garden spaces or public promenades—there were ample opportunities for many individuals to experience its reflective properties.

Polished metal objects such as shields could also act as reflective devices. The primary use for such tools was as protective implements, however, their large surface is a prime location for image display. One can think of the honorary portraits placed on the surface of shields as part of the tradition of the *imago clipeata*.²⁴ The Alexander mosaic, for example, represents an example of a shield-induced reflection.²⁵ The fallen Persian warrior's face is naturalistically rendered in the large shield that occupies a large portion

²² For private water features see Gemma Jansen, "Water Pipe Systems in the Houses of Pompeii: Distribution and Use," *Water Use and Hydraulics in the Roman City*, ed. Ann Olga Koloski-Ostrow, (Dubuque, IA: Kendall/Hunt, 2001), 27-40; For public water features see Longfellow, *Roman Imperialism and Civic Patronage*, 31-60.

²³ G. deKleijn, *The Water Supply of Ancient Rome: City Area, Water, and Population* (Amsterdam: Gieben, 2001), especially 30-35; On the technical planning and maintenance of aqueducts see Rabun Taylor, *Public Needs and Private Pleasures: Water Distribution, the Tiber River, and the Urban Development of Ancient Rome* (Roma: L'Erma di Bretschneider, 2000), 23-53; for water's role in public spectacles/displays water see Kathleen Coleman, "Launching Into History: Aquatic Displays in the Early Empire," *JRS* 83 (1993): 48-74.

²⁴ Cornelius Vermeule, "A Greek Theme and its Survivals: the Ruler's Shield (Tondo Image) in Tomb and Temple," *ProcPhilSoc* 109 (1965): 361-97; P.R. Hardie, "Imago Mundi: Cosmological and Ideological Aspects of the Shield of Achilles," *JHS* 105 (1985): 11-31.

²⁵ Ada Cohen, *The Alexander Mosaic: Stories of Victory and Defeat* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 205 n.1; Dunbabin, *Mosaics of the Greek and Roman World*, 41; Taylor, *Moral Mirror*, 140-141.

of the mosaic's right side. The metaphoric power of reflection is especially poignant when considering mirroring shields, which by their very nature deflect objects, enemies, or other powers in a process that mimics reflection.

Man-made Mirrors

Although reflections could be, and were, encountered in a variety of reflective media the most accurate—and most frequent—means of seeing one's reflection was through a manmade, artificial mirror. Other reflective surfaces—water, metal, polished stone—create reflections as a bi-product, but often distort the represented image. Although, as objects, mirrors may have served symbolic purposes, their value in Roman culture was first and foremost based on their optical properties and ability to display accurate reflections, so that the materials, shape, and size were all modified for this purpose.

As an essential reflective medium, mirrors were common objects in Rome and have a long history in the Mediterranean region as votive, funerary, and personal objects. The earliest known manmade mirrors are dated to ca. 6200 BC and come from Çatal Höyük in Central Anatolia.²⁶ These simple objects were made of polished obsidian and have almost no reflective properties. Mirrors were manufactured in Egypt as early as 4500 BC where they have been found in graves and are frequently depicted in wall and tomb paintings.²⁷ Unlike the mirrors from Çatal Höyük, Egyptian mirrors were made of metal, typically copper, bronze or even more precious gold and silver. The metal was

²⁶ Pendergrast, *Mirror Mirror*, 3; James Mellaart, "Excavations at Çatal Höyük, 1962, Second Preliminary Report," *Anatolian Studies*, 13 (1963): 43-103; J. Enoch, "Archeological Optics: the Very First Known Mirrors and Lenses," *Journal of Modern Optics* 54 (2007): 1221-1239.

²⁷ Christine Lilyquist, *Ancient Egyptian Mirrors* (Munich: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 1979), 195-196.

formed into flat discs and polished on both sides with a sharp tang on the bottom that fit into a separate handle made of wood, metal or sometimes clay. Egyptian mirrors served both a secular purpose—as a visual aid for putting on makeup and preparing oneself—and a sacred purpose—as the symbol of Ra.²⁸ Mirrors also served a ritualistic function; they were placed in tombs near the deceased and even wrapped into their linens.²⁹

Bronze mirrors are known from both Greece and Italy beginning in the late seventh century BC. Greek mirrors, like Egyptian examples, were cast of metal, but have slightly convex surfaces, which would have enhanced their reflective properties.³⁰ Dated to as early as the late seventh and early sixth century BC, these objects come from both votive and grave contexts, suggesting different uses.³¹ Etruscan mirrors, produced from the sixth to the fourth centuries BC, are also cast of bronze. Unlike Greek mirrors, Etruscan examples come almost strictly from funerary contexts and remarkably never from votive settings. De Grummond notes that in the case of Etruscan mirrors, a funerary find-spot does not necessary indicate a designation as funerary dedication since the valuable mirrors were more likely buried with their owners like jewelry or other precious

²⁸ Hartlaub, *Zauber des Spiegels*, 34; Pendergrast, *Mirror Mirror*, 5.

²⁹ Lilyquist, *Egyptian Mirrors*, 195-196.

³⁰ On the forms of Greek mirrors and their similarities to earlier Egyptian examples see M. Comstock and C. Vermeule, *Greek, Etruscan, and Roman Bronzes in the Museum of Fine Arts Boston* (Boston: Graphic Society, 1971), 240-260; Petra Oberländer, *Griechische Handspiegel* (PhD Dissertation, University Of Hamburg, 1967); A. de Ridder, “Miroirs grecs à reliefs,” *MonPiot* 4 (1897): 77-103; Schefold, “Griechische Spiegel,” 11-37.

³¹ Mirrors have been found in votive contexts for many gods including Apollo, Artemis, Athena, Asklepios, Demeter, Hera, Persephone, and Zeus, see De Grummond, *A Guide to Etruscan Mirrors*; W.H.D. Rouse, *Greek Votive Offerings* (Cambridge University Press, 1920), 459; Marcus N. Tod “A Bronze Mirror in the Ashmolean Museum,” *Journal of Hellenic Studies* 50 (1930): 33-34; J.M. Turfa, “Etruscan Votive Offerings,” in *The Religion of the Etruscans*, eds. N.T. De Grummond and Erika Simon (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2006), 90-94.

objects.³² The mirrors were surely feminine objects as they are recovered almost strictly from female funerary contexts and only one known example depicts a man using a mirror.³³

Roman mirrors drew inspiration from both Greek and Etruscan prototypes in form, material, and decoration.³⁴ Because Roman mirrors are often found as grave goods or as parts of hoards they are widely disseminated and poorly catalogued, particularly in comparison to their Etruscan ancestors, making general comments on their production, style or subject difficult. The most comprehensive, albeit still limited, study of Roman mirrors is G. Lloyd-Morgan's unpublished, 1977 Doctoral thesis the University of Birmingham, "The Typology and Chronology of Roman Hand Mirrors from Italy and the Northwest Provinces."³⁵ Mirrors were ubiquitous in Roman society, but became especially popular in the early first century AD when the increased level of wealth and luxury led to an increase in their production.³⁶ Roman mirrors responded to the demands for better portability and better reflective properties. Like their Greek and Etruscan

³² De Grummond, "For the Mother and for the Daughter: Some Thoughts on the Dedications From Etruria and Praeneste," *Hesperia Supplements XAPIΣ: Essays in Honor of Sara A. Immerwahr* 33 (2004): 351–370; In *A Guide to Etruscan Mirrors*, Nancy De Grummond compiles essays from a number of authors addressing the production, history, and use of mirrors among other subjects as well as J.D. Beazley's often cited article "The World of the Etruscan Mirror" which offers an overview of these mirrors from the Etruscan Archaic to the Hellenistic period.

³³ For this example see Ingela Wiman, "Further Studies of Metals and Motifs on Etruscan Mirrors," *Etruscan Studies*, 5 (1998): pl. 14; A Carpino, "Reflections from the Tomb: Mirrors as Grave Goods in Late Classical and Hellenistic Tarquinia," *Etruscan Studies* 11 (2008): 1-34.

³⁴ For Greek mirrors that continue into the Roman period see Agnes Schwarzmaier, *Griechische Klappspiegel: Untersuchungen zu Typologie und Stil* (Berlin, 1997).

³⁵ Lloyd-Morgan, "Catalogue of Roman Mirrors," 97-128; Lloyd-Morgan, "Two Roman Mirrors from Corbridge," 1–6; G. Lloyd-Morgan, "The Antecedents and Development of the Roman Hand Mirror," in *Papers in Italian Archaeology I: The Lancaster Seminar: Recent Research in Prehistoric, Classical, and Medieval Archaeology*, ed. H.M. Blake, T.W. Potter, and D.B. Whitehouse (Oxford : Oxford University Press, 1978), 227–235; Lloyd-Morgan, "Roman Mirror and Its Origins," 39–48.

³⁶ Lloyd-Morgan, "Roman Hand Mirrors" 227.

ancestors, the objects had a metal reflective surface, generally consisting of polished bronze. Silver mirrors were also produced, but in much smaller quantities although Pliny claims that these more precious objects were preferred for their purer reflective properties.³⁷ Both silver and bronze reflective surfaces were eventually replaced with glass that had a metal backing. This change in material occurred in the first century BC when Pliny reports that the Sidonians, near Syria, mastered the production of transparent glass.³⁸ Although glass mirrors produced clearer reflections, they were much smaller, not only because of their function as personal items, but also because of the scarcity of the precious material.

Whether the reflective surface was made of polished metal or glass, Roman mirrors come in a variety of shapes and, in some instances, have decorated surfaces. Lloyd-Morgan characterizes over 200 variations in decoration and manufacturing technique among Roman mirrors, however, these can be classified into four general shapes: rectangular mirrors, disc mirrors, hand mirrors, and lid mirrors.³⁹ The simplest and earliest forms were the rectangular and disc mirrors.⁴⁰ These humble types are simple round or rectangular reflective metal surfaces with no handles. A later variation on simple disc mirror is the “Simpelveld” or *miroir à poignée* in which a handle or strap is

³⁷ Plin., *HN*. 33.45.8-14, He also explains that the Sidonians invented transparent glass *ibid.*, 36.**CIII.34**; Seneca also mentions the use of gold in mirrors *Q.Nat.* 1.17.8.

³⁸ Pliny also explains how to make glass *HN*. 36.194-95.

³⁹ Lloyd-Morgan, “The Typology and Chronology of Roman Mirrors,” 1-20 although she discusses five overarching categories, the author notes 25 more detailed typologies; For illustrations of these different types consult Fiona Cameron, *Greek Bronze Hand-Mirrors in South Italy, With Special Reference to Calabria* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979).

⁴⁰ For an example see De Grummond, *Guide to Etruscan Mirrors*, fig. 40.

attached to the back of the disc.⁴¹ The disc mirror seems to have originated in the first century AD, where it appears in several Pompeian paintings. After its original appearance does not occur again until the second and third centuries AD.

The hand mirror was the most iconic form and consist of a simple metal disks and an attached handle (*fig. 50*). These hand mirrors are similar in form to earlier Greek and Etruscan mirrors, but have a different manufacturing technique. Greek hand mirrors (*Griffspiegel*) and Etruscan grip-type mirrors consist of a disk and handle cast in one solid piece while the Etruscan tang-type mirror are a disk and tang plus a separate handle.⁴² Like the Etruscan tang-type mirrors, Roman examples were cast in two separate pieces consisting of the disk and a handle. The handle is usually made of metal that has been soldered onto the disc with two projecting arms forming a sort of cradle. Lid and box mirrors were also popular, most likely among aristocratic women, and have Greek and Etruscan precedents.⁴³ Lid mirrors take the form of modern cosmetic compacts: either a round or rectangular mirror covered with a hinged, metal lid (*Klappspiegel*). Similarly, box mirrors are a form in which a thin reflective disk is set into wooden boxes or frames, often with a sliding cover to protect the metal or glass. Both lid and box mirrors were particularly popular during the first century AD because of their portability and stability—they could be easily carried with individuals as they went

⁴¹ Lloyd Morgan, "Typology and Chronology," Groups W and X; Françoise Frontisi-Ducroux, "Narcisse, à travers le miroir," in *Miroirs: Jeux et reflets depuis l'antiquité*, ed. G. Sennequier, et. al. (Paris, 2000), 54, 89-90 cat. 66-7; Taylor, *Moral Mirror*, 11.

⁴² On the technical distinctions of these types see Lloyd-Morgan, "The Roman Mirror and Its Origins," 42-44; De Grummond, *A Guide to Etruscan mirrors*, 10-11; The term *Griffspiegel* comes from Hartlaub, *Zauber des Spiegel*, 35-38; D. Rebuffat-Emmanuel, *Le Miroir Étrusque: D'après La Collection Du Cabinet Des Médailles* (Rome: École française de Rome, 1973), 621; Congdon, *Caryatid Mirrors*, nos. 52, 87. Hand mirrors waned in popularity towards the fourth century BC when the pieces began to be cast separately, eventually resulting in the transformation of the handle into a stand.

⁴³ See late-Republican Eros statuettes that hold these lid mirrors, for example Louvre Myr 94, in Taylor, *Moral Mirror*, fig. 2.

about their daily business. Lid and box mirrors are frequently shown as attributes on Etruscan cinerary urns and lid mirrors appear with small terracotta statues of erotes or other figures. Greek and Etruscan lid mirrors show evidence of relief or incised designs, but Roman examples are much simpler.⁴⁴ The inner surface of the concave lid was usually highly polished and De Ridder suggests that this served to shine light on the owner as s/he used the mirror.⁴⁵

Roman mirrors rarely have complex decoration. Earlier Etruscan mirrors were highly decorated and are known for their elaborate engraved figural decoration that depict Etruscan or Greek mythological scenes.⁴⁶ These scenes decorate the non-reflective sides of mirrors and serve as one major source of knowledge about Etruscan religion and culture. Roman mirrors almost never have figural decoration; there are only four known examples of figural reliefs on Roman mirrors, the most famous being two silver mirrors from the Boscoreale hoard, now in the Louvre, which depict Leda and the Swan and a Maenad.⁴⁷ More often, the reflective surface is surrounded by perforated patterns or simple, geometric motifs similar to the decoration on Greek mirrors which was generally ornamental motifs sometimes on the upper portion of the handles, such as leaf shapes or

⁴⁴ Wolfgang Züchner, *Griechische Klappspiegel: Untersuchungen zu Typologie und Stil* (Diss. W. de Gruyter, 1942), 63 (KS 88): 86-88.

⁴⁵ A. de Ridder, "Speculum," in *Dictionnaire des antiquités grecques et romaines*, eds. C. Daremberg and E. Saglio (Paris, 1877-1919), 4.2:1422-30.

⁴⁶ L. Meer, *Interpretatio etrusca: Greek Myths on Etruscan Mirrors* (Amsterdam, 1995). In addition to the well known and numerous engraved mirrors, the Etruscans also produced bronze relief mirrors, of which sixteen survive. Slightly later in date, the earliest known bronze relief mirror dates to the early fifth century (Etruscan Late Archaic period), Carpino, *Discs of Splendor*, 4-5; Beazley, *EVP*, 2.

⁴⁷ See Louvre cat. 2158 in Antoine-Marie Héron de Villefosse, *Le trésor d'Argenterie de Boscoreale près de Pompéi* (Paris: Buiette et Cie., 1899), 88-90, no. 21 pl. XIX, figs. 20, 47; and Louvre cat. 2159 in de Villefosse, *Le trésor d'Argenterie de Boscoreale*, 90-2, 190-1, 277, no. 22 pl. XX.

repeated dots.⁴⁸ The non-reflective sides of Roman mirrors are sometimes engraved with simple border patterns, such as palmettes or concentric circles of beadings.

Reading Reflections

Whether created by natural or man-made reflective surfaces, mirrored images required explanation. Reflected images were understood in several different ways. Most obviously, they were the accurate representations of the objects placed before them, but they could also be something more magical or mysterious. The reasoned, scientific approach to reflectivity was derived from earlier Greek theories of vision in which the eye was either active (extramission, Stoic) or passive (atomist). Catoptrics, the science of mirrors, explained surfaces and their reflections in terms of visual rays, light, and geometry.⁴⁹ A number of the scientific discussions concerning reflectivity survive including Euclid's *Catoptrics* of the third century BC, Hero of Alexandria's *Catoptrica* from the mid-first century AD, and the last three books of Ptolemy's *Optics* from the second century AD.⁵⁰ This mathematics-based scholarship offered a rational and reasoned approach to reflection, which stemmed from the same original questions as optics: how do humans see and understand their world? Hero of Alexandria explains the importance of studying catoptrics at the beginning of his own treatise saying:

“catoptrics, too, is clearly a science worthy of study and at the same time produces spectacles which excite wonder in the observer....The study of

⁴⁸ For borders on the reflective side see, Cameron, *Greek Bronze Hand-Mirrors*, 31-36; for illustrations of decorative motifs on the non-reflective side see S.P. Karouzou, “Attic Bronze Mirrors,” in *Studies in Presented to David Moore Robinson on His 70th Birthday*, ed. G.E. Nylonas (St. Louis, 1951), 1.565-87.

⁴⁹ See Lindberg, *Theories of Vision*, 1-17 for a summary; See Chapter 1, 40-46.

⁵⁰ Euclid, *Optics* in Heiberg, “Euclidis Optica.”; Ptolemy, *Optics* in Smith, *Ptolemy*, 79-126; Hero of Alexandria, in Cohen and Drabkin, *Source Book*, 261-71.

catoptrics, however, is useful not merely in affording diverting spectacles but also for necessary purposes.”⁵¹

Ancient catoptrics held that reflected images were the result of visual rays bouncing off reflective surfaces. With this notion of eye-emitted rays, catoptrics was predicated on earlier extramissionist notions of visual flux in which particles were believed to emanate from the observer’s eye in order to encounter objects and cause sight, thereby assigning the cause of vision to the eye. At the same time, visual rays were believed to behave according to the laws of geometry and in this way were similar to modern ray theory.⁵² The “visual ray paradigm” held that reflected images were a result of visual rays that emanated from the eye, intersected with the mirror surface, and encountered the object of vision.⁵³ Because ancient optics understood vision to result from the physical contact between the visual ray and the object of vision, the moment in which visual rays interacted with objects they were automatically seen. Unlike modern ray theory, which assumes rays of light independent of the eye, visual ray theory depends entirely on the eye and its visual flux traveling from observer to mirror and finally the object of vision. Therefore, according to ancient theories of catoptrics, the eye was the

⁵¹ Hero as quoted by Cohen and Drabkin, *Source Book*, 261-62. The full text can be found in Willhelm Schmidt, Leo Nix, et al, ed. *Opera quae supersunt omnia*, vol. 2, fasc. 1 (Stuttgart: Teubner, 1976), 310-65.

⁵² Ronchi, *Nature of Light*, 232-284.

⁵³ For a very clear explanation, consult Smith, *Ptolemy*, 79-80. Modern ray theory asserts similar geometric principles and laws, however, rather than a visual ray of particles or flux emanating from the eye it posits rays of light, independent of the eye.

active agent in the creation of reflection while the mirror, although necessary, was a passive participant.⁵⁴

The way in which these visual rays actually interact with mirrors to create reflections is explained by a series of theoretical and empirical laws first articulated by Euclid and later revised by Ptolemy. The ‘Law of Equal Angles’ is the basis of all catoptrics and governs the location of images in mirrors. As stated by Euclid in Proposition 1, visual rays are reflected at equal angles by all mirrors—plane, spherical convex, and spherical concave—meaning the angle at which rays encounter a mirror is the same angle at which they are rebounded back, explaining how visual rays travel from eye to object and back.⁵⁵ Euclid, Ptolemy, and Hero all offer slight variations on this law, but Hero provides a uniquely dynamic account when he compares visual rays to moving bodies explaining that “just as a rock hurled with great force against a compact body rebounds...so also the rays sent forth by us at enormous velocity...are reflected by compact bodies when they strike them.”⁵⁶ Accordingly, fast-moving visual rays collide with the mirror, but are diverted back thereby resulting in reflection. The Law of Equal Angles, and other catoptric principles, hold true for specular reflection, or reflection in smooth, compact surfaces. Water or other transparent surfaces do not behave according to the same rules and instead result in diffuse reflection, although many of the same general principles hold true. With the Law of Equal Angles as a starting point to explain the behavior of visual rays, catoptrics proceeded to systematically explain the appearance of

⁵⁴ Smith, *Ptolemy*, 79; This was the predominant model, however, in the first century Seneca also recognizes a second, less prevalent theory in which the mirror changes the path of rays moving from the object towards the eye, ideas that are noticeably similar to atomist models, *QNat.* 1.5.1.

⁵⁵ Euclid, *Catoptrics*, 286-289; See also Ptolemy, *Optics III*, 3, 131 in Smith, *Ptolemy*, 82-83.

⁵⁶ Hero of Alexandria, *Catoptrics*, 322-24, transl. by Smith, *Ptolemy*, 80-81.

images in reflective surface including the lack of multiple reflections, an image's location in relation to the mirror, and image distortion.

An alternate means of understanding, or perhaps using, reflections was the practice of catoptromancy, a form of divination performed by reading mirrored surfaces to reveal future events.⁵⁷ Catoptromancy was just one form of the more general practice of scrying, which also included such acts as hydromancy, looking at water, and lecanomancy, looking into bowl of liquid. In his historical survey of catoptromancy, A. Delette suggests that lecanomancy originated in Babylonia while divination by mirror was first started in Greece.⁵⁸ Roman practice was most likely influenced by these earlier and proximate traditions, however, scrying was widely practiced throughout the ancient world with accounts of the practice from such locations as Egypt, Sumeria, India, and ancient China.⁵⁹ The practice waned slightly with the rise of Christianity, however, new means of divination continued to be developed throughout the medieval and early modern periods particularly crystallomancy.⁶⁰

Catoptromancy, hydromancy, and lecanomancy all understood the images in mirroring surfaces (whether an actual mirror, water, or oil) as indicative of some future

⁵⁷ See S.I. Johnston, "Magic," in *Religions of the Ancient World: A Guide*, ed. S.I. Johnston (Harvard University Press, 2004), 139-150.

⁵⁸ A. Delatte, *La catoptromancie grecque et ses derives* (Paris: E. Droz, 1932).

⁵⁹ Pendergrast, *Mirror, Mirror*, 32.

⁶⁰ For a list and description of the many variations of divination with an emphasis on these later periods see A. Delatte, *La catoptromancie grecque et ses dérivés* (Liège and Paris, 1932); For a popular survey of the subject consult Clifford Pickover, *Dreaming the Future: The Fantastic Story of Prediction* (Prometheus Books, 2001), 195-198; A particularly vivid account comes from the 10th century Persian poet Firdausi, (translation in Pendergrast, *Mirror Mirror*, 37).

event.⁶¹ In the divination process, surface images were not representations of some visual object in the real world, but rather symbols or clues to be interpreted by the *specularii*, or scryer. Lecanomancy, for example, involved pouring oil onto the water's surface and observing the shapes. Although these mirrors and other surfaces were not used to produce optical reflections they still maintained their passive role. The divination process relied entirely on the individual looking at the image and interpreting its appearance. The famous scene from the Villa dei Mysteries depicts what has been interpreted as a scene of divination.⁶² The scene is situated on the room's east wall and is comprised of the three semi-nude males who huddle together. In the front, the old Silenus holds a bowl or drinking cup, which he tilts backwards towards the figure behind him. The younger satyr leans forward and looks into the bowl while the third satyr stands in the background holding a theatrical mask behind the group. The scene has been read in many ways, debating the identity of the mask and its relation to the remainder of the enigmatic frieze, but most interpretations agree that the figures engages in some form of divination—catoptromancy, lecanomancy, hydromancy—in which they look at a vision or reflection in the bowl.

Mirrors in Paintings: Representing Reflections

Reflections and mirrors appear with frequency in Roman paintings. The current section describes and analyzes this motif as it occurs in four different mythological

⁶¹ Georg Luck, *Arcana Mundi: Magic and the Occult in the Greek and Roman Worlds* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006), 82.

⁶² Cooke, "Villa Item," 167-9; J. Toynbee, "The Villa Item and a Bride's Ordeal," *JRS*, 19 (1929): 77-86; Gilles Sauron, *La grande fresque de la villa des Mystères à Pompèi: memoires d'une devote de Dionysos* (Paris: Picard, 1998), 171; For a recent interpretation of the Narcissus myth that relies on lecanomancy, for example, see Nelson, "Myth and Magic," 363-389.

contexts in an effort to understand the pictorial language of reflection. Rather than explore the paintings as iterations of a single mythological narrative, examining their iconography and adherence to literary sources, this section focuses on the catoptric devices, reflected images, and internal gazes depicted in each painting. In his discussion of the metaphorical mirror in Roman art and literature, Taylor dismisses depictions of reflection claiming that “there are no strong typological traditions for the representation of mirror images in art...reflected images are a “freelance tradition.”⁶³ The following paragraphs re-evaluate depictions of reflections in order to clarify their visual appearances based on their mythological context, position, appearance, and relationship with other figures in the painting. Although the analysis is not focused on mythological narrative or subject, the paintings are discussed according to their mythological context because consistent patterns emerge between paintings of the same scene or subject. I am not concerned with debunking earlier interpretations of either myth or understanding, but with contributing visual evidence. In all of the myths that are represented, seeing and being seen by others play an important role and my goal here is to comprehensively present the painted evidence as well as comment on the way in which the paintings represent the process of reflection.

Approximately 66 paintings catalogued for this study represent Venus, Narcissus, Perseus, or Thetis and a mirror. The total represents both extant paintings—those that survive in conditions that permit visual analysis—and paintings that are known only from written indexes or earlier drawings. Only forty-four paintings currently survive. The additional eighteen representations, because they cannot be viewed, are used only as supplementary data. Three types of reflective devices appear in the paintings: man-made

⁶³ Taylor, *Moral Mirror*, 154.

mirrors, water, and a polished metal shield.⁶⁴ Water is the most common ‘tool’ for reflection although it occurs in two separate narrative contexts—Narcissus and Perseus—while both the manmade mirror and the shield are limited to one myth. Regardless of the type of reflective medium, the reflective media are represented as functional devices. Reflections are nearly always visible in the surfaces of these reflective surfaces. Reflected images appear in 38 of these representations, and although later drawings and watercolors are occasionally unclear or incorrect, 28 of the 43 surviving paintings also represent reflections, indicating a clear intention.⁶⁵ The reflections are not difficult to decipher, but look like the visual object they mirror: 82% of *all* representations (paintings and drawings) depict naturalistic reflections, compared with 72% of extant paintings (paintings only).

The representations differ according to the reflective surface portrayed. Venus is depicted with a man-made mirror. These scenes are relatively standardized, but have no textual basis. Two different myths involve water: the story of Narcissus and the myth of Perseus. Both Narcissus and Perseus have been the subject of countless studies both visual and textual. Narcissus has long been seen as a symbol of unrequited love, punished desire, or self-transformation while Perseus’ story has been variously understood as a Freudian allegory of male castration anxiety or a heroic tale of masculinity. Although Narcissus and Perseus differ significantly in myth and iconography, they do have similar representations of viewing acts, particularly in Roman wall paintings. Both subjects involve youthful subjects looking at reflections in water. Finally, one painting depicts a polished metallic shield as the reflective surface. In only

⁶⁴ See Appendix I chart 3 and 4.

⁶⁵ See Appendix I chart 3 and 4.

one painting, Thetis is shown sitting in Hephaestus's forge and gazing at her own reflection. As this is the only known representation of this motif, the painting is discussed in terms of similar representations of the same scene.⁶⁶

Regardless of their subject or reflective device, the paintings are largely representative of the Fourth Style and exhibit typical characteristics of this style of mythological panels, including specifically enlarged figures with simplified compositions and fewer figures in each panel. Spectator figures are rare and when they do appear, these onlookers number one or two rather than large groups as is seen in Third Style paintings. These Fourth Style paintings date almost entirely to the third quarter of the first century AD. The approximately seven Third Style paintings are examples of the transition period between the stark classicism of the Augustan-influenced Third Style and the eclectic Fourth Style.⁶⁷ The paintings come from a wide range of domestic contexts with no noticeable correlation between location within the home and subject, reflective device, or reflection. As with paintings of spectators, the largest number appear in more 'important' spaces—triclinia and tablina—while cubicula and exedra are less often represented.

Venus at Her Toilette

Venus' mirror appears in a series of genre paintings where she performs her toilette. These scenes are part of a larger tradition of representing the female toilette, which is best illustrated by a panel from an unknown house in Herculaneum now in the Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Napoli, where an unidentified woman sits in the center

⁶⁶ Although one painting in the current corpus depicts Hermaphroditus and a mirror it will not be discussed in the current section, but is included in the accompanying catalogue **CHIL.59**.

⁶⁷ Only one painting departs drastically from these stylistic parameters: the previously discussed painting of a seated woman from the Villa dei Misteri in Pompeii exhibits the rare, megalographic technique of the Second Style. The large, lifelike figures are themselves an example of trompe-l'oeil illusionism.

of the composition while an *ornatrix*, or female attendant, curls her hair in the background (*fig. 51*). These attendants could have a multitude of duties including carrying jewelry, holding silver basins, or displaying a mirror.⁶⁸ The toilette was part of every wealthy Roman woman's daily ritual, prior to her interaction with the outside world, and these scenes offer a view into the intimate female world.⁶⁹ Mortal women are sometimes represented in painted toilette scenes, but more often Venus is shown engaged in the act. The goddess is distinguished from mortal women based on her iconography and attributes, in particular the mirror. Ria Berg has surveyed the painted toilette scenes of both Venus and mortal women from the Campanian region and deduced that only Venus carries a mirror.⁷⁰ Mortal women instead carry a jewelry box with iconography derived from adornment scenes on fifth century BC Greek painted vases.⁷¹

Toilette scenes of Venus are genre scenes with no apparent narrative or mythological context, that instead emphasize the goddess' beauty and eroticism. As the ancestral mother of Rome, Venus features prominently in a wide range of both public and private visual media and in many guises including political, religious, and mythological

⁶⁸ An *ornatrix* was considered a skilled job, Jane Gardner, *Women in Roman Law and Society*, s.v. "ornatrix," (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986); A. Richlin, "Making up a Woman: the Face of Roman Gender," in *Off with Her Head! The Denial of Women's Identity in Myth, Religion, and Culture*, eds. H. Eilberg-Schwartz and W. Doniger (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 185-213.

⁶⁹ Berg, "Wearing Wealth," 15-73; for the importance of adornment in the Roman world see Ann Stout, "Jewelry as a Symbol of Statue in the Roman Empire," in *The World of Roman Costume*, eds. J.L. Sebesta and L. Bonfante (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1994), 77; Elizabeth Bartman, "Hair and Artifice of Roman Female Adornment," *AJA* 105 (2001): 1.

⁷⁰ Berg, "Lo specchio de Venere," 289-300; also see Susan Peirce-Silberberg, "The Muse Restored: Images of Women in Roman Painting," *Woman's Art Inc.* (2007): 1-10.

⁷¹ See F. Lissarrague, "Women, Boxes, Containers: Some Signs and Metaphors," in *Pandora* ed. E. Reeder (Baltimore, 1995), 91-101 and F. Lissarrague, "Intrusioni nel gineceo," in *I misteri del gineceo*, ed. P. Veyne, (Bari, 2000), 149-190.

settings.⁷² Although the Roman goddess is based in many ways on the Greek Aphrodite, Venusian imagery of the Republican period shares little with the earlier Greek and Hellenistic representations.⁷³ Political imagery of this period is uniquely Roman and emphasizes Venus' martial qualities, associating her with Mars and Victory.⁷⁴ During the Augustan period, however, images of Venus adopt earlier sensuous and feminized characteristics of the Hellenistic and, Rachel Kousser suggests, Classical, Greek Aphrodite.⁷⁵ Venus appears as a young, beautiful female and she is usually fully or partially nude with a soft, supple body that emphasizes her erotic nature. She also adopts attributes including doves, Cupid, and apples.⁷⁶ It is this beautiful, supple Venus that is depicted in Roman toilette scenes.⁷⁷ The most common representations of Venus in all media are the Venus Pudica (modest) and the Venus Anadyomene (Rising from the sea) both of which are adopted from earlier Hellenistic forms and focus on her nude body.⁷⁸ Venus also appears taking part in stories drawn from contemporary mythology. In the

⁷² Virg., *Aen*; Ov., *Met.* 13.623-625; Roman leaders often claimed Venus as their patron, most famously Augustus, for imagery related to her political function see Paul Zanker, *The Power of Images in the Age of Augustus* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1988).

⁷³ On the Hellenistic Aphrodite see Brunilde Ridgeway, *Hellenistic Sculpture* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1990), 2.171-1880.

⁷⁴ *LIMC*.VIII, "Venus," 192-194; *LIMC*.VII, "Mars, 347, 350.

⁷⁵ Kousser, "Augustan Aphrodite," 301-305; The classic example is the Knidian Aphrodite from the mid-fourth century BC, see Christine Havelock, *The Aphrodite of Knidos and Her Successors: A Historical Review of the Female Nude in Greek Art* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1995), 11-15.

⁷⁶ For Venus' ornithic nature see Paul Friedrich, *The Meaning of Aphrodite* (University of Chicago Press, 1978), 76-77 and fruits, 75-75.

⁷⁷ The Venus Pompeiana type also appears in some wall paintings, which depicts the goddess standing, draped in garments and often in a ritualistic setting as she is the cult goddess of the city, Mary H. Swindler, "Venus Pompeiana and the New Pompeian Frescoes," *AJA* 27.3 (1923): 302-313.

⁷⁸ See *LIMC*. VIII. "Venus," 88, 91, 93 (Pudica); 84, 85 (Anadyomene).

mythological paintings of Pompeii she is commonly represented with her lover the young Adonis or accompanying Mars.⁷⁹

Depictions of Venus and her mirror become extremely common in the Hellenistic period when they were popularly produced as small, painted vignettes or sculptural pieces, often displayed in domestic contexts.⁸⁰ These simple compositions suppress any narrative, instead focusing on Venus' beauty, femininity, and eroticism. Most early representations are small—either small, painted vignettes, miniature statues, or carved gemstones. The most popular form were miniature, bronze statues of the goddess standing in a variation on the Anadyomene pose where she is nude and adopts a slightly contrappasto stance.⁸¹ Rather than combing her long hair, Venus holds a mirror or jewelry box. Variations on the toilette type continued throughout the imperial period to eventually include a number of hybrid scenes. The culmination of the toilette type came in the late second century AD when it was combined with the marine thiasos to form a new type known as the Venus Triumphans.⁸² This marine motif was initially seen only in Roman Africa, but appeared later in Italy.⁸³ The Venus Triumphans depicts a nude and

⁷⁹ See *LIMC*.VIII, "Venus," 338-339 (Adonis) and *LIMC*.VII, Mars," 346-389 (Mars).

⁸⁰ Toilette scenes continued to be produced throughout the imperial and late antique period, the Projecta Casket is the most famous Christian example, BM 66.12-29.1 in Kathleen Shelton, *The Esquiline Treasure* (London, 1981); for a reading of the object that invokes gender-theory see Elsner, "Genders of Viewing: Visualizing Woman in the Casket of Projecta," in *Roman Eyes: Visuality and Subjectivity in Roman Art* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007), 200-224; For the earlier visual tradition of Aphrodite with mirrors on women's toiletry items and nuptial vases, see Phoebe Segal, "The Paradox of Aphrodite: a Philandering Goddess of Marriage," in *Aphrodite*, ed. Christine Kondoleon (Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, 2011), 72-77, cat. 75, 77.

⁸¹ See *LIMC*.VIII, "Venus," 158, 164.

⁸² The marine thiasos did not always include Venus, in fact it often depicted a generic Nereid rather than the goddess, see Balensiefen, *Spiegelbildes*, 76-80, 243 K 49.

⁸³ *LIMC*.VIII, "Venus," 292-293, 307-323; See Taylor's description of *Venus Triumphans* type as well as his distinction between this type, the Birth of Venus, and other earlier Venus on the half-shell types: *Moral Mirror*, 212 with bibliography.

sexualized Venus, typically seated on a seashell. Amorini are accompanied, and in some instances replaced, by marine creatures—nereids, tritons, dolphins. In his *Metamorphoses*, Apuleius describes the Tritons who “shielded her from the hostile sun’s blaze with a silken awning” or “carried a mirror before his mistress’s eyes.”⁸⁴ Although still separated from a narrative, these compositions are significantly more crowded, complex, and public as they seem to parade the goddess rather than peek into an private, daily ritual. A mosaic from Maison de l’Âne, Djemila in Tunisia dated to 178-179 AD illustrates this hybrid Venus.⁸⁵ She sits on a conch shell and is surrounded by a host of sea creatures.

Paintings of Venus at her toilette represent the eroticized goddess, but also focus on the mirror itself. Venus wears jewels and a crown as she looks into her mirror that either that is held in front of her by an attending figure. Only two variations of the many toilette-types appear with any consistency in Roman paintings of the first centuries BC and AD: Venus enthroned or standing to perform her toilette. Most frequently, Venus sits enthroned as she engages in her daily ritual. The most iconic scenes are those in which she is enthroned in an isolated vignette accompanied by several attendants. The goddess is shown enthroned, bejeweled, and coiffed while, as in Hellenistic gems or sculpture reliefs, Cupid or several amorini replace the *ornatrices* in order to carry jewelry boxes, fix her hair, and most importantly, position a mirror towards the goddesses’ face.⁸⁶ A characteristic example is a painting from the south wall of room seven in the Casa di

⁸⁴ Apul., *Met.* 4.31.

⁸⁵ Djemila Mus. In. 293 in Katherine Dunbabin, *Mosaics of the Greek and Roman World*, 156; *LIMC.VIII*, “Venus,” 315; Balensiefen, *Spiegelbildes*, 76 K 52 Taf 14, 2; See marine Venus, **CI.1**.

⁸⁶ *LIMC.VIII*, “Venus,” 170 this is the “*Halbbekleidet*” type.

Apollo (**CIII.2**, *fig. 52*) that presents Venus seated in the center of the composition.⁸⁷ She is the largest and central figure, dominating the composition. Her body is positioned to the left while she rotates her torso and head to the right.

Although her throne is only partially visible in the current painting, a panel in cubiculum C from the Villa della Farnesina (**CIII.7**, *fig. 19*), offers a standard model for a typical Venusian throne.⁸⁸ In this Third Style painting from the Imperial workshop, the goddess sits on a high-backed throne and rests her feet on a stool. Venus is accompanied by an older, more youthful Cupid as well as a second figure, a female attendant, gently places an elaborate golden crown on her head. Her throne is made of gilt wood or possibly metal, either gold or a polished bronze. The throne's turned legs are also gilt and the arm is supported by a small Victory figure. On the side of the seat, a painted enamel panel depicts a battle scene. This is not a toilette scene and, as Rachel Kousser suggests, its style and tone refer more to a Classical Aphrodisian model than the nude, eroticized, Hellenistic type that is more consistently found in Roman wall paintings.⁸⁹

Toilette scenes in which Venus appears combine elements of female adornment scenes with standard Venusian imagery. Venus' costume, adornment and setting are consistently represented. She appears in her Hellenistic, eroticized guise: partially nude, draped by a garment that falls to her waist, revealing her torso and breasts. In the Casa di Apollo painting she is draped with a dark purple garment, but it falls to her waist, displaying her nude body. Subtle shading up her torso and breasts emphasizes her soft,

⁸⁷ Hodske, *Mythologische Bildthemen*, cat. 218; Helbig, *Wandgemälde*, no. 305.

⁸⁸ On the panel see Bettina Bergmann, "Greek Masterpieces and Roman Recreative Fictions," 103-104; Christopher Hallett, "Emulation Versus Replication," *JRA* (2005): 433-434; Kousser, "Augustan Aphrodite," 301; Parallels have been made to white ground lekythoi see J. Oakley, *Picturing Death in Classical Athens: The Evidence of the White Lekythoi* (Cambridge University Press, 2004).

⁸⁹ Kousser, "Augustan Aphrodite," 302-303.

almost tactile, pink skin. She is often bejeweled, wearing simple bracelets or, possibly, a necklace as appears in the Casa di Apollo painting. The setting is isolated and appropriate for the intimate acts of a feminine ritual. The goddess sits in a closed environment without indications of setting, such as architecture or landscape as in the panel located in the Casa di Marco Lucrezio Frontone (**CIII.8**, *fig. 53*). The simple background suggest a separation from any narrative.

Venus is never entirely alone, but the figures who accompany her are not unexpected. Cupid and other attendants surround and assist Venus. In paintings depicting female toilette, mortal women assist their mistress. Cupid and amorini replace these *ornatrices* and are positioned behind, in front of, and to the sides of the goddess on her throne. Cupid often holds a mirror up to Venus. In the Casa di Apollo painting, Cupid, indicated by his wings, stands at the goddess' left side holding a water basin, jewelry box or other implement in his left hand and a mirror in his right hand. Here, he appears as a youth, as opposed to a chubby child, but his age varies among the surviving paintings. The Casa di Apollo painting is only poorly preserved, but a drawing of the panel by N. La Volpe suggests that an additional figure is also present (*fig. 54*).⁹⁰ Behind the goddess, to her right, a second figure is partially shown, peaking into the scene. The unidentified, spectator figure is only partially preserved and visible in the painting and his/her identity is unclear. Because this unidentified figure is out of place in such an intimate scene, his presence is slightly arresting and noticeable.⁹¹ He rests his chin on his hands in a relaxed gesture, as if spying, and his voyeuristic gaze emphasizes the scene's intimate nature as

⁹⁰ For N. La Volpe's drawing see *PPM.Disegnatori*, 574.

⁹¹ Most descriptions of this painting do not discuss this figure's identity: Helbig, *Wandgemälde*, no. 305 mentions a second spectator; Berg, "Lo specchio di Venere," 250; Taylor, *Moral Mirror*, 41.

well as provides a point of entry for external viewers. Both Cupid and the unidentified figure focalize the composition through their internal gazes and Venus does not pay attention to either of these figures.

Mars also accompanies Venus in a hybrid variation of the enthroned-type. While Mars and Venus are frequent companions in paintings, this particular version combines elements from two independent tropes: Venus at her toilette and erotic scenes of Mars and Venus.⁹² A painting from Room 14 of the Casa del Piano Superiore (CIII.11, fig. 26), depicts this somewhat awkward juxtaposition.⁹³ Venus sits enthroned on the panel's right side. She is assisted by two attendants, one of whom holds a large surface—possibly the shield of Mars—towards the goddess' face. Mars sits on the painting's left side, nude and almost entirely in profile, looking towards the goddess as she adorns herself. In his complete masculinity, Mars seems out of place in the otherwise feminine setting and Venus completely ignores his presence, directing her gaze towards the large mirror positioned in front of her. The juxtaposition of femininity and masculinity creates a tension, which Ria Berg suggests is inherent in all representations of Mars and Venus.⁹⁴ Although Mars and Venus are combined in one panel, they are always separated and rarely interact, Mars is an interloper.

In all toilette scenes, Venus either holds or is offered a mirror. Although mirrors were conventionally considered feminine objects, associated with the female ritual of toilette, and, as physical objects, indicators of a mortal woman's status, they are rare in

⁹² For these so-called erotic scenes of Mars and Venus see Chapter 4, 256-260; also consult Volker Michael Strocka, "Mars und Venus in Bildprogrammen pompejanischer Häuser," *I temi figurative nella Pittura Parietale Antica: (IV sec. a.C. –IV sec.d.C)* ed. Daniela Scagliarini Corlàita, (Bologna University of Bologna Press, 1997), 129-134; and Lorenz, *Bilder machen Räume*, 149-185.

⁹³ Hodske, *Mythologische Bildthemen*, cat. 82.

⁹⁴ Berg, "Lo specchio di Venere," 291.

paintings of such scenes.⁹⁵ Venus' mirror is always man-made, but its shape varies. Most often, Cupid holds a simple hand mirror, as in the Casa di M. Epidius Rufus (**CHL.6**, *fig. 55*), but other shapes also appear.⁹⁶ A large disc mirror, for example, appears in a drawing of the original painting from Pompeii VI.5.3 and a box mirror is represented in the megalographic frieze from the Villa dei Misteri.⁹⁷ The painted mirrors are not simply pictorial symbols, but display catoptric properties. Regardless of their shape, the painted mirrors display visible reflections when their surfaces face the external audience. A miniscule mirror depicted in Pompeii I.14.15 (**CHL.4**, *fig. 56*), for example, displays a small reflected face presumably belonging to Venus. The mirror and its image are small, but definitively depict a female face. An especially naturalistic reflection appears in the megalographic frieze in the Villa dei Misteri. The painted reflection represents a naturalistic likeness of the seated woman with light brown hair, large, shining eyes, and plump lips. The image's visible likeness suggests an intentional emphasis on the mirror's catoptric properties, which are on display for the viewer.

The reflected image is also emphasized in scenes that represent Venus' other type, which Berg describes as the "pudica" guise.⁹⁸ This "pudica" representation of Venus is comparatively rare: only one extant painting shows this motif and two destroyed

⁹⁵ Berg, "Lo specchio di Venere," 290.

⁹⁶ For scenes of Venus with a hand mirror see **CHL.2**, **CHL.4**, **CHL.5**, **CHL.6**.

⁹⁷ The painting of Venus holding a disc mirror in Pompeii VI.5.3 is not the same composition, Venus stands, Cupid is not present, see *PPM.IV*, 320; on the Villa dei Misteri frieze and female see Chapter 1, 70-71.

⁹⁸ Berg, "Lo Specchio di Venere," 290; Havelock, *Aphrodite of Knidos*, 69-102; Andrew Stewart, *Art, Desire, and the Body in Ancient Greece* (Cambridge University Press, 1997), 97-107.

examples are known from photographs.⁹⁹ In the from Pompeii I.14.5 a small, nude Venus stands, her white body contrasting with the dark background.¹⁰⁰ A second instance is partially preserved in the summer triclinium of Pompeii I.13.16 (**CIII.3**) where the goddess' outline is still visible and she holds a mirror. The painting's isolation and the figure's fragility are reminiscent of small bronze statuary such as a first century BC bronze relief from the Walters Art Museum in which a nude Venus stands and covers herself with her arm in a gesture of modesty.¹⁰¹ The motif borrows from earlier Late Classical and Hellenistic Anadyomene types, which appear elsewhere in paintings, for example, an over-life-sized panel from the Casa di Principe di Napoli.¹⁰² In this painting, a nude Venus emerges from her bath while her wet hair clings to her head, shoulders, and body. Unlike the seated versions of Venus' toilette, these scenes always depict the goddess fully nude. In the painting from Pompeii I.14.15, she wears very simple armbands and ankle bands, however, is otherwise unadorned. Only Cupid accompanies Venus and, as in the former painting, he stands at her feet, looking up toward the goddess. Cupid holds a round hand mirror in one hand and a jewelry box in the other, suggesting that this image is a remnant of the more crowded compositions in which Venus sits in her throne.

Despite the naturalistic reflection, the goddess does not interact with her reflected image. Venus does not always, or even often, look at her mirror. In the former painting

⁹⁹ At least four other known examples of this type existed, however, only survive in drawings, all in Pompeii: **CIII.4**, **CIII.10**; VII.9.33 (*PPM.VII*, 357); VII.5.3 (*PPM.VII*, 774).

¹⁰⁰ Berg lists this as a rare example of the *pudica* type, "Lo specchio di Venere," 290, fn. 9; The other surviving example comes from Pompeii II.1.12, Complesso dei Rieti di Magici **CIII.5**.

¹⁰¹ Walter Art Museum inv. 54.595, *LIMC.VII*, "Venus," no. 164.

¹⁰² *PPM.V.670-671*, fig. 32, 33.

from Pompeii I.14.15, for example, she does not look at her mirror, but instead turns her head in the opposite direction, staring off into the distance. She does not engage with the external audience, her mirror, or other figures. Similarly, in the Villa dei Misteri frieze, the doting Cupid figure holds the box mirror up to the seated female who emphatically ignores its surface, instead staring straight out at the external audience.¹⁰³ The Cupid seems to be aware of the woman's disregard and positions the mirror in the ideal vantage point for the external viewer, one that would subsequently be impossible for the painted figure to see. Venus does look at her mirror in several instances, The previously discussed Marco Lucrezio Frontone painting shows the goddess enthroned at her toilette in a composition almost identical to the painting from the Casa di Apollo. Rather than amorini, several female attendants surround her, one of whom fixes her hair while another holds a mirror. Venus looks directly into the mirror before her, however its surface is directed away from the external viewer. Similarly, in the painting from the Casa di Epidius Rufus Venus stares into the reflected shield, but the external viewer cannot see its surface. When a reflection is not visible in the painting's surface, it is only because the mirror is positioned away from the external audience and towards Venus.

Narcissus

Unlike Venus at her toilette, representations of Narcissus have strong mythological connections and his mirror has a symbolic role in the story. Narcissus's story is well-known in Roman mythology for its combination of objectification, desire, and

¹⁰³ See especially Balensiefen, *Spiegelbildes*, 48-50; Henderson, "Footnote," 245-247.

transformation.¹⁰⁴ The story seems to have originated in Boeotia with an early version by the Greek mythographer Conan (first-century BC), however, the dominant account is Ovid's.¹⁰⁵ The son of the nymph Leiriope and the river-god Cephissus, Narcissus is known for his great beauty, which attracted many young men and women. He scorned the advances of these individuals, the nymph Echo numbering among those discontented individuals. He finally receives punishment for his actions from the goddess Nemesis who decrees that he should feel love for the one thing he cannot attain. While he is out hunting, Narcissus spies his own reflection in a stream and is immediately struck with unquenchable, and unrequited, desire. When he finally recognizes his own reflection he also realizes his fate, exclaiming "oh, that I might be parted from my own body! And, strange prayer for a lover, I would that what I love were absent from me!"¹⁰⁶ He continues to gaze longingly at his reflection, eventually transforming into a narcissus flower, which continues to grow on the bank of the stream. Ovid also adds to the account that Narcissus continues to admire his own reflections in the Stygian water of the Underworld—his curse unending even in death.¹⁰⁷

Ovid's version of Narcissus' tale is the most well known and seems to have borrowed many features from the earlier sources, primarily Conan's shorter version from

¹⁰⁴ The bibliography on Narcissus is dense and literary analyses are too numerous to cite comprehensively, see A. Skinner, "Ovid's 'Narcissus'-An Analysis," *CB* 41 (1965): 59-61; W.S. Anderson, *Ovid's Metamorphoses: Book 1-5* (Norman, OK: Oklahoma University Press, 1997); Bartsch, *Mirror of the Self*, and for Narcissus in art see Jaś Elsner, "Naturalism and the Erotics of the Gaze: Intimations of Narcissus," in *Sexuality in Ancient Art*, ed. Natalie Kampen, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 101-105; Prehn, "Der Spiegel des Narziss," 107-109.

¹⁰⁵ Ov., *Met.* 3.339-512,

¹⁰⁶ Ov., *Met.* 4.363-367, transl. F.J. Miller. All subsequent translation of Ovid are from this source unless otherwise attributed.

¹⁰⁷ Ov., *Met.* 3.339-510.

the late first century BC-first century AD.¹⁰⁸ Conan also describes Narcissus as a beautiful youth who rejects his admirers, however, he specifies the name of one of his suitors, Ameinias. Ameinias kills himself outside Narcissus's home after being scorned and as punishment, Narcissus is doomed to his fate. Conan also specifies that Narcissus hails from Thespieae in Boeotia and adds that, in light of the story, the Thespians bestowed honor upon Eros.¹⁰⁹ In a later version, Pausanias also emphasizes Narcissus' Boeotian origins and offers an alternate explanation for the watery image suggesting that instead of seeing an image of himself, Narcissus believed the image was of his deceased twin sister, whom he loved.¹¹⁰ This detail is unusual among accounts with no known parallel. Narcissus' story continued to be recounted in later literature with various changes, but most of these accounts are thought to derive from the earlier writings of Conan and Ovid and do not contribute to an understanding of the myth's origins. By the third century AD, the story was commonplace in writing and associated with the major themes of desire and unreturned love.¹¹¹

Narcissus was extremely popular in the Graeco-Roman world and from the Augustan age onwards, he is frequently depicted in visual culture with a highly

¹⁰⁸ Conan *Narr.* 24. ap. Phot. *Bibl.* 134b28-135a3; L. Vinge, *The Narcissus Theme in Western European Literature up to the Early 19th Century* (Lund, 1967), 19-20, for English translations of the Greek text.

¹⁰⁹ I. Colpo, "La formazione del repertorio: Lo schema del giovane eroe seduto nella pittura pompeiana," (PhD Dissertation, Archaeological Sciences, University of Padua, 2002), 4-7 who discusses the Praxitelean statue of the Thespian Eros.

¹¹⁰ Paus. 9.31.7 and 9.31.8; Bettini, "Narciso e le immagini gemelle," in *La Maschera, il doppio e il ritratto: Strategie dell'identità* (Rome, 1991), 40-60; Frontisi-Ducroux and Vernant, *Dans l'oeil du miroir*, 217-221.

¹¹¹ Bartsch, *Mirror of the Self*, 86; Callistr. 5 and Phil., *Imag.* I.2.3 compose ekphraseis of painting. On Philostratus' ekphrasis, in particular consult Elsner, *Roman Eyes*, 146-152.

standardized formula.¹¹² All representations of the youth come from the Roman period when Narcissus was particularly popular following the wide dissemination of Ovid's poem. Several groups of Classical Greek statues have been identified as Narcissus. These standing youths exhibit a slight contrappasto stance and sometimes look down to the side, however, bear no uniquely Narcissan features. Visual representations of the myth do not rely heavily on any one literary version, but depend most often on Ovid's version of the story.¹¹³ Narcissus appears in almost all media including gems, sculpture, relief, mosaics, and painting. He is usually portrayed as an effeminate youth with long hair and a soft body and is most often alone or accompanied by one or two figures, usually Eros or Echo.¹¹⁴ Depictions stress his sensuous nature, classifying him with other vulnerable youth including Adonis, Ganymede or Endymion whose visual representations have similar iconographic features: youthful bodies, relaxed positions, and isolated settings. Narcissus appears in three types: sitting by the pool of water in what Elsner refers to as the "reflective Narcissus;" the standing pose; or, much less frequently, as a huntsman.¹¹⁵ Narcissus is found standing most frequently in later Roman art beginning in the second century AD, and primarily on sarcophagi and freestanding sculpture. The youth stands facing forward, his arms crossed over his chest, and looks down at the ground where his reflection is visible in a pool. This type is also seen in Hadrianic and Antonine period

¹¹² Narcissus is also a popular subject among more modern art, and culture see Hartlaub, *Zauber des Spiegels*, 67-73; S. Bann, *The True Vine: On Visual Representation and the Western Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 127-156; Melchior-Bonnet, *Mirror*, 112-113.

¹¹³ See J.P. Small, *The Parallel Worlds of Classical Art and Text* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 203 for instances in which representations diverge from the literary sources.

¹¹⁴ For an overview of visual representations of the scene see: Balensiefen, *Spiegelbildes*, 130-166 239K 41; Frontisi-Ducroux and Vernant, *Dans l'oeil du miroir*, 200-241; Colpo "La formazione del repertorio," 33-53; *LIMC*.VII, "Narkissos," nos. 16, 17, 21-23, 35, 41-43.

¹¹⁵ Elsner, *Roman Eyes*, 153.

statuary and only rarely in a series of paintings.¹¹⁶ The hunting Narcissus motif is seen almost strictly in the Roman East, particularly Roman Antioch, where the youth is identified by his petatos, laced buskins, sword, and spear.¹¹⁷ Although Ovid mentions Narcissus' profession, this aspect is rarely depicted, not to mentioned highlighted, in other visual representations and seems to be a uniquely Antiochene emphasis.¹¹⁸

The reflective Narcissus is by far the most common type and the version that appears in Roman painting. Painted representations of the youth are almost formulaic with regards to his position, dress, gestures, and context. Narcissus is shown as a youth, his beauty and sensuous nature are emphasized by his nude body, which is displayed. He usually sits in a pastoral setting near a body of water—typically a stream, pond, or fountain—and casually leans on one arm while he holds the other above his head, as seen in a painting from the Casa di Fabio Rufo (**CIII.20**, *fig. 57*), a gesture which Rabun Taylor suggests indicates vulnerability for its similarity to the sleep gesture wielded by other passive figures such as Ariadne or Endymion.¹¹⁹ A characteristic example of the reflective type is painting from the Villa di Diomede (**CIII.45**).¹²⁰ Narcissus is positioned

¹¹⁶ LIMC.VI, "Narkissos," no. 711; Colpo, "Formazione de repertorio," 31 n. 87, 38-41; For two painted examples of the standing Narcissus see **CIII.12**, **CIII.13**.

¹¹⁷ Levi, *Antioch Mosaic Pavements*, 60-61, 62-63, 89; for Narcissus the hunter as a specifically Antiochene visual motif see Elizabeth Molacek, "Narcissus the Hunter in the Mosaics of Antioch," *Athanasia* XXXI (2013): 15-23.

¹¹⁸ Several paintings from Pompeii seems to share similar compositional elements as these Antiochene mosaics, but lacks the emphasis on hunting, **CIII.14**, **CIII.19**, **CIII.28**, **CIII.36**.

¹¹⁹ Taylor, *Moral Mirror*, 60; Balensiefen, *Spiegelbildes*, 239K 41; Aoyagi and Pappalardo, *Insula Occidentalis*, 398; LIMC.VII, "Narkissos," nos. 16, 17, 21-23, 35, 38; Other figures who wield this gesture include Ariadne and Endymion, see Sheila McNally, "Ariadne and Others: Images of Sleep in Greek and Roman Art," *Classical Antiquity* 4.2 (1985): 152-192; for other paintings of Narcissus with his arm resting above his head see, **CIII.13**, **CIII.25**, **CIII.44**.

¹²⁰ MANN inv. 9383 in Balensiefen, *Spiegelbildes*, 233 K 32.35.

in a pastoral landscape, resting his body on his arm and as he looks down at the water. He is nude with only a small garment draped around his waist. A spear rests in his right hand and echoes the diagonal line of Narcissus' relaxed body.¹²¹ A crown of narcissus flowers circle his head, a reminder of the story's tragic end.¹²² The youth looks down into the pool of water in which he sees his own reflection.

The Narcissus episode is made especially powerful by its isolated setting; Narcissus is alone in a pastoral setting free of the many spectators that often crowd other compositions. The only additional internal viewers are Cupid or Echo who occasionally surround Narcissus in the wilderness, but do not look at the reflected image. A painting from the Casa di Narcisso, Pompeii (**CIIL.23**, *fig. 58*), for instance, depicts a small Cupid kneeling in the foreground and dipping his torch into the water.¹²³ When he appears with Narcissus, Cupid stands on the sidelines or in the background, perhaps, as Taylor suggests, embodying the youth's desire.¹²⁴ Cupid does not appear in any written narrative. Besides Cupid, Echo also appears in several paintings, for example, a panel from the Casa dell'Efebo (**CIIL.33**, *fig. 31*), where she stands behind Narcissus gazing

¹²¹ Although these hunting attributes, especially a spear, are often present, they are only emphasized in the pavements from the Roman East. See Elsner's discussion of Narcissus' huntsman profession as a link to his chastity through the chaste huntress Diana, Elsner, *Roman Eyes*, 153; Balensiefen also provides one painting in which Eros holds the spear, now in the Pompeii Antiquarium, from Pompeii VII.15.2, *Spiegelbildes*, 232 K 32.26.

¹²² Rafn identifies the flowers as narcissi, *LIMC*.VI, "Narkissos," no. 28 and 31, however, as Taylor remarks (*Moral Mirror*, 215 fn.42) this is only an educated, albeit very likely, hypothesis; for Narcissus wearing a crown of narcissi see **CIIL.12**, **CIIL.22**, **CIIL.24**, **CIIL.27**, **CIIL.28**, **CIIL.29**, **CIIL.30**, **CIIL.32**, **CIIL.34**, **CIIL.39**, **CIIL.40**, **CIIL.41**.

¹²³ Hodske, *Mythologische Bildthemen*, cat. 158. for Cupid and amorini in these scenes see Chapter 2, 107, fn. 93.

¹²⁴ Taylor, *Moral Mirror*, 66.

into the water.¹²⁵ There is no standardized position or appearance for the nymph and she is much less frequently represented than Cupid, both in paintings and in other representations.¹²⁶ In an unusual example from the Casa della Regina Margherita (**CHL.18**, *fig. 59*), for example, a cherubic cupid hovers behind Narcissus, while a nymph—possibly Echo—sits in the background.¹²⁷ A second nymph, reaches towards Narcissus from the water and a third cupid plays in the water at his feet.

The basic elements of this composition remain constant throughout all painted representations of Narcissus and his reflection and to say that this subject is popular among Roman wall paintings does not do justice to the situation. In his 1868 catalogue of Pompeian paintings, Wolfgang Helbig records thirty paintings of the subject and in his updated catalogue of mythological paintings, Jürgen Hodske lists thirty four panels.¹²⁸ Tested against the approximated number of mythological paintings, five hundred, the reflective Narcissus accounts for six percent of the total.¹²⁹ No other single scene is represented with such frequency in Roman wall painting and Sheila McNally goes so far as to report that Schefold's index lists no more than twenty-seven stories "that occur

¹²⁵ Hodske, *Mythologische Bildthemen*, cat. 38; Echo is never identified by name in any painting, however, she is labeled with Greek inscriptions in later mosaics, Levi, *Antioch Mosaic Pavements*, 62-63; see also Chapter 2, 116 fn.118.

¹²⁶ Rafn (*LIMC.VII*, "Narkissos," no. 707-708, 710) identifies many figures as Echo whom Taylor (*Moral Mirror*, 216, fn. 51) identifies instead as attendant nymphs; See Chapter 2, 110-113 for a discussion of nymph iconography which relies primarily on mythological context.

¹²⁷ For paintings in which multiple female figures or nymphs appear see **CHL.16**, **CHL.18**, **CHL.40**.

¹²⁸ Helbig, *Wandgemälde*, no. 1338-1367; Hodske, *Mythologische Bildthemen*, cat. 167-171.

¹²⁹ A number of the paintings are severely damaged making it difficult to discuss their iconography, **CHL.37**, **CHL.42**, **CHL. 43**; For an explanation of the sample and the approximate total number of mythological paintings see the Introduction, 18-20; See also Schefold, *Die Wände Pompejis*; Fredrick, "Erotic Painting and Visual Pleasure," 272; Hodske, *Mythologische Bildthemen*, cat. 59-68.

more than five times, for a total of 350 paintings.”¹³⁰ Narcissus was not only the most frequent, he was significantly *more* popular than other stories, subjects, and themes. What’s more, it is not simply that Narcissus is repeated in six percent of all mythological paintings but that he looks nearly identical in all of his representations. The comparatively small number of paintings that represent Narcissus standing or walking on the side of the pool, rather than enraptured by his reflection, attests to the preference for the latter representational formula.¹³¹ Patrons or painters were not only selecting the theme of Narcissus’ story, but a specific visual tradition that emphasizes reflection.

The visual formula is remarkably enduring and focuses the story not on the myth, nor on the result of Narcissus’ actions, but on the process of creating and viewing reflection. Every painting depicts a catoptric surface (water), an image (reflection), and an internal viewer/object of vision (Narcissus).¹³² The catoptric surface remains constant throughout all representations. A natural pond, pool, or puddle of water is always present at Narcissus’ feet with the only three exceptions: a surviving painting from the Casa di Fabio Rufo (**CIII.41**, *fig. 60*) and drawings of a painting from the Casa dei Dioscuri (**CIII.40**) and a painting from an unknown Pompeian house (**CIII.39**). In these versions, Cupid pours water from a hydria into a metal bowl.¹³³ The water reflects an image of Narcissus’ face, which according to the myth, deceives the youth and is object of his

¹³⁰ McNally, “Ariadne and Others,” 177.

¹³¹ For example, Pompeii IX.3.5.24, in *PPM.IX*, 205 and *PPM.Disegnatori*, 364, no. 179; Pompeii X.2.10 in *PPM.Disegnatori* 408, no. 232.

¹³² Perhaps the single exception is the Yakto complex Megalopsychia pavement, which is arguably an arena fighter dressed as Narcissus, J. Lassus, “La mosaïque de Yakto,” in *Antioch-on-the-Orontes I*, ed. G.W. Elderkin (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1934), 119; Levi, *Antioch Mosaic Pavements*, 1:338-339.

¹³³ Echo is shown performing the same action in an Antonine period puteal, *LIMC.VI*, “Narkissos,” no. 53.

desire. In his particularly vivid ekphrasis of a Narcissan painting, Philostratus emphasizes the reflection's naturalistic appearance when he speaks directly to a painted Narcissus saying, "but you do not realize that the water represents you exactly as you are when you gaze upon it, nor do you see through the artifice of the pool..."¹³⁴ attempting to prove the image's falsity to the youth. Almost universally, Narcissus' reflected image appears in the water, but never with such exacting naturalism. Instead, the paintings represent reflected images with abstracted features human features. A painting from the Casa di Marinaio (CIII.34, fig. 61), for example, depicts eyes, a nose and mouth, however, these features are no echo of the Narcissus in the same panel. Similarly, in nearly every instance, only a disembodied head appears in the water without a trace of a neck, shoulders or torso regardless of Narcissus' position above the water. The reflections are occasionally more distorted, the most extreme case being a panel in the Casa di Octavius Quartio (CIII.17, fig. 62) in which the features are significantly abstracted.¹³⁵ The large, undefined features lack detailing and have been explained as poor artisanship by Lawrence Richardson who cannot conceive of the painter consciously executing such a design.¹³⁶ Taking the interpretation even further, Verity Platt martials a psychoanalytic framework to compare the mirrored face to a Gorgon, suggesting that the artist intentionally conflated the Narcissan myth with this other catoptric story, prompting a viewer to connect the two myths of reflection, but feel danger in looking at the image.¹³⁷

¹³⁴ Phil., *Imag.* 1.23.3,

¹³⁵ Balensiefen, *Spiegelbildes*, 231 K 32.5; Hodske, *Mythologische Bildthemen*, cat. 97.

¹³⁶ Richardson, *Figure Painters*, 147; also see a response from Taylor, *Moral Mirror*, 217 fn. 65.

¹³⁷ Platt, "Viewing, Desiring, Believing," 92-94; and similarly Elsner, "Between Mimesis and Divine Power," In *Visuality Before and Beyond the Renaissance*, ed. Robert Nelson (Cambridge University Press and Harvard Divinity School, 2000), 103-104.

Rather than superimpose a modern understanding or underestimate the artisan, it seems more productive to question how these differences might be understood in terms of the paintings' subject: reflection. These imperfect reflections are intentional and suggest an attempt to emphasize the specific characteristics of water as a unique reflective surface.¹³⁸ When Philostratus claims that "the pool paints Narcissus" he is referring to a painted pool. The painted reflections are not perfect catoptric surfaces, however, seeming only to emphasize the appearance of the image and the reflective properties of water.¹³⁹ The paintings also provide an unrealistic vantage point in which the water seems to be flipped towards the external audience so as to provide the fullest view possible. The reflected image is significantly distorted in the painting from the Casa di Marco Lucrezio Frontone (**CIII.24**, *fig. 63*) in which the reflection is inverted in the puddle of water. Although the image symbolizes Narcissus' reflection, its position accommodates the external viewer, providing the most ideal viewing position.

That the external viewer is intentionally accommodated by the painting seems likely when we notice that Narcissus does not even look at his own reflection. In some instances, Narcissus gazes down at his reflection in a position that emphasizes the myth. The Casa di Marco Lucrezio Frontone painting, for example, depicts Narcissus leaning over the pond and staring into his the eye of his reflected image.¹⁴⁰ Here, the youth lounges on a rock, leaning on his left hand with his legs pushed out in front of him

¹³⁸ Water and manmade mirrors both produce what are known as specular reflections. These result from the smooth surfaces resulting in light rays bouncing off in a multitude of directions. Although both are technically specular, polished metal objects reflect light more efficiently than water resulting in crisper reflections.

¹³⁹ Phil., *Imag.* 1.23.12; Ovid also notes the pool's ideal clarity and reflectivity *Met.* 3.407.

¹⁴⁰ This painting is unusual because of its relatively private location in a small side room off of the atrium, *PPM.III*, 103. Several drawings also seem to emphasize this visual interaction **CIII.27**.

creating the signature diagonal composition. The lack of surroundings emphasizes Narcissus' isolation; he is completely alone in the scene except for his reflected face, which appears in the small puddle of water. The small panel and lack of surroundings emphasizes the visual connection between the two faces. Narcissus displays different behavior in many other paintings where he either looks out at the external viewer or seems to look elsewhere within the painting. As was demonstrated in Chapter Two, the tendency for paintings to more directly interact with their external audiences is almost entirely unique to the Fourth Style paintings of the mid first century AD. Narcissus pose and behavior in the Casa di Octavius Quartio painting for example, is almost identical to his appearance in other depictions, however, he ignores his reflection.¹⁴¹ The youth lounges amidst an isolated landscape forming a diagonal composition, sitting upright, leaning only slightly on his right arm, and holding his staff in his left arm. He seems generally more alert than the somewhat aloof representations in which he languishes with his arm relaxed above his head, cradling his neck. He does not directly engage with his reflection, but looks out from the wall, engaging with a potential viewer and leaving his reflection to be seen by the audience.¹⁴²

¹⁴¹ There are rare instances from the Second and/or Third Style in which this outward gaze occurs, most noticeably the Villa of the Mysteries; This painting, one of the only signed works in Pompeii, is of a significantly different style than all others. See Richardson's discussion of what he identifies as the "Iphigenia painter" in *Figure Painters*, 129-140.

¹⁴² Although Narcissus looks at the external viewer with relative frequency in paintings of the first century BC/AD, this type is otherwise rare thereby solidifying its intentionality during this period or within this medium.

Perseus at the Sea

While the literary and visual imagery of the Narcissus myth was established almost entirely during the Roman period, the story of Perseus was one of the earliest narratives subjects in Greek art, appearing as early as the first quarter of the 7th century BC.¹⁴³ Perseus is known as early as Homer's *Iliad* when Zeus describes him as the foremost of warriors and he is famed for slaying the Gorgon Medusa.¹⁴⁴ Like Narcissus, many aspects of Perseus' story deal with themes of vision, manipulation of sight, and reflection. Unlike the story of Narcissus, the details of Perseus' adventure are an amalgamation of many sources both literary and artistic, but by the Roman period a basic narrative had been established.¹⁴⁵ The son of Zeus and Danae, Perseus, along with his mother, was exiled on the island of Seriphos by his grandfather Akrisios who feared the prophecy that he would be killed by his grandson. The pair was rescued by a fisherman on the island of Seriphos. While on Seriphos, Perseus made a deal with the king Polydektes, to kill Medusa in order to stop the king's advances against his mother. The only mortal of the three Gorgon sisters, Medusa was known to turn all mortals to stone

¹⁴³ LIMC.VII, "Perseus," no. 112, 113, 151, 137; H. von Steuben, *Frühe Sagen Darstellungen in Korinth und Athen* (Berlin, 1968), 13-17; Like Narcissus, the bibliography for Perseus is too vast to cite comprehensively, see S. Freud, "Medusa's Head (1922)," *International Journal of Psychoanalysis* 22 (1941): 69-70; T.P. Howe, "The Origin and Development of the Gorgon-Head," *AJA* 58 (1954): 209-221; E. Phinney, "Perseus' Battle with the Gorgons," *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association* 102 (1971): 445-473; A. Napier, *Masks, Transformation, and Paradox* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986), 89-90; Taylor, *Moral Mirror*, 169-196; and R. Mack, "Facing Down Medusa (An Aetiology of the Gaze)," *Art History* 25 (2002): 571-604; particularly a volume by M. Garber and N. Vickers, *The Medusa Reader* (New York, 2003), that compiles many of the most relevant theoretical essays dealing with Medusa.

¹⁴⁴ Hom., *Il.* 14. 319-320; On the origins of the myth see Howe, "Origin and Development." See also T.H. Carpenter, *Art and Myth in Ancient Greece: A Handbook* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1991).

¹⁴⁵ The principle ancient sources for the myth are Hes., *Th.* 270-283; Pindar, "Pythian 12"; Ov., *Met.* 4.604-803; Lucian *Dial.* D. 14 (323-324); Apollod. 2.4.3; The Greek sources are compiled by J.M. Woodward, *Perseus: A Study of Greek Art and Legend* (Cambridge: Cambridge University of Art, 1937), 3-27; The Latin and Greek sources are compiled and translated by Garber and Vickers, *Medusa Reader*, 9-49.

with her gaze. Although earlier sources mention Medusa and even represent the Gorgon, it was not until the early fifth century BC that her petrifying gaze begins to be specifically represented depictions of the myth.¹⁴⁶ In order to succeed at his task, Perseus wore special garments and carried specific instruments. From Hermes, he obtained a harpe or hooked sword to sever the Gorgon's head and also acquired a pair of winged sandals/boots, an expandable bag or 'kibisis' in which to transport the Gorgon's head, and the magical cap of Hades that renders its wearer invisible.¹⁴⁷ Most importantly Athena provided a reflective shield to divert the Gorgon's deadly gaze.¹⁴⁸

After being appropriately attired, Perseus tracked down the Graiae in order to find Medusa's location. Because the three Graiae sisters shared one eye and one tooth, which they passed amongst themselves, Perseus intercepted the organs in order to obtain the precious information. Once he located Medusa, Perseus approached the Gorgones while they were sleeping in a grove. Unable to look directly at Medusa for fear of suffering the potency of her gaze, he used the shield-mirror to guide himself and behead Medusa. The reflective surface was indispensable as he guided his sword into her neck—all the while avoiding eye-contact with her face.¹⁴⁹ Perseus, having accomplished his task, fled the scene using the cap of Hades to become invisible so that the remaining Gorgones could

¹⁴⁶ Ov., *Met.* 4.793-803; Lucian *Dial.* D.14 (323); Medusa's petrifying gaze is first revealed by Pindar in the fifth century *Pyth.* 10.48.

¹⁴⁷ For visual representations of these attributes see *LIMC.VII*, "Perseus," no. 87-94. Also Carpenter, *Art and Myth*; Karl Schefold and L. Guiliani, *Gods and Heroes in Late Archaic Greek Art* (Cambridge University Press, 1992), 85-90; Kyle Phillips, "Perseus and Andromeda," *AJA* 72 (1968): 1-23.

¹⁴⁸ This shield's ability to stop the gaze's power seems to emerge in the 5-4th century when it appears in vases, Balensiefen, *Spiegelbildes*, 117-120.

¹⁴⁹ The Gorgones location is not consistent among the literary sources. Hes., *Theog.* 274-276 cites it as near the Ocean, Pind. P. 10.31-50 says they are near the Hyperboreans and Diod. 3.52.4 says they are in Libya. From the wound on Medusa's neck are born Pegasus and the hero Chrysaor.

not locate him. On his way back to Seriphos, Perseus stopped in Ethiopia where he rescued Andromeda. Because her mother, Cassiopeia, claimed to be more beautiful than the nymphs, Andromeda was chained to a cliff by Neptune and guarded over by the ketos, a giant sea-monster. Using his deadly harpe, Perseus slayed the ketos, unchained Andromeda from her perch, and took her back to his home on Seriphos in order to be married.¹⁵⁰ Upon their return to Seriphos, Perseus used Medusa's severed head to turn Polydektes into stone, finally rescuing Danae from her aggressor. Having completed his ultimate deed, Perseus returned the Gorgon and shield to Athena who had the head placed into her own shield and aegis.

Visual depictions of Perseus vary much more than those of Narcissus. The hero is almost always shown as an idealized youth and he is frequently nude.¹⁵¹ His usual attributes include winged sandals, kibisis, the cap of Hades, and the curved sword. Without his sword and kibisis, Perseus can be mistaken for Hermes as both figures wear winged footgear and variations on a winged cap.¹⁵² The Perseus Triumphant type is common in Roman art, when the hero holds the Gorgoneion head raised above his head.¹⁵³ Unlike Narcissus, Perseus appears in a wide variety of narrative scenes that focus on many episodes from his journey. Images of Perseus in Greek art focus on his act of beheading Medusa and the subsequent escape from the scene. The earliest known

¹⁵⁰ Lucian *Dial.* D.14 (323) notes that Perseus killed the ketos with a sword and then turned it to stone using Medusa's head; Visual sources vary: in one sixth century, black figure Corinthian amphora Perseus throws rocks at the ketos, see Woodward, *Perseus*, fig. 9a.

¹⁵¹ He is very rarely shown bearded in Archaic Greek vases (*LIMC.VII*, "Perseus," no. 113, 152) and the Campana plaques, *LIMC.VII*, "Perseus," no. 133.

¹⁵² Mary Sturgeon, "A Group of Sculptures from Ancient Corinth," *Hesperia*, 44 (1975): 284-286 notes that a soft cap, or *petasos*, was worn by Hermes and a hard helmet, or "Cap of Darkness," by Perseus although this difference is often difficult to determine in the visual evidence.

¹⁵³ So called by Jean Balty in *LIMC.VII*, "Perseus," no. 61-62.

example, a Proto-Corinthian kotyle from the 7th century BC (650-625 BC) depicts Perseus beheading the Medusa.¹⁵⁴ Beheading scenes, as well as episodes of Perseus fleeing from the Gorgones, continue into the Greek Archaic period and through the end of the fifth century. The fleeing scene is most common focusing on various aspects of the story including the Graiae, Danae, or the sleeping Gorgons.¹⁵⁵ The story also appears in Etruscan art, primarily of the fourth century BC, which focuses almost strictly on the Medusa episode.¹⁵⁶ Although the reflective shield is an important aspect of the narrative, its properties are not depicted in visual imagery until the late Classical period when it begins to appear post-beheading. Athena and Perseus are sometimes shown holding the Gorgon above a shield where a reflected image appears in the surface.¹⁵⁷

Roman representations of Perseus are significantly different than their Greek and Etruscan counterparts. The beheading scene appears, but less frequently, and Perseus is never shown fleeing the Gorgon.¹⁵⁸ Roman scenes do not center on the mirroring shield as a tool for beheading the Medusa instead preferring the story of Perseus and Andromeda. Andromeda appears with Perseus in Greek vases of the Classical period, however, she is almost never shown in Etruscan images. Perseus and Andromeda are

¹⁵⁴ LIMC.VII, "Perseus," no. 112; D.A. Amyx, *Studies in Archaic Corinthian Vase Painting* (Princeton: American School of Classical Studies at Athens, 1996) 23, A 1. Pl. 8, I; see also Woodward, *Perseus*, 30-40.

¹⁵⁵ See an example of this scene in a fifth century BC Attic pyxis cover, Brauron Museum 282, in LIMC.VII, "Perseus," 104; John Oakley, "Perseus, the Graiai and Aeschylus," *AJA* 86 (1982): 111-115 has suggested that these variations in representation during the fifth century may reflect Aeschylus' Phorkides, specifically the representations of the Graiai.

¹⁵⁶ For examples a bronze fourth century BC bronze mirror in the San Antonio Museum of Art (inv. 91.80.5), in LIMC.VII, "Perseus," 46.

¹⁵⁷ Balensiefen, *Spiegelbildes*, 124-130, 337-338.

¹⁵⁸ A Campana plaque depicts the beheading scene, Naples, Mus. Naz. 24224 in Balensiefen, *Spiegelbildes*, 237, K 37 pl. 19.

frequently depicted in wall paintings and in contexts that are unique to Roman art. Most often, the pair are shown after the battle with the ketos where Perseus assists Andromeda down from the cliff, a scene which appears several times and with great regularity in painting.¹⁵⁹ The two are also shown flying through the air to Seriphos.¹⁶⁰ In neither scene does the reflective shield play a major, or even minor, role.

The mirrored reflection is the focus of one popular motif, scenes in which Perseus and Andromeda sit or stand by the sea. This version is unique to Roman art and appears primarily in paintings beginning in the first century BC.¹⁶¹ Like paintings of Narcissus, these scenes are almost entirely of the Fourth Style and dated to the middle of the first century AD. The motif is not repeated with enough frequency to draw conclusions about its physical location within the house. Rather than depict the mirroring shield as Perseus' tool for locating or beheading Medusa, this scene depicts an alternative catoptric device—water—and its ability to deflect the evil eye of Medusa. A drawing of a now destroyed painting from the Casa del Forno a Riverbero (**CIII.50**, *fig. 64*) portrays a characteristic composition. Perseus and Andromeda are shown sitting on the edge of the sea, which is indicated by a small pool of water in the foreground. The figures are alone, often perched on rocks and leaning towards one another to form a pyramid in the center

¹⁵⁹ Pompeii VII.Ins.Occ.16-10, MANN inv. 8997 (Hodske, *Mythologische Bildthemen*, cat. 557) and Pompeii VI.9.6-7, MANN inv. 8998 (Hodske, *Mythologische Bildthemen*, cat. 298); Rodenwalt suggests that this motif may originate in a painting by the fourth century BC Greek painter Nikias; Rocco, *LIMC*.VII, "Perseus," 347; Bernhard Schmalz, *Untersuchungen zu den attischen Marmorlekythen* (PhD Dissertation, University des Saarlandes, 1970), 204, 250 n. 2.

¹⁶⁰ For example a landscape panel from the villa at Boscotrecase, Metropolitan Museum 20.192.16, in Phillips, "Perseus and Andromeda," pl.1 fig.2. Phillips discusses all types of Perseus freeing Andromeda; See also Peter von Blanckenhagen, "The Paintings from Boscotrecase," in *6.Erg.Mdl* (Heidelberg, 1962), 9-11.

¹⁶¹ The motif appears in later gems and mosaics, for example, a sardonyx cameo in the Hermitage AB 1.10 (X 298), in Schefold and Jung, *Perseus, Bellerophon, Herakles, und Theseus*, 113 fig. 135.

of the composition. Here, as is typical, both Perseus and Andromeda are draped from the waist down in garments leaving their torsos nude. In this drawing, Perseus loosely holds his sword with his left hand, however, this is not usually shown in paintings and may be an addition by the nineteenth century artist.¹⁶² Perseus raises his arm above his head, dangling the Gorgoneion above the water so that a reflection is visible in the surface below.

Perseus and Andromeda are consistently shown seated in the same isolated setting near a water feature, their position and appearance the same in all paintings of this scene. Both figures are shown semi-nude with draping garments falling off of their hips to reveal fleshy bodies and soft skin. Perseus' skin is slightly darker than Andromeda's snowy white complexion, a feature that is especially emphasized in a painting from the Casa di Arianna (**CIII.46**, *fig. 65*) as well as a panel from the Casa dell'Efebo (**CIII.48**) where Perseus' glistening abdominal muscles are a display of the artist's mastery of shadow and highlight.¹⁶³ In the Casa di Arianna painting, Andromeda wears a bracelet, armband and diadem.¹⁶⁴

As is typical of Fourth Style Roman paintings, the scene is not tied to a specific narrative, it displays a quiet moment either before or after a major event. The figures are familiar, but their atypical setting and behavior emphasizes the creation and interaction with a reflection, in this case Medusa's face. A manmade mirror or shield never appears

¹⁶² C. Antonio Niccolini, G. Bechi, et. al., *Real Museo Borbonico: Museo nazionale di Napoli XII* (Napoli: Stamperia reale, 1839), pl. 49.

¹⁶³ For Richardson's discussion of the Dioscuri painter (**CIII.46**) and his stylized male bodies see *Figure Painters*, 110-112.

¹⁶⁴ Jewelry or other items of adornment are not consistently displayed in images of Andromeda, however, she is very often shown partially undressed with her long chiton falling from her shoulders and exposing her breast(s), for examples consult *LIMC.I*, "Andromeda I," 878-891. See two additional examples of this scene, **CIII.47** and **CIII.51**.

in this specific composition. Like the Narcissus scenes, the paintings of Perseus and Andromeda emphasize the act of creating and viewing a reflection and include the requisite viewer, a catoptric surface and the object of vision.

Unlike the Narcissus scenes, in which mirrored reflections consistently appeared, the depictions of Perseus do not always represent Medusa's reflection.¹⁶⁵ In several paintings, the lack of reflection may be due in part to the poor state of preservation. A poorly preserved panel from an unknown Pompeian house (**CIIL.52**, *fig. 66*), for instance, displays Perseus and Andromeda seated with the severed head, but the bottom portion of the painting is severely damaged. Drawings most often represent the reflection, for example, a nineteenth century drawing of the painting in the Casa del Forno a Riverbero, for example, records the Gorgon head reflected in the water.¹⁶⁶ These later drawings cannot be used as substantial proof, however, since illustrators may have been inclined to add the Gorgon for the sake of a more complete drawing. The painting from the Casa di Arianna, for example, is well preserved but shows no reflection in the water suggesting that this feature is not ubiquitous. In only one instance, a painting in the Casa di Principo di Napoli (**CIIL.49**, *fig. 67*), does the painting present a truly discernable reflection in its current state. This reflection is inverted and only partially resembles the Medusa-head with abstracted eyes, mouth, nose, and hair, perhaps the artist's attempt to represent water's inferior catoptric abilities.

While the paintings of Narcissus and Venus focused almost completely on a visible, naturalistic reflection as an indicator of reflectivity, the Perseus scenes utilize

¹⁶⁵ Mack, "Facing Down Medusa," 573-575.

¹⁶⁶ See **CIIL.50**; Even if the reflected face is not shown in its entirety these drawings at least hint at its presence: **CIIL.52** does not depict the entire reflection, but a small portion is visible in the bottom of the panel.

additional elements to imply a mirrored image. The reflected image is displayed for both of the figures to see, however, only Andromeda looks into the water. In the Casa di Arianna painting, Andromeda is seated in an upright position and turns her body towards Perseus who sits on her right. She stretches her left arm to the side in order to support her weight. Perseus reaches his arm upward to hold Medusa's severed head above the water, resulting in a presumed reflection in the water below. Andromeda looks down into the water, engrossed by the now innocuous reflection, while, Perseus looks towards his companion. Perseus' face is bright, his eyes are wide, and his expression is glowing as if he is anticipating her reaction or even attempting to impress his soon-to-be wife. Unlike the earlier Greek representations, the mirror is not used as a weapon or even referencing its past utility, but instead brings the two lovers together.

In none of the paintings does Perseus actually look down at the reflected Medusa head, however, in a slight variation found in the Casa di Principe di Napoli painting Perseus nor Andromeda looks down at the reflection. In this painting, Perseus sits on the left side of the painting, leaning on Andromeda who seems to push back on Perseus with her weight. Now, only Perseus is nude and his garment has completely fallen off his body exposing his flesh. Andromeda is covered with a long, gold tunic and a mantle, but does not wear any jewelry. Instead of looking at the water in this painting, Andromeda looks towards Perseus who returns her gaze. The Gorgon's reflection stares straight out from the water, perfectly poised for a viewer—internal or external—to see.

Thetis and Achilles' Shield

Perhaps the clearest depiction of a reflected image is also the most unusual. A painting of Thetis from the Casa di Paccius Alexander (CIII.53, fig. 23) presents the famous nymph and mother of Achilles in Hephaestus's forge where she is procuring armor for her son. The scene takes place indoors and the figures seem to sit on a stage. A set of windows appear in the background, which is separated from the narrative by a column and draped curtain. Thetis sits on the right, resting her feet on an ornamental stool. She is draped in a gauzy blue garment, which falls off of her right shoulder. Her attendant, most likely a nymph, sits or stands behind her. Hephaestus sits opposite Thetis, his dark muscular form partially clad in a purple garment. Achilles' armor lays on the ground; his greaves and breastplate in the center of the composition while on the left, a Cyclops finishes his helmet. A second cyclops stands in the center of the composition holding the oversized shield, in which is visible Thetis' reflection. This is the only known depiction in Roman wall painting of Achilles' shield acting as an optical mirror. It is not only unusual for the shield to reflect an image, but also strange that Thetis should look at this image with virtually no reaction.¹⁶⁷

Although Achilles' shield does not typically display catoptric properties, it is no ordinary object and is known for its special surface, most notably as the *imago mundi*.¹⁶⁸ The shield's unusual aspects are displayed in a other contexts, noticeably the episode of

¹⁶⁷ Martin Robertson describes this scene in the following way, "The tragic mother, trying to arm her son against a fate which she in fact knows he cannot escape, should not, one feels, sit looking at her own reflection in the shield, or even just admiring its workmanship." *A History of Greek Art* (Cambridge University Press, 1975), 583-584.

¹⁶⁸ The shield as an allegory for the world originates in the *Iliad*, but continues throughout later accounts Hom., *Il.* 18.478-608.

Achille's exposure on Skyros.¹⁶⁹ This story appears in two paintings, one from the Casa di Achilles (CIL.13, fig. 68) and a second from the Casa dei Dioscuri (CIL.14, fig. 69).¹⁷⁰ Although not completely identical, these panels are formulaic in their representations: both have a crowded composition of moving figures focused on the group in the central foreground. Achilles stands in the center, masquerading as a woman in a chiton. He shifts his weight to the right in an attempt to grab the sword and shield placed in the foreground. Having recognized Achilles, Achaean and Odysseus seize his right arm. Achaean reaches around from behind while Odysseus, wearing a cap and bearing a spear, lunges to the center from the panel's right side. The captured Achilles glances to the left where Deidamia stands with her back to the audience, a garment falling from her waist to reveal her nude back, torso and buttocks. In both paintings, Achilles touches his shield that rests next to his feet.

Achilles' shield in this episode is not blank, but also does not display a catoptric reflection. The lack of catoptric mirroring does not appear to be due to the shields' physical properties. In the Casa dei Dioscuri, for example, light shines off of the shield's rim emphasizing its polished surface. Despite this, both surfaces display a rough outline of two small figures: the centaur Chiron and Achilles himself.¹⁷¹ Trimble suggests that the painted emblem alludes to the main scene through its thematic connotation and Taylor argues that a viewer would have been prompted to see this shield as a mirror, its

¹⁶⁹ Statius' first century version from the *Achilleid*.1.852-871.

¹⁷⁰ There is also a mosaic of this subject found in the Casa di Apollo (Pompeii VI.7.23) *PPM.V*, 507-508 no. 64-65; For more discussion of the theme see Robertson, *History of Greek Art*, 583-584; Trimble, "Gender, and Social Structure," 230-245; Taylor, *Moral Mirror*, 146-149.

¹⁷¹ Robertson, *Greek Art*, 583-584; Balensiefen, *Spiegelbildes*, 200-201.

surface reflecting an image of the true, masculine Achilles.¹⁷² While the idea of a polished metal shield could be a symbol of potential reflections and their ability to clarify reality, the visual evidence does not support this conclusion. Emblems appear elsewhere on shields and do not seem to be unique to Achilles' special shield. The megalographic friezes from Boscoreale, for example, depict a large unidentified woman holding a metallic, possibly bronze shield.¹⁷³ On its surface appears a small figure, variously identified as Achilles, a Hellenistic ruler, or a mantic image foretelling the future.¹⁷⁴ No matter what this emblem actually represents, it does not mirror any person or object in the painting. Like the depictions of Chiron and Achilles in the paintings from Pompeii, this figure is superimposed on the shield, is improperly scaled, and has no physical referent. Furthermore, as the images of other mirrors attest, painted reflections adhere to catoptric laws and are not simply placeholders or metaphorical references.

The painting in the Casa di Paccia Alessandro is unique in its portrayal of a catoptric shield.¹⁷⁵ Although the depiction of Thetis in Hephaestus's forge is not specific to wall painting or the Roman period, its display of catoptric properties is unparalleled in

¹⁷² Trimble, "Gender and Social Structure," 230-245; Taylor, *Moral Mirror*, 149-150.

¹⁷³ The frieze receives full treatment from H.G. Beyen, *Pompeianische Wanddekoration*, 212ff; Phyllis Williams Lehmann, *Roman Wall Paintings from Boscoreale in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Monographs of Archaeology and Fine Arts, V* (Cambridge, MA: Archaeological Institute of America, 1953), 31, 72 suggests the painting represents Aphrodite and Adonis; Martin Robertson, "The Boscoreale Figure Paintings," *JRS* 45 (1955): 58-67.

¹⁷⁴ Balensiefen *Spiegelbildes*, 200-201; R.R.R. Smith, "Spear-Won Land at Boscoreale: On the Royal Paintings of a Roman Villa," *JRA* 7 (1994): 100-128 consider this a mantic shield; Bettina Bergmann, *Roman frescoes from Boscoreale: the villa of Publius Fannius Synisotor in Reality and Virtual Reality*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010), 13-17 offers the most recent reconstruction of the frescoes.

¹⁷⁵ In addition to the six extant examples, there are two documented, lost paintings in Pompeii from the House of Quadriga, VII.2.25 and the House of Epidius Sabinus, IX.1.22, see Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 173.

Roman treatment of the subject.¹⁷⁶ As one of the most famous intervening mothers in history, Thetis is frequently portrayed in Roman and Greek art where she is shown as a bride during her marriage to the mortal Peleus or with her son Achilles, especially during the years 570 to 450 BC.¹⁷⁷ In scenes where Thetis is shown visiting Hephaestus's forge, the basic composition is standard as seen in a carnelian intaglio from the first century BC where the two figures sit facing one another with the shield in the center.¹⁷⁸ Here, Thetis holds the shield while Hephaestus continues to work on its detail, but it is more common for Hephaestus to hold up the finished shield towards Thetis as in a small, first century BC glass cameo.¹⁷⁹

Eight known wall paintings depict the standardized motif of Thetis in Hephaestus' forge. Only five of these panels survive including the former painting from the Casa di Paccius Alessandro.¹⁸⁰ The remaining panels from the Casa di Achille (**CIII.54**), Casa di Sirico (**CIII.55**), Casa degli Amorini Dorati (**CIII.57**), and Casa di Meleagro (**CIII.58**) exhibit several minor differences from the earlier painting. Most noticeably the paintings lack the complex, almost theatrical setting that is established by the background column and illusionistic windows in the former painting. Instead, the four remaining examples are decidedly simpler focusing on the key, protagonist figures: Thetis and Hephaestus.

¹⁷⁶ F. Brommer, *Hephaistos. Der Schmiedergott in der antiken Kunst* (Mainz: Ph. Von Zabern, 1978).

¹⁷⁷ *LIMC*.VIII, "Thetis," no. 13; Steven Lowenstam, "The Arming of Achilleus on Early Greek Vases," *CIAnt* 12 (1993): 199-218; Judith M. Barringer, *Divine Escorts: Nereids in Archaic and classical Greek Art* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1994), 44-50.

¹⁷⁸ First century BC, carnelian intaglio in Vienna Kunsthistorische Museum IX B679 in *LIMC*.VIII, "Thetis," 35.

¹⁷⁹ Glass Cameo in Zürich Kunsthandel, in *LIMC*.VIII, "Thetis," no. 34; Also *LIMC*.VIII, "Hephaestus," no. 33; see a later example, S. Lewis, "A Coptic Representation of Thetis at the Forge of Hephaistos." *AJA* 77 (1973): 309-318.

¹⁸⁰ For the Casa di Meleagro (VI.9.2.13) see *PPM*.V, 786 no. 131 and for the Casa degli Amorini Dorati (VI.16.7) see *PPM* IV.675, no. 39.

The paintings are not identical, but do follow the same basic pattern. Thetis sits in a throne to the right of the composition, her milky white skin partially draped with a gauzy white garment. Unlike the Alessandro painting where Hephaestus sits admiring his shield, in these examples the god stands in a slightly contrappasto stance on the left side of the panel. Hephaestus's dark, shiny body is only covered by a loin cloth at the torso. Several other attributes clutter the scene: Hephaestus holds a hammer in his right hand and Achilles' greaves and breastplate lay on the ground.¹⁸¹ Whereas a Cyclops held the shield for Thetis' viewing pleasure in the former painting, in these examples it rests on a stand while Hephaestus steadies it in place and positions it towards Thetis. Rather than rest her chin on her hand, she lifts her right hand either in a gesture of exclamation or to her mouth in contemplation.¹⁸²

A major distinction between the four paintings above and the Casa di Paccius Alessandro painting is the shield. The Alessandro panel depicts a clear and relatively naturalistic image of Thetis who sits across from the metal surface: her face, shoulders, and upper body visible. The mirrored image shows a pink-skinned woman resting her face on her arm while simultaneously supporting her elbow with her opposite hand. Thetis' features are also depicted including her brown hair, delicate eyes, and rosy cheeks. Even her blue garment is carefully replicated in the mirrored surface. The surface not only mirrors Thetis to herself it also reflects an image of the nymph who sits behind her. She clearly looks into the mirroring shield, but her face and gestures do not betray any reaction to what she sees. She does not raise her hand and is visibly unshaken, unsurprised, and completely nonreactive to her mirrored reflection. In contrast, the other

¹⁸¹ For *Hephaestus*'s iconography, see Erika Simon, "*Hephaestus*," *LIMC*.VIII, 292-293.

¹⁸² For similarly expressive gestures by nymphs and background, female observers see Chapter 2, 113-114.

four paintings represent more standardized imagery on the shield's surface, what appears to be a serpent in the center surrounded by zodiac symbols in the border, a *clipeus caelestis* or symbol of the cosmos.¹⁸³ These decorative patterns explains Thetis' surprised reaction—she sees the symbols of fate. In these examples, the shield is not an optical tool or surface—it does not reflect the object or individual in front of it—but instead performs an allegorical purpose. The shiny mirroring shield in the Casa di Paccius Alessandro, therefore, is a unique, and also intentional, variation that highlights the shield's catoptric abilities.

Viewing Mirrors: Reflecting Narcissus

The survey of visual evidence shows the continued and consistent depiction of mirrors and their resulting reflections amongst mythological wall paintings, but does not explain how they might be understood by their ancient viewers. The painting of Narcissus with which the chapter began provides a case study with which to understand how these surfaces and reflections may have created meaning for their ancient viewers. The composition presents Narcissus, a figure familiar from a narrative context, and depicts what seems to be a single moment from the Ovidian tale. Taylor, and others, would understand the pictorial mirror to symbolize the painting's thematic emphasis on transformation, a notion that reads the mirrors not as passive tools, but as active metaphorical devices.¹⁸⁴ Foremost among the forms of transformation is the process of

¹⁸³ On Roman cosmological symbols and the shield see H.P. L'Orange, *Studies on the Iconography of Cosmic Kingship in the Ancient World* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1953), 90-102; Otto Brendel, "The Shield of Achilles," in *The Visible Idea: Interpretations of Classical Art* (Washington DC, 1980), 67-74; Hardie, "Imago mundi," 11-31.

¹⁸⁴ Taylor, *Moral Mirror*, 197.

individual, self-transformation through self-mirroring in which ‘reflection’ takes on a modern, cognitive meaning.¹⁸⁵ The painting does not focus on Narcissus’ visual—or cognitive—engagement with himself, but rather on the catoptric mirror and its reflected image. Narcissus does not look at the mirror, but the reflective surface is the focus of the scene. A closer analysis of paintings that depict this scene within the broader visual tradition of reflection, however, demonstrates that the frescoes do more than illustrate the Narcissan textual tradition. In fact, the visual evidence departs in subtle, but significant ways from the accounts that focus on mirroring or self-transformation because Narcissus is not absorbed in his reflection. To understand the pictorial mirror and its reflection in the mythological paintings requires a shift in emphasis away from Narcissus’ actions and towards the mirror, and more importantly, the reflection it produced.

Reflections, as the bi-products of mirrors, are much less frequently represented in visual evidence than the surfaces that create them. Although reflectivity was certainly understood, or at least theorized, in ancient Rome it seems to be depicted only in limited instances, most often those associated with the four subjects under discussion, where reflections are almost always depicted.¹⁸⁶ Reflections are not ubiquitous amidst the visual traditions of each myth, but are among the majority in the painted evidence.

Representations of Narcissus in other media, for example, do not always or even mostly depict a reflection in the water. Instead, the scenes emphasize the youth’s gaze *toward* the watery pool that fulfills his fate. Even more extreme is the instance of Thetis, whose

¹⁸⁵ The notion of the self-mirroring is based on the modern understanding of reflection in the cognitive sense which builds on John Locke’s definition of the observer-model, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, 2.1.25; See also W. McCarty, “Shape of the Mirror,” 166; For a counter discussion cf. Bartsch, *Mirror of the Self*, 41-56.

¹⁸⁶ See Appendix I, charts 3, 4; one additional example that comes to mind is Hermaphroditus, who is sometimes shown with a mirror, **CHL.26**, **CHL.59**.

reflection appears in only one known example, the painting from the Casa di Paccius Alessandro which has no known precedent. The reflections that appear on the surfaces of painted mirrors that occur in the mythological wall paintings, therefore, stray from the established visual tradition and mark the mirrors as distinct. The surfaces are not simply symbolic, representing ideas or concepts relevant to the myth, but are reflective, catoptric objects that demonstrate reflective properties.

The catoptric mirror does not simply symbolize an inner process, but transmits other physical images onto its surface: Venus' tiny face appears in her hand mirror, Narcissus' reflection shimmers in the water, the Gorgon stares out from the sea, and Thetis' form shines off of Achilles' shield. Not only are reflected images present, but they emphasize the pictorial mirror's catoptric properties. Mirrors were valued for their specular honesty and believed to present the most accurate and truthful verisimilitude. The images in mirrors were specifically believed to not be distorted, in fact, mirrors were considered to be the truest reporters of images even above painters, sculptors, or any other artisan. Mirrored images were so far superior to any other form of representation that Apuleius wrote they, "outstrip the crafts in portraying a likeness."¹⁸⁷ According to Euclid, Ptolemy and later iterations, catoptric surfaces never changed an image's scale nor did they distort the original image, they simply displayed an object's appearance with honesty.¹⁸⁸ Mirrors, therefore, were inherently different from paintings or other artifacts in that they did not generate new images, but instead reported images that were already present.

¹⁸⁷ Ap., *Apol.* 14.8, transl. Bartsch, *Mirror of the Self*, 35.

¹⁸⁸ Vitruvius, *De arch.* 7.3.9; Apuleius *Apol.* 14.8; Lucian *Hist. conscr.* 51 translation by Bartsch, *Mirror of the Self*, 36.

Mirrors did not create images, but only displayed the likeness of another object. Seneca reports that mirrors played a passive role in the formation of reflections: viewers and their outwardly directed visual rays were the active and necessary agents of vision while the mirror only deflected the rays back to the eye.¹⁸⁹ Reflected images were not real, but came into being when rays or particles from the eye collided with an object and were reflected back to the eye, meaning that any reflection, was an active process and absolutely required a viewer.¹⁹⁰ As Ptolemy emphasizes, the image does not appear *on* the mirror, but is seen *by* the viewer, or as Seneca states more simply, “what is shown by the mirror isn’t there.”¹⁹¹ Decidedly different than an active, metaphorical mirror that transforms the viewer, the ancient mirror’s efficacy relied on the viewing subject.¹⁹² Without a viewer present, as Gerard Simon explains “the mirror reflects nothing that bears a relation to visibility.”¹⁹³ In other words, mirrors cannot function without an outside audience, or to think about it in terms of the visual evidence, a visible reflection requires or at least imagines a viewer.

The visual evidence shares an understanding of mirrors as physical objects on whose surface images are displayed according to the laws of catoptrics. The consistent representation of naturalistic reflections suggests that painters went to great pains to emphasize the painted mirrors’ catoptric properties, particularly their superior

¹⁸⁹ Sen., *QNat.* I.5.1.

¹⁹⁰ Smith, *Ptolemy*, 79.

¹⁹¹ Sen., *QNat.* 1.15.7.

¹⁹² For discussion of the mirror as a passive tool see Jónsson, *Le miroir*, 53; in its ancient context see Bartsch, *Mirror of the Self*, 36-37.

¹⁹³ Ptolemy, *Optics* 3.3, in Smith, *Ptolemy*, 83; Gerard Simon, “Behind the Mirror,” *Graduate Faculty Philosophy Journal* 12 (1987): n. 319-320.

representational ability, and in order to imbue the objects with function rather than merely a metaphoric role. If reflections were the result of a viewing subject then the pictorial mirrors and reflected images are visual cues, anticipating a viewer. Uniquely, a significant number of the paintings have no internal viewer, or, the painted figure does not look at the reflection.¹⁹⁴ Narcissus, for example, in the Casa dell'Argenteria panel does not look at his reflection, yet it is clearly rendered in the watery pool.

With no internal viewer to produce this reflection, the evidence suggests an intentional decision on the part of the artist to invoke another viewer: the external audience. Just as the painter conveniently positioned the image at the optimal vantage point for the external audience—a skewed perspective—the choice to represent this reflection is an intentional invitation or act of instruction.¹⁹⁵ These painted mirrors, like many formal elements, actively guide the viewing process and suggest one way in which the painter intended the viewer to interact with the scene. The painted mirrors are not only meant for the internal viewer, but also for the external audience.

Paintings of Narcissus have often been understood to involve the external viewer, relying only on the youth's visual behavior. Jaś Elsner has interpreted Narcissus' outward engagement with the external viewer as an absorption with the audience, making a new Narcissus of the viewer.¹⁹⁶ While the naturalistic image and outward looking Narcissus triangulate the image, forcing the viewer into the visual dialogue, I would suggest that the situation is not so clear, given Narcissus' varied visual behavior. Instead,

¹⁹⁴ See Appendix I, charts 5, 6.

¹⁹⁵ See Taylor's ideas about the color of the water, its transparency, and its relationship with the viewer in relation to Ovid's text in *Moral Mirror*,

¹⁹⁶ Elsner, "Erotics of the Gaze," 101-105.

Narcissus does not look down at his reflection and also does not stare out at the audience. He turns his head and body towards the water while simultaneously directing his eyes slyly outward, as if only sneaking a look at those who look at him. He does not blatantly encounter the external viewer and also is not transfixed by his own reflection, but instead displays a flexible relationship with the external audience and the painting. Here, the image does not focus on Narcissus' visual interaction with any one thing (reflection or audience) instead taking an intentionally ambiguous stance. The viewer does not enter the painting through Narcissus' outward and open gaze, but instead through the reflected image (of Narcissus). Whether or not Narcissus looks at his reflection, the image is always present because "the pool paints Narcissus." With their consistent representation and emphasis on catoptric realism, the images demonstrate an attempt to convince the viewer of this painted reflection's validity. When Philostratus says that "the pool paints Narcissus," he finishes his statement by explaining that, "the painting represents both the pool and the whole story of Narcissus" suggesting that the pool—i.e., the mirror—is a necessary element to the story because of the image it produces.¹⁹⁷

By shifting the emphasis from Narcissus' behavior towards the mirror and its reflected image as they appear in the paintings it becomes evident that these images are not simply illustrations of mythological stories. The catoptric mirrors and their reflections that appear in the wall paintings are recognizable, visual cues that encourage and even require participation from the external viewer. As artifacts of daily life, mirrors carried meaning and could be understood for their ability to create accurate images. Like Narcissus' reflective pool, Venus' mirror, Perseus' sea, and Achille's shield all demonstrate catoptric properties. Pictorial mirrors can be understood within their ancient

¹⁹⁷ Phil., *Imag.* 1.23

context—as catoptric surfaces. With this realization, however, the mirror also helps perform a transformation. By shifting emphasis to the surface’s physical properties and its resulting reflections, the image transforms the external viewer from audience to participant. The mirror becomes more than a physical tool of everyday life and in this case does participate in “psychological phenomena.”

Conclusions

This chapter has examined a group of paintings that represent mirrors and their reflected images. Mirrors and their reflections occur in four different mythological contexts and with remarkable visual consistency. The repeated and frequent appearance of mirrors and their reflections in paintings is not an accident, nor was it necessarily seen and understood by the ancient viewer in the same way. At the most basic, mirrors and their reflected images are important compositional elements—guiding and directing a scene. A reflection in a mirror or other surface signals that something is interesting, worthwhile and important, and, like other internal viewers, focalizes the composition. Viewers, both painted and real, are drawn to a reflection as the center-point in a composition. Just as Narcissus is caught by his own reflection or Thetis entranced by the scene on Achilles’ shield, so too would Roman viewers have been entranced by the visual nexus of a reflection, and the painted gazes directed toward it. Mirrors can also be understood as part of individual mythological scenes, contributing to the action or eventual outcome. The tales of Narcissus and Perseus, for example, both reference mirrors as an object that protects and harms with its reflective properties. For Perseus the water simultaneously reflects and *deflects* Medusa’s gaze. For Narcissus it is,

unknowingly, a tool for his eventual demise. This aspect of the mirror is what Taylor refers to as metaphorical or “an agent in a *phenomenon*.”¹⁹⁸

Painted mirrors are not only symbolic, iconographic elements, but also catoptric devices that invoke the very real process of reflection. The most basic laws of catoptrics state that reflection requires three conditions: an active viewing agent, an object of vision, and a reflective surface. Painted mirrors and reflective acts adhered to these rules so that surfaces were not only symbolic, but also suggestive of actual mirrors. Although the bulk of material and literary evidence indicates that manmade mirrors were the primary tool used to create reflections, the painted evidence also depicts water and metallic shields as efficient catoptric devices. Every scene represents its own, unique object of vision, however, all result in a realistic image. This emphasis on accuracy and specular honesty characterizes the surfaces as true catoptric devices. Finally, the scenes all utilize the mirrors and reflections as a tool to involve the external audience. Reflection is unique among ways of seeing in that it requires an external, third party. Even as ancient theory conceived of a passive mirror, the reflective surface was still necessary to redirect rays. The visual evidence attests to the interest in these objects and their visual properties and also demonstrates the way in which mirrors could be made active. Although still passively deflecting rays within the scene, the painted mirrors transform the viewer occupying a role as both catoptric object and metaphoric symbol.

¹⁹⁸ Taylor, *Moral Mirror*, 8.

IV

VISION AND LOVE IN MYTHOLOGICAL LOVE SCENES

Roman art is replete with images of what have often been termed ‘erotic art’. Representations of sexual intercourse, naked couples, apotropaic phalluses, and other sex acts adorn walls, silver vessels, jewelry, and countless other forms of material evidence.¹ What these items share is an emphasis on the physical aspects of love and sexual intercourse. But for Romans of the first century AD, love, desire, and pleasure were not limited to physical interaction. Desire and pleasure were intricately bound with the eye and the process of looking and gazing, both on the part of the lover and the beloved. Inheritors of the Greek science and philosophy of eros and the eye, the Romans further theorized the relationship between the eye, love, and a pleasurable response.² In paintings from the first century AD, couples and lovers not only embrace, gesture or otherwise signal an amatory relationship, but also display noticeable visual interaction. Not only physical, but also visual contact classifies the evidence as ‘erotic.’ Visual interaction between figures organize the composition and direct the narrative, however, in certain instances they also acts as a pictorial strategy for illustrating amatory relationships. Given the cultural attitudes surrounding sight and love, Roman audiences certainly recognized the evocative implications of these visual interactions and understood the lovers’ gaze as a signal of eroticized desire and pleasure.

¹ For a discussion of the apotropaic phallus see Clarke, *Looking at Lovemaking*, 133-136; Kellum, “Phallus as Signifier,” 170-174; Aileen Ajootian, “The Only Happy Couple: Hermaphrodites and Gender,” in *Naked Truths: Women, Sexuality, and Gender in Classical Art and Archaeology* (1997), 220-242.

² Greek science and philosophy on eros Plato *Phdr.* 250d-251c articulates a relationship between seeing and loving in which a lover seeks to be completed by looking into the eye/soul of his beloved.

Scholars of ancient art have noticed the visual interaction between these painted lovers as well as its potential implications for expressing relationships between figures. The predominant body of criticism understands representations such as these as part of the Roman culture of power. In a society where male equaled active penetrator and female equaled passive penetrated, erotic representations have been considered a means of expressing power through gender.³ Several interpretations, foremost amongst them a reading of mythological paintings by David Fredrick, offer interpretive models of mythological art based firmly in modern, feminist film theory.⁴ This specific, modern notion of the gaze, Fredrick argues, “provides some useful outlines” for the way in which the paintings incited the scopophilic gaze in its male viewers and subsequently offered pleasure through visual power. As articulated originally by Laura Mulvey, viewers receive pleasure when they are protected from the possibility of losing power and/or status.⁵ In Roman society that separated gender and hierarchy, this model provides just one means of approaching erotic representations.

The notion of an erotic gaze and its manifestation in pictorial art is not a new concept particularly in more modern criticism, but as James Elkins warns “theories of the

³ Discussions of gender and power in the Roman world go far beyond art as Marilyn Skinner succinctly surmises, “Roman literary discourse is obsessed with literal or symbolic transactions between sexual dominance and other modes of dominance, especially those involving wealth and patronage,” in “The Dynamics of Catullan Obscenity,” *Syllecta Classica* 3 (1991): 5; See also Richlin, “Reading Ovid’s Rapes,” 158-179; and Barton, *The Sorrows of the Ancient Romans*, 46.

⁴ Fredrick, “Erotic Painting and Visual Pleasure,” 269; See also Ann Koloski-Ostrow, “Violent Stages in Two Pompeian Houses: Imperial Taste, Aristocratic Response, and Messages of Male Control,” in *Naked Truths: Women, sexuality, and gender in classical art and archaeology*, ed. A. Koloski-Ostrow and C. Lyons, (New York: Routledge, 1997), 243-266.

⁵ Laura Mulvey, “Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema,” in *Visual and Other Pleasures* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989); for film theory in classics more widely see Diana Robin, “Film Theory and the Gendered Voice in Seneca,” in *Feminist Theory and the Classics*, ed. Nancy Rabinowitz and Amy Richlin, (New York: Routledge, 1993), 102-21.

gaze are demonstrably both modern and Western, so its extension to non-Western and pre-modern work should be viewed with circumspection.”⁶ But vision and love were also related in the ancient world. The connection between eros and the eye, desire and vision, physical pleasure and seeing, was a “widespread element of ancient cultural attitudes toward sight,”⁷ but was based in contemporary scientific theory. Scholars such as Shadi Bartsch and Simon Goldhill have shown the ways in which eros, the eye, and the beloved were thought to be intricately connected in a physical exchange of particles through a process that evoked a pleasurable response in the viewer/lover.⁸ The power of vision remains a central concept, but is no longer tied strictly to gender, separation, or violence. Instead, the eye and physical particles (*simulacra*) explain the effects of desire and the connection between lovers.

Despite the scholarly notice that Roman scientific theories of the first centuries AD recognized vision as the path to sexual pleasure and ultimately love, analyses of love scenes and other erotic art remain primarily tied to questions of sexuality and gender. Acknowledging the inherent emphasis on the visual component of love and desire in the paintings, I seek to parse the pictorial language, asking what elements in the painting actively eroticize or de-eroticize the gaze, and how, if at all, they are related to one another. I focus on the paintings of mythological love scenes that Paul Zanker calls

⁶ James Elkins, *The Object Stares Back: On the Nature of Seeing* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1996), 26.

⁷ Bartsch, *Mirror of the Self*, 67.

⁸ Bartsch, *Mirror of the Self*; Goldhill explores the intersection between love and scientific theory, especially in the work of second and third century AD writers in “Refracting Classical Vision: Changing Cultures of Viewing,” in *Vision in Context: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives on Sight*, ed. Martin Jay and Teresa Brennan, (New York: Routledge, 1996), 15-28 and “The Erotic Experience of Looking: Cultural Conflict and the Gaze in Empire Culture,” in *The Sleep of Reason: Erotic Experience and Sexual Ethics in Ancient Greece and Rome*, ed. Martha Nussbaum and Juha Sihvola, (University of Chicago Press, 2002), 374-399.

“romantic idylls,” or mythological pairs whose narratives and contexts are firmly based in contemporary literature, most often poetry.⁹ These scenes have previously been studied within their mythological context but only rarely as part of the corpus of erotic art or the cultural understanding of desire and pleasure. This chapter takes a new approach to the material, and one that is less concerned with the relationship to mythological or literary sources than the “visual relationship that unites the figures within the iconic narrative.”¹⁰

As the prior chapters have attested, Roman culture was preoccupied with vision and viewing in its various forms. The goal of this chapter is not to deconstruct the Roman conception of desire, eros, or ‘the gaze’, but to explore the autonomous visual language that is used in paintings and establish a vocabulary of this model of viewing.¹¹ As the review of the paintings makes clear, Roman image makers actively emphasized the connection between vision and desire. By interrogating the self-conscious repetition of visual interaction in a number of mythological scenes, I suggest its role in both captivating, and subsequently eroticizing, the internal viewer.

⁹ Paul Zanker, “Mythenbilder im Haus.” *Proceedings of the XVth International Congress of Classical Archaeology Amsterdam July 12-17, 1998*, (Amsterdam, 1998), 40-48.

¹⁰ Frontisi-Ducroux, “Eros, Desire, and the Gaze,” 82.

¹¹ For scholarship on the Roman understanding of desire in particular, female, see Sandra Joshel, “Female Desire and the Discourse of Empire: Tacitus’s Messalina,” in *Roman Sexualities*, (Princeton University Press, 1997), 50-82; for eros see an essay by David Konstan, “Enacting Eros,” in *The Sleep of Reason: Erotic Experience and Sexual Ethics in Ancient Greece and Rome*, edited by Martha Nussbaum and Juha Sihvola, (University of Chicago Press, 2002), 354-373; for the Roman gaze see Fredrick, *The Roman Gaze*.

‘Erotic’ Imagery: Representing Pleasure, Desire, and Love

To study issues of love, desire, or sex involves terminology and concepts that lack clear scholarly consensus, particularly among historians of ancient art. Admittedly problematic the term, ‘erotic art’ has been traditionally reserved for material that focuses on representations of sexual acts between mortals expressed in physical terms. As John Clarke explains, the word erotic suggests sexual arousal as the intent.¹² Although the images of lovers could certainly have stimulated some Roman viewers (as well as incited other reactions), such a conclusion is not the focus of my discussion. Therefore, when I use the term ‘erotic art’ I refer to the visual representations of sexual interaction, physical or otherwise. In his 1970 essay, Otto Brendel defines erotic art as a “self-consciously mundane style of representing sexual acts” between “real, not mythical, people.”¹³ But this definition remains too narrow. As the following sections demonstrate, ancient notions of what constitutes erotic, arousal, or pleasure extend far beyond physical contact and sexual acts.

Even more problematic than ‘erotic’ is the term ‘sexuality.’ Much recent scholarship, including Clarke’s work, has focused on understanding sexual behavior and identity in the ancient world.¹⁴ Building on Michel Foucault’s argument that sexuality (i.e., sexual identity) did not exist in the ancient world, the general scholarly consensus

¹² Clarke, *Looking at Lovemaking*, 12-13.

¹³ Otto Brendel, “Scope and Temperament of Erotic Art in the Greco-Roman World,” in *Studies in Erotic Art*, ed. T. Bowie and C. Christenson, (New York: Basic Books, 1970), 5, 19.

¹⁴ The primary publications include: Kenneth Dover, *Greek Homosexuality* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1978); Craig Williams, *Roman Homosexuality: Ideologies of Masculinity in Classical Antiquity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999); David, J. Halperin, J. Winkler, and Froma Zeitlin, eds. *Before Sexuality: The Construction of Erotic Experience in the Ancient Greek World* (Princeton University Press, 1990); for more summary of the field see Kampen’s introduction in, *Sexuality in Ancient Art* with bibliography; and Judith Hallett and Marilyn Skinner, *Roman Sexualities* (Princeton University Press, 1997); for Etruscan sexuality consult Larissa Bonfante, “Etruscan Sexuality and Funerary Art,” in *Sexuality in Ancient Art*, ed. Natalie Kampen (Cambridge University Press, 1997), 155-169.

contends that sexual acts were tied to gender with male equaling penetrating phallus and female equaling penetrated void.¹⁵ Accordingly, sexual behavior did not define individual identity so that terms such ‘bisexual,’ ‘homosexual’ and ‘heterosexual’ with their modern implications of behavioral identity, are anachronistic.¹⁶ To be especially careful, Clarke adopts the terms male-male, male-female, female-female to describe pairings of couples in any erotic scenes.¹⁷ In this section, I use the term ‘sexuality’ to describe the cultural and societal boundaries that govern sexual behavior and practice.

With the increase in figurative, mythological wall paintings in the first century AD came an increase in scenes representing well known love stories. These scenes come from familiar narratives and usually depict two lovers engaged in a visual act. Intimate scenes are not unusual for Roman painting or visual art in general, but these mythological love scenes are unique with their emphasis on looking rather than touching. Perhaps because of this difference, mythological love scenes are not often studied alongside the body of imagery that is termed ‘erotic art’ and therefore do not contribute to the study of sexuality in the ancient world.

¹⁵ Michel Foucault’s historical study of sexuality, *The History of Sexuality*, II-III (New York: Vintage Books, 1986); for a counter to this see John Boswell, “Concepts, Experience, and Sexuality,” *Differences* 2.1 (1990): 67-87; Richlin’s critique of Foucault, “Foucault’s History of Sexuality: A Useful Theory for Women?” in *Rethinking Sexuality: Foucault and Classical Antiquity*, ed. H.J. Larmour, P.A. Miller, and C. Platter (Princeton University Press, 1998), 138-80; see also Eva Keuls’ discussion of the “phallocracy” in ancient Athens in *The Reign of the Phallus: Sexual Politics in Ancient Athenas* (University of California Press, 1993).

¹⁶ See Clarke, *Looking at Lovemaking*, 19-25; for a counter-argument to Clarke see Amy Richlin, “Not before homosexuality: The Materiality of the Cinaedus and the Roman Law Against Love Between Men,” *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 3.4 (1993): 523-573;

¹⁷ Clarke, *Looking at Lovemaking*, 19-20; see also a discussion of bisexuality in Luc Brisson, *Sexual Ambivalence; Androgyny and Hermaphroditism in Graeco-Roman Antiquity* (Joan Palevsky Imprint in Classical Literature, 2002).

Depictions of Sex

In Roman imagery, the relationship between lovers and couples is usually expressed with physical interaction. Scenes of sexual pursuit and engagement leave little to the imagination with their displays of mostly male-female couples engaged in sexual acts.¹⁸ “Fancy sex pictures” seem to have been a standardized status symbol in elite houses.¹⁹ Ovid famously describes *pinacothecae* or picture galleries that depict various sex acts and surviving paintings confirm the vivid nature of the representations.²⁰ Whether in galleries or as single panels, these sex scenes display couples in various states of undress engaged in copulation and in different sexual positions. Most often these couples appear to be mortals who recline on a couch or bed that is located in a bedroom or other private setting. In some instances, the pairs may be a bride and groom where the woman wears jewelry, is partially covered by an elaborate garment and veil, and displays unrestrained gestures and emotions as she embraces her partner, grasps his hand, or even kisses his face.²¹ Her male partner or husband is less expressive in his actions and facial

¹⁸ This is in contrast to Greek erotic paintings, for example on vases, which display both male-female and male-male scenes, see M.F. Kilmer, *Greek Erotica on Attic Red Figure Vases* (London: Duckworth, 1993); H.A. Shapiro, “Eros in Love: Pederasty and Pornography in Greece,” in *Pornography and Representation in Greece and Rome*, ed. Amy Richlin (Oxford University Press, 1992), 53-72; For a discussion of male-male representations in Roman art see John Clarke, “The Warren Cup and the Contexts for Representations of Male-to-Male Lovemaking in Augustan and early Julio-Claudian Art,” *ArtBull* 75.2 (1993): 274-294.

¹⁹ John Clarke, *Roman Sex: 100 B.C. to A.D. 250* (New York: Harry Abrams, 2003) refers to the sex scenes in elite homes.

²⁰ Ov., *Tr.* 2.521-528; Clarke, *Roman Sex*, 28-37; on *pinacothecae* see Bergmann, “Greek Masterpieces and Roman Recreative Fictions,” 98-106.

²¹ See, for instance, the Villa della Farnesina cubiculum D paintings, Irene Bragantini and Mariette de Vos, eds. *Museo Nazionale Romano: Le Pitture: Le decorazioni della villa romana della Farnesina*. vol. II.1 (Roma: De Luca, 1992), 19; in the case of the Farnesina painting, the woman wears a yellow veil over her head, which is characteristic of the flammeum worn by Roman brides, see Laetitia La Follette, “The Costume of the Roman Bride,” in *The World of Roman Costume*, ed. Judith Sebesta and Larissa Bonfante (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2001), 54-55.

expressions, but seems to command the action with his rigid posture.²² Interestingly, the paintings often do not depict sexual intercourse, but instead show intimate moments of contemplation before or after the act. The scenes also commonly include a servant or attendant figure on the side or in the background, who does not interact, but focalizes the scene.²³

Sex scenes also decorate less prestigious locations such as brothels. The Lupanar in Pompeii, for example houses a series of paintings representing sexual intercourse.²⁴ The couples recline on beds amidst stark surroundings and as in one particularly well preserved example, the man always penetrates the woman.²⁵ These scenes share iconography with domestic paintings and seem to differ only in artistic quality and style.²⁶ Although the couples engage in physical penetration, their eyes never meet.

Sexual imagery was also not limited to wall painting and is found in decorative objects such as silver vessels, gemstones, and small sculpture.²⁷ The themes and

²² Roman attitudes to sex were complex, see some discussion in Rebecca Langlands, *Sexual morality in Ancient Rome* (Cambridge University Press, 2006); compare to Kenneth Dover, "Classical Greek Attitudes to Sexual Behavior," *Arethusa* 6 (1973): 59-62.

²³ In the case of the Villa della Farnesina, Varone suggests that these servant figures not only focalizes the scene, but also heighten erotic awareness, *Eroticism in Pompeii*, 74.

²⁴ Thomas McGinn, "Pompeian Brothels and Social History," *Pompeian Brothels, Pompeii's Ancient History, Mirrors and Mysteris, Art and Nature at Oplontis, the Herculaneum Basilica. JRA Supplement* 47 (2002): 13; For study of these paintings see Clarke, *Looking at Lovemaking*, 196-201 who suggested the paintings were imitative of elite sexual fantasies for visitors to the brothel; also Varone, *Eroticism in Pompeii*, 57-58 who argues the panels are both didactic and arousing.

²⁵ Clarke, *Roman Sex*, fig. 37.

²⁶ Molly Myerowitz, "The Domestication of Desire: Ovid's *Parva Tabella* and the Theater of Love," in *Pornography and Representation in Greece and Rome*, ed. Amy Richlin (Oxford University Press, 1992), 141.

²⁷ Antonio Varone, *Erotica Pompeiana: Iscrizioni d'amore sui muri di Pompei* (Roma: L'Erma di Bretschneider, 1994).

iconography remain relatively consistent across media with the emphasis placed on physical contact or penetration and lack of visual interaction.²⁸

This emphasis on physical interaction and behavior in visual evidence has led to a particular emphasis in critical scholarship that traditionally marginalizes this material as separate from other visual culture. Approached from a modern perspective, scholars have termed these overt displays of sexual intercourse as “obscene” or even “pornographic” suggesting that the ancient intention was to stimulate sexual pleasure through their visual content.²⁹ During early excavations in the 18th century, erotic material was catalogued and described with embarrassment in the archaeological journals and then stored in a separate space of the Portici Palace.³⁰ Once the collections were moved to Naples, this “obscene” content was sectioned off into the “Gabinetto Segreto” at the Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Napoli, which until 1931 was restricted only to male visitors because it was considered too graphic for females. Into the late twentieth century, erotic art and objects continued to be treated as separate from other material culture and united by their emphasis on sexual content despite the fact that, as William Anderson has noted, the “stuff is really pretty tame.”³¹ The tendency to view the objects as pornographic and

²⁸ The lack of visual interaction is not always the case, however, for a good example see a cameo-glass perfume flask depicting a man and woman from Ostippo, Spain in Clarke, *Roman Sex*, 84.

²⁹ C.O. Müller coined the term ‘pornography’ in 1850 to describe these and other objects, See Clarke, *Roman Sex*, 11-12 for a brief history of the term; for a discussion of “pornography” as a useful way to consider ancient artifacts consult Amy Richlin’s introduction to *Pornography and Representation in Greece and Rome*; for definitions of pornographic stemming from feminist theory see a classic essay by Susan Gubar, “Representing Pornography: Feminism, Criticism, and Depictions of Female Violation,” *Critical Inquiry* 13.4 (1987): 712-741.

³⁰ Stefano De Caro, ed. *The Secret Cabinet in the National Archaeological Museum of Naples* (Naples: Electa Napoli, 2000).

³¹ William Anderson. Review of *Looking at Lovemaking*, by John Clarke in *Bryn Mawr Classical Review*, 1998.8.12; Sarah Levin-Richardson has recently addressed the continued fascination with these erotic paintings in “Modern Tourists, Ancient Sexualities: Looking at Looking in Pompeii’s Brothel and the

sequester them is wrapped up in modern cultural understanding of sexuality and the obscene.³²

But as Natalie Kampen suggests, by labeling only this material as “erotic” and limiting the definition of the word to include sexual acts and the feelings they incite, we also limit the discussion to sexual intercourse and assume a single meaning.³³

Paintings—whether labeled erotic, pornographic or tame—decorate all varieties of Roman spaces and, since Brendel’s essay, have been examined as more than representations of sexual acts or evidence of a sex-obsessed culture. In his 1998 volume, *Looking at Lovemaking: Constructions of Sexuality in Roman Art 100 B.C.-A.D. 250*, John Clarke asks “what pleasure did viewers take from the images?”—a question that immediately connects the viewing of these paintings with enjoyment.³⁴ From the outset, Clarke approaches scenes of male-male and male-female “lovemaking” as ordinary, albeit pleasant, aspects of Roman life rather than forbidden displays of obscene or pornographic lust as they have often been treated in the modern world.³⁵ Central to Clarke’s investigation is the issue of ancient sexuality and its broad parameters compared to the modern world and as he explains, the ancients “would find most of our attitudes

Secret Cabinet,” in *Pompeii in the Public Imagination from Its Rediscovery to Today*, ed. Shelley Hales and Joanna Paul (Oxford University Press, 2013), 316.

³² Catherine Johns’ 1982 compilation of ‘erotic’ imagery did not treat the materials as obscene, however, did not offer any sustained attempt at interpretation, contextualization, or analysis and was simply a picture book, *Sex or Symbol: Erotic Images of Greece and Rome* (London: Colonnade Books, 1982).

³³ Kampen, *Sexuality in Ancient Art*.

³⁴ Clarke, *Looking at Lovemaking*, 2-3.

³⁵ Clarke specifically adopts the terms “lovemaking,” “male-male” and “male-female” as opposed to homosexual or heterosexual as part of his argument that sexuality was not defined in a modern sense, *Looking at Lovemaking*, 11-15.

towards sex strange and even absurd.”³⁶ This difference between ancient and modern attitudes is what requires discernment when examining the images of mythological lovers.³⁷

Expanding Erotic

Labeling visual material as erotic with no further discussion or explanation not only limits the scope of study and meaning, but also the scope of evidence. Constant among these studies of so-called erotic painting has been a heavy, although not exclusive, focus on scenes of lovemaking and sexual encounters between mortal, human figures.³⁸ Mythological couples have remained relegated to iconographic and stylistic analyses or textual studies. They have been repeatedly cited, along with other mythological panels, in the collective cry for programmatic painting in elite rooms and houses or wielded as evidence of a patron’s status and clever use of common mythological themes.³⁹ Only rarely are such couples, Mars and Venus for example, mentioned in the context of erotic art.⁴⁰ David Fredrick’s analysis of mythological love scenes in Pompeii remains the most extensive typology and interpretation of these scenes. Approaching the evidence from an art historical perspective, the author emphasizes the violent physical and visual

³⁶ Clarke, *Roman Sex*, 14.

³⁷ See Nancy Rabinowitz and Lisa Auanger, eds. *Among Women: From the Homosocial to the Homoerotic in the Ancient World* (University of Texas Press, 2002) for a good discussion of the complicated nature of all of these terms, eros, sexuality, in reference to the ancient world as well as the need to reevaluate the field.

³⁸ See Myerowitz, “Domestication of Desire;” Brendel also defines erotic art as involving “real, not mythical, people” in “Erotic Art,” 5, 19.

³⁹ For the early notion of strict, programmatic rooms see Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*; More recent approaches to programmatic painting within houses posit a more generalized adoption of themes within a larger space see Leach, *Rhetoric of Space*, 361-408.

⁴⁰ Clarke, *Roman Sex*; Lorenz, *Bilder machen Räume*, 149-155.

penetration in each scene. Although Fredrick's model offers possible implications for expressing a patron's status and engaging the viewer, it is an account of vision as a negative force that destroys or harms the object (almost always a female) in pursuit of pleasure.⁴¹ Working within a similar theoretical model, Verity Platt suggests similar representations of desire in the paintings of one specific house, the Casa di Octavius Quartio.⁴² Here she sees the painted gaze as the force of destructive desire in scenes of Pyramus and Thisbe, Diana and Actaeon, and Narcissus.

An alternate approach to these scenes focuses not on the subject's violent and ultimately destructive gaze, but instead on the relationship between the subject and object that occurs because of vision. Fredrick and others label mythological love scenes as "rape-scenes," inherently emphasizing the violence towards the female by the male.⁴³ A broader approach to this material does not necessarily ignore the situation's male dominance, established by myth, but it looks beyond this to understand what the painting itself says about the relationship between the figures. Here, 'rape' becomes 'pursuit' with the understanding that desire is not expressed solely as a violence. H. Nascimento Valladares, for example, probes paintings of mythological couples for their relationship to Latin elegiac poetry of the first centuries BC/AD including Catullus, Propertius, and Ovid. She suggests that the paintings are a visual expression of the poetic desire to

⁴¹ This draws straight from Mulvey wherein the female is punished for her sexual difference, Mulvey "Visual Narratives," 22.

⁴² Platt, "Viewing, Desiring, Believing," 89.

⁴³ See Fredrick's discussion of Ariadne in, "Erotic Painting and Visual Pleasures," 273

emphasize vision as a means of erotic fulfillment and enthrallment.⁴⁴ Mythological love scenes do not only emphasize physical force or interaction, but also focus on vision as the source of connection between lovers.

Optics, Eros, and Vision

Although there is a long history of the human eye's role in love and related matters, Shadi Bartsch has shown that it was only during the first centuries AD that these cultural notions of the erotic eye were mapped onto optical theory.⁴⁵ As inheritors of earlier optical theory, Roman sources explain the force of love in terms of the giving and receiving of simulacra or effluences between the lover and beloved—that is, in terms of both intromissive and extramissive optical theory. Vision as a tactile, physical force is key to these theories, which emphasize the ability of sight to touch a lover's heart or soul. The language of simulacra imprinting on the eye is familiar from the Greek atomist accounts of Democritus and later Epicurus as discussed in Chapter 1, but in the first century context become complicated by Stoic and atomist influences.

While sight was understood as a piercing force or ray sent forth from a viewer's eye there was also a parallel action on the part of the object seen which emanated simulacra. Not only do simulacra emanate from the object of vision (beloved), but they

⁴⁴ Hérica Nascimento Valladares, "Imago Amores: The Poetics of Desire in Roman Painting," (PhD Dissertation, Columbia University, 2006), 3; Judith Hallett, "Role of Women in Roman Elegy," *Arethusa*, 111ff.

⁴⁵ Plato stands as the first to associate eros, intromission, and arousal in his *Phaedrus* 250d-251c, which is focused on self-knowledge through seeing beauty; On this passage see David Halperin, "Plato and Erotic Reciprocity," *Classical Antiquity* 5 (1986): 60-80; Bartsch, *Mirror of the Self*, 77-79. Platonic eros is complicated and is not represented by this passage alone; For Platonic eros and its influence in later Roman sources see M.B Trapp, "Plato's *Phaedrus* in Second Century Greek Literature," in *Antonine Literature*, ed. D.A. Russell (Oxford University Press, 1990), 141-173.

also penetrate the eye of the receiver (lover).⁴⁶ Writing in the first century AD, Plutarch remarks that,

“Vision provides access to the first impulse to love, that most powerful and violent experience of the soul, and causes the lover to melt and be dissolved when he looks at those who are beautiful, as if he were pouring forth his whole being toward them. For this reason, we are entitled, I think, to be most surprised at anyone who believes that, while men are passively influenced and suffer harm through their eyes, they yet should not be able to influence others and inflict injury in the same way”⁴⁷

Plutarch explains the power that the viewer/lover plays in the process of love as the individual who sends forth and penetrates the beloved, but he also reports of the eye’s vulnerability to harm. In a separate passage he explains that “the eidola, entering into the amorous ones and coursing through them, arouse and titillate the body to the production of seed,” stressing the passive role of the eye. These passages reflect a syncretism between intromission and extramission theory in which the eye is both active and passive making love a mutual process.⁴⁸

The exact workings of this interaction are theorized differently according to the Stoics, Lucretius, and other writers, but what they share is a common notion of an intromissive object and extromissive subject. Lucretius, for example, emphasizes the lack of bodily satisfaction resulting from visual interaction when he talks about the “wound” of love in Book 4 of *De rerum natura*.⁴⁹ For Lucretius, the beloved (object) emits

⁴⁶ This is familiar terminology from Democritus *Frag.* 135; On the Epicurean tradition see Simon Goldhill, “The Erotic Eye: Visual Stimulation and Cultural Conflict,” in *Being Greek under Rome: Cultural Identity, the Second Sophistic and the Development of Empire*, ed. Simon Goldhill (Cambridge University Press, 2001), 154-195.

⁴⁷ Plut., *Table Talk* 5.7.680c0683b, transl. P.A. Clement.

⁴⁸ Plut., *Amat.*, 27.766e.

intromissive particles that penetrate the lover (subject), causing a wound. This wound causes a corresponding reaction from the lover in the direction of the beloved:

ejaculation.⁵⁰ The eye as a physical “ambassador of love” took hold and later Roman sources feature language of erotic, and tactile vision drawing from both atomist and Stoic accounts. Like Lucretius’ beloved who wounds the lover/viewer, these later sources further emphasize the power of the beloved to affect the viewer. An oft-cited second century AD account is that of Achilles Tatius’ protagonist Clitophan who declares that “the emanation given off by beauty, pulled via invisible rays to the lover’s heart, imprints upon it its shadow-image.”⁵¹

Theory and other textual sources, however, do not equal widespread cultural belief and it may seem a large jump from ideas to practice—would any ancient Roman actually believe in the physical nature of vision, its power to induce change, and the relationship between vision and love? As Shadi Bartsch convincingly argues, the widespread ancient belief in the evil eye is a demonstrative example of the vision’s ability to interfere with individual bodies.⁵² Both the evil eye and the erotic gaze were understood to be connected with a materialist account of vision in which particles entered the eye causing both erotic and harmful effects as Plutarch remarks when he says “The answering glances of the young and the beautiful and the stream of influences from their

⁴⁹ For more on this much discussed passage and the “conspiracy of sight and semen,” see Robert Brown, *Lucretius on Love and Sex: A Commentary on De rerum natura IV 1030-1287, with Prologomena, Text, and Translation* (Leiden: Brill, 1987), 63.

⁵⁰ Lucr. 4.1045-56 transl. Brown, *Lucretius on Love and Sex*, 180; Bartsch, *Mirror of the Self*, 73-75.

⁵¹ A. Tatius *Clitophan & Leucippe* 5.13.4, transl. Bartsch.

⁵² Bartsch, *Mirror of the Self*, 71-72; Goldhill, “Erotic Eye,” 171. In Heliodorus, *Aethiopika*, the Egyptian priest explains love and the evil eye both with a materialist account of optics, 3.7.4-5.

eyes, whether it be light or a current of particles, melts the lovers and destroyed them...”⁵³

Because of this deep connection between vision and eros, it is important to reconsider the expression and representation of love, eroticism, desire, and pleasure in paintings beyond simply physical interaction and sexual intercourse. If seeing was a valid path to physical pleasure and a way to fulfill desire then it seems just as likely that painters would have represented visual contact in their displays of eros and desire.

Erotic Mythological Love Scenes

The visual nature of love is represented in a series of paintings that depict mythological couples. Although a painted figure’s visual behavior could be understood in relation to his/her mythological role, gender, or status, it is my contention that “the notation of gazes takes on meaning only as it relates, in particular to the distance separating characters, to their gestures, and to attitudes and positions indicating other modes of contact.”⁵⁴ The following section is concerned with the way in which these figures relate to one another through their appearance, positions, and behavior with an emphasis on their visual interaction, or lack thereof.⁵⁵ Mythological couples are united by their narrative context, however, their visual behavior unites them within the visual narrative.

⁵³ Plutarch, *Table Talk* 5.7.680c0683b, transl. P.A. Clement.

⁵⁴ Frontisi-Ducroux, “Eros, Desire, and the Gaze,” 82.

⁵⁵ Different ways of looking in interaction has been the subject of psychological research. Mark Cook and Michael Argyle have identified five different ways see *Gaze and Mutual Gaze* (Cambridge University Press, 1976).

The paintings do not share a common mythological narrative, however, and several subjects are frequently repeated with remarkable consistency including Ariadne with both Dionysus and Theseus, Selene and Endymion, and Venus with her assorted lovers. These figures are not the only ones that appear, in fact, mythological pairs---whether actual lovers, couples, or scenes that have been termed “abduction”—make up approximately 25% of the total mythological scenes.⁵⁶ While Fredrick classifies paintings according to the modern categories of either scopophilia or voyeurism according to the eventual fate of the female object (i.e., rape or abduction), this section re-evaluates the evidence through visual analysis. The pictorial representation of visual exchange takes on a coded meaning in relation to the figures’ poses, gestures, positions, and mythological relationships. As in other representations of viewership and the painted gaze, this layer of meaning is not exclusive, but complementary—it does not eclipse other mythological and thematic connotations, but grounds the painting and its audience in a contemporary context of viewership.

The following sections examine the graphical representation of visual relationships focusing on the way in which the figures engage in acts of looking or gazing. As in previous chapters, the analysis is primarily visual, in this case focusing on three aspects: 1) position, 2) gesture or actions, and 3) visual behavior. Special attention is paid to points of convergence, interaction, or connection in both physical or visual behavior. Differences and similarities between gender, type of relationship, and status of figure (god or mortal) are also noted. I argue that the pictorial expression does not vary

⁵⁶ It must be noted that abduction, rape, or pursuit scenes certainly held a variety of notions in their ancient context, M. Lefkowitz “Seduction and rape,” in *Consent and Coercion to Sex and Marriage in Ancient and Medieval Societies*, ed. A. E. Laiou (Washington D.C. Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 1993), 17-37; The percentage is based on the approximate number of mythological pairs as 125 from my own investigation and Schefold’s calculation of figural scenes as 500, *Wände Pompejis*.

based on these factors, but instead is an indicator of the painted figure's response to love and their active or passive role in the relationship. The discussion begins with an analysis of the two major types of interaction—absence and presence of visual exchange—where it becomes clear that viewers and viewed share visual characteristics regardless of subject. The discussion then moves to a more comprehensive discussion and reading of three specific motifs: Ariadne with both Dionysus and Theseus, Selene and Endymion, and Venus with her lovers.

Absence of Exchange

The absence of visual exchange between lovers is common in paintings where both male and female figures gaze at their beloved. Visual behavior is suggested by the figure's gaze. The typically male painted viewer is often shown in profile directing his gaze towards the beloved. Male lovers often stand at a distance from their female beloved and do not touch her as she either bows her head, closes her eyes, looks away, or appears otherwise unaware of her audience. In a representation of Paris and Helen from the Casa dell'affresco di Spartaco, for example, Paris stands on the right looking directly at Helen who sits in profile on the left (**CIV.1**, *fig. 70*). Although Helen faces Paris, she tilts her head down and draws her veil across her face. In the painting, Paris reaches towards Helen, helping to breach the physical gap between the two figures and emphasize the direction of his gaze, but there is still no physical contact.⁵⁷

A number of such male-centered scenes also represent an unclothed or otherwise exposed female. Ariadne, Venus, Daphne, and others are all shown as idealized female bodies wearing few or no garments. Nude female bodies can be contrasted with the

⁵⁷ For a similar composition of the two figures with no gesture see **CIV.2-CIV.5**; similar interaction also occurs in representations of Diana and Actaeon, **CIV.14-CIV.17**.

tendency for the male viewer to be at least partially draped. This distinction is not universal, however, for as in the previously mentioned painting of Paris and Helen, Paris idealized body is bare while Helen is modestly covered by a himation and veil. More often, both male viewer and female viewed are partially unclothed with idealized bodies.

There are far fewer instances in which a female lover is shown looking at a male beloved with no reciprocation. When they do appear, female viewers follow the same general iconographic conventions as male figures: they stand apart, do not engage in physical contact, and turn their face and sometime entire body towards the beloved. Female viewers are usually found in contexts in which their position emphasizes their role as viewing subject and intentionally sets them apart as an ‘other’ in some way superior to their beloved. Amorous scenes of goddesses and mortal men, for example Selene and Endymion, often present the goddess gazing at her sleeping or otherwise oblivious lover.⁵⁸ Female lovers vary according to context and their behavior seems to depend almost entirely on mythological context.

Several paintings represent Omphale gazing at Hercules, who squats on the ground unaware of his audience.⁵⁹ A painting from the Casa di Sirico, for example, shows Omphale seated in the upper left corner while Hercules sits in the lower right corner (**CIV.6**, *fig. 33*). The two figures are physically separated, but joined by Omphale’s gaze. This panel is further complicated because Hercules is dressed as a woman. Should such scenes then, be considered an instance of female-female gazing?⁶⁰

⁵⁸ Ariadne is also shown looking at Theseus’ ship as it sails away, but this composition is discussed at length elsewhere in the dissertation, see pages 239-251 below; for Selene and Endymion see 251-256: **CIV.46**, **CIV.75-CIV.77**, **CIV.79**, **CIV.82**, **CIV.83**.

⁵⁹ See **CIV.7-CIV.9**.

An interesting exception to the of the one-sided female gaze are paintings which represent the tragic deaths of Pyramus and Thisbe. At least four paintings depict this episode in which Thisbe looks at her beloved Pyramus after his death.⁶¹ A typical representation of the scene can be found in a painting from the Casa del Ristorante (CIV.10, *fig. 71*). Pyramus lays horizontally across the center of the panel. He wears a dark red cape around his neck, which wraps around his lower leg. The remainder of his body is unclothed except for his sheath that rests behind his left arm. A stream of red paint dots his chest presumably representing blood from his self-inflicted, lethal wound.⁶² Thisbe rests her body directly on top of Pyramus and uses her arms to hold his torso. She holds a sword to her chest where blood drips, indicating she is falling on the blade. She looks down at Pyramus' face, but his eyes are closed. Pyramus does not return Thisbe's glance because he is dead. This pattern of looking is repeated in other paintings of the subject and stressed even further in a painting from the Casa di Marco Lucrezio Frontone (CIV.11) in which Pyramus' head is turned away from Thisbe.⁶³

The only exception to Thisbe's one-sided gaze appears in painting from the Casa di Octavius Quartio (CIV.12, *fig. 72*) where Pyramus still seems to be alive.⁶⁴ Thisbe appears on the right where she kneels on the ground and leans forward, her upper body hovering over Pyramus. She is in profile so that only her left side is visible as she stabs the a sword into her breast where a stream of blood gushes forth. Pyramus is on the left,

⁶⁰ Natalie Kampen, "Omphale and the Instability of Gender," in *Sexuality in Ancient Art: Near East, Egypt, Greece, and Italy*, ed. Natalie Kampen (Cambridge University Press, 1996), 233-246.

⁶¹ Ov. *Met.*, IV.55-166; Nonnus, *Dion.* 12, 84-85.

⁶² Pyramus stabbed himself in the side, Ov. *Met.*, IV.55-166.

⁶³ LIMC.VII, "Pyramos et Thisbe," no. 24, 25; see a partially preserved example in the Casa di Venere in Bikini, CIV.13.

⁶⁴ Platt discusses this interaction as an instance of deadly desire, "Viewing, Desiring, Believing," 95.

laying on the ground, with his body faced forward. He holds a spear in his hand. Thisbe tilts her head forward and looks directly toward Pyramus who turns his face towards her with open eyes. How can we explain this deliberate variation? Ovid writes that upon hearing Thisbe “Pyramus lifted his eyes, now heavy with death, and having looked upon her face, closed them again” but this final look occurred before Thisbe located the sword and stabbed herself.⁶⁵ The painter, it seems, has conflated the two moments—Pyramus’ parting glance and Thisbe’s death—perhaps in an effort to increase the painting’s emotional impact.

Visual Exchange

Infrequently, two lovers look directly at one another. Of the evidence surveyed, this is the least common way of looking and it seems that paintings more often depict lovers avoiding eye contact or looking in other directions than engaging in an intimate visual exchange with one another. Even when figures do not intentionally look away from one another, they are not shown looking towards each other. A painting of Perseus freeing Andromeda in the Casa del Principe del Montenegro (**CI.30**), for example, presents neither the hero nor the princess looking at the other.⁶⁶ Although Perseus stands in profile facing Andromeda, whose hand he touches, the hero looks towards her feet while she gazes absently off of the panel. Here, the relationship is expressed by timid physical contact that seems to emphasize Perseus’ role in the narrative’s plot rather than his connection to Andromeda.

⁶⁵ Ov., *Met.* IV.145-146 (trans. F.J. Miller)

⁶⁶ See an almost identical composition, **CII.31**.

When figures do look at one another, they stand or sit at a distance from one another and often do not touch, but in this case are joined by their shared gazes.⁶⁷ A painting of Apollo and Daphne from Casa dell'Efebo (**CIV.18**, *fig. 73*) represents the two joined by an exchanged gaze.⁶⁸ Apollo sits on the left in three-quarter profile with his face and eyes directed straight at Daphne. She stands on the right, her body turned backward, but her head shifted to the left facing Apollo. Apollo gestures towards Daphne and points a laurel branch at her shoulder, but the two do not touch one another. Both figures are only partly draped: Apollo in a dark red mantle and Daphne in a golden himation wrapped around her legs.⁶⁹ Interaction is further emphasized in instances where the Daphne turns her head back to meet the Apollo's gaze.⁷⁰ A second painting of the same couple from the Casa del Gallo (**CIV.19**) shows Daphne as she walks away from Apollo, but turns her head over her shoulder to look back at the god.

Ariadne, Theseus, and Dionysus: Captured by Vision

Ariadne is the most popular figure portrayed in Roman wall painting from the first century AD, especially in the Campanian region. Although scenes of Narcissus at the stream are the most frequent single motif, the figure of Ariadne is the single most represented individual as she appears repeatedly in several different contexts. In fact, Ariadne appears over fifty times in paintings meaning she is found in approximately 10%

⁶⁷ An exception to the lack of physical contact can be seen in two paintings of Neptune and Amphitrite in which the figures look at one another and embrace, **CIV.29**, **CIV.30**.

⁶⁸ The pursuit of Daphne by Apollo occurs in Ov., *Met.* I.452-567

⁶⁹ See also, **CIV.115**, **CIV.19-CIV.21**, **CIV.24**, **CIV.26**, **CIV.27**.

⁷⁰ Two additional paintings of these lovers depict Apollo pursuing Daphne more actively, see Helbig, *Wandgemälde*, no. 206, Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 119, 146, 182, 202. This theme is also more prevalent in later mosaics, see Dunbabin, *Mosaics of the Greek and Roman World*, 258-259; LIMC.III, "Daphne," nos. 16-28.

of all panels.⁷¹ Surviving examples are primarily of the Fourth Style. Ariadne appears in multiple mythological contexts, but the most widespread representations are panels related to her role as a beloved or object of love on the island of Naxos.⁷² Paintings of Ariadne and her lovers on Naxos come in three forms: the first represents Theseus as he abandons Ariadne; the second depicts Ariadne's surprise when she wakes up alone on Naxos only to see Theseus' ship sailing away in the distance; and the third illustrates Dionysus' discovery of the sleeping maiden.⁷³ These episodes are found elsewhere in Roman art, including gems and later mosaics and sarcophagi, however, the consistent representation and focus of the wall paintings is unique and notably different than earlier examples of the same motif.⁷⁴ The iconography of this scene does not originate in the first century AD and the Romans adjusted earlier continuous narrative compositions into these three, individual episodes.⁷⁵ This change is not insignificant and reflects an emphasis on single moments, in line with other Fourth Style themes of contemplation and

⁷¹ Exact figures differ depending on whether one includes drawings, photographs of destroyed paintings, and other similar issues, however, this percentage serves to highlight the extreme prevalence of Ariadne among the paintings of Pompeii and Campania. This percentage is calculated using my data of fifty-five paintings and Scheffold's count of 500 paintings for the Pompeiian region; Fredrick is slightly more conservative quoting "somewhere between five and ten percent of the total number of central panels, "Erotic Paintings and Visual Pleasure," 272; see also McNally, "Ariadne and Others," 177; also Friedrich Matz, *Die dionysischen Sarkophage III* (1969) ; Volker Scherf, *Flügelwesen in Römisch-kampanischen Wandbildern* (Hamburg 1967), 9, 71.

⁷² For literary sources of the story see Emeline Richardson, "The Story of Ariadne in Italy," *Studies in Classical Art and Archaeology: A Tribute to Peter Heinrich von Blanckenhagen* (Locust Valley, New York, 1979), 189-195; Hans von Geisau, "Ariadne," *der kleine Pauly I* (1964) 543-545.

⁷³ Ariadne also appears with Theseus in an episode on Crete where she hands him yarn outside of the labyrinth, see Hodske, *Mythologische Bildthemen*, cat. 481, 163, 1879, 343, 201.

⁷⁴ For other Roman representations of this Ariadne cycle consult Parise Badoni, "Arianna a Naxos," 73-87; for Roman sarcophagi with this motif see Carl Roberts, *Die Antiken Sarkophag Reliefs* (Berlin: G. Grotische Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1897-1919): IV 1.100, 143, 149, 156; 3.380.

⁷⁵ Paus.I.20,3; See a calyx crater that combines Theseus' departure with Dionysus' arrival, Berlin 2179 ARV 252.

moments-before-the action.⁷⁶ As individual tableaux, the panels take on new meanings aside from their larger narrative as they are no longer concerned solely with conveying the stages of a story, but now depicting a single theme or aspect of the event.⁷⁷ More significantly, the Campanian painters shift emphasis to the lover's visual relationship.

The most frequently represented episode is the "discovery" scene in which Dionysus encounters the abandoned Ariadne on Naxos.⁷⁸ In these scenes, Dionysus stands in the center of the composition contrasting Ariadne's passive, sleeping form in the lower corner. She sleeps, her nude body on display, while Dionysus towers above her, gazing down at her motionless form. A painting from the Casa delle Caccia Nuova (**CIV.31**, *fig. 74*) illustrates the standardized composition. Ariadne's slumbering body appears in the lower left corner with her back to the external viewer while Dionysus stands on the right. Paintings rarely deviate from the standardized composition type in which Dionysus plays an active role—both physically and visually—while Ariadne is entirely passive.

As an isolated moment, the episode does not emphasize Ariadne's rescue—the sequence in this narrative—but instead focuses on the single moment in which Dionysus first sees Ariadne. The discovery scene is especially popular in Roman art and almost

⁷⁶ For a discussion of such Fourth Style compositions see Chapter 2, 93-96.

⁷⁷ For a complete look at these Ariadne scenes consult Parise Badoni, "Arianna a Nasso," 73-87.

⁷⁸ McNally, "Ariadne and Others," 172 argues that the "discovery" and "despair" scenes cannot be part of the same narrative cycle because Ariadne is awake in the first and asleep in the second, however, this does not necessary preclude connection as Ariadne may have fallen asleep again. There is no literary explanation.

entirely absent from the literary record.⁷⁹ Earlier representations of Ariadne's abandonment depict Dionysus' arrival, however, the Roman visual tradition develops a particular emphasis on and representation of this episode of the story.⁸⁰ Of the Ariadne episodes, this scene is the most popular: over ten examples of this painting survive with an additional eight recorded in drawings and notebooks, suggesting an intentional choice on the part of painters and/or patrons to depict this specific moment.⁸¹ While Dionysian themes were popular during this period, offering a possible explanation for the great number of paintings, the panels do not seem to focus on the god himself or his personal attributes and individual qualities.⁸² Instead, the real subject of the scene is the relationship between Dionysus and Ariadne, expressed through visual interaction.

The youthful Dionysus always stands in the center of the panel, physically dominating the composition. He nearly always carries his thyrsus and wears a wreath, but other common attributes are absent such as kantharoi, wine, or grapes.⁸³ His dress varies slightly. Infrequently, he is fully clothed in a tunic, but in most instances his robes swirl around his nude body, emphasizing his movement onto the scene, as in the *Casa dei Postumii e i suoi annessi* (CIV.40, fig. 75).⁸⁴ Movement is further emphasized as Cupid

⁷⁹ Only Ovid mentions that Dionysus is nearby, providing an outcome to Ariadne's abandonment "To her, deserted and bewailing bitterly, Bacchus brought love and help" *Met.* 8.176-177; See also *Fast.* 3.459-516 and *Ars.Am.* 1.527-64. Catullus, the second contemporary account, does not mention Bacchus.

⁸⁰ For the earliest surviving example of Dionysus approaching a sleeping Ariadne see a fourth century BC calyx crater from Tarentum n. 52230 see AA 71 (1956) 223 fig. 17-20, however, this motif is rarely found; For other representations of this scene see *LIMC*.II, "Ariadne," nos. 138-142.

⁸¹ Paintings include CIV.32-CIV.56.

⁸² For a summary of Dionysus/Bacchus' iconography in Roman art and specifically painting see *LIMC*.III, "Dionysos/Bacchus," 563-565.

⁸³ For Dionysus with his thyrsus see CIV.49-CIV.51; For the god's almost identical appearance and behavior in different composition with Ariadne enthroned see CIV.44.

appears to lead Dionysus towards Ariadne. In an unprovenanced painting from Pompeii now in the Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Napoli (**CIV.34**), for example, Dionysus is flanked by Cupid and Silenus as he steps towards Ariadne with his right foot. Movement towards the sleeping maiden is the norm except for a variation found in the Casa del Citarista (**CIV.35**, *fig. 76*), where Dionysus steps away from Ariadne after glimpsing her form, as if stunned by her appearance.⁸⁵ The god always maintains distance from Ariadne and the figures never touch one another. Regardless of his position, Dionysus directs his gaze towards Ariadne.⁸⁶

While in the discovery scenes Dionysus dominates the composition in both position, appearance, and behavior, Ariadne remains a less prevalent figure. She appears in the lower left or right corner of the composition with her body positioned horizontally across the panel. Most frequently, she lays on her back with her breast and torso exposed. In a panel from the Villa Arianna at Stabiae (**CIV.36**) she appears in the lower right corner. She leans against a rock and is covered with a purple garment from the waist down, but her torso and breasts remain exposed. She raises her right hand above her head in a gesture associated with sleep and other slumbering figures, for example Endymion or Narcissus, and her appearance has often been compared with maenads.⁸⁷ Slight variations do persist, such as in the previously discussed painting from the Casa della Caccia Nuova where Ariadne is positioned on her side. In this much less frequent position, she faces

⁸⁴ For clothed Dionysus see also Casa del Citarista, **CIV.35**.

⁸⁵ See also **CIV.40**.

⁸⁶ In earlier Hellenistic examples, Dionysus is seen shaking Ariadne or standing over her so this choice seems deliberate.

⁸⁷ McNally, "Ariadne and Others," 152-154; For Ariadne's gesture in other media see *LIMC*.VIII, "Ariadne," nos. 131, 135, 143; for Narcissus: *LIMC*.VI, "Narkissos," no. 48; and Endymion: *LIMC*.III, "Endymion," no. 4

inward exposing her back and buttocks towards the external audience.⁸⁸ Whether on her back or her stomach, Ariadne is asleep and not interacting, either physically or visually, with Dionysus. The single exception is a destroyed panel from the Casa della Fortuna (**CIV.38**, *fig. 77*) where she sits upright and points at Dionysus.

Although Ariadne does not actively participate in the panel, her body incites action, as both “erotic and harmonious.”⁸⁹ Ariadne’s nude form creates a spectacle at which all other figures direct their gazes.⁹⁰ Dionysus is nearly always accompanied by members of his retinue—a silen or satyr—and Cupid, one of whom lifts Ariadne’s garment from her body to reveal her milky skin and breasts or buttocks as appears most fully in a painting from the Casa di Arianna (**CIV.37**, *fig. 78*). Cupid hovers above Ariadne and lifts the corner of her translucent garment to frame her body. Cupid gestures to Dionysus as well as the group of other figures in the background. Ariadne’s body is on display—for Dionysus, the surrounding retinue, and the viewing audience—and its disrobing by Cupid creates a spectacle for the crowd of satyrs, silenoi, and other figures populating the background.⁹¹ These approaching individuals are not the only figures to look at Ariadne, the spectacle is further emphasized by the inclusion of a winged female

⁸⁸ Fredrick, “Erotic Painting and Visual Pleasure,” stresses the significance of Ariadne’s nudity 273-274; McNally, “The Maenad in Early Greek Art,” *Arethusa* 11 (1978): 113; See painting of Ariadne and maenad from Casa dell’Ara Massima.

⁸⁹ McNally uses this phrase to describe sleeping maenads, “Ariadne and Others,” 157. On the similarity of Ariadne’s form to maenads see McNally, “Maenad in Early Greek Art,” 113.

⁹⁰ Ariadne is almost exclusively nude in Roman representations of the three compositions discussed here. The single exception is the Vatican Ariadne, a second century BC sculpture, see Bieber, *Sculpture of the Hellenistic Age*, 145-156, *fig. 624*.

⁹¹ The first literary account of an astonished group comes from Nonnus, *Dion.* 47.265-467; on the unveilers see Scherf, *Fluegelwesen*, 184-91; Ariadne is infrequently “guarded” by a winged figure, Simon *LIMC*.II, “Ariadne,” 111-72.

figure who sits behind Ariadne. in several paintings such as the Casa della Fortuna (CIV.39, fig. 79) where she looks towards the approaching audience and Dionysus.⁹²

Dionysus looks towards Ariadne, but there is no visual reciprocity or physical contact between the two figures. Dionysus alone performs a visual act. David Fredrick argues that Dionysus' one-way gaze represents the imbalance of power that precedes possession. He suggests that the paintings of Ariadne are examples of both scopophilic and voyeuristic pleasure in which Dionysus' gaze weakens Ariadne.⁹³ Although Dionysus' gaze could be seen as penetrating Ariadne's fractured body, an alternative reading of this act reverses the direction of penetration.⁹⁴ As H.N. Valladeres notices, there are no visual indicators that Dionysus will possess, penetrate, or overpower Ariadne.⁹⁵ In fact, the paintings tell the opposite story; the beginning of a union between the two figures. Dionysus not only looks at Ariadne, but he also steps towards her with his body turned in her direction. In several paintings he raises his hand in a gesture of surprise or captivation, suggesting that he is *affected* by the sight of Ariadne. Rather than interpret Dionysus as the aggressor, we can turn to our understanding of the erotic gaze as an explanation for Dionysus' position and reaction, for "it is through vision that the god is captivated."⁹⁶ Ariadne's beautiful body acts as the object of vision (beloved) and Dionysus' (lover) eye is penetrated by simulacra her body emits. As explained by

⁹² Ariadne looks at Dionysus and his retinue in CIV.35, CIV.37.

⁹³ Fredrick, "Erotic Painting and Visual Pleasure," 274, the disrobing of Ariadne invokes both scopophilic pleasure for the external viewer and connects this with Ovid's presentation of the eventual union between the figures as rape in *Ars. Am.* 1.527-64.

⁹⁴ Fredrick, "Erotic Painting and Visual Pleasure," 273.

⁹⁵ Valladares, "Poetics of Desire," 101.

⁹⁶ Valladeres, "Poetics of Desire," 101.

Plutarch and others, this penetration is not simply metaphorical but results in physical change explaining Dionysus' expressions. Furthermore, no physical interaction is necessary, however, because looking is enough. Dionysus desires Ariadne the moment he sees her beautiful body, or, his gaze incites feelings of love, desire, or even pleasure. Although the erotic gaze is often a signal of possession, within this Roman context it stands as a signifier of connection rather than separation or the hierarchical distinction. If we recall the parallels between viewing one's beloved and experiencing love or sexual pleasure, the paintings take on a more erotic undertone. A. Tatius writes of viewing one's beloved, "doing this is more pleasurable than actual consummation."⁹⁷ The process of looking at one's beloved was not simply metaphorical, but physical—looking *leads* to pleasure. Dionysus' directed gaze, therefore, could be understood not simply as dominating male control, but itself as a source of pleasure.

Because the paintings represent single moments, they offer no resolution, glimpse of future interaction, or fulfillment of desire. If the paintings represent the moment in which Dionysus sees and therefore loves/desires Ariadne, what is the result of this visual process and Dionysus' desire? Although literary sources suggest further resolution and we know that Ariadne and Dionysus eventually interact, the paintings offer no hint of later events, physical interaction, or satisfied desires—they are simply moments in time.⁹⁸ But a lack of depiction does not equal a lack of representation. While the paintings stop short of illustrating a physical encounter between any of the figures a

⁹⁷ A. Tatius *Clitophon and Leucippe* 1.9.4-5; for more on vision in this text consult Helen Morales, *Vision and Narrative in Achilles Tatius' Leucippe and Clitophon*, Cambridge Classical Studies (Cambridge University Press, 2005).

⁹⁸ Ov. *Fast.*, 4.

potential viewer could still read the panels as representing unification between the pairs of lovers as it is expressed with vision rather than physical embrace. .

If we recognize a visual vocabulary of the erotic gaze in these discovery scenes, how is it represented in the other episodes in this series? Dionysus' gaze is simultaneously paralleled and contradicted in panels that depict an earlier episode from the narrative, in which Theseus abandons Ariadne on Naxos. These "departure" scenes are remarkably similar to representations of Dionysus' arrival, and the episodes were apparently depicted together as continuous narrative in earlier Hellenistic representations of the myth.⁹⁹ For instance, Pausanias reports that the Temple of Dionysus at Athens contained the depictions of "Ariadne asleep, Theseus putting out to sea, and Dionysus on his arrival to carry off Ariadne."¹⁰⁰ Like the previously discussed discovery scene, the earlier episode of Theseus and Ariadne focuses on one specific moment, that in which Theseus boards his ship to leave the island, and representations follow a standardized overall composition.¹⁰¹ The best preserved example comes from the Casa di Arianna (CIV.52, fig. 80) where Theseus stands on the right, his body facing the right as he steps up onto the gangway. He turns his head backwards to look at Ariadne. Ariadne occupies the opposite side of the panel, resting her upper body on a striped cushion as pale green garment slips from her waist to reveal the soft and supple skin of her torso and breasts.

⁹⁹ LIMC.III, "Ariadne Addenda," 1-109. Greek representations emphasize Theseus' abandonment at the instruction of a god, usually Athena.

¹⁰⁰ Paus. I.20,3: Pausanias does not specify if the scenes are all in one picture, but Erika Simon argues that they would certainly have been one continuous narrative, "Zur Lekythos des Panmalers in Tarent," *O. Jh.* 41 (1954): 87; see also Martin Robertson, "Monocrepis," *GRBS* 13 (1972): 39-48 .

¹⁰¹ The earliest representation of a sleeping Ariadne is Tarquinia RC 5291, see *CVA* pl. 18, however, this may not represent Ariadne and Theseus; Ariadne and Theseus scene appears in earlier fifth century vases, but with little intermediary evidence, see Scherf, *Fluegelwesen*, 115 no. 207; these scenes are generally considered attempts by fifth century painters to justify Theseus' behavior, see Wiktor Daszewski, LIMC.III, "Ariadne," 1666-1668.

There is little variation in the figures' overall appearance or behavior. Ariadne's sleeping pose is identical to her position in the discovery scenes. A painting from the Casa di L. Caecilius Iucundus (**CIV.53**) illustrates a slight difference in which she rests an arm over her head, bends her left knee, and rests her upper body on her left arm. Even in this slightly less tranquil pose, Ariadne's eyes remain closed and she is asleep. Theseus is also shown with remarkable consistency. He stands mid-stride, steps forward, and extends one arm towards the ship. He usually wears only a chlamys over one arm, revealing his legs as appears in painting from the Villa Imperiale (**CIV.54**). Less frequently, he wears a long himation as seen in a panel from the Casa di Dido ed Aenede (**CIV.57**) or is entirely nude.¹⁰² While the discovery scenes emphasized Dionysus' movement towards Ariadne, these panels instead depict Theseus' movement away. Theseus actively steps onto the gangway and faces away from Ariadne and in many instances additional male figures, presumably sailors, stand inside the ship to assist him. A painting from the Casa del Poeta Tragico (**CIV.55**, *fig. 81*) depicts a single male figure who leans over the ship's edge and grasps Theseus' arm to guide him up the gangway.¹⁰³ Although multiple figures can appear in the ship only one of them interacts with Theseus.¹⁰⁴

Like the discovery scenes, Ariadne and Theseus do not touch one another or interact. Ariadne occupies one side of the panel while Theseus stands on the other, a distinction shown clearly in the Casa del Poeta Tragico painting where the composition is

¹⁰² Roman representations of Theseus generally emphasize heroic nudity, see Woodford in *LIMC*.VII, "Theseus," 943; for nude Theseus in this compositional type see **CIV.53**.

¹⁰³ See also **CIV.54**, **CIV.59-CIV.61**; A marble relief from the Hadrian's villa displays almost the exact composition as **CIV.53**, Vatican inv. 540, see Helbig, *Wandgemälde*, 112 no. 147.

¹⁰⁴ For groups of figures in the ship see: **CIV.57**; Also *LIMC*.III, "Ariadne Addenda," no. 70.

almost divided in half. A drawing of a fragmentary painting from Pompeii IX.9.3 (CIV.58) represents Theseus standing over Ariadne, however, even here there is no physical contact. The only connection between the two figures is Theseus' gaze, which he directs towards the sleeping Ariadne. Once again, his gaze is not reciprocated.

The departure scenes parallel the discovery scenes but with one major difference: Theseus moves away from Ariadne, unlike Dionysus who sees Ariadne and walks towards her, Theseus seems to be moving in the opposite direction. His position on the gangway signals his physical separation from Ariadne, but also demonstrates that lovers must not behave identically. Like Dionysus, who was captured by desire when he gazed upon Ariadne, Theseus is equally captivated by her beauty, but is pulled away.¹⁰⁵ The two figures perform the same visual behavior, but different physical actions. But while Theseus does not seem to move towards his object of vision, his gaze contradicts his position. Although Theseus stands on the gangway and is pulled upward by his companions, he deliberately looks backwards at Ariadne. Unlike earlier Greek representations of this scene which depict Athena presenting a crown to Theseus, rewarding him for his virtuous choice, the Roman examples focus only on the hero's internal struggle.¹⁰⁶ In only one unusual variation does Athena appear, a painting from the Casa dei Quattro Stili (CIV.62, *fig.* 82) in which Ariadne sleeps in the background while Theseus and the goddess face one another in the foreground, as if in conversation. In examining erotic gazes on Greek vases, Françoise Frontisi-Ducroux remarks on the

¹⁰⁵ This is, of course, part of the story that Theseus abandons Ariadne out of duty; for more on literary sources see Hans Herter, "Theseus," *PW* suppl. 13 (1973): 1111-1117.

¹⁰⁶ See an example of this scene on a red-figure, calyx crater by the Kadmos Painter from Camerina, Syracuse inv. 17427, *ARV* 1184.

significance of this model as a notation of particular intention on the part of the viewer.¹⁰⁷

The end result is known—Theseus abandons Ariadne on Naxos—however, the painters have intentionally chosen to depict the moment in which he stops and looks back at her sleeping body. Once again the figures are united through vision because the viewer/lover, Theseus, is halted by the sight of his beloved.

The final composition-type represents the moment of transition when neither Dionysus nor Theseus look with love or desire at Ariadne. The episode depicts Ariadne looking out at Theseus' ship as it sails into the distance.¹⁰⁸ Unlike both the discovery and the departure episodes, these panels depict Ariadne as an active viewer. In a model of hierarchy and power, this change would be understood as operating outside the normal gender roles of Roman society and therefore causing anxiety at the lack of male control.¹⁰⁹ But rather than think about *who* is looking (their identity or gender) it is more productive to wonder how that act is performed and received. Like the previous compositions, there is a lack of exchange: Ariadne looks at her beloved, but her gaze is not returned. Ariadne, like Dionysus and Theseus, looks at her beloved—in this case Theseus, represented by his ship—who does not respond.

The scene is described in contemporary Latin poetry. Both Ovid and Catullus describe Ariadne's slow reaction upon realizing that Theseus has left and she is alone on a deserted island.¹¹⁰ The authors describe Ariadne's reaction as she wanders around in a

¹⁰⁷ Frontisi-Ducroux, "Eros, Desire, and the Gaze," 75.

¹⁰⁸ This scene appeared combined with Theseus' departure in fifth century vases, but then seems to disappear from the visual record for several centuries. For a discussion see Anna Gallo, "Le pitture rappresentanti Arianna abbandonata in ambiente pompeiano," *Rivista di Studi Pompeiani* (1988): 57-80.

¹⁰⁹ Shelby Brown, "Death as Decoration: Scenes from the Arena on Roman Domestic Mosaics," in *Pornography and Representation in Greece and Rome* ed. Amy Richlin (Oxford University Press, 1997).

state of frenzy.¹¹¹ These descriptions are not paralleled in the paintings where Ariadne is shown seated looking out over the sea and there is little evidence that Ariadne shows her own emotions, for example a painting from the Casa dei Vettii (**CIV.63**, *fig. 83*) where she holds her hand to her mouth in surprise, shock, or perhaps to quiet a cry. In other instances, she is accompanied by one or more amorini or other winged figures whose actions, gestures, and emotions highlight the protagonist's sadness at her desolation.¹¹² In a painting from the Casa di Meleagro (**CIV.64**, *fig. 84*) Cupid stands next to Ariadne and holds his hands to his eyes as he weeps.¹¹³ These visual cues suggest that Ariadne is captured by the sight of Theseus' ship and reacts emotionally.

Ariadne is the protagonist in each episode and the connective thread that unites the isolated panels within a room, house, or viewer's mind yet her active gaze is highlighted in only one of the three episodes.¹¹⁴ Furthermore, the paintings belong to a clear narrative sequence, but in their isolation focus on single moments, carefully selected for their emphasis on viewing acts and visual interactions. In a pre-modern culture where notions of scopophilia and voyeurism must be utilized with caution, the unequal gazes of Theseus, Dionysus, *and* Ariadne take on a particularly nuanced role in the painting's

¹¹⁰ Ov., *Her.* 10; Catullus 65.54-122.

¹¹¹ Ov., *Her.* 10.47-48 and Cat. 64.124-129; Much work on these paintings concerns their faithfulness to this passage, see Scherf, *Fluegelwesen*, 120-21 and Friedrich, *Die dionysischen Sarkophage III*, 467-468.

¹¹² For instances where a female winged figure appears with Ariadne see **CIV.63**, **CIV.66-CIV.69**; for a male figure with Ariadne see **CIV.71**; On these winged figures see McNally, "Ariadne and Others;" for the winged figures as "guardians" see Scherf *Fluegelwesen*, 22 n.10, 115 n. 207.

¹¹³ For Cupid or amorini see **CIV.64-CIV.66**, **CIV.68--CIV.74**.

¹¹⁴ The surviving examples of all three episodes are primarily from the Fourth Style and in several instances occur together in the same room or same house suggesting a programmatic intention on the part of the patron: Casa di Marco Lucrezio Frontone; the Casa dell'Ara Massima contains two depictions of the II episode, Casa dei Vettii contains the II and III episode.

organization, as directors of subjectivity and director of subject's position.¹¹⁵ While the unreturned gazes of both Theseus and Dionysus could be understood as pictorial depictions of masculine penetration, possession, and ultimately separation, they are more productively read as positive, uniting components of the composition.

Selene and Endymion: Changing Gender Roles

The myth of Selene and Endymion is infrequently represented in paintings, but offers an interesting counterpart to the visual representation of erotic gazing found in paintings of Ariadne, Theseus, and Dionysus.¹¹⁶ Surviving examples of the scene are mostly small, square panels of the late Third and early Fourth Style and illustrate the female moon goddess as she swoops down from the sky to ravish her mortal lover, Endymion. The compositions bear a remarkable resemblance to the discovery scenes of Dionysus and Ariadne. The lack of earlier visual precedents have prompted some scholars to suggest that the Endymion scenes actually derive from the Ariadne paintings as a sort of gender balance.¹¹⁷ The isolated panels stress Selene's passion and hierarchical status with her dynamic movement and position in the painting's upper corners, which contrasts Endymion's languid form as he sleeps in the lower corner of the painting.

¹¹⁵ See Parise-Badoni, "Arianna a Nossos," 73-87.

¹¹⁶ For a comparison of Ariadne and Endymion to one another based on cultic rites see McNally, "Ariadne and Others," 189-190. McNally suggests that Endymion was introduced in Campanian paintings as a deliberate counterpart to Ariadne.

¹¹⁷ McNally, "Ariadne and Others," 189 makes this suggestion most explicitly denying any earlier representations of Endymion and Selene of this type; Scherf, *Fluegelwesen*, 113 suggests three Greek originals of the Endymion scene; T. Wirth, "Zum Bildprogramm der Raum N und P in der Casa dei Vettii," *Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts, Abteilung Rom* 90 (1983): 449-455 ; for Endymion more broadly in art see Hellmut Sichtermann, "Endimione," *EAA* III, 336-37.

Selene and Endymion are found in three surviving paintings and at least four other instances are known from drawings and descriptions. The consistent compositional formula, as seen in a panel in the Casa dell'Ara Massima (**CIV.75**, *fig.85*), depicts Endymion asleep in the foreground while Selene approaches from the back corner. He rests his body on a rock or small hill and uses his left arm to prop up his head and neck. A green garment falls from Endymion's waist leaving his torso, hips, and genitals exposed for visual consumption. Selene floats towards the sleeping hunter as blue drapes swirl around her body to emphasize her dynamic movement. She shifts her head slightly to her left to look at Endymion whose eyes remain closed. The contrast between approaching lover and sleeping beloved is emphasized by the figures' poses, physical actions, and visual behavior. The scenes of Selene and Endymion recall the almost identical compositions of Dionysus and Ariadne, but with inverted gender roles.

Endymion's position and appearance emphasize relaxation and passivity. In his state of slumber, Endymion bends his arm over his head, a gesture that echoes Ariadne's similar pose and perhaps suggests his effeminate role in the interaction.¹¹⁸ This connection to Ariadne is further implied in a painting from the Casa di Ganimede (**CIV.76**) where he lays horizontally on the ground rather than languishing in an upright, seated position recalling both the "discovery" and "departure" episodes of the Ariadne cycle. Although a hunter, Endymion usually appears disarmed or with minimal weapons.¹¹⁹ A painting from Casa del Centenario (**CIV.77**) depicts a thin spear resting

¹¹⁸ Endymion's sleep is often associated with death, in both modern and ancient sources, see Likymnios of Chios *Athenaeus*, 13.564; Marbury B. Ogle, "The Sleep of Death," *MAAR* 11 (1933): 81-117.

¹¹⁹ Endymion's identification as a huntsman is not emphasized here, as is the case with other youthful hunters in Pompeian paintings, such as Dionysus. He is also a herdsman, but these attributes do not appear in painting, only surfacing in later sarcophagi.

gently against his arm, but the youth is otherwise unarmed and without attributes of a hunter. He is consistently shown wearing nothing more than a dark green or red cloak that drapes from his shoulder, around his arm, and to his thighs. His torso and genitals are visible (**CIV.75-CIV.79, CIV.83**) A drawing of a painting from the Casa del Forno a riverbero (**CIV.78**) represents sandals on his feet, but this is the only instance of footwear.¹²⁰ With his sleepy pose, disarmed state, and nude body Endymion resembles another mythological hunter common in Pompeian paintings: Narcissus.

Selene contrasts Endymion's passive, feminized appearance with her dynamic actions and dominate position. Like Dionysus in the "discovery" scenes, Selene is physically positioned above her beloved and moves towards him. A painting from an unidentified Pompeian house (**CIV.79, fig. 86**) shows the goddess as she descends from the sky and raises her arms to hold her garments. Her drapery billows behind her, moving away from her body, and her hair blows around her face. Her body is neither rigid nor aggressive, but active and full of purpose as she approaches her beloved. She steps forward with one of her feet, as if walking through the air towards Endymion, and in several instances her body tilts forward towards the youth (**CIV.76, CIV.77**). In one painting, the connection between the two figures is emphasized by Cupid who actively pulls Selene towards the sleeping figure of Endymion (**CIV.78**).¹²¹ The cherubic figure hovers to the right of Selene holding a torch. He grasps her left arm and gently guides her towards Endymion, recalling similar representations of Cupid and Dionysus.¹²²

¹²⁰ A painting from an unidentified Pompeian house inv. 9242 depicts Endymion's with laced sandals, Hodske, *Mythologische Bildthemen*, cat. 806.

¹²¹ In a drawing of a painting from the Casa di Sirico, Cupid rides a stag in between Endymion and Selene, **CIV.84**.

The panels' similarity to the "discovery" scenes is further emphasized with the figures' visual exchange: the lover looks at the beloved. As the active surveyor of the scene, Selene (the lover) looks at Endymion (the beloved) as she moves towards him. Endymion is asleep with his eyes closed and head turned away from the goddess, resulting in an unequal gaze. By representing Selene as the viewer rather than Endymion, the panels alter the interaction and change normative gender roles. Selene occupies a typically male role and performs the typically male action of pursuer, discoverer, and recipient of love's power. When understood as a source of social power, Selene's gaze upends normative gender roles. As a female goddess who loves a mortal male, Selene's relationship and position can be viewed as an unusual balance of power and passivity.

Eva Stehle explains this difference:

"the pairing of a goddess and a human man poses, within Greek [and one might add, Roman] hegemonic discourse, an irreconcilable conflict between the two established hierarchies, the hierarchy of male and female and that of divine and human. In human relations the female is "tamed" by sexual intercourse, and the subordinate position is identified with the female one. But in divine-human relations the human is subordinate to divine desire."¹²³

As a divine female, Selene's physical dominance and unreturned gaze, therefore, could be understood as signaling her hierarchy as divine goddess with superior desire and thereby upending the cultural definitions of gender: active, penetrating male and passive, penetrated female. But the paintings do not represent the effects of a dominating gaze, they depict a lover captivated by her vision.

¹²² Recall the hovering Cupid that appears next to Dionysus in the discovery scenes, **CIV.34**, **CIV.37**.

¹²³ Stehle, "Sapphos' Gaze," 94.

Rather than focus on the effect Selene's gaze has on Endymion—as the penetrated object—the paintings represent the effect that Endymion has on Selene. Just as Dionysus discovers Ariadne and is drawn to her through sight, Selene discovers Endymion and is captivated—the sight of her beloved penetrates her soul. Like Dionysus, Selene looks at her beloved and is physically and emotionally affected by the act. Selene is a female lover, but she performs the same act as a male lover. That the paintings represent male and female lovers/viewers in the same way, performing the same actions, and having the same reaction suggests that looking at one's beloved was not conceived solely as a gendered performance or assertion of power, but as a universal visual act. Female lover/viewers were just as susceptible as male lover/viewers to the physical affects of eros. Furthermore, the visual evidence represents both men and women as objects of love and therefore capable of emitting stimulating particles towards his/her lover. The notion that both genders held the potential to stimulate intromissive arousal occurs in Plutarch's *Amatorius* when the author comments on the particles that stream off of boys and enter the eyes of lovers and then asks, “why should they not issue from maidens and women as well as from boys and young men?”¹²⁴ The focus of these paintings seems to be not the differences created by gender, but rather the sameness in spite of gender differences.

The power of the gaze to bring lovers together is further attested in a final variation of the composition. While the majority of panels represent Endymion sleeping, unaware of Selene's penetrating gaze, at least four paintings depict the youth awake, lucidly staring back at the approaching goddess. This variation is both unprecedented and

¹²⁴ *Amat.* 766e; on the *Amatorius* see Simon Goldhill, *Foucault's Virginity: Ancient Erotic Fiction and the History of Sexuality* (Cambridge University Press, 1995), 144-161.

unexpected.¹²⁵ Two nearly identical panels from the Casa del Gallo (**CIV.80**, *fig.87*) and the Casa dei Dioscuri (**CIV.81**) illustrate Endymion's more active position. Now on the left side of the panel, Endymion is shown as a youthful but muscular male with defined chest and assertive posture. He sits propped up on a rock turned slightly in profile with his feet resting on the ground in front of him and his right elbow leaning behind him on a ledge. He remains partially nude, but his chest, arms, and legs are no longer soft and fleshy instead toned with highlighting and shadow. Endymion lifts his face up to look straight at Selene who descends from the sky. In the Casa del Gallo painting, his gaze is echoed by one of two anonymous figures who are faintly visible in the background. This rare depiction of visual interaction could indicate a particularly meaningful exchange between the two figures in which both are viewers and both are viewed.

Venus and Mars: Looking and Touching

Paintings of Venus and Mars differ significantly from other mythological love scenes and provide an alternative model for questioning the depiction of love through visual exchange. Erotic paintings by their very nature reference Venusian themes but the goddess also appears as part of an amorous couple.¹²⁶ The most ubiquitous among lovers, she is frequently shown with one of her consorts in scenes that emphasize the goddess' beauty and eroticism. In Roman painting, she does not appear with her husband, *Hephaestus*, but instead with Mars.¹²⁷ These love scenes differ from the others in their choice of subject as well as the figures' positions and behaviors. The lovers are found

¹²⁵ Ines Jucker names two fourth century vases that may show Selene and an awake Endymion, but it is uncertain, *Der Gestus des Aposkopein: Ein Beitrag zur Gebaerdensprache in der antiken Kunst* (Zurich: Juris-Verlage, 1956), 38-39.

¹²⁶ For general iconography of Venus, see pages 177-178 in Chapter 3; also *LIMC*.VIII, "Venus."

¹²⁷ For Venus with *Hephaestus* see *LIMC*.VII, "Ares/Mars," nos. 385-388.

primarily in paintings of the Fourth Style, with a handful of earlier Third Style examples, when it became standard for mythological pendants to occupy the central zone of Roman walls. Representations of the two gods are so common that V. Michael Strocka and Erika Simon describe the pair as *das ideale Liebespaar*, referring to their status as the idealized mythological lovers and an exemplum for Roman love.¹²⁸ Mars and Venus appear in approximately twenty-three panels which scholars classify according to their compositions: the pyramidal type, in which both figures sit on a bench or bed, and the *lectus* type, in which Mars stands while Venus sits.¹²⁹ These compositions have more differences than similarities and Katharina Lorenz has gone so far as to suggest that they represent two forms of love: legitimate versus erotic.¹³⁰ With differences in position, gesture, visual behavior, and context the paintings of Mars and Venus demonstrate a change in representation from the third to the Fourth Style that allowed a corresponding change in focus.

Mars and Venus begin to appear as ideal lovers in Roman art of the imperial period, and particularly Roman paintings. Earlier Greek representations, both textual and artistic, of Ares and Aphrodite depict the two gods as an adulterous couple, focusing on their illicit behavior.¹³¹ The pair are often shown with Hephaestus lingering in the

¹²⁸ Strocka, "Mars und Venus," 130, "*das ideale Liebespaar*"; Simon, *LIMC*.II, "Ares/Mars," 505-567; For earliest interpretations of the paintings see Curtius, *Wandmalerei Pompejis*, 250.

¹²⁹ Strocka, "Mars und Venus," 130; Lorenz, *Bilder machen Räume*, 149-159.

¹³⁰ There are also at least three paintings of the two standing together for which Lorenz suggests a cultic function *Bilder machen Räume*, 149-50; See similar iconography in reliefs from the Temple of Mars Ultor in Zanker, 198-201.

¹³¹ Hom., *Il.* VIII.261ff; also Ov., *Met.* 4.171-78; bibliography on the Homeric version of the tale is understandably long. For an introduction see, W. Burkert, "Das Lied von Ares und Aphrodite," *RhM* 103 (1960): 130-144; for commentary on Ovid's version see Victor Castellani, "Two Divine Scandals: Ovid *Met.* 2.680ff and 4.171ff and His Sources," *Transactions of the American Philological Association* 110 (1980): 37-50.

background in compositions that illustrate Book VIII of the *Iliad* or depict the couple caught in the act, as Hephaestus' net ensnares the guilty pair. By depicting the lovers under the voyeuristic gaze of Aphrodite's husband and rightful lover, Hephaestus, the representations emphasize the lovers' adulterous act. Their actions result in punishment, which is evident from the composition. Conversely, Roman paintings are free of any negative connotations surrounding an adulterous affair and instead highlight mutual love. Roman depictions of Mars and Venus derive from these earlier Greek models, but alter the composition in order to refocus the scene's theme from adulterous lust to idealized love.

The *lectus* type displays a formal relationship between the lovers. Three Third Style paintings represent this composition type in which Mars stands while Venus remains seated.¹³² The compositions follow a standard formula: Venus sits on a cushion or bed while Mars stands behind her in what seems to be a private moment. Based on their garments, context, and gesture, Lorenz suggests that these paintings represent the marriage of the two gods and therefore 'legitimate' love. No longer watched by *Hephaestus* as in Greek images, the two lovers are free to be together. However, the images depict a surprisingly restrained moment of interaction, focusing not on physical passion but instead on restrained contact. The painting in the Casa di Marco Lucrezio Frontone (**CIV.95**, *fig.39*) shows Venus on the left side of the composition where she perches on a cushioned bench, identified as a *lectus* or marriage bed, and rests her feet on a footstool. Mars stands behind the goddess. Unlike in the other love scenes, the figures are in direct physical contact with one another. Mars reaches across Venus' chest to touch

¹³² The three paintings are **CIV.95**, **CIV.96**, **CIV.97**.

her breast and she lifts her hand to pull Mars' arm towards her body, a gesture that is especially vivid in a painting from the Casa dell'amore punito (**CIV.96**, *fig.88*). In this context, the gesture has been interpreted as a reference to the *dextrarum iunctio* or joining of the bride and groom's right hands during a Roman wedding.¹³³ The wedding of Venus and Mars is an appropriate trope for these Third Style paintings from the early first century AD, a period in which marriage and fidelity were emphasized.¹³⁴ Venus' dress also suggests a more conservative matron or bride.¹³⁵ She wears a simple garment and modest jewels. In a panel from the Casa del Amore Punito painting Venus wears a dark purple garment that covers her entire body leaving only her right arm, left hand, and right breast exposed. A simple gold diadem rests on her head, but she wears no other jewelry. Venus' conservative appearance is in stark contrast to her usual eroticized depiction in Roman wall paintings and finds visual parallels in contemporary depictions of Roman brides, for example the seated female figure from the large room 5 of the Villa dei Misteri.¹³⁶

Whether portraying a wedding or a private moment, the panels seem in contrast to the other love discussed so far except for the figures' visual behavior. Mars stands behind

¹³³ For this interpretation see Lorenz, *Bilder machen Räume*, 155; For the gesture in Roman art see Diana E.E. Kleiner, *Roman Group Portraiture. The Funerary Reliefs of the Late Republic and Early Empire* (New York and London, 1977), 24-25 nos. 13, 18, 28, 31, 34. Kleiner suggests that in funerary art, the gesture is symbolic of affection and fidelity, Diana E.E. Kleiner, "Second-Century Mythological Portraiture: Mars and Venus," *Latomus* 40.5 (1981): 530; The *dextrarum iunctio* gesture may be based on the earlier Greek *cheir epi karpo* gesture, in which a man grasps a woman's wrist in scenes of abduction or rape, but scholars disagree on the origins and relation of these gestures. See Oakley and Sinos, *Wedding in Ancient Athens* (University of Wisconsin Press, 1993), 137 n. 71; For the gesture in a more intimate scene of Mars and Venus see **CIV.106**.

¹³⁴ For similar iconography of married mortals in the guise of Mars and Venus see Kleiner, "Mars and Venus," 512-544.

¹³⁵ For iconography of Roman brides see La Follette, "The Costume of the Roman Bride," 54-64.

¹³⁶ Toynbee, "Villa Item," 77-78.

Venus and seems to look down at his beloved, but she does not look at him. Venus looks into the distance, not out at the viewer, but also not at Mars. The focus seems to be less on the lovers' interaction, either physical or visual, with one another and more on their larger context. In the earliest of the three panels, that from the Casa del Amore Punito, the figures float on the flat white background typical of Third Style paintings, but in both the Casa di Marco Lucrezio Frontone and the Casa dell'Efebo (**CIV.97**, *fig.40*) Mars and Venus are surrounded by a crowd of observers in a confined room. Two maidens sit on the right facing the gods and two stand in the background behind the low wall. In the center, a youthful Cupid relaxes in a contrapposto stance and holds his bow. One final figure is visible, entering through a doorway in the background. The identities and importance of the observers have puzzled scholars. As Strocka rightly points out, these figures are not Olympian gods—an angry Hephaestus is not present—and therefore do not reference the adulterous episode of Greek art.¹³⁷ Instead, the spectators seem to be approving eyes, witnessing and possibly legitimizing the 'marriage' of Mars and Venus. Each of the figures watches Venus and Mars as they interact. Here, the external audience is welcomed and even encouraged to look at the divine couple for witnesses lend credence to the act.¹³⁸ The inclusion of observer figures, as in this example, is characteristic of Third Style paintings and draws the attention away from the lovers and the intricacies of their intimate relationship. The subject of *these* painting is not Mars and Venus' visual or physical interaction or even their identity as lovers, but rather the way in which they are observed by others, including the outside audience.

¹³⁷ Also, Simon, *LIMC*.VII, "Ares/Mars," no. 389.

¹³⁸ On spectators as judges see Chapter 2, 91-92.

Approximately fifteen late third and Fourth Style paintings represent a different composition in which the figures are shown in intimate scenes of close embrace.¹³⁹ Unlike scenes of Ariadne and her lovers or Selene and Endymion, these panels focus on an intimate embrace, coming closer to the “erotic” paintings of mortal figures. A painting from the Casa delle Nozze di Ercole (**CIV.98**, *fig. 89*) provides one of the best preserved examples of the pyramidal composition, so named because of the figures’ position in the center of the composition where Venus leans into Mars. In this large panel, Mars and Venus sit together in the center. Mars sits upright, his feet flat on the ground to support his weight and his back straight. Mars’ rigid pose is juxtaposed with Venus’ relaxed and more graceful posture. She crosses her legs in front of her and leans backward into Mars’s chest, relying on his body for support. She rests her left elbow on Mars’ knee, and raises her right arm above her head. The figures are alone and sit in a private, interior space. A panel from the Casa del Menandro situates the lovers in an architectural setting: two walls converge to form a corner behind the figures, (**CIV.99**, *fig. 20*) suggesting a closed room and creating an illusionistic space through the use of limited perspective. Even when no architecture background or landscape is explicitly indicated, the panels foreground the figures and minimize the compositions space with larger figures, as is typical of Fourth Style paintings.

A close look at the paintings’ iconography reveals similarities to other representations of mythological lovers. Venus is shown in her eroticized guise typical of wall paintings and appropriate to her context with one of her lovers. She is nude, her soft milky skin covered only by a garment draped across her lap. Pearls adorn her ears and in the Casa delle Nozze di Ercole painting, a golden diadem is nestled in her brown curls

¹³⁹ These are: **CIV.97-CIV.111**, **CIV.267**.

while a delicate gold chain wraps around her neck and torso. Venus is not only shown in this her more eroticized self, but her pose and appearance echoes that of other beloved figures. With her fleshy torso and relaxed legs forming a near diagonal, her form resembles that of the sleeping Endymion as he sits awaiting Selene. Venus' raised arm, shown in the Casa di L. Caecilius Iucundus for example (**CIV.100**, *fig. 90*) mirrors the pose of both Endymion and Ariadne.¹⁴⁰ In several drawings, she reaches for a veil behind her head with her raised arm, but this does not appear clearly in any surviving paintings.¹⁴¹

Mars and Venus also display the established visual relationship between lover and beloved. As he embraces Venus, Mars looks towards her. A painting from the Casa dei Epigrami (**CIV.101**, *fig. 91*) offers an example in which Mars shifts his eyes towards Venus and the goddess' delicate head is turned up and her eyes shift to find his face. Although in many of the paintings Venus lifts her head towards Mars, the position of the two figures often prevents intimate visual contact. Only the Casa dei Epigrami painting does Venus clearly direct her eyes towards Mars. More often, Venus does not look at Mars. In a panel from the Casa dell'Ara Massima (**CIV.102**, *fig. 92*) she actually looks away from her lover. Although her face is tilted back and turned to the right to meet his cheek her eyes clearly point to the left. In other instances she exhibits a less directed stare off of the panel, but not towards Mars.¹⁴²

¹⁴⁰ For Venus' raised arm see **CIV.98**, **CIV.99**, **CIV.101**, **CIV.102**, **CIV.104**, **CIV.105**, **CIV.108**, **CIV.109**.

¹⁴¹ See her veil in **CIV.109**.

¹⁴² See the same interaction in **CIV.99**.

Similarly, Mars as the lover is affected by the power of love which emanates from Venus' body. He is not depicted as the active and powerful god of war, but instead the subjective lover. His implements are scattered throughout the scene leaving him disarmed and easily penetrated by the particles streaming towards him. In the Casa dell'Ara Massima painting, the shiny shield rests against a wall in the background behind Mars while Cupid sits in the foreground, playfully wearing the helmet. The neglected weapons and armor reflect the status of their owner, who, being disarmed, is vulnerable and subject to the power of love. With no protection, guard, or offense Mars is consumed by love and he, like other lovers, is drawn to his beloved.¹⁴³ Direct physical contact between mythological lovers is rare in scenes, which more often hint at connection with gesture or signs of movement, but Mars wraps his arms around the goddess.¹⁴⁴

The pictorial representation of desire expressed through physical embrace appears consistently in images of Venus with her lovers. Physical contact is more characteristic of mainstream 'erotic' paintings rather than mythological love scenes, which prefer to hint at eventual contact or sexual behavior. When mythological lovers do touch one another it is usually subtle rather than a full embrace.¹⁴⁵ The intimate, erotic, embrace between Mars and Venus is echoed in a series of paintings that represent the goddess with another of her lovers, Adonis. Despite their difference in subject, paintings of this scene have remarkably similar compositions in which the lovers are positioned close to one another

¹⁴³ Mars wears his helmet in one painting **CIV.96** and one drawing **CIV.109**.

¹⁴⁴ For this same intimate physical embrace see **CIV.98**, **CIV.99**, **CIV.100-CIV.102**, **CIV.104**, **CIV.105**, **CIV.208**.

¹⁴⁵ Apollo grasps Daphne's arm: **CIV.19**, **CIV.22**, **CIV.26**; Io and Argo: **CIV.28**.

in the center of the panel, often embracing, and in intimate settings or landscapes. The differences, however, lay not only in *who* Venus loves, but also *how* she behaves.

Adonis is found with Venus in scenes that depict his death.¹⁴⁶ The panels are traditionally understood as Venus comforting her young, dying lover, however, they very rarely display aspects of this event. Instead, the panels focus on the relationship between the two figures using compositions and iconography familiar from the pyramidal Mars and Venus panels. A painting from the Casa di Meleagro (**CIV.114**, *fig. 93*) most closely resembles the pyramidal compositions of Mars and Venus. The couple sits alone in the center of the panel with no indication of setting or context. Adonis appears in the front, seated on a chair or stool with his legs facing the right and his body facing forward. Venus sits behind him, supporting his torso and places a comforting hand on his shoulder. Cupid hovers behind Adonis' left shoulder. The only indicator of Adonis' impending death is a small wound and blood on the hunter's thigh.¹⁴⁷ The figures' positions and physical contact clearly recall the earlier Mars and Venus paintings, but the roles are reversed: Venus resembles Mars with her upright position while Adonis' languid pose is closer to that of the goddess. A similar painting in the Casa di Adone Ferito (**CIV.115**, *fig. 21*) takes this comparison even further. Adonis' right arm is held up by Venus, recalling the sleeping poses of Endymion, Ariadne, and even Venus.¹⁴⁸ His soft, fleshy body also echoes these figures as they appeared in earlier paintings. It is nude, except for

¹⁴⁶ The paintings are: **CIV.110**, **CIV.114-CIV.127**; This is, of course, not the only scene of the two figures that appears in all visual evidence, but is the only scene found in paintings of this period. See *LIMC.I*, "Adonis," 223-225 for other types; Koortbojian, *Myth Meaning and Memory*, 23-35.

¹⁴⁷ A drawing of a painting in the **CIV.120** Casa di Medico shows Adonis fully reclined on Venus' lap while Cupid stands to the side weeping, but this is does not appear in any surviving paintings.

¹⁴⁸ See the raised arm gesture with Venus in the Casa di L. Caecilius Iucundus **CIV.100**; with Endymion in the Casa dell'Ara Massima, **CIV.75**; and with Ariadne in the Casa dell'Ara Massima, **CIV.56**.

a mantle that draped around his waist and forearm. An amorino bandages the wound on his left thigh, identifying this as a part of the death narrative. Venus replaces Mars in the role of subjective lover. She sits behind and slightly above Adonis. She wears a light, gauzy chiton that covers her torso, but leaves her arms bare and hugs her form. Venus looks down at Adonis, her eyes positioned at his head, and Adonis also looks up towards Venus. The painter has not positioned Adonis' head so that his eyes will actually meet Venus' gaze, but this appears to be a technical mistake since his eyes are deliberately pointed upward.¹⁴⁹

A series of late third and early Fourth Style paintings further emphasizes visual interaction between the two lovers and abandon any reference to Adonis' death.¹⁵⁰ The earliest example is a large, Third Style panel from the Casa del Citarista (**CIV.122**, *fig. 94*) in which the pair appear in the center of the vertical composition where they sit amidst a rocky landscape.¹⁵¹ On the right, Adonis sits upright and props himself up with his left arm, his assertive posture a stark contrast from his relaxed pose in the former panels. He turns his body slightly to the left towards Venus and stretches left leg to form a slight diagonal. The goddess leans against Adonis' body and wraps her arms around his shoulders. This composition departs from the Mars and Venus model. His face is in profile as he looks straight at Venus.¹⁵² Her body twists to the right and her face is in

¹⁴⁹ See Richardson's description of this painting and the Adone Ferito painter, in *Figure Painters*, 91-92.

¹⁵⁰ These include **CIV.115**, **CIV.116**, **CIV.121**, **CIV.123-CIV.126**.

¹⁵¹ The identity of the male figure in this panel has variously identified as Adonis, Anchises, and Aeneas; For Adonis see Erika Simon, *Gesammelte Schriften* (1986), 123-237; For Anchises see Lehmann, *Roman Wall Paintings from Boscoreale*, 38-81; For a re-reading of Aeneas and Dido see de Vos, *PPM.I*, 151ff; For the suggestion that the figure has a polyvalent identification see Lorenz, *Bilder machen Räume*, 175-180.

¹⁵² Lorenz, *Bilder machen Räume*, 174 posits that the male figure in **CIV.121** and **CIV.125** may be Mars rather than Adonis based on his attributes: sword and shield.

three-quarter profile to look at Adonis. The figures stare directly into each others' eyes with a closeness not found in any known paintings of Mars and Venus, but resembling the visual interaction between Selene and Endymion—another female-deity and mortal-male pair.

Although the paintings of Mars and Venus are significantly different from other scenes of mythological lovers, several important features connect them to other love scenes. Aside from the appearance of Mars and Venus, the *lectus* type composition shares few characteristics with other paintings of the figures or mythological lovers. The pyramidal compositions, adapt elements of other love scenes including a secluded and intimate setting and a one-way gaze. Although significantly modified, the lover—Mars—looks at Venus who does not look back. Venus adopts the relaxed appearance and actions of other beloveds. The most noticeable difference between these and other scenes is that the two figures are in close physical contact with one another, often in an intimate embrace.

That paintings of Venus and her lovers should focus on physical contact as well as visual interaction is somewhat puzzling, when examined within the larger context of mythological love scenes. Wherein other scenes almost never represent the physical aspects of desire, these compositions always focus on both and may even favor the physical behavior.

Conclusions

Aside from Venus and her lovers, mythological couples are almost always separated from one another in a composition. The separation can be made more obvious by the inclusion of a cupid hovering between them. The lover may stand or sit on one side of the composition while the beloved sits or reclines on the opposite side. Only in rare instances do the figures touch one another, most often this is found in scenes of Venus and Mars, Venus and Adonis, Apollo and Daphne, or Pyramus and Thisbe, perhaps highlighting special events or interactions. Although separated, the lover often moves towards his/her beloved a feature indicated by flowing garments or moving limbs. S/he may also gesture towards the beloved and on several occasions indicates emotions with facial expressions. Ariadne, for example, points and weeps at her beloved Theseus as he sails off into the distance. Conversely, the beloved is static. S/he usually reclines in a chair or lays on the ground in a relaxed position and, in the case of Ariadne and Endymion, is frequently asleep. In most love scenes, the lover looks at the beloved, facing his/her head and sometimes body towards the other figure. Conversely, the beloved is typically disengaged or unaware of the gaze; visual exchange is rare.

The identity of a lover or beloved is not standardized according to gender or other features (god, mortal). Although male figures more often occupy the position of viewer/lover, this is not a strict distinction and female figures are also shown looking at their beloved (i.e., Selene, Ariadne, Omphale, Venus). While there may be some indications of hierarchy in the divine-mortal relationships between Selene and Venus and their respective lovers, this alone does not seem to account for their iconographic depiction as subjective lovers. Ariadne, for instance, also appears as a viewer/lover.

Rather than understand the relationship between vision and love as one that manifests as violent penetration and ultimately power, I suggest an alternate model based on ancient optical theories of the erotic gaze as a force that affects the viewer just as much as the viewed. Wherein the gaze as a wielder of power asks what the process of looking does to the (female) object, the erotic gaze instead interrogates the reciprocal relationship between subject and object, contending that the subject (lover) is also affected by the object (beloved). The unifying power of vision, understood as a tactile force, captivated the lover and induced a response. Accordingly, these images should be seen as representing the power of love to capture, enthrall, and transform. By rethinking the importance of ‘the look’ in these love scenes, I do not contend that penetration, power, and gender played no role, but instead offer new insight and additional nuance. That vision was powerful is uncontested; but this model suggests that the affects of this power were not necessarily felt in only one direction.

Furthermore, by considering the importance of the gaze in these mythological love scenes I suggest that the “erotic” be extended to include more than depictions of physical behavior and sexual intercourse. While love scenes of mythological lovers do not depict vivid physical interaction between figures they do certainly depict a relationship that, according to contemporary authors, could be even more powerful than the sex act itself.¹⁵³ This does not necessarily negate the existence of cultural gender dynamics and vision, but suggests alternate/additional means of understanding the interaction between mythological lovers.

Considering these mythological love scenes as displays of erotic *interaction* also begs the question: how did ancient viewers look at the panels? When a wealth of

¹⁵³ Plut., *Amat.* 27.766e; A. Tatius *Clitophan & Leucippe* 5.13.4.

scholarship has considered the audience's reaction to and interaction with erotic art and objects these panels offer what might initially be considered a tamer alternative to the more overt sex scenes found in wealthy homes and other spaces. Although these mythological love scenes appear in domestic contexts rather than brothels or other civic locations, they might still have the ability to evoke feelings of desire just as powerful as the "fancy sex paintings" that appear in the same elite homes. But as John Clarke, Natalie Kampen, and others have attested, the ancient Roman attitude towards sex scenes was not the same as ours.¹⁵⁴ If gazing at one's beloved held the potential to be as stimulating and pleasurable as actual physical contact or even sexual intercourse, then these panels could, at the very least, confirm the active power of vision.¹⁵⁵

¹⁵⁴ Clarke, *Looking at Lovemaking*; Kampen, *Sexuality in Ancient Art*.

¹⁵⁵ The panels have also been regarded both as part of the hierarchy of literary genres (heroic epic, lyric, epigram) or, alternatively social power, that may have worked to code Roman social space, see Wallace Hadrill, "Social Structure of the Roman House," *BSR* 56 (1988): 75; Fredrick, "Erotic Painting and Visual Pleasure," 267 on power.

CONCLUSION

Given the primacy of the sense of sight in ancient Rome, Roman wall paintings are ripe to contribute new information to the history of viewing. The words vision, viewing, seeing, looking, gazing, and many others are at the core of many investigations of art and material evidence from the ancient world, that seek to understand *how* people saw, *what* they looked at, and *who* was seeing. Inquiries into ancient visual culture, however, are frequently bolstered by modern theories of vision or rooted in the notion that art illustrates life. Acknowledging the overwhelming interest in vision and viewing practice in the Roman world, this study contends that wall paintings are a source of evidence for understanding Roman attitudes towards sight. The goal has neither been to use the images as supporting evidence for existing theories of vision nor to suggest that the paintings represent social practice, but instead to examine the pictorial language with which Roman painters represented the phenomenon of vision and subsequently to understand ways in which these depictions may have been understood within their ancient culture.¹ Through the visual analysis of mythological wall paintings, this study has reached new conclusions regarding the depiction of viewers and visual experience which can contribute to the overall history of viewing in the Roman world.

With their rich diversity of figural motifs, wall paintings offer a valuable source of evidence for understanding the way in which Roman cultural notions of vision, seeing, and looking were translated into pictorial form (and vice versa). Prior studies of the

¹ Recall Clarke's suggestion that erotic paintings represent practice in *Looking at Lovemaking* and see the Introduction, 6 ; alternatively, Fredrick, uses paintings as evidence of social practice when he says "this essay will draw upon some recent trends in Roman social history, and will treat the paintings as evidence for that history," "Erotic Painting and Visual Pleasure," 271.

subject, however, have offered general observations and used a limited portion of the painted evidence. Although there are an estimated 500 figural panels from Pompeii, for example, the painting of Theseus from the Casa di Gavius Rufus (**CIL.1**) is repeatedly invoked as evidence of the Roman interest in representing internal viewers and thus focalizing the process of viewing. Bianchi Bandinelli, Michel, Clarke, Ling, Dobbins, Elsner, Lorenz, and other scholars have all offered varied thoughts and observations about this admittedly intriguing illustration of ‘supernumerary’ figures.² Their approaches, with rare exceptions, have tended to focus on single, vivid examples of internal viewers offering in-depth analyses of compositions, contexts, and potential viewers but no consideration of the larger body of visual evidence. But only limited conclusions can be drawn from a single painting, or even consideration of several similar paintings. By expanding the corpus of evidence to include more paintings, focusing on a close visual analysis, and treating the paintings as part of the Roman culture of vision, it has become clear that Theseus and his audience are only one part of a much larger pictorial occurrence. Four major themes emerge throughout the analysis: 1) Roman paintings repeatedly represent acts of looking, seeing, and viewing and in many different ways; 2) vision is intentional and indicated by formal traits; 3) vision is an active process; and 4) paintings affect response.

Vision is Different

This study has confirmed the frequently noted occurrence of internal gazes, spectators, and viewers in Roman wall painting, bolstering the particularly insightful

² See Chapter 2, fn. 4-6.

suggestion that the panels serve as a “laboratory for the exploration of strategies of viewing.”³ Other scholars have noted the internal audiences and commented on the “theater of gazes” that occur because of their presence, but with little distinction or critical analysis. The previous chapters have provided a detailed examination of these viewers to conclude that Roman paintings represent many different and specific ways of looking, seeing, and viewing. Spectator figures, such as those found in the Theseus painting from the Casa di Gavius Rufus, are by far the most common types of painted viewers, but visual analysis of paintings has demonstrated that this is certainly not the only way in which vision and viewing experience are represented in wall paintings and even the term ‘spectator’ requires critical distinction. In the paintings under consideration, viewership is articulated with three repeated, but different motifs: spectatorship, reflections, and lovers gazing at one another. Each of these motifs is articulated with a standardized visual language. Spectator-figures stand on the sidelines watching scenes. Reflections appear in catoptric surfaces, namely mirrors, when an object of vision—Venus, Perseus, Narcissus, or Thetis—looks at the surface. Lovers stand at a distance from their beloved and are almost always engaged in a one-way visual exchange.

Distinguishing different types of viewership provides new meaning for the paintings in which the images are no longer solely about a generalized idea of ‘viewing’ but a more specific and culturally situated way of seeing. A spectator figure watching a scene performs a far different action than Selene looking at sleeping Endymion although both could be considered ‘viewers’ and both look from a distance at objects of vision. When considered together, the varied depictions of viewership form a more complete

³ Lorenz, “Ear of the Beholder,” 680.

picture of the way in which Romans translated the cultural interest in vision during the first century AD.

Vision is the Same

The distinction between acts of viewing is made evident through context, figures' actions, and behaviors, however, it remains that all of the scenes focalize vision. While different, several formal traits occur throughout all of the paintings that emphasize figures' gazes, visual exchange, or act of seeing. Observer-figures, by their very nature, heighten the outside viewer's awareness of their presence by their separation and smaller scale. The very presence of such figures in a composition turns the scene into one of a display or spectacle. In scenes that depict reflection or mythological lovers, the visual act is emphasized by the figures' actions. Figures are shown looking over their shoulder in a backwards-directed gaze that highlights their intentional look in one direction. This is most common in scenes of Narcissus, who frequently leans his body in one direction while turning his head over his shoulder to look towards the opposite side at his reflection, or off into the distance. A similar situation occurs with scenes of Venus and Mars where the pair are found sitting together, the goddess leaning against Mars' chest. Even though damage to many paintings prevents one from clearly seeing the direction of her gaze, Venus strains her neck to look up and backwards at Mars as in the painting from the Casa dell'Ara Massima (*fig. 92*).

Finally, gesture and facial expression indicates a figure's response to a particular situation. Observer figures, for instance, gesture towards the object of vision or respond to what they see with facial expressions. Group reactions are often generalized with the

entire group raising their arms in shock while individualized figures may express differentiated reactions or responses. A particularly reactive pair of eavesdropping nymphs, for example, express their surprise at Callisto's state (**CII.18**) as they raise their hands to their face and open their eyes widely. Gestures serve to echo the figures' own gaze, with the canonical example being the old man in the Casa di Gavius Rufus painting. In several instances, protagonist figures highlight the direction of their gaze with gesture. The most noticeable instance of this is the painting of Ariadne (**CIV.65**). In other instances, accompanying figures point or gesture to focalize the protagonist figure's gaze.

Vision is Active

The gestures, reaction, and other behaviors of painted viewers can also be understood with the help of contemporary sources on optical theory and viewing practice. Although ancient theories of vision differed in their consensus over the eye's role in the process of sight, as either an active or passive in sending or receiving particles/rays, the painted representations consistently emphasize the cultural notion of viewing as an active process in which the viewer participates, engages, and interacts with his/her object of vision.

The observer-figures discussed in Chapter 2 participate in scenes through their gestures and reactions. The figures do not simply stand on the sideline or in the background, but contribute to the main scene with their suggestive tone or focalizing gesture. In the case of lovers, as discussed in Chapter 4, viewing is shown as a simultaneously active and passive process in which the figures engage in visual interaction. The lover looks directly at the beloved and in some instances is shown

walking or otherwise moving towards her/him. Selene, for example, floats down towards Endymion and Dionysus approaches sleeping Ariadne. While on the surface this seems to indicate a one-sided interaction—Selene looking at a passive Endymion—a deeper consideration of Roman notions of erotic looking suggest that it was actually a two-way process. Lovers were affected by the site of the beloved. Such interaction is evidenced in the painting as Selene is drawn towards Endymion who sleeps contently.

Vision Transforms

Finally, the images examined in this study bring into focus the relationship between wall paintings and their external audience and its effect on meaning. By considering wall paintings as participants in a Roman visual culture, rather than solely aesthetic art objects, the painted figures have been understood as more than compositional elements or attributes relevant to the mythological narrative. Just as the viewers represented in paintings are active viewers, the external audience looking at paintings was also active in its own process of seeing.

As was established in Chapter 1, vision and the experience of viewing were core components of daily life in ancient Rome and the repeated depiction of visual experiences in the paintings only serves to further emphasize the significance of this sense. The paintings, however, should not be read as direct representations of the viewer's own act of seeing. When a viewer looks at a painting of a mythological pair of lovers, he does not necessarily engage in the same exchange of erotic love that is occurring in the painting. The individual can, however, bring his knowledge of contemporary beliefs or viewing practice to the experience.

Although this study has not specifically addressed chronology, broad observations regarding changes in representation over time contribute to our understanding of the increasingly active Roman audience. While it has previously been observed that spectator figures were most common in paintings of the late first century BC-early first century AD, this observation does not take into consideration the frequent appearance of secondary observers in Fourth Style paintings of the middle first century AD. In the extant evidence, the small and anonymous observers who previously fill the backgrounds disappear in the early first century AD, but are quickly replaced with larger figures often involved in the scene. At the same time, the Fourth Style mythological panels representing Narcissus, Perseus, and others integrate other themes of viewership at a time when painted compositions were becoming more simplified to focus on moments of contemplation or ‘pre-action.’ The emphasis on a more involved internal viewer in these cases may reflect the contemporaneous change in social practices. During a period when spectators were becoming more active, for example, and spectatorship meant more than simply watching from the sidelines, these paintings change the way in which spectatorship is represented.

With the change in representation, comes an increasingly blurred division between external Roman audience and internal painted viewers. Perhaps the figures who look out from the wall at the external audience go furthest among paintings in shifting the focus from compositional figure to the audience member. This shift in focus simultaneously transforms the audience from passive observer to active participant, engaging in and reacting to the scene. The ability of paintings to act upon their audience is not limited to these overt depictions, however, but occurs in all of the paintings with

their complex patterns of vision. The patterns of viewing in each of the panels, whether spectators, reflections, or lovers, alert the viewer of his own act and at the same time guide him through the process. By providing visual cues, reactions, or overt visual interaction with the outside audience, the painted viewers transform the Roman viewer into a participant.

The Culture of Viewing

Mythological wall paintings have most often been considered for their faithfulness to textual narrative sources, treated more like illustrations of stories than sources of evidence in their own right. Such readings attempt to understand how depictions represent texts rather than to examine what is painted or how it is understood by those who viewed it. Text-based readings of paintings, often rooted in semiotics, are especially useful and effective with individual paintings or multiple paintings of the same myth wherein deep analyses can be conducted, however, alternate approaches offer additional insights. Paintings are more than vivid depictions of familiar mythological stories to be decoded by scholars. They are ‘objects’ looked at and engaged with by ancient individuals and as such can help us to understand the culture of viewing.

This study has examined one aspect of these paintings, their representation of vision and viewing experiences, with the hope of clarifying ways in which this cultural interest is reflected in the pictorial evidence. By taking into consideration a large catalogue of paintings and looking beyond the commonly cited examples, this study has demonstrated the wide occurrence of painted, internal viewers engaged in an equally wide variety of visual behaviors. Roman paintings do not only represent spectatorship—

which in itself is nuanced—but also depict a range of viewing experiences, thereby confirming the deep-rooted cultural interest in vision and its many forms.

The wall paintings gain and contribute meaning to this Roman culture of vision based on their relationships with social factors, space, viewers, texts, and other factors meaning that all of these elements offer additional threads of insight. Because this study did not examine all of the paintings in their original viewing context, future work should more directly consider the way in which viewers encountered the paintings in architectural space, asking how viewing conditions may have affected the relationship between beholder and image. Additional questions might address the ‘art of vision’ beyond wall painting, in other surface decoration—specifically mosaics—as well as sculpture, jewelry, and other small objects. Do the same patterns appear in other media or were wall paintings particularly well-suited for these pictorial themes? As is nearly always true in studies of Roman art and specifically wall painting, one should look beyond Campania and the Italian peninsula to observe the art of vision in paintings of the Roman provinces and in later periods. Particularly interesting would be the change (or continuity?) in representations of vision in Late Antiquity as Christianity begins to take a stronger hold or in the Roman East with its longstanding Hellenistic traditions.⁴

In yoking Roman art to questions of vision, visuality, and viewership that are so pertinent to the broader field of art history, this study has offered new thoughts about old material and perhaps suggested new material for old thoughts. The well-worn notion of Rome’s fascination with vision is made visible in wall paintings, whose endless combinations of mythological scenes offer a host of possible spaces to further explore the

⁴ The discontinuity of viewing modes between pagan and Christian Rome is the premise of Elsner, *Art and the Roman Viewer*.

relationship between vision and art. Perhaps most importantly, it is clear that wall paintings do more than illustrate narratives; they participate in the Rome's visual culture.

APPENDIX I

TABLES

Narcissus	6
Venus	4
Endymion	2
Hermaphrodite	2
Perseus	2
Unidentified Women	2
Apollo	1
Io and Argo	1
Briseis	1
Iphigenia	1
Diana	1
Hera	1
Cyparissus	1
Atalanta	1

Table 1. Spectator figures who look out from the wall and the number of times they are found.

Undefined	9
Triclinium	6
Tablinum	3
Peristyle	2
Atrium	2
Cubiculum	1
Biclinium	1
Oecus	1
Portico	1

Table 2. Locations of paintings with outward looking figures and the number of times the paintings are found in these rooms, Chapter 2.

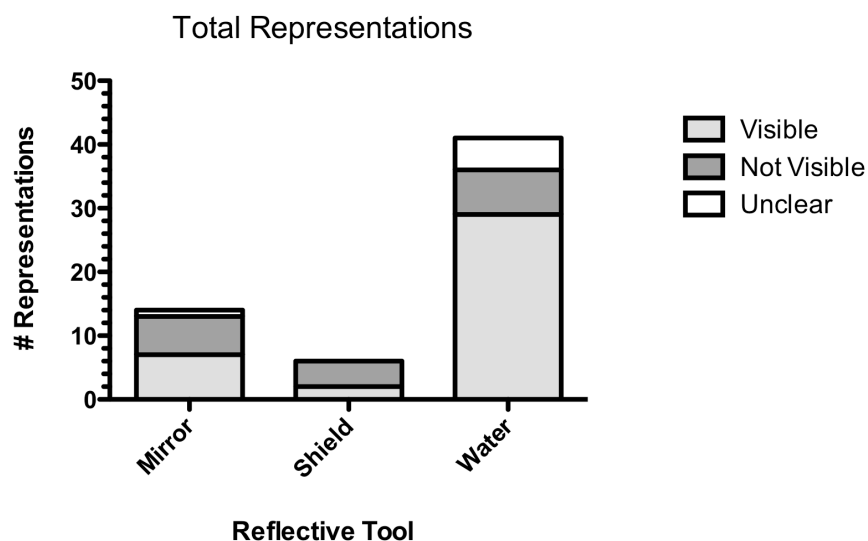


Table 3. Reflective device and visible reflections in extant paintings, drawings, and watercolors. Of the total representations, 14 depict a mirror, 6 a shield, and 41 water. In these tools, visible reflections appear in 6 mirrors, 2 shields, and 29 bodies of water.

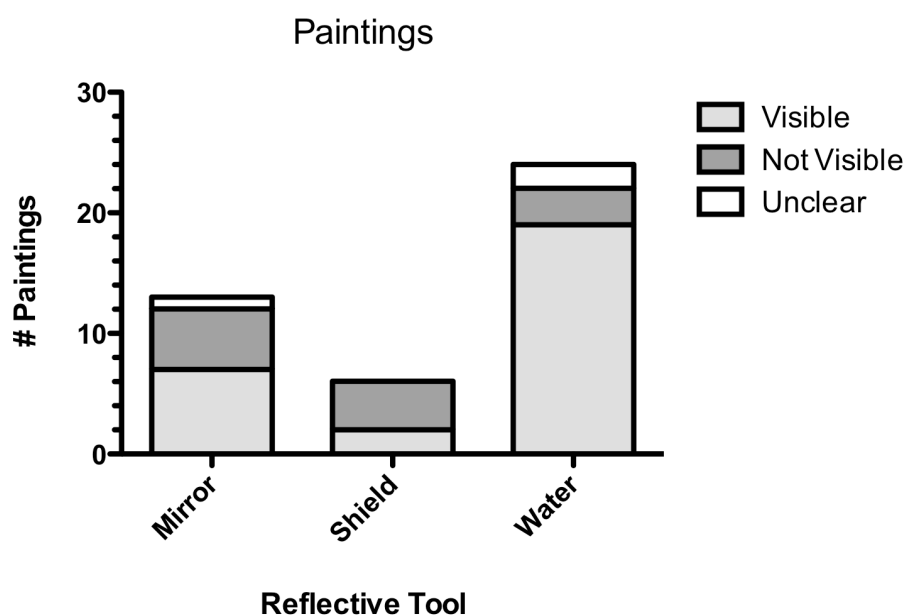


Table 4. Reflective device and visible reflections in extant paintings. Of the total representations, 13 depict a mirror, 6 a shield, and 24 water. In these tools, visible reflections appear in 7 mirrors, 2 shields, and 19 bodies of water.

	Figure looks at Reflection	Figure looks at Audience
Yes	27	13
No	13	39
Unclear	10	9

Table 5. Direction of the figure's gaze in all representations (extant paintings, drawings, and watercolors)

	Figure looks at Reflection	Figure looks at Audience
Yes	18	12
No	16	24
Unclear	8	7

Table 6. Direction of the figure's gaze in the total of extant paintings only.

APPENDIX II

LIST OF HOUSES and ADDRESSES

The following table compiles all of the houses referenced in the study along with the conventionally used address. The names are in alphabetical order beginning with locations in Pompeii and ending with the spaces in Herculaneum, Rome, and Stabiae. Both the name and address are modern conventions. The names used throughout the study follow those in Lawrence Richardson's *Catalogue of Identifiable Figure Painters*, when available, or otherwise follow those used by Jürgen Hodske in *Mythologische Bildthemen in Den Häusern Pompejis*. Addresses follow the standard pattern of city, region, insula, door.

Name	Address
Casa di Achille	Pompeii IX.5.2
Casa di Adone Ferito	Pompeii VI.7.18
Casa dell'Affresco di Spartaco	Pompeii I.7.7
Casa degli Amanti	Pompeii I.10.10/11
Casa di Amore Punito	Pompeii VII.2.23
Casa degli Amorini Dorati	Pompeii VI.16.7
Casa annessa alla Casa dell'Efebo	Pompeii I.7.10-12/19
Casa di Apollo	Pompeii VI.7.23
Casa di Apollo e Coronide	Pompeii VIII.3.24
Casa dell'Ara Massima	Pompeii VI.16.15/17
Casa di Arianna/Casa degli Capitelli Colorati	Pompeii VII.4.31/51
Casa di Arianna Abbandonata	Pompeii IX.2.5
Casa dell'Argenteria	Pompeii VI.7.20/22
Casa degli Attori	Pompeii I.2.6
Casa del Banchiere	Pompeii VII.14.5
Casa del Bracciale d'Oro	Pompeii VI.17 (Ins. Occ) 42-44
Casa del C. Arrius Crescens	Pompeii III.4.2
Casa della Caccia Antica	Pompeii VII.4.48
Casa della Caccia Nuova	Pompeii VII.10.3/14
Casa della Camillo	Pompeii VII.12.22/23/24
Casa dei Casti Amanti	Pompeii IX.12.6/7
Casa del Cavallo Troiano	Pompeii IX.7.16/17
Casa del Centauro	Pompeii VI.9.3/5
Casa del Centenario	Pompeii IX.8.3/6
Casa del Chirurgo	Pompeii VI.1.10,
Casa dei Cinque Scheletri	Pompeii VI.10.2
Casa del Citarista	Pompeii I.4.5/25
Casa del Criptoportico	Pompeii I.6.2
Casa del Cubicoli Floreali	Pompeii I.9.5

Casa delle Danzatrici	Pompeii VI.2.15/22
Casa di Dido ed Aeneas	Pompeii IX.6.d
Casa dei Dioscuri	Pompeii VI.9.6/7
Casa del Duca d'Aumale	Pompeii VI.9.1
Casa dell'Efebo	Pompeii I.7.10/12
Casa degli Epigrami	Pompeii V.1.18
Casa del Fabbro	Pompeii I.10.7
Casa di Fabio Rufo	Pompeii VII. Ins. Occ. 17-19
Casa del Focolare di Ferro	Pompeii VI.15.6
Casa della Fontana	Pompeii VII.5.56
Casa del Forno a Riverbero	Pompeii VII.4.29
Casa del Forno di Ferro	Pompeii VI.13.6
Casa delle Forme di Creta	Pompeii VII.4.62
Casa della Fortuna	Pompeii IX.7.20
Casa del Gallo	Pompeii VIII.5.5
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Casa di Ganimede	Pompeii VII.13.4
Casa di Gavius Rufus	Pompeii VII.2.16/17
Casa di Giasone	Pompeii IX.5.18
Casa di Giulio Polibio	Pompeii IX.13.1/3
Casa di Giuseppe II	Pompeii VIII.2.38/39
Casa dei Gladiatori	Pompeii V.5.3
Casa del Granduca di Toscana/Casa della Fontana	Pompeii VII.4.56
Casa della Grata Metallica	Pompeii I.2.28
Casa di L. Caecilius Iucundus	Pompeii V.1.26
Casa di L. Cornelius Diadumenus	Pompeii VII.12.26
Casa di Laocoonte	Pompeii VI.14.28.31
Casa di Lucius Betutius	Pompeii I.8.9,
Casa di M. Epidius Rufus	Pompeii IX.1.20/30
Casa di Marco Lucrezio	Pompeii IX.3.5
Casa di Marco Lucrezio Frontone	Pompeii V.4.a
Casa di Marinaio	Pompeii VII.15.1/2
Casa dl Medico	Pompeii VIII.5.24
Casa di Meleagro	Pompeii VI.9.2/13
Casa del Menandro	Pompeii I.10.4
Casa di Narcisso	Pompeii V.3.6
Casa di Nettuno	Pompeii VI.5.3
Casa delle Nozze di Ercole	Pompeii VII.9.47/65
Casa di Octavius Quartio	Pompeii II.2.2
Casa di Omfale	Pompeii VIII.4.34

Casa dell'Orso	Pompeii VII.2.45
Casa della Paccia	Pompeii V.2.10
Casa di Paccius Alessandro	Pompeii IX.1.7
Casa di Papirius Sabinus	Pompeii IX.3.19
Casa delle Pareti Rosse	Pompeii VIII.5.37
Casa della Pescatrice	Pompeii VII.9.63/60
Casa del Poeta Tragico	Pompeii VI.8.3/5
Casa dei Postumii e i suoi annessi/Casa di Olconio Rufo	Pompeii VIII.4.4
Casa del Primo Piano	Pompeii I.11.9/15
Casa del Principe de Montenegro	Pompeii VII Ins. Occ.16-10
Casa del Principe di Napoli	Pompeii VI.15.7/8
Casa dell'Quadrighe	Pompeii VII.2.25
Casa dei Quattro Stili	Pompeii I.8.17
Casa del Re di Prussia	Pompeii VII.9.33
Casa della Regina Margherita	Pompeii V.2.1
Casa del Ristorante	Pompeii IX.5.14-16
Casa di Sallustio	Pompeii VI.2.4/30/31
Casa degli Scienziati	Pompeii VI.14.43
Casa di Sirico	Pompeii VII.1.25/47
Casa della Soffitta	Pompeii V.3.4
Casa di Sulpicio Rufo	Pompeii IX.9.d
Casa di Venere in Bikini	Pompeii I.11.6
Casa della Venere in Conchiglia	Pompeii II.3.3
Casa delle Vestali	Pompeii VI.1.7/25
Casa dei Vettii	Pompeii VI.15.1/2
Complesso dei Riti magici	Pompeii II.1.12
Villa di Diomede	Pompeii
Villa Imperiale	Pompeii
Villa dei Misteri	Pompeii
Casa dell'Alcove	Herculaneum IV.4
Casa dl Gran Portale	Herculaneum V.35
Casa di Sannitica	Herculaneum V.1
Villa Farnesina	Rome
Villa Arianna	Stabiae
Villa San Marco	Stabiae

CATALOGUE

The paintings presented in the Catalogue are divided into four separate sections, each corresponding with the appropriate chapter. Each painting is assigned an individual catalogue number which is generated as follows: the Roman numeral correlates with the chapter in which the painting is primarily referenced and the Arabic numeral corresponds to the chronological order of the scene in that catalogue. Within the catalogue, entries are arranged in roughly the order in which they are discussed within the chapter. Each entry provides relevant information for the painting including: subject, original location, museum and inventory number (if relevant), dimensions, condition, bibliography, and description of the composition. Location refers to the paintings' original provenance and is designated by five factors: city, address, house name (when provided), room (if known), and wall (if known). The house names are given in Italian and adhere to those used by Lawrence Richardson, *Figure Painters in A Catalog of Identifiable Figure Painters of Ancient Pompeii, Herculaneum, and Stabiae*.

Due to the volume of entries, the descriptions are necessarily brief including an overview of the composition and noting any unusual formal characteristics. Although every effort was made to examine the paintings in person, some paintings were inaccessible, destroyed, or display significant damage. In these cases, drawings or older photographs have been consulted. When drawings do not provide sufficient information, descriptions are shortened. A list of the most relevant bibliographic references is provided for each entry. In instances where a painting has many references, only the most pertinent are listed. References are listed by author with a list of abbreviations found below.

Not all paintings referenced in the study are found in the catalogue. Any uncatalogued paintings have a footnote that provides relevant, identifying information including provenance, museum, reference in Helbig's *Wandgemälde Der Vom Vesuv Verschlütteten Städte Campaniens* when available, or other essential bibliography.

Condition

Paintings are evaluated according to the following list of descriptors, which are based on visual analysis.

Good condition: The painting's subject and/or figures can be discerned. Original pigments remain. Most paintings in museums fall into this category.

Fair condition: The subject and/or figures can be discerned with some degree of certainty. Most pigments remain, but may have faded or worn in several places. Painting may suffer damage in areas.

Poor condition: Subjects and/or figures are difficult to determine without the help of written or drawn descriptions. Pigments have faded or worn. Significant portions of the panel have been destroyed.

Now Destroyed: The painting no longer survives. A photograph/drawing may substitute.

Abbreviations

Met = Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City
MNPM = Museo Nazionale Palazzo Massimo, Rome
BM = British Museum, London
MANN = Museo Nazionale Archeologico, Naples

— I —

VISION AND VIEWING IN THE ANCIENT WORLD

CI.1. Marine Venus (fig. 5)

Pompeii II.3.3, Casa della Venere in Conchiglia

Peristyle 8, south wall; in situ

Good condition

References: PPM.III, 141; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, *Wände Pompejis* 53; Hodske, cat. 102; PPP I, 223.

A nude Venus lounges in a conch shell in the center of the sea. She props her torso up with right arm and crosses her left leg over her right. Her right arm points gently to the right. She is bejeweled with a necklace, bracelet, and anklets. Two youthful amorini flank each side of the conch shell. Venus looks straight out from the wall.

CI.2. Bride and Cupid (fig. 6)

Pompeii Villa dei Misteri

Room 5, south wall, in situ

Good condition

References: Rizzo, pl. 11-15; Maiuri, *Roman Painting*, 51-61; Ragghianti, 26, 35; Picard, 32; Eschbach, figs 216-218; Guillaud and Guillaud, figs. 146-52; Richardson, *Figure Painters, Figure Paintiers*, 28.

The woman sits enthroned; Her purple-trimmed, golden garment and seven-strand hair style suggest she is a bride. An ornatrix stands behind the woman and fixes her hair. An amorini stands to the left, in front of the woman, and holds a box mirror. The mirror reflects a virtual image. The woman looks out from the wall.

— II —

REPRESENTING OBSERVATION: SPECTATOR FIGURES***Anonymous Human Crowds*****CII.1. Theseus (fig. 7)**

Pompeii VII.2.16-17, Casa di Gavius Rufus

Exedra o, east wall; MANN inv. 9043

97 x 88 cm; Good Condition

References: PPM.VI, 563; Ling, *Roman Painting*, 138; Elsner, *Roman Viewer*, 91-92; fig 4.2; Sogliano, 527; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 170; PPP III, 64; Hodske cat. 427.

Theseus triumphator. Theseus stands nude in the center. Minotaur's body in the lower left corner. Right: an old man, a child, a woman, and three identical women look at the dead beast, the old man gestures toward the body. Two archways in the background.

CII.2 Theseus and Minotaur

Villa Imperiale

Oecus; in situ

Poor condition

References: Richardson, *Figure Painters*, 57; Ling, *Roman Painting*, fig. 121.

Theseus Triumphator. Theseus stands in the center, his head and lower right body are not visible due to the painting's damage. The Minotaur lays dead at his feet in the central foreground. A small (female?) figure stands at Theseus' left, she grabs his hand. In the background, three figures watch. Two females sit on a ledge in the left corner. One soldier stands holding a spear and shield and wearing a helmet.

CII.3. Aeneas and Polyphemus (fig. 10)

Pompeii VI.14.28/31, Casa di Laocoonte

Tablinum k, north wall; MANN inv. 111211

123 x 84 cm; Fair condition

References: Elia, 191; Guida, 1398; LIMC.I, 393 no. 208; Hodske cat. 341.

Polyphemus stands in the left foreground and Aeneas stands in the right, slightly behind. Aeneas wears a full-length mantle. Four figures stand behind Aeneas. To the left, three additional figures stand behind the bow of a ship, which is barely visible.

CII.4. Cassandra (fig. 13)

Pompeii I.10.4, Casa del Menandro

Ala 4, east wall; in situ

63 x 63 cm; Good Condition

References: PPM.II, 281; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 40; Ling, *Menander*, 74, 102 pl. 6; PPP I, 116; Hodske, cat. 61.

Trojan war cycle. Two figures: Cassandra delivering a prophecy, youth holding Cassandra back. Three rows of identical, Trojan faces crowd the background.

CII.5. Priam and Cassandra (fig. 15)

Pompeii I.10.4, Casa del Menandro

Ala 4, west wall; in situ.

63 x 64 cm; Good Condition

References: PPM.II, 277; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 40; PPP I, 115; Ling, *Menander*, 74, 99 pl. 66; Hodske, cat. 60.

Trojan war cycle. Right: Cassandra clings to the Palladium; Ajax pulls her away. Priam stands in the center and watches the abduction. Left: A crowd of Trojan and Greek soldiers watch, they wear Phrygian caps.

CII.6 Laocoon (fig. 16)

Pompeii I.10.4 Casa del Menandro

Ala 4, south wall; in situ

63 x 67 cm; Good Condition

References: PPM.II, 284; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 40; PPP I, 116; Ling, *Menander*, 74, 194 pl. 65; Hodske cat. 59.

Trojan war cycle, three registers. Upper register: crowd of five, identical Trojans stand behind a low wall on the right; two figures watch from the center of the panel; three figures stand on the left wearing what may be identified as Persian crowns. Middle register: Laocoon battles the serpent. Bottom register: Laocoon's sons battle the serpent, one lies dead.

CII.7 Laocoon (fig. 17)

Pompeii VI.15.28/31, Casa di Laocoonte,

Atrium a, south wall; MANN inv. 111210

132 x 72 cm; Fair Condition

References: PPM.V, 354; Bastet, 70-71 n. 39 tav. XXXVI; Peters, *Landscapes*, 103; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 123, Richardson, *Figure Painters*, 67; Hodske, cat. 240; PPP II, 289.

Trojan war cycle. Central register: Laocoon battling the serpent. Bottom register: Laocoon's two sons. Bottom register: Identical and unidentified spectators standing and watching Laocoon.

CII.8 Cassandra

Pompeii VI.10.2, Casa dei Cinque Scheletri

Triclinium 6, north wall.

77 x 78 cm; Fair condition

References: Helbig no. 1391; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 123; Hodske cat. 306.

Cassandra stands on the right in front of the Palladium looking to the right. She gestures towards Priam who sits on the left with a young Paris leaning on his knees. Hector stands next to Priam holding a sword. Two soldiers stand in the background. The entire group looks to the right.

CII.9 Pan and Eros (fig. 18)

Pompeii VI.15.1/2, Casa dei Vettii

Oecus e, south wall; in situ

Fair condition

References: AND 26469

In the lower, right corner, Pan and Eros wrestle. Ariadne and Dionysus sit in the center watching the competition. Behind Dionysus a group of satyrs and other revelers push through a doorway.

CII.10 Pan and Nymphs (fig. 9)

Pompeii IX.5.18, Casa di Giasone

Cubiculum g, south wall; MANN inv. 111473

123 x 93 cm; Good condition

References: PPM.IX, 704; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 19; Peters, *Landscapes*, 95; PPP III, 488; Braghantini and Sampaolo, 236; Hodske, cat. 742.

Pan sits in the center playing his loot while a nymph walks toward him. Two female figures sit on a rocky ledge in the background.

CII.11 Admetus and Alcestis

Pompeii VI.8.3/5, Casa del Poeta Tragico

Tablinum 8, east wall; MANN inv. 9026

106 x 86.5 cm; Good condition

References: Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 104; PPP II, 167; Hodske, cat. 228.

Wedding of Alcestis and Admetus. Alcestis sits on the right, raises her left hand to her chin and looks towards Apollo who sits in the background. Admetus sits on the left and points towards the book offered by the figure in the foreground. He looks towards Alcestis. Apollo stands behind the low wall in the background. He looks towards Admetus. Three figures stand in the background and look towards Apollo.

CII.12 Hylas and the nymphs

Pompeii VII.4.62, Casa delle Forme di Creta

Triclinium 7, north wall; MANN. Inv. 8882

72 x 81 cm; Fair condition

References: PPM.VII, 151ff; Elia 109; Guida 1351; Helbig no, 1261; Rizzo, 63; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 189; PPP III, 149; Hodske, cat. 495.

Hylas appears in the center falling forward. Two nymphs are on the left and grab his arm and shoulder. He looks over his shoulder towards them. Two additional figures sit in the upper right-hand corner watching the scene. They are nude and appear to be male figures.

CII.13 Achilles. (fig. 68)

Pompeii IX.5.2, Casa di Achille

Room u, north wall; MANN inv. 116085

Good Condition

References: PPM.IX, 394; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 252; PPP III, 453.

Achilles on Skyros. Achilles in the center, dressed in chiton. Odysseus stands on the right, lunges forward and grabs Achilles. Deidamia on the left with her back to the audience, looks over her shoulder towards Achilles. Groups of soldiers in the background.

CII.14 Achilles

Pompeii VI.9.6/7 Casa dei Dioscuri (*fig. 69*)

Tablinum 42, south wall; MANN inv. 9110

148 x 100 cm; Good condition

References: PPM.IV, 910; Helbig, 1297; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 117; PPP II, 212; Hodske, cat, 285.

Achilles on Skyros. Achilles in the center dress in a chiton. Odyseuss on the right, grabs Achilles' arm. Deidamia in the background, right hand side. Soldier and anonymous figures in the left hand background.

Cupid and Amorini

CII.15 Amorini/Ariadne/Hermaphrodite?

Pompeii VI.8.3/5 Casa del Poeta Tragico

Triclinium 15, north wall; in situ

Fair condition

References:

Figure sits in the center (Ariadne/Venus?) in the center, leans on right arm. Three figures sit on the right, one in the background. One figure sits in the background, right-hand side.

CII.16 Amorini/Ariadne/Hermaphrodite?

Pompeii VII.12.26 Casa di L. Cornelius Diadumenus

Triclinium h, east; MANN inv. 111437

107 x 91 cm; Fair condition

References: PPM.VII, 574; Helbig, no. 823; Rizzo, V; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 202; Michel, 2-14; PPP III, 203; LIMC.II, "Eros/Amor/Cupid," 964; Hodkse, cat. 528;

Figure sits in the center (Ariadne/Venus?), leans on right arm. Three figures sit on the right, one in the background. Two figures in the right-hand background.

Nymphs and Female Attendants

CII.17 Polyphemus and Galatea (*fig. 24*)

Pompeii, Unknown House

MANN inv. 8983

59 x 65 cm; Good condition

References: Helbig, no. 1050; Elia 1932, 156; Peters, *Landscapes*, 141, n. 522; Rosso *Pompeiano*, 114.

Polyphemus sits on a rocky ledge in the center of the panel. He stretches his legs out to the right and twists his body to the left to face Galatea. Galatea stands on the left facing Polyphemus. She is fully draped in a golden tunic and light, purple mantle and holds a fan. She looks at Polyphemus. A nymph stands in the background.

CII.18 Callisto and Artemis (*fig. 25*)

Pompeii VII.12.26, Casa di L. Cornelius Diadumenus

Triclinium, west wall; MANN inv. 111441

107 x 90 cm; Good condition

References: PPM.VII, 579; Helbig, no. 253; Elia 1923, n. 58; Rizzo, IXss; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 202; PPP III, 204; LIMC, “Kallisto,” 943 n. 15; Hodske, cat. 529.

Artemis sits enthroned on the right in three-quarter profile. She wears a sea-foam green chiton and a golden crown. Cupid stands at her feet, leaning on her knee. He is nude and wears his wings. Callisto stands on the left in a short white tunic. A nymph stands in the center, confronting Callisto. Behind Artemis, two additional nymphs watch the Callisto’s humiliation. The first stands and lists her hand to her mouth in surprise while the second peeks her head to watch the scene.

CII.19 Dido (fig. 27)

Pompeii VI.9.2/13, Casa di Meleagro
atrium 2, north wall; MANN inv. 8898
108 x 128 cm; Good condition

References: Parise Badoni “Arianna,” 73-87; LIMC. II, “Asia” 3; LIMC. I “Africa” n. 51, “Alexandria,” 80; LIMC.IV, “Europa,” 2; Hodske, cat. 242.

Dido sits in the center enthroned, facing the front. To the left stand two female attendants. In the front, a woman holds out a rhyton towards the queen while in the back a second attendant holds a flabellum. The third attendant stands on the right wearing elephant tusks on her head. All three attendants look towards Dido. O. Elia suggests these are the personifications of the continents: Europe, Africa, and Asia. Conversely, Parise-Badoni posits this as a representation of Ariadne abandoned with Theseus sailing away in the background

CII.20 Iphigenia (fig. 28)

Pompeii V.1.26, Casa di L. Caecilius Iucundus
Tablinum I north wall; MANN inv. 111439
112 x 87 cm

References: PPM.III, 589; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 66; PPP II, 20; LIMC.V, “Iphigenia,” 52; Richardson, *Figure Painters*, 56; Hodske, cat. 123;

This painting depicts Iphigenia standing in the pronaos of the Temple of Artemis in Tauris, when she is recognized by her brother Orestes, who had thought her dead. The extensive damage to the painting’s left side presumably obscures Orestes who would have been looking at Iphigenia. Iphigenia looks down at Orestes, meeting this assumed gaze and her attendants stand behind her observing the scene.

CII.21 Pasiphae and Daedalus (fig. 29)

Pompeii VI.15.1/2, Casa dei Vettii
Triclinium p, north wall; in situ
122 x 108 cm; Good condition

References: PPM.V, 534; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 145; PPP II, 314; Hodske, cat. 359.

Pasiphae, Daedalus, and the bull appear in the foreground. Pasiphae sits enthroned on the left in three-quarter profile. She faces Daedalus who stands in the center with his back facing out. He stands in a relaxed position and stretches his arms out to his side at shoulder length, gesturing towards the bull to the right. Behind Pasiphae, two female

attendants stand watching the scene. They are both anonymous, but dressed in modest, draped garments.

CII.22 Hermaphroditus

Pompeii VI.7.18, Casa di Adone Ferito

Oecus 11, east wall; in situ

79 x 60 cm; Poor condition

References: PPM.IV, 417; Helbig no. 1369; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 100; Balensiefen, 53 234 K33; PPP II, 151; Hodske, cat. 213.

This painting is poorly preserved: damage has obscured many pigments as well as a large lacuna in the center of the painting. Hermaphroditus stands in the center of the painting assisted by several attendants who stand on either side. He is nude, but only the top of his torso is visible due to the lacuna. On his right a female attendant holds a small hand mirror.

CII.23 Europa

Pompeii I.8.9, Casa di Lucius Betutius

Triclinium 10, east wall; in situ

42 x 51 cm; Good condition

References: Hodske, cat. 47; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, *Wände Pompejis*, 37; PPM.I, 821; PPP I, 80; Richardson, *Figure Painters*, 67.

Europa sits on the bull. One female attendant dances on the right in front of the procession. Two attendants stand near the bull's head, one petting the bull's nuzzle and the other looking up towards Europa. A fourth attendant stands behind Europa reaching up to the figure.

CII.24 Europa

Pompeii IX.5.18, Casa di Giasone

Cubiculum g, west wall; MANN inv. 111475

125 x 95 cm; Good condition

References: ; Rizzo, pl. 99; Curtius, pl. 4; Richardson, *Figure Painters*, 70.

Europa sits in the center, riding on the bull. She rides with her body facing forward and lifts her right hand above her head. A purple garment wraps around her waist and legs exposing her upper body. Three female attendants stand on the right watching Europa and her bull. One figure grabs the bull at the neck and bends to look straight at the bull, while the two other figures stand aloof and look up towards Europa.

CII.25 Odysseus and Penelope

Pompeii VI.10.2, Casa dei Cinque Scheletri

Triclinium 6, wall unknown; MANN inv. 9107

73 x 80 cm; Fair condition

References: PPM.IV, 1041; Helbig, no. 1331; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 123; Richardson, *Figure Painters*, 62; Hodske, cat. 307.

Penelope stands on the right and looks at Odysseus who sits in the center. Odysseus is partially visible, his lower body missing from the painting. He looks toward Penelope. A female attendant stands behind Penelope on the right, watching the scene. On the left, the

legs and tunic of a second figure remain, however, the painting's condition do not permit identification.

CII.26 Hercules and Auge

Pompeii VI.15.1/2, Casa dei Vettii

Triclinium t, south wall; in situ

94 x 82 cm; Fair condition

References: PPM.V, 568; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 149; PPP II, 322; Hodske, cat. 363.

Auge kneels on her left leg in the center of the composition. She faces the left, but twists her head back to look at Hercules who stands behind her on the right. She reaches back towards Hercules who reaches out to her. Hercules leans on his club. He is nude except for the lion skin wrapped around his left arm. Two female attendants stand in the background, one behind Auge on the left and a second behind Hercules. A winged, female figure stands in the center

Dionysiac Figures

CII.27 Triumph of Dionysus

Pompeii V.4.a, Casa di Marco Lucrezio Frontone

Tablinum 7, south wall; in situ

45 x 46 cm; Good condition

References: PPM.III, 1013; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 85; PPP II, 88f; Hodske cat. 168.

Dionysus sits on a donkey. Two maenads surround him on the right, watching. On the left, two nude males stand as part of the procession.

CII.28 Dionysus and Maenad (fig. 34)

Pompeii VI.17 Ins. Occ. 42-44 Casa di Bracciale d'Oro

Triclinium 20, north wall; in situ

118 x 95 cm; Good condition

References: PPM.VI, 80; PPP III, 12; Hodske, cat. 404.

Dionysus sits in the center wearing a wreath and holding his thyrsus. Silenus stands to his left identified by his darker skin and beard. He watches Dionysus. A maenad stands on the right. Drapes billow around her as she is mad with frenzy with Dionysus. The god turns his head back to look at the maenad.

CII.29 Pentheus and bacchantes

Pompeii VI.15.1/2, Casa dei Vettii

Triclinium n, east wall; in situ

105 x 100 cm; Fair condition

References: PPM.V, 529; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, no. 144; PPP II, 314; Hodske cat. 356.

Pentheus is on his knees in the center of the composition surrounded by frenzied bacchantes. Two women stand on either side of him pulling his arms in their effort to tear

him to pieces. Three additional women appear in the background reacting to the scene. A woman stands in the left corner, leaning forward and raising her right arm. A second woman stands in the right corner and echoes this pose. In the center, a third woman looks down at Pentheus, holding a stone above her head as she prepares to strike his head.

Miscellaneous Figures:

CII.30 Perseus and Andromeda (*fig. 36*)

Pompeii VII.Ins. Occ. 16-10 Casa del Principe de Montenegro

MANN inv. 8997

110.5 x 103 cm; Fair condition

References: PPM.VII, 842; Fiorelli, *Scavi*, 47-48; PAH, 309-310; Helbig, no. 1187; Elia 120; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 209; *Rosso Pompeiano*, 108; Hodske, 557;

Perseus frees Andromeda. Perseus stands on the right in profile, his right left bent and resting on a rock. Andromeda stands above him on the rocky cliff, her body facing forward. Perseus reaches for her arm. He looks down at her feet. Two figures sit on a cliff in the background.

CII.31 Perseus and Andromeda (*fig. 37*)

Pompeii VI.9.6/7 Casa dei Dioscuri

Peristyle 53, southeast wall; MANN inv. 8998

128 x 106 cm; Good condition

References: PPM.IV, 975; Helbig, 1186; Richarson, *Dioscuri*, 155; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 121; *PPP* II, 223; Hodske, 298.

Perseus frees Andromeda. Perseus stands on the right in profile and Andromeda stands above him on the rocky cliff. Her body is turned slightly towards Perseus. Perseus looks down at Andromeda's feet.

CII.32 Helen (*fig. 38*)

Pompeii V.2.14

Backshop e, north wall; MANN inv. 119690

Good condition

References: PPM.III, 851; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 72; *PPP* II, 65; Hodske, cat. 153.

Helen on the left, stepping onto the gangway. A young, female attendant stands on the left and an adolescent boy on the right. A man reaches towards Helen from the ship. Two soldiers stand in the background. Damage to the panel's right hand side.

CII.33 Helen

Pompeii VI.8.3/5, Casa del Poeta Tragico,

Atrium b south wall; MANN inv. 9044

116 x 58 cm; Good condition

References: PPM IV, 539; Helbig, no. 1308; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 143 ss. tav. 50; Peters, *Landscapes*, 1963, p. 147; *LIMC* IV s.v. Helene; Hodske, cat. 220.

Helen on the left, stepping onto the gangway. A young, female attendant stands on the left and an adolescent boy on the right. A man reaches towards Helen from the ship. Two soldiers stand in the background. Damage to the panel's right hand side.

CII.34 Medea (fig. 11)

Pompeii VI.9.6/7 Casa dei Dioscuri

Peristyle 53, northeast wall; MANN inv. 8977

127 x 104 cm; Good condition

References: *PPM*.IV, 975; Helbig, no. 1262; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 121; *PPP* II, 22; Richardson, *Figure Painters*, 155; Hodske, 299.

On the left, Medea looks over her shoulder at her two children. The children lean on a low podium in the middleground. In the left-hand, background an anonymous male figure stands in a doorway.

Identified Figures

CII.35 163. Pirithous and Centaurs (fig. 12)

Pompeii VII.2.16/17 Casa di Gavius Rufus

Exedra o, west wall; MANN inv. 9044

107 x 94 cm; Fair condition

References: *PPM*.VI, 567; Sogliano 539; Richardson, *Dioscuri*, p. 121; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 170; *LIMC*.VI, "Minotauros," 68; *LIMC*.VII, "Theseus," 250; Ling, *Roman Painting*, 124 fig. 126; *PPP* III, 64; Hodske, 429.

Pirithous stands greeting the centaurs while Hippodamia stands behind him. A group of centaurs stand also in the right-hand corner.

CII.36 Bellerophon and Proitos

Pompeii IX.2.15/16, Casa di T. Dentatius Panthera

Atrium d, north wall; MANN inv. 115399

219 x 172 cm; Fair condition

References: *PPM*.IX, 17; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 242; *PPP* III, 414; Richardson, *Figure Painters*, 61; Hodske cat. 659.

Bellerophon stands on the right in profile facing Proitos who sits on the left. Stheneboi stands behind Proitos watching the interaction.

CII.37 Hercules and Nessos

Pompeii VI.9.3/5, Casa del Centaurio

Tablinum 26, south wall; MANN inv. 9001

152 x 115 cm; Good condition

References: *PPM*.IV, 857; Helbig no. 1146; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 115; Peters, *Landscapes*, fig. 102; *LIMC*.II, "Nessos" 842; Hodske cat. 280.

Hercules stands on the left looking down at Nessos. He face inward with his back and buttocks visible. Hercules steps towards Nessos and leans slightly on his club. Nessos is close to the group, but looks up at Hercules. He gestures with his arms. In the

background, Deineira sits watching the scene. A second figure, possibly a female attendant, sits next to Deineira.

Gods and Goddesses:

CII.38 Venus and Aeneas (fig. 41)

Pompeii VII.1.25/47, Casa di Sirico

Triclinium 8, north wall; MANN inv. 9009

39 x 33 cm; Good condition

References: PPM.VI, 245; Helbig, no. 1383; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 165; Rizzo, 81; PPP III, 29; Richardson, *Figure Painters*, 46; Hodske, cat. 408.

In the center, Aeneas is in profile facing the left. He leans on his spear. Ascanius stands next to him, weeping. Three soldiers march behind Aeneas, they hold spears, shields, and wear helmets. Venus floats in the left hand background corner. She looks at Aeneas.

CII.39 Iphigenia (fig. 42)

Pompeii VI.8.3/5 Casa del Poeta Tragico

Peristyle 10, east wall; MANN inv. 9112

140 x 138 cm; Good condition

References: PPM.IV, 552; Helbig, 1304; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 105; Peters, *Landscapes*, 143; PPP II, 167; Hodske, cat. 229.

Sacrifice of Iphigenia. Artemis is in the sky, riding on a stag; an unidentified nymph rides beside her. In the foreground, Iphigenia is carried to the altar.

Icarus and Daedalus

CII.40 Icarus and Daedalus (fig. 43)

Pompeii I.7.7, Casa dell'affresco di Spartaco

Triclinium b, east wall; in situ

135 x 91 cm; Fair condition

References: PPM.I, 584ff; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 31; PPP I, 58; Richardson, *Figure Painters*, 44; Hodske, cat. 33.

Fall of Icarus. Top register: Daedalus flies and looks down at Icarus; Icarus falling. Icarus not visible because of damage. Center register: boat of sailors looking up toward Icarus. Lower register: two females watching and pointing up at Icarus. The next episode in the scene appears in the foreground where Icarus lies dead on the seashore. A fisherman stands over his body.

CII.41 Daedalus and Icarus

Pompeii V.2.10, Casa della Paccia

Cubiculum q, north wall; MANN inv. 9245

101 x 63 cm; Now Destroyed

References: PPM.III, 839; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 72; PPP II, 64; Hodske, 149.

Three registers. Top register: Helios flies through the sky in his quadriga. Middle register: a boat with three sailors, flying Daedalus and falling Icarus. Bottom register: a

seated fisherman in the right corner, a statue of Poseidon on the left. A group of two women in the front who look up towards Icarus.

CII.42 Daedalus and Icarus

Pompeii I.10.7 Casa del Fabbro

Triclinium 9, west wall

125 x 108 cm; Now Destroyed

References: PPM.II, 419; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 46; PPP I, 136f; Hodske, cat. 73.

Three registers. Top register: IHelios flies through the sky in his quadriga, Icarus falls with his face towards the ground. Daedalus hovers below him and looks upwards. Middle register: a boat sails in the sea with two sailors, one points up towards Icarus. A temple stands on the right. Bottom register: a fisherman stands in the center of the composition looking up towards Icarus as he falls. On the left, a seated statue of Poseidon. Upper left hand side destroyed.

CII.43 Daedalus and Icarus (*fig. 44*)

Villa Imperiale; in situ

175 x 117 cm; Fair condition

References: Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 290; Richardson, *Figure Painters*, 56; von Blanckenhagen, "Icarus," pl. 27, 29.2; Hodske, cat. 570.

Megalographic. Icarus' body lays in the foreground on the shore. Female figure sits on the right amidst the cliffs and looks down at Icarus. Daedalus hovers above the body in the center of the panel. Lower left hand side, partially destroyed.

CII.44 Daedalus and Icarus

Pompeii IX.6.d, Casa di Dido ed Aeneas

95 x 81 cm; Now Destroyed

References: PPM.IX, 729; Sogliano, no. 524; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 266; Peters, *Landscapes*, 80.205 no. 305; Blanckenhagen, "Icarus," 109 n. 3; Hodske, cat. 747.

Icarus lays dead on the shore. Two female figures stand on the right, looking down at Icarus' body.

CII.45 Daedalus and Icarus

Pompeii I.9.5 Casa di Cubicoli Floreali

Triclinium 11, east wall; in situ

118 x 185 cm; Fair condition

References: PPM.II, 88-92; Blanckenhagen, "Icarus," pl. 38; Richardson, *Figure Painters*, 45; Hodske, cat. 55.

Fall of Icarus. Top Register: destroyed. Middle Register: small boat in the center, one figure sits on a cliff, far right. Bottom Register: Three figures. A female figure draped in white stands on the right, male figure (fisherman?) on the left walks towards the center, (female?) figure on left sits on a ledge.

CII.46 Daedalus and Icarus

Pompeii, House Unknown

MANN inv. 9506

36 x 36 cm; Fair condition

References: Peters, *Landscapes*, 130f 208 n. 454ff; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 348; Blanckenhagen, "Icarus," 109; Richardson, *Figure Painters* 46.

Fall of Icarus. Top register: Daedalus flies in the sky, looking down. Middle register: a small boat floats in the center with at least one figure, two small figures stand on the far right facing the center. Bottom register: Icarus' body on the shore, on the left a seated female figure.

CII.47 Daedalus and Icarus

Pompeii V.5.3 Casa dei Gladiatori

Peristyle, pluteus interior; in situ

102 x 97 cm; Poor condition/Partially Destroyed

References: PPM.III, 1072 fig. 6; Helbig, 1209; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 348; Blanckenhagen, "Icarus," pl. 39.1; Peters, *Landscapes*, 132f 208 n. 463ff; Richardson, *Figure Painters*, 45; Hodske, 814.

Three registers. Top register: Icarus and Daedalus. Middle register: fishermen stand on the shore. Lower register: seated figure, possibly female, and a small temple.

CII.48 Daedalus and Icarus (fig. 45)

Pompeii, Unknown House

BM inv. 1867, 0508.1355

32 x 33 cm; Fair condition

References: Helbig, no. 1210; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 314; Blanckenhagen, "Icarus," pl. 75 (1968), pl. 39.2; Richardson, *Figure Painters*, 45; Hodske, cat. 823.

Three registers. Top register: left hand corner, Knossos in aerial perspective. Center register: Daedalus flies through the sky; a boat with two sailors. Bottom register: Icarus' body on the seashore; a small fisherman looks over the dead youth.

CII.49 Daedalus and Icarus

Pompeii IX.7.16/17, Casa del Cavallo Troiano

Triclinium b, south wall

100 x 69 cm; Now Destroyed

References: PPM.IX, 797; von Blanckenhagen, "Icarus," pl. 30.1; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 269; Peters, *Landscapes*, 78ff, 205 n. 300; Hodske, cat. 758.

Three registers. Top register: Daedalus hovers in the air. Middle register: Aerial view of Knossos. Bottom register: Icarus' body on the shore. Female figure stands on the left. Second female figure sits amidst the rocks on the right.

Outward:

CII.50 Achilles and Briseide (fig. 46)

Pompeii VI.8.3/5, Casa del Poeta Tragico

Atrium 3, east wall; MANN inv. 9105

Good condition

References: PPM.IV, 539; Helbig, 1309; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 104; Peters, *Landscapes*, 147; Hodske, 224.

Achilles sits in the center, his body facing the left. He turns his head over his shoulder to the right to look at Briseide who is led towards him. Briseide wears a gauzy mantle and veil and bows her head. With her head in profile, she looks straight out from the panel. A crowd of soldiers fill the background, their heads visible above Achilles and Briseide in the foreground.

CII.51 Iphigenaia (fig. 47a)

Stabiae, Villa San Marco

Room 30, southeast wall; in situ

Good condition

This is a vignette, there is no setting. An unidentified woman sits partially nude with a garment draped from her waist. She perches on a ledge created by the painted architecture and faces away from the audience so that her back side is visible. She rests a lyre on her knee. The woman looks over her shoulder at the audience, her hair blowing slightly in a breeze.

CII.52 Hercules and consort (fig. 49)

Pompeii VII.16.Ins.Occ.17-19, Casa di Fabio Rufo

Room 58, east wall; in situ

47 x 41 cm; Good condition

References; *PPM*.VII, 1067; *PPP* III, 271; Hodske, cat. 561.

The panel depicts Hercules and his consort [possibly Auge] in an intimate setting. Hercules sits on the right facing his consort. He is nude and leans his arms on his club. He faces the female figure and looks at her. She sits with her body facing Hercules and her back facing outward. She wears a light gauzy chiton and a feather in her hair. The female figure turns her head over her right shoulder and looks out from the panel.

CII.53 Apollo, Hesperus, and Venus

Pompeii VII.16.Ins.Occ. 17-19 Casa di Fabio Rufo

Room 62, east wall; in situ

99 x 99 cm; Good condition

References: *PPM*.VII, 1085; Hodske, cat. 564.

This panel appears the three deities. Apollo in the center is enthroned holding a scepter and with a griffin above his right shoulder. To his left is Venus with cupid perched on her left shoulder. To Apollo's right is Hesperus who is crowned with a halo and holds an orb of light. All three figures are nude or partially nude: Apollo and Venus have billowing garments falling from their waists while Hesperus is entirely nude. The figures do not look at one another, but instead stare straight out from the wall at the outside viewer.

CII.54 Meleager and Atalanta

Pompeii II.3.3, Casa della Venere in Conchiglia

Cubiculum 14, south wall; in situ

32 x 37 cm; Good condition

References: *PPM*.III, 170; *PPP* I, 227; Hodske, cat.106.

This painting depicts Atalanta, the female huntress, and Meleager. The two are most often represented together as part of the Calydonian Boar Hunt, but here are shown after

the hunt. Atalanta stands on the right in a gauzy chiton holding her staff and looking out at the audience; she ignores Meleager to her right. Meleager is seated, in profile, resting his arms on his staff and staring intently at Atalanta. His posture and gaze emphasize his desire for Atalanta, despite his marital status.

CII.55 Hermaphroditus, Silenus, Maenad

Pompeii IX.8.3/6, Casa del Centenario

Triclinium 41, east wall; in situ

Fair Condition

References: PPM.IX, 1041; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 278; PPP III, 540; Hodske, cat. 775.

Hermaphroditus stands in the center of this composition, nude with a transparent garment draped diagonally across his body. He stands on a sort of pedestal and rests his left arm on his waist. His gaze is directed outwards. To his left stands Silenus, holding a lyre and also gazing outwards. Behind Hermaphroditus is a long-haired maenad whose gaze is not directly visible, but she seems to gaze out at the audience.

CII.56 Cyparissus

Pompeii VI.15.1/2, Casa dei Vettii

Oecus e, north wall; in situ

65 x 50 cm; Good condition

References: PPM.V, 486; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 142; PPP II, 307; Hodske, cat. 353.

Cyparissus, the youth beloved by Apollo, sits in the center of the panel on a rocky ledge. His relaxed pose resembles Narcissus or Ganymede: he leans back on his left arm and pushes his left foot out in front forming a diagonal composition. In his right arm, Cyparissus holds a staff. He wears only a blue garment around his upper legs. He looks out from the panel. His pet stag appears in the lower right corner. A tripod stands on the right. A figure, possibly Apollo, watches the youth from the background in the upper left corner. The figure rests his chin on his right hand.

CII.57 Perseus and Gorgoneion

Stabiae, Villa San Marco

Room 30, northeast wall; in situ

Good condition

Perseus is shown here just after slaying the Gorgoneion. He is nude, save his winged boots and a mantle draped over his left arm. Two wings sprout directly from his head, which is atypical iconography more frequently associated with Hermes. Perseus raises his arm above his head, displaying the Gorgoneion and holds his harpe in his right arm. Perseus looks at the Gorgoneion, a small smirk on his lips, and the Gorgoneion looks out at the audience.

CII.58 Hera and Zeus

Pompeii VI.8.3/5, Casa del Poeta Tragico

Atrium b, south wall; MANN inv. 9559

153 x 130 cm; Good Condition

References: PPM.IV, 539; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 49; Peters, *Landscapes*, 1963, 145-147; Helbig, no 114; PPP II, 166; Hodske, cat. 221.

Zeus and Hera occupy the panel. Zeus sits on the right, his body in three-quarter profile. He stretches his legs out to the left and leans his torso back on his left elbow forming a diagonal as he facing Hera who stands on the left. Hera ignores Zeus' gaze and faces outward. She is fully covered in a white chiton, mantle, and veil under which is visible a golden diadem. Behind Hera, a winged, female figure stands watching the goddess.

—III—
**REPRESENTING REFLECTION: MIRRORS, MANIFESTIONS, AND
 MEANING**

Venus

CIII.1. Venus

Pompeii VII.4.31/51, Casa di Arianna

Room 17, south wall, in situ

Poor condition

References: PPM.VI, 1013.

A nude Venus sits in the center of the composition. She leans on her left elbow and turns her body slightly towards the left to face outward. A series of cupids hold a pink garment up over her head and behind her as a backdrop and two additional attendant figures stand to her left. Due to the painting's state of preservation it is unclear in what direction Venus's gaze is directed, but the two attendant figures at her left clearly look towards the goddess, focalizing the scene. The attendants do not interact with the goddess.

CIII.2. Venus (fig. 52)

Pompeii VI.7.23, Casa di Apollo

Tablinum 7, north wall; in situ

29 x 29 cm; Good condition

References: PPM IV, 486; Helbig, no. 305; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 102; Hodske, cat. 218.

Venus at her toilette. She is partially nude, draped from the waist down in a purple garment. A staff rests in her left arm. To her left stands a winged, blonde, Cupid. The cherub holds a mirror up to the goddess and she turns slightly towards her left directing her gaze to the reflective object. A reflection is partially visible in the mirror's surface, although it is impossible to tell if this accurately represents Venus' face. In the background, a third figure looks on to the main scene from the upper left-hand corner. Unidentifiable, this figure peers over a ledge, resting his/her head on his/her folded arms and looks directly at the goddess.

CIII.3. Venus

Pompeii I.13.16

Summer triclinium 3, north wall; in situ

Poor condition

References: PPM.II, 931.

Venus at her toilette. Venus stands. She is nude and reaches up to touch her hair with her right hand. She holds a mirror in her left hand, the reflective side facing out. In the surface, a painted face is visible presumably representing Venus' reflection. (See #s)

CIII.4. Venus and Eros (fig. 56)

Pompeii I.14.5

Triclinium 2, east wall

References: PPM.II, 936.

Venus at her toilette: Venus stands in a frontal position. She is nude and holds a billowing garment over her head with her right arm and reaches down to cover herself with her left. She wears a simple bracelet, anklet, necklace, and diadem. Cupid stands at her left holding a mirror. The mirror displays the outline of an unidentified human face.

CIIL.5. Venus and Dolphin

Pompeii II.1.12, Complesso dei riti magici

Façade

Destroyed

References: PPM.III, 20.

Venus at her toilette: Venus stands. She is draped from the waist down. Her hair flows wildly around her head and she reaches up with her right hand to hold several locks. Her left hand holds a mirror. On her shoulder sits a small cupid who also reaches for the mirror. It is unclear whether Venus looks in the mirror or out at the viewer. Behind the goddess is a large dolphin making this a hybrid between a toilette and marine Venus.

CIIL.6. Venus and Helios (fig. 55)

Pompeii IX.1.20, Casa di M. Epidius Rufus

Triclinium s, east wall; Now Destroyed

References: PPM.VIII, 947.

Venus sits on the right. She is enthroned. She wears only a billowing purple garment around her hips and lower legs leaving her upper torso, breasts, and arms bare. Her legs face towards the left while her upper body faces the front. Cupid stands in front of Venus, identified by his wings. He holds a hand mirror towards the goddess. Venus looks towards the mirror and reaches down with her right hand. Helios stands on the left. A mantle draped around his shoulder. Rays of sun crown his head.

CIIL.7. Venus (fig. 19)

Rome, Villa della Farnesina

Cubiculum B; Museo Nazionale Palazzo Massimo

Good Condition

References: Bergmann, "Greek Masterpieces," 103-104.

Venus enthroned: Venus sits on cushioned, golden throne and rests her feet on a golden footstool. She faces the right in profile. She wears a pink gauzy chiton and mantle and a golden crown. Cupid stands at the goddess' feet. He is youthful with green and yellow-tipped wings. A golden chain loops around his waist. Cupid holds a golden scepter. An ornatrix stands behind Venus. She styles the goddess' hair.

CIIL.8. Venus (fig. 53)

Pompeii V.4.a, Casa di Marco Lucrezio Frontone

Cubiculum 5, east wall, in situ

38 x 37 cm; Fair condition

References: PPM.III, 989, 997; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 85; PPP II, 84f; Hodske, cat. 164.

Venus at her toilette. The goddess sits in a chair, her body facing left. A yellow mantle with a purple border is draped around her waist while her upper body is bare. Three attendant figure stand in the background. The goddess holds her hair above her head with her right hand. To her left stands a small attendant figure who holds a mirror. Venus looks over her left shoulder towards the mirror, but no reflection is visible.

CHL.10. Venus

Pompeii IX.12.16/17 Casa dei Casti Amanti

Room 5

Destroyed

The panel, which no longer survives, depicted Venus standing in the center and holding an object in her right hand.

CHL.11. Mars and Venus (fig. 26)

Pompeii I.11.15/9, Casa del Piano Superiore

Room 14, east wall; in situ

92 x 79 cm; Fair condition

References: PPM.II, 636; PPP I, 161; Hodske, cat. 82.

This painting combines two themes: Venus' toilette and the intimacy of Mars and Venus. Mars sits on the left, identified by his shield, a faintly visible spear that he holds in his left hand, and his heroic nudity. Mars looks directly at Venus, his face in profile. Venus, on the right, is completely absorbed in her personal toilette: she is characteristically nude only wearing a mantle from the waist down and holds her hair with her right arm (See # Marco Lucrezio Frontone)). An attendant stands in the background fixing her hair while a second stands in the foreground holding a large mirror into which the goddess gazes.

Narcissus

CHL.12. Narcissus

Pompeii IX.3.5, Casa di Marco Lucrezio

Cubiculum 6, west wall; MANN inv. 9381

46 x 51 cm; Good condition

References: Helbig no. 1354; PPM IX, 205; PPM.Disegnatori 364, 179, 461-4 no.823-6 no. 2; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 246; Balesiefen, 231 K 32.2; Hodske, cat. 682.

Reflective Narcissus: In this variation on the Narcissus' standardized iconography, the youth stands on the bank of water. He is nude, holds a staff and wears a floral crown. His back faces the viewer. A cupid kneels on the right side of the composition, holding a torch above the water. Narcissus looks down into the water where a reflection is visible, although difficult to see due to the painting's current state. Consult a drawing by XX.

CHL.13. Narcissus

Pompeii VII.13.4, Casa di Ganimede

References: PPM.VII, 633; Helbig, no. 1350; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 203; PPP III, 211; Hodske, cat., 357.

Narcissus stands and faces forward. Holds two spears in his left hand and reaches his right arm around his head. Cupid stands next to Narcissus on the right and holds a bowl. Pond of water in the lower right corner and reflection faintly visible: inverted face.

CHL.14. Narcissus

Pompeii VI.16.15/19, Casa dell'Ara Massima

Atrium niche

Fair condition

References: Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 157; Hodske, cat. 382.

Reflective Narcissus: Narcissus languishes alone in this painting. He is partially draped in a dark garment and holding his staff in his left hand. He gazes over his right shoulder towards a body of water below. No reflection is visible in the current painting, although the state of preservation could be responsible for this lack of visibility. The scene is framed by a thick red border as well as two painted, trompe l'oeil shutters on the right and left sides. The shutters give the impression that they are partially opened, offering a view into an outside world.

CHL.15. Narcissus

Pompeii VII.16.Ins.Occ.17-19, Casa di Fabio Rufo

In Situ

Sources: PPM.VII, 1102; PPP II, 276; Hodske cat. 566.

Reflective Narcissus: Narcissus leans on his left arm, his left positioned to the left and his body in a diagonal across the panel. His right arm is raised above his head and spear rests in his left arm. The painting is damaged. Neither his face nor the pool of water are visible.

CHL.16. Narcissus (fig. 30)

Pompeii VI.7.20/22, Casa dell'Argenteria

Tablinum 7, north wall; MANN inv. 9388

62 x 79 cm; Good condition

References: Elia, 131; Guida 1371; Helbig, no. 1363; Rizzo 63; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 345; Balensiefen, 233 K 32.42.

Reflective Narcissus: Narcissus lounges in the wilderness; he leans on his right hand, holds his staff in his right arm and crosses his legs in front of him. He is nude except for a narrow garment draped over his thigh. In the foreground is a small puddle of water in which appears his reflected face. Narcissus does not look at his reflection, but stares out at the outside viewer, his eyes wide and open. Behind him in the background are two small figures: on the right is a nymph—most likely Echo—who looks towards the youth and directly behind Narcissus' head is a second small figure, whose identity is indistinguishable.

CHL.17. Narcissus (*fig. 62*)

Pompeii II.2.2, Casa di Octavius Quartio

Biclinium k, east wall; in situ

Good condition

References: PPM III, 104; Balensiefen, 231 K 32.5.

Reflective Narcissus: Narcissus sits in the wilderness. He leans on his right hand and holds his staff lightly in his left, crossing his legs gently in front of him. A narrow garment is draped around his upper thighs, but otherwise he is nude. Rocky landscape dominates the foreground except for a small puddle directly in front of Narcissus in which a face is visible. Meant to represent Narcissus' reflection, the face does not resemble the youth's features, but does stare up at him. Narcissus, however, does not look at his reflection, but instead looks straight out at the audience.

CHL.18. Narcissus (*fig. 59*)

Pompeii V.2.1 Casa della Regina Margherita

Triclinium 4, east wall, in situ

85 x 82cm; Fair condition

References: PPM III, 792; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 70; PPP II, 57; Hodske, cat. 140.

Reflective Narcissus: Narcissus sits at the stream, a garment draped across his waist revealing his upper body and genitals. He holds a spear in his right hand. An amorini sits near his feet while a second hovers near his left arm. In the right background, a female figure perches on a rock, perhaps a nymph, and a second female figure floats in the water, reaching her left arm towards Narcissus. No reflection is visible in the water, however, the panel's surface is partially destroyed. Narcissus looks out towards the audience.

CHL.19. Narcissus

Pompeii, House Unknown

MANN inv. 9384

References: Helbig, no. 1347; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 345; Hodske, cat. 810.

Reflective Narcissus. Narcissus sits on the left side, with his body facing the right side. He turns his face forward. He holds a spear in his left hand. An altar stands on the right side. The painting is damaged in the upper left and right corners.

CHL.20. Narcissus (*fig. 57*)

Pompeii VII.16.Ins.Occ. 17-19, Casa di Fabio Rufo

Room 64, east wall, in situ

Good condition

References: PPM.VII,1072; PPP III, 272; Aoyagi and Pappolardo, 398; Hodske, cat. 460.

A nude Narcissus lounges on a rock. He rests on his left arm and raises his right arm behind his head. His right leg bends at the knee and rests on the rock. Narcissus is entirely nude, his body on view. He looks out from the wall. No reflection is currently visible in the pool, although this portion of the painting suffers from moderate damage.

CIIL.21. Narcissus

Pompeii IX.2.10/14, Casa del Gallo

Unknown Room; MANN inv. 9386

52 x 51 cm; Good condition

References: PPM.VIII, 1098; Helbig, no. 1360; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 241; Hodske, cat. 653.

Reflective Narcissus: Narcissus sits on a rock near the pool. He leans on his right arm and looks over his right shoulder into the water. Cupid stands on the edge of the water gesturing towards where a reflection would be present. A female figure, possibly a nymph, sits in the background watching the scene. She is nude.

CIIL.22. Narcissus

Pompeii VI.1.7/25, Casa delle Vestali

Room 23 east wall; MANN inv. 9701

230 x 200 cm; Good condition

References: PPM.IV, 46 n. 83; Helbig, no. 1355; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 92; Taylor, *Moral Mirror*, 67 n. 36; Hodske, 179.

Reflective Narcissus: Narcissus leans over a jagged cliff, resting his body on his left hand. He raises his right arm over his body, holding a purple garment that billows out behind him, wears a floral crown. In the lower right-hand corner stands a cupid next to a pool of water. In the water appears Narcissus' reflected face. Narcissus looks down at the water.

CIIL.23. Narcissus (fig. 58)

Pompeii V.3.6, Casa di Narcisso

Room d, west wall; in situ

55 x 53cm; Fair condition

References: PPM III, 909; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 81; Hodske, cat. 158.

Reflective Narcissus: Narcissus lounging in the wilderness. The youth is nude with a garment falling from his waist. He holds a staff in his left hand. A small figure kneels in the bottom, left corner and dips a long implement into the water. A reflection is visible in the water; Narcissus gazes down. The reflection does not accurately portray Narcissus' face.

CIIL.24. Narcissus (fig. 63)

Pompeii V.4.a, Casa di Marco Lucretio Frontone

Cubiculum 6, north wall; in situ

51 x 48cm; Good condition

References: PPM.III, 1002-1003, 1005; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis* 86; PPP II, 86; Hodske, 166.

Reflective Narcissus: Narcissus sits in the wilderness. He leans on his left arm and holds his staff in right hand. He is nude, a red garment draped around his thighs and a wreath around his head. In the foreground is a pool of water in which a reflection of the youth's face is visible. Narcissus looks down at his reflection.

CHL.25. Narcissus

Pompeii, Unknown House

MANN inv. 9380

43 x 42 cm; Good condition

References: Helbig, no. 1361; *Wände Pompejis*, 344; Hodske cat. 808.

Reflective Narcissus. Sits by the pool with his legs crossed front of him and body facing the left. He leans on his left arm and raises his right arm above his head. Turns his head to the right. A garment hangs loosely around his waist leaving his torso bare. A reflection appears in the pool in the lower right-hand corner. Narcissus looks to the right, possibly into the distance. A female figure, possibly a nymph, sits in profile at the left. She looks at Narcissus. Cupid stands at the edge of the pool.

CHL.26. Narcissus/Hermaphroditus (?)

Pompeii IX.13.1/3 Casa di C. Giulio Polibio

238 x 160 cm; Poor condition

References: *PPM.X*, 256; *PPP III*, 563f; Hodske, cat. 796.

The figure is positioned in the center of the panel, leaning on his left arm and stretching his legs out to the left to form a diagonal composition. A purple garment drapes his legs leaving his upper body nude. A small cupid hovers in the background. The compositional formula is consistent with reflective Narcissus types, however, the painting's damage makes further identification unclear.

CHL.27. Narcissus

Pompeii VII.9.63/60 Casa della Pescatrice

42 x 36 cm

References: *PPM.VII*, 383; Helbig, no. 1339; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 198; Hodske, cat. 517.

Reflective Narcissus. Narcissus in the center, facing the right. Holds a spear in his right hand, wears floral wreath. Looks down at the water. Narcissus' reflected in the water, inverted face. Pastoral landscape setting.

CHL.28. Narcissus

Pompeii, House Unknown

References: Helbig, no. 1340; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 316; Hodske, cat. 817.

Reflective Narcissus. Narcissus sits on the right, his body turned towards the left and leans back on his left elbow. His legs stretch out to the left and he turns his head to the right, looking off to the side. He holds a spear gently in his right arm. A pool of water is in the lower right-hand corner. A reflection is visible here, an inverted, naturalistic face. The features are not clear, but the face wears a narcissus crown.

CHL.29. Narcissus

Pompeii, VIII.3.24, Casa di Apollo e Coronide

References: *PPM.VIII*, 429; Helbig, 1341; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 221; *PPP III*, 332; Hodske, cat. 591.

Reflective Narcissus. Narcissus sits on the right, his body turned towards the left and leans back on his left elbow. He looks over his left shoulder to the right and off to the

side. A spear rests gently in his right arm, wears a floral crown. The bottom right-hand corner of the panel is damaged and not represented in the drawing.

CHL.30. Narcissus

Pompeii IX.9.d

Drawing

References: PPM.X, 76; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 283; PPP III, 547; Hodske cat. 786.

Reflective Narcissus. Sits in the center with body facing the left, leans on left hand and turns head over left shoulder. Eyes raised and directed to the right. Spear rests gently against right leg and arm. He wears a floral crown. Pool of water in the lower right-hand corner. Naturalist, inverted face faintly visible with eyes, nose, and mouth as well as crown of narcissus flower. Cupid stands behind Narcissus to the right.

CHL.31. Narcissus

Pompeii IX.5.11/13

Rough drawing

References: PPM.IX, 554; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 258; PPP III, 474; Hodske, 720.

Narcissus sits on the right with body facing left. Leans on left elbow and turn his head over left shoulder. Cupid stands behind Narcissus' right shoulder. The drawing is very schematic.

CHL.32. Narcissus

Pompeii, House Unknown

References: PPM.1995.293; Hodske, cat. 109; Helbig, no. 1343; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 55;

Reflective Narcissus. Narcissus lounges in the center. His legs stretched out to the left and his upper body facing and face turned to the right. He holds a spear in his right hand, he wears a floral crown. A reflection is visible in the lower right corner, an inverted face.

CHL.33. Narcissus (*fig. 31*)

Pompeii I.7.10/12 Casa dell'Efebo

Cubiculum 11, north wall; in situ

Fair condition

References: PPM I, 663; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 33; Hodske, cat. 38.

Reflective Narcissus: In this version of the Narcissus scene, the youth reclines on the banks of lake or stream; little setting is depicted, the scene is focused on the figures of Narcissus, Echo, and the reflection. An almost nude Narcissus is partially draped in a dark red garment that falls from his waist revealing his youthful figure and he holds a staff in his right hand. Behind his left shoulder stands Echo, also partially nude as her green mantel falls off of her shoulder revealing her right breast. Narcissus gazes to his left at the water below him while Echo looks at Narcissus. Narcissus' reflection is visible in the water below staring back at the youth

CHL.34. Narcissus (*fig. 61*)

Pompeii VII.15.1/2 Casa di Marinaio

Tablinum t, wall unknown

Good condition

References: PPM. VII, 736; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 106; PPM. VII, 736; PPP III, 226; Hodske, cat. 547.

Reflective Narcissus; Narcissus sits at the stream, resting his body on his left arm. He is nude from the waist up; a dark purple garment drapes his hips, crown of narcissus flowers on his head. A reflected face appears in the pool with naturalistic features. Narcissus stares into the distances, looking to his left. Cupid hovers behind Narcissus, nude with wings.

CHL.35. Narcissus

Pompeii VI.9.6/7, Casa dei Dioscuri

70 x 54 cm

References: PPM.IV, 897; Helbig, no. 1364; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 117; PPP II, 211; Hodske, cat. 283.

Reflective Narcissus. Narcissus sits in the center, with his body facing the right and turns his face over his shoulder to the left. Holds a spear in his left hand. A winged cupid leans on his right shoulder. Two figures stand on the right side background, possibly Echo and second cupid. Lower left corner, a reflection is visible in the water. Narcissus' inverted face.

CHL.36. Narcissus

Pompeii VII.3.17, House Unknown

References: Helbig, no. 1346; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 177; Hodske, cat. 446.

Reflective Narcissus. Narcissus sits in the center, his body faces the right. He leans back on his right hand and turns his head over his right shoulder, looking off to the side. A spear rests gently against his left arm. In the center foreground his reflection is visible in the water as an inverted, naturalistic human head and face with eyes, nose, mouth, and hair matching the youth.

CHL.37. Narcissus

Pompeii VII.4.62 Casa delle Forme di Creta

Drawing

References: PPM.VII, 148ff; Helbig, no. 1345; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 188; PPP III, 149; Hodske, cat. 492.

Reflective Narcissus. Sits in the center with body facing the right, leans on right hand and turns head over right shoulder. Drawing too simple to indicate direction of eyes or gaze. Water in center, foreground with naturalist, inverted head.

CHL.38. Narcissus

Pompeii V.2.15

Rough drawing

References: PPM.III, 857; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 73; PPP II, 67; Hodske, cat. 155.

Reflective Narcissus. Sits in the center, body facing right and looks over shoulder to the right. Cupid stands in the lower left-hand corner motioning towards the water. An inverted, naturalistic face appears in the center foreground with eyes, mouth, and nose.

CHL.39. Narcissus

Pompeii, House Unknown

MANN inv. 9382

Drawing

References: Helbig, 1357; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 316; Hodske, cat. 809.

Reflective Narcissus. Sits upright in the center with body facing the right. Holds a spear with left hand, wears laced buskins and a crown of narcissus flowers. In the center foreground Cupid reaches towards a bowl, possibly filled with water. Narcissus looks down towards the bowl.

CHL.40. Narcissus

Pompeii VI.9.6/7, Casa dei Dioscuri

References: PPM.IV, 953; Helbig, no. 1366; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 119; PPP II, 220; Hodske, cat. 296.

Reflective Narcissus. Narcissus lounges in the center, his upper body facing left. He holds a spear in his left hand and wears a crown of narcissus flowers. In the lower left corner, Cupid pours water into a bowl from a hydra. Narcissus looks down towards the bowl. Upper left corner, a female figure leans on mountain in the background and looks down at the scene. A second female figure stands to Narcissus' right, leaning against a building.

CHL.41. Narcissus (fig. 60)

Pompeii VII.16 Ins.Occ.17-19, Casa di Fabio Rufo

Room 58, south wall; in situ

Good condition

References: PPM VII,1072; PPP III, 272; Hodske, cat. 560.

Reflective Narcissus: Narcissus reclines in his typical position with his left arm lifted above his head and his right arm resting on the arm of the chair. He holds X loosely in his right arm. The youth is loosely draped in a red garment, which falls off of his thighs, revealing his nude body, and he wears a crown of narcissus flowers around his head. His head is turned to his right as he looks down at a Cupid who pours water from a hydria into a large, silver bowl. A faint reflection is visible in the bowl.

CHL.42. Narcissus

Pompeii IX.5.14/16, Casa del Ristorante e Lupanar

Now Destroyed

References: PPM.IX, 649; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 261; PPP III, 484; Hodske, cat. 733.

Panel is severely destroyed. A pair of legs are faintly visible on the left, crossed at the ankles.

CHL.43. Narcissus

Pompeii VIII.5.37, Casa delle Pareti Rosse

38 x 37 cm; Now Destroyed

References: PPM.VIII, 645; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 228; PPP III, 358; Hodske, cat. 625.

Reflective Narcissus: Sits in the center his legs stretched out in front of him to the left and his weight resting on his left arm. Severely damaged.

CIIL.44. Narcissus

Pompeii VII.2.45, Casa dell'Orso

49 x 47 cm; Now Destroyed

References: PPM.VI, 760; Helbig, no. 1349; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 174; PPP III, 88; Hodske, cat. 440.

Reflective Narcissus: Lounges in the center, turned slightly onto his front side with his legs stretched out to the left and facing the right. Lifts right arm above head to hold a garment. Head is lifted and facing forward into the distance.

CIIL.45. Narcussis

Pompeii, Villa di Diomede

Unidentified room, upper story; MANN inv. 9383

References: Helbig, no. 1351; Rizzo, pl. 1281; Richardson, *Figure Painters*, 141.

Narcissus sits in the center leaning on his right arm and facing forward.

Perseus and Andromeda

CIIL.46. Perseus and Andromeda (*fig. 65*)

Pompeii VII.4.31/51, Casa di Arianna

Oecus 17, west wall; MANN inv. 8996

Fair condition

References: PPM VI, 1020; Helbig no. 1196; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 183; PPP III, 119; Hodske, cat. 460;

Perseus and Andromeda by the sea. Perseus sits on the right, nude save a garment falling from his thighs. He raises his right arm above his head, which holds the Gorgon so it may be reflected in the sea below. He turns his head to the right to look at Andromeda.

Andromeda, on the left, is also nude from the waist-up, her mantle falling from her waist. She wraps her arm around Perseus and looks down in the sea, presumably at the Gorgon's reflection, which is not visible in the painting.

CIIL.47. Perseus and Andromeda

Pompeii VI.15.7.8, Casa del Principe di Napoli

In situ

49 x 47cm; Fair condition

References: PPM.V, 663; Helbig, no. 1193; Schefold, 152; PPP II, 334f; Hodske, cat. 369.

Perseus and Andromeda at the sea: Andromeda leans on Perseus and looks down into the water. Perseus leans back on the seashore and raises his left hand above his head, holding the Gorgon. He looks towards Andromeda. The Gorgon faces the water.

CIIL.48. Perseus and Andromeda

Pompeii I.7.10/12, Casa dell'Efebo

Tablinum 4, north wall, in situ

Poor condition

References: PPM I, 635; PPP I, 62; Hodske, cat. 36.

Perseus and Andromeda at the sea: Perseus leans back on his right hand and turns his head to his right towards Andromeda. He raises his left hand above his head. Andromeda sits on the left.

CIIL.49. Perseus, Andromeda, and the Gorgon (*fig. 67*)

Pompeii VI.15.8, Casa del Principe di Napoli

Triclinium k, north wall, in situ

Good condition

References: PPM V, 662; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 152; PPP II, 334f; Hodske, cat 369.

Perseus and Andromeda at the sea. The figures lean on one another forming a pyramidal composition with their bodies. On the left, Perseus is heroically nude with a dark purple garment draped over his shoulder. On the right, Andromeda wears a dark yellow tunic topped by a sea-green mantle. Andromeda rests her right arm on Perseus' shoulder and turns her head to look at him while he raises his right arm above his head and dangles the Gorgon over the sea below. The Gorgon is only sketchily rendered, but has two visible eyes, an open mouth and hair. In the sea, the Gorgon's reflection is visible, but not accurately reflected. The face is turned upright for the outside viewer rather than as it would have been seen by Perseus who look down at the Gorgon in the water.

CIIL.50. Perseus and Andromeda (*fig. 64*)

Pompeii VII.4.29.57 Casa dei Capitelli Figurati,

Room 9, wall unknown

References: PPM.VI, 994 Abb.2; Helbig no. 1194; PPP III, 116; Lorenz, *Bilder machen Räume*, K47a; Hodske, 458.

Perseus and Andromeda at the sea. Perseus sits on the left, he holds the Gorgon above his head and looks towards Andromeda. Andromeda sits on the right, leans into Perseus. In the lower foreground, images of the Gorgon, Perseus, and Andromeda appear upside down in the sea—reflections.

CIIL.51. Perseus and Andromeda

Pompeii VI.2.15/22 Casa delle Danzatrici

Room 12, west wall

References: PPM.IV, 254 Abb. 47; Helbig no. 1193; PPP II, 138; LIMC.I

“Andromeda,”107; Lorenz, *Bilder machen Räume*, K24bW; Hodske, cat. 194.

Perseus and Andromeda at the sea. Perseus on the left, sits on a rock. He holds the Gorgon above his head and looks toward Andromeda. On the right, Andromeda sits, facing Perseus. She looks down at the sea. No reflection is visible.

CIIL.52. Perseus and Andromeda (*fig. 66I*)

Pompeii, House Unknown

References: Helbig, no. 1200; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 314; Hodske, cat. 834.

Perseus and Andromeda at the sea. Perseus on the left, he sits on a rock. He holds the Gorgon above his head and looks towards Andromeda. On the right, Andromeda stands, leans her right elbow on a ledge and crosses her right foot, relaxed. She looks down at the sea. The Gorgon's reflection is partially visible.

Achilles' Shield

CIII.53. Thetis (*fig. 23*)

Pompeii IX.1.7 Casa di Paccius Alessandro

Triclinium e, north wall; MANN inv. 9529

159 x 113 cm; Good condition

References: PPM VIII, 878 n. 17 fig. a, 879; Helbig 1868, n. 1813c; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, p. 235.

Thetis in the Forge of Hephaestus: In this scene from the Iliad, Thetis petitions the god Hephaestus for armor on behalf of her son, Achilles. Hephaestus sits on the left, holding up the shield of Achilles and Thetis is on the right, resting her head on her right hand as she examines the object. Several other figures are present: an attendant helps Hephaestus hold the shield, an assistant sits at Hephaestus' feet hammering a helmet, and a female attendant sits behind Thetis looking towards the shield. In the foreground lay two greaves and a breastplate and the background is a generic series of columns suggesting a great hall or other large space. In Achilles shield, a clear reflection of Thetis is visible.

CIII.54. Thetis and Hephaeustus

Pompeii IX.5.2, Casa di Achille

Room u, east wall

133 x 115 cm; Poor condition

References: PPM IX, 394; PPP III, 453; Hodske, cat. 706.

On the right, Thetis sits enthroned wearing a light garment that falls from her waist. Hephaestus stands on the left, holding the shield of Achilles towards the nymph. She looks towards the shield at the abstract design on its surface. Achilles' breastplate and greaves lie scattered in the foreground.

CIII.55. Thetis and Hephaestus

Pompeii VII.1.25/47, Casa di Sirico

Exedra 10, east wall, in situ

119 x 103 cm; Poor condition

References: Helbig no. 1316; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 164; PPP III, 33; Hodske, cat. 412.

Thetis sits on the right, Hephaestus stands on the left. Hephaestus holds Achilles' shield towards the nymph. She faces its surface.

CIII.56. Thetis and Hephaestus

Pompeii I.6.2. Casa del Criptoportico

Oecus 22, north wall; in situ

Poor condition/Partially Destroyed

References: PPM.I, 209; Richardson, Figure Painters, 25.

Hephaestus sits on the left. Achilles' shield rests next to his chair. The right side of the painting is destroyed. A large, winged figure stands in the center looking to the right. A small attendant figure stands to the far right.

CIIL.57. Thetis and Hephaestus

Pompeii VI.17 (Ins. Occ) 42-44, Casa di Bracciale d'Oro

In situ

Poor condition

References: PPM.V, 787; Schefold, Wände Pompejis, 154; PPP II, 349; Hodske cat. 377.

Hephaestus stands on the left propping up the shield of Achilles in the center. The lower half of Thetis' body is visible on the right: her lower torso and legs. The painting is damaged in the upper right-hand corner.

CIIL.58. Thetis and Hephaestus

Pompeii VI.9.2/13, Casa di Meleagro

MANN inv. 9528

100 x 111 cm; Good condition

References: PPM.IV, 675; Helbig no. 1317; Schefold, Wände Pompejis, 111; PPP II, 185; Hodske cat, 243.

Thetis sits on the right side in profile with her left leg crossed over her right. She leans her chin on her right hand which rests on her knee. She looks towards the center where Hephaestus holds Achilles' shield. Behind her stands an attendant. Hephaestus stands facing Thetis. The shield's surface is damaged in its current state.

Other:

CIIL.59. Hermaphroditus

Pompeii VI.7.18, Casa di Adone Ferito

Oecus 11, east wall; in situ

Fair condition

References: PPM IV, 417; Schefold, Wände Pompejis, 100; Balensiefen, 53, 234 K 33.

This painting is poorly preserved: damage has obscured many pigments as well as a large lacuna in the center of the painting. Hermaphroditus stands in the center of the painting assisted by several attendants who stand on either side. He is nude, but only the top of his torso is visible due to the lacuna. On his right a female attendant holds a small hand mirror.

—IV—

VISION AND LOVE IN MYTHOLOGICAL LOVE SCENES

*Lack of visual Exchange***CIV.1** Helen and Paris (*fig. 70*)

Pompeii I.7.7, Casa dell'affresco di Spartaco

cubiculum c, south wall; in situ

48 x 42 cm; Good condition

References: PPM.I, 607-9; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 31; Hodske, cat. 34.

Helen sits on the left facing Paris. Her body is in profile. She is modestly draped. A female attendant sits beside her and looks at Helen. Paris stands on the right, looking at Helen. He is nude; shifts his weight to his right foot and bends his left leg in a contrappasto stance. He reaches his right arm towards Helen.

CIV.2 Paris and Helen

Pompeii I.7.10-12/19, Casa annessa alla Casa dell'Efebo

cubiculum d, north wall; in situ

27 x 24 cm; Poor condition

References: PPM.I.773; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 36; Hodske, cat. 44.

Helen sits on the right facing Paris. Her body is in profile. She seems to be nude, but wearing a light blue veil, which she holds over her face. Paris stands on the left facing Helen. He wears a full tunic and Phrygian cap. He is dynamic: shifting his weight to the right foot and lifting his left leg. He lifts his left hand to his face.

CIV.3 Helen and Paris (*fig. 22*)

Pompeii VI.16.7, Casa degli Amorini Dorati

Tablinum e, west wall; in situ

Fair Condition

References: PPM.V, 738; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 153; Richardson, *Figure Painters*, 70; Hodske, cat. 374.

Paris sits on the left, his legs and body facing the right towards Helen and her attendants. He wears a purple tunic trimmed in white. A female attendant sits behind him. Helen stands on the left, looking towards Paris; a light gray mantle covers her body modestly. A female attendant stands behind Helen. Cupid hovers between Paris and Helen. He is nude and winged.

CIV.4 Helen and Paris

Pompeii IX.5.18, Casa di Giasone

Cubiculum e, north wall; MANN inv. 114320

115 x 87 cm; Good condition

References: PPM.IX, 681; Sogliano, no. 569; PPP III, 486; Hodske, cat. 736.

Paris sits on the left, his legs and body facing the right. Helen stands on the left. She looks towards Paris. Helen wears a modest tunic and mantle. Cupid stands in the center, shifting his weight in a relaxed stance. Two columns frame him on either side.

CIV.5 Paris and Helen

Stabiae, Villa di Arianna

Room 24; MANN inv. 8982

37 x 35 cm; Good condition

References: Helbig, no. 240; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 333; Sampaolo and Braghantini, 270.

CIV.6 Hercules and Omphale (fig. 33)

Pompeii VII.1.25/47 Casa di Sirico

exedra 10, north wall, in situ

126 x 106 cm; Good condition

References: PPM VI, 266; Helbig no. 1139; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 164; PPP III, 31; Hodske, cat. 413.

Omphale sits in the upper left corner flanked by two young, female attendants. She looks down towards Hercules who relaxes in the lower right corner. The attendants both follow her gaze. Hercules lays on the ground, presumably drunk. A light chiton falls from his waist revealing his torso. He raises his right arm above his head. Two amorini carry his club. A crowd of five revelers watch the scene from the upper, right corner. These male and female figures wear wreaths of grape leaves and raise their arms in gestures of excitement.

CIV.7 Hercules and Omphale

Pompeii IX.3.5/24, Casa di M. Lucrestius

triclinium 16, east wall; MANN inv. 8992

1.51 x 1.92 m; Fair condition

References: PPM.IX, 269; Helbig no. 1410; Guida 1319; Rizzo, 43; PPP III, 440.

Hercules stands in the center. He wears only a light chiton that has slipped from his body, revealing his upper torso. He turns his head and looks to the right at the crowd standing behind him. Omphale stands on the right. She leans her weight on low wall and positions her right arm on her hip. Her upper body is nude. She looks towards Hercules. A crowd of figures stand behind Hercules and Omphale. Cupid hovers at Hercules' left shoulder.

CIV.8 Hercules and Omphale (fig. 32)

Pompeii VII. Ins. Occ. 16-10 Casa di Principe del Principe di Montenegro

Room unknown; MANN inv. 9000

90 x 80 cm; Good condition

References: PPM VII 841f; Helbig, no. 1137; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 209; PPP III, 237; Hodske, cat. 558.

Omphale sits in the upper left corner flanked by two attendants. She wears a light garment and delicate jewelry—bracelets and necklace. Her body faces left, but she turns her head to the right looking down towards Hercules who lounges in the lower right corner. The attendant on the left also looks down towards Hercules while the one on the right looks at Omphale or perhaps outside of the picture field. Hercules lays on the ground, his right arm raised above his head. He holds a cup in his hand, a remnant of his

drunken state. He wears only a chiton, which has slipped off his body revealing his upper torso. Three amorini carry Hercules' club in an act of disarmament. [See also no. 195]

CIV.9 Hercules and Omphale

Pompeii VIII.4.34 Casa di Omphale

Wall unknown

160 x 100 cm

Now Destroyed

References: PPM.VIII, 534; Helbig, no. 1136; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 225; PPP III, 349; Hodske, cat. 613.

Hercules sits on the left with his body facing the right. Omphale and a group of female attendants sit on the right looking towards him. Damage to the painting prevents further analysis.

CIV.10 Pyramus and Thisbe (fig. 71)

Pompeii IX.5.14/16, Casa del Ristorante

Triclinium f, south wall; MANN inv. 111483

100 x 74 cm; Good condition

References: PPM.IX, 630; Rizzo, 64; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 260; Hodske cat. 729.

Pyramus lies dead across the foreground, a red mantle under his body and wrapped around his left leg. Thisbe leans on top of Pyramus and looks down at her lover as she plunges a dagger into her breast.

CIV.11 Pyramus and Thisbe

Pompeii V.4.a, Casa di Marco Lucrezio Frontone

summer triclinium 12, west wall; in situ

35 x 33 cm; Poor condition

References: PPM.III, 1028; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 86; PPP II, 91; Hodske, cat. 169.

Pyramus lies dead across the foreground, his face turned forward. Thisbe leans over Pyramus and looks at his dead body. A mantle blows behind her. She plunges a knife into her breast.

CIV.12 Pyramus and Thisbe (fig. 72)

Pompeii II.2.2, Casa di Octavius Quartio

Biclinium k; in situ

123 x 110 cm; Good condition

References: PPM.III, 105; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 53; PPP I, 218; Hodske cat. 98.

Pyramus lies on the ground, his nude body forming a diagonal through the center of the panel. His face is turned upward and his eyes are open. A spear lies next to his right arm signaling his death. Thisbe kneels on the right, leans over the dead Pyramus, and looks at him as she plunges a knife into her breast. A lion leaps through the background

CIV.13 Pyramus and Thisbe

Pompeii I.11.6, Casa di Venere in Bikini

Cubiculum 4, east wall; in situ

71 x 75 cm; Fair condition

References: PPM.II, 541; PPP I, 151; Hodske, cat. 78.

Pyramus lies on his back in the foreground. He raises his right hand above his head and bends his left knee. Thisbe sits behind Pyramus and looks towards his face.

CIV.14 Diana and Actaeon

Pompeii VI.16.7 Casa del'Amorini Dorati

Cubiculum r, south wall; in situ

36 x 32 cm; Good condition

References: PPM.V, 838; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 156; PPP II, 354; Hodske, cat. 379.

Diana stands on the left in a pudica stance. She shifts her weight to her right leg and bends her left knee. She turns her head over her left shoulder to look at Actaeon. Actaeon stands in the background. He peers at the bathing Diana. His body is damaged, but his face and hands remain.

CIV.15 Diana and Actaeon

Pompeii I.11.6, Casa di Venere in Bikini

tablinum 7, south wall; in situ

Fair condition

References: PPM.II, 564; PPP, I, 154; Hodske, cat. 81.

Diana kneels, bathing herself in a pool of water. She is nude. At the right, Actaeon approaches, his right leg cast in front of his body. He raises his left arm.

CIV.16 Diana and Actaeon

Pompeii VI.2.4/30/31, Casa di Sallustius

Viridarium 32, south wall; in situ

309 cm; Fair condition

References: PPM.IV, 132; Helbig, no. 249; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 93; PPP II, 121; Hodske, cat. 186.

Diana kneels at the left, hiding amidst a dense landscape. Actaeon approaches on the right. He raises his right arm.

CIV.17 Actaeon

Pompeii II.2.2, Casa di Octavius Quartio

portico I, northwest wall; in situ

Good condition

References: PPM.I, 218; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 51; PPP III, 101; PPP I, 218; Richardson, *Figure Painters* 2000, 151; Hodske, cat. 94.

Actaeon stands amidst a landscape, his nude body glimmering in the light. He steps forward with his left leg and raises his right hand above his head.

Visual Exchange

CIV.18 Apollo and Daphne (*fig. 73*)

Pompeii I.7.10/12, Casa dell'Efebo

Cubiculum 12, south wall; in situ

48 x 48 cm; Good condition

References: PPM.I, 658; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 33; PPP I, 65; Hodske, cat. 39.

Apollo sits on the right, his legs crossed in front of him. He is nude save a dark red mantle draped across his right leg, behind his back, and over his shoulder. He wears a laurel wreath. Opposite Apollo stands Daphne, her back facing out and her head in profile as she looks toward Apollo. She is nude with a deep gold mantle wrapped around her lower legs.

CIV.19 Apollo and Daphne

Pompeii IX.2.10/14, Casa del Gallo

Triclinium d, wall unknown; MANN inv. 9532

51 x 51 cm; Good condition

References: PPM.VIII, 1097; Helbig no, 216; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 241; Hodske cat. 652.

Apollo sits on a ledge on the right side of the composition and is youthful wearing a laurel wreath. He kicks his left leg forward and leans the weight of his torso back on his left arm. Opposite is Daphne who faces away from Apollo. She is nude with a dark red mantle swirling around her waist. She steps forward with her left leg, moving away from Apollo who pulls her towards him with his right hand. He looks intently at the nymph who ignores his gaze.

CIV.20 Apollo and Daphne

Pompeii VII.4.31/51, Casa di Arianna

Ala 7, west wall; in situ

56 x 53 cm; Good Condition

References: PPM.IV, 1006; Helbig, no 211; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 182; PPP III, 117; Hodske, cat. 459.

Apollo stands on the left in profile, advancing towards Daphne. His upper body is bare and a dark garment drapes around his lower torso and legs. He wears a laurel wreath on his head. Opposite Apollo is Daphne seated on a rock. She is nude with a light garment around her lower legs. She looks at Apollo. She lifts her right arm up to her head.

CIV.21 Apollo and Daphne

Pompeii VII.12.22/23/24, Casa della Camillo

room f, south

86 x 78 cm; Good condition

References: PPM.VII, 556; Helbig, no. 212; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 202; PPP III, 200; Hodske, cat. 526.

Apollo sits on the left facing Daphne. He looks at her and reaches towards her with his right arm. He is nude, wears a laurel wreath, and carries a lyre. Daphne stands opposite Apollo. She is frontal. She looks away from Apollo.

CIV.22 Apollo and Daphne

Pompeii IX.3.5/24, Casa di M. Lucrestius
triclinium 21, south; MANN 9536

37 x 43 cm

References: PPM.VII, 556; Helbig, no. 207; Elia, 152; *Guida* 1429; PPP III, 443; Hodske, cat. 694.

Daphne kneels, raising her right arm in the air and leaning her torso backwards. A deep gold garment swirls behind her. Apollo lunges towards her wrapping his arms around her body. A deep red mantle flows from his shoulders and a laurel wreath encircles his head. Apollo looks down at Daphne as she falls towards the ground.

CIV.23 Apollo and Daphne

Pompeii II.3.3, Casa della Venere in Conchiglia
Oecus 10, north wall; in situ

37 x 37 cm

References: PPM.III, 147; PPP I, 225; Hodske cat. 103.

Apollo sits on the left facing Daphne who stands at the right. He crosses his legs in front of him and rests his right arm on his chair. Daphne stands in front of Apollo, facing the god, and looks down towards him. She is nude and her body maintains a relaxed stance: right leg slightly bent, left leg stepping softly forward, and her weight shifted onto her front leg. Apollo reaches towards her with his left arm and follows his arm with his gaze.

CIV.24 Apollo and Daphne

Pompeii VI.9.2/13, Casa di Meleagro
Peristyle 16, west wall; MANN inv. 9534

56 x 49 cm; Good condition

References: PPM.IV, 720; Helbig, no. 214; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 113; Hodske, cat. 264.

Apollo stands in the center of the panel holding his lyre. He faces the front, his left leg bent, and his body moving to the right. He turns his head backward over his right shoulder towards Daphne who stands on the left in the background. She wears only a light colored garment around her waist. Daphne raises her left arm to her face.

CIV.25 Apollo and Daphne

Pompeii VI.9.6/7, Casa dei Dioscuri
Cubiculum 44, west wall; in situ

57 x 52 cm; Fair condition

References: PPM IV, 939; Helbig, no. 208; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 119; PPP II, 217; Hodske, cat. 292.

Apollo grasping Daphne. Daphne kneels, her head and arms raised above and leaning backwards. Apollo stands beside her, wrapping his arms around her waist. He looks towards her, but she looks away in agony.

CIV.26 Apollo and Daphne

Pompeii VIII.3.24, Casa di Apollo e Coronide

Triclinium 6, north wall; in situ

92 x 82 cm; Fair condition

References: PPM.VIII, 421f; Helbig, no. 213; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 222; PPP III, 331; Richardson, *Figure Painters*, 62; Hodske, cat. 589.

Apollo sits on the left, his legs facing the left and his torso forward. He leans back on his left arm and raises his right arm above his head. He looks toward Daphne. Daphne stands on the right facing forward. She leans on her right hand and shifts her weight onto her left foot.

CIV.27 Apollo and Daphne

Pompeii IX.13.1/3, Casa di C. Giulio Polibio

In Situ

238 x 160 cm; Fair condition

References: PPM.X, 256; PPP III, 563f; Hodske, cat. 796.

Apollo sits on the left with crossed legs. He rests on his left arm. With his right arm, Apollo grabs Daphne. Standing opposite Apollo, Daphne lunges away. Her back faces outward. She turns her head back over her shoulder to look at Apollo.

CIV.28 Io

Pompeii VI.9.2/13, Casa di Meleagro

Tablinum 8, north wall

MANN in. 9556

102 x 107 cm; Good condition

References: PPM.IV, 681; Helbig, no. 132; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 111; Hodske, cat. 248.

Io sits on the left. Her body faces the left and she rests her left hand on the rock. She turns her head over her shoulder to look at Argo who stands on the right. Argo, nude, rests his right foot on a rock and leans on his right knee. He places his left hand on his hip in a casual gesture and looks towards Io, meeting her gaze.

CIV.29. Neptune and Amphitrite

Pompeii IX.5.14/16, Casa del Ristorante

Peristyle k; MANN inv. 111442

References: PPM.IX, 648; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 262; PPP III, 484; Hodske, cat. 735.

Neptune and Amphitrite in the sea. Amphitrite leans against Neptune and lifts her right arm above her head to grab a blue garment that billows behind the god. She is fully clothed in a golden chiton. She looks upward at Neptune. Neptune leans his cheek on Amphitrite's head and looks down. To the left, a XXX swims through the waves watching the pair.

CIV.30 Neptune and Amphitrite

Pompeii VII.16. Ins.Occ.17-19, Casa di Fabio Rufo

Room 62, north wall; in situ

Poor condition

References:

Neptune sits on a rock, leaning towards Amphitrite who stands on the right. His body is in profile and he looks towards Amphitrite. He holds a triton in his left hand and reaches towards Amphitrite with his right hand, pulling the gold mantle from her body.

Amphitrite stands frontally in a relaxed pose and looks towards Neptune, but does not touch him.

Dionysus and Ariadne**CIV.31 Dionysus and Ariadne (fig. 74)**

Pompeii VII.10.3/14, Casa della Caccia Nuova

tablinum o, south wall

MANN inv. 111484

88 x 81 cm; Good condition

References: PPM.VII, 409; Helbig no. 1236; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 199; PPP III, 181; Hodske cat. 419.

Ariadne sleeps on the left with her back facing outward. Her light, gold mantle falls from her hips exposing her back and buttocks. A satyr lifts the garment from Ariadne exposing her body. Dionysus stands on the right, crossing his right leg over his left and resting his right arm on his hip. He looks down at Ariadne. He loosely drapes a purple mantle around his waist, exposing his torso, genitals and legs. A small satyr stands next to Dionysus and looks up at the god's face while Silenus stands on the left and behind Ariadne. He wears a bushy white beard and his potbelly is visible.

CIV.32 Dionysus and Ariadne

Pompeii I.9.5, Casa dei Cubicoli Floreali

Cubiculum 8 east wall; in situ

Poor condition

References: PPM.II, 20; PPP I, 96

Ariadne sleeps on the left side with her back facing outward. A light garment drapes her body, but leaves her back and buttocks exposed. Dionysus approaches from the right, stepping forward on his left foot and raising his right foot in motion. His right arm reaches forward and pulls the drapery off of Ariadne as he peaks at her sleeping form. He holds a thyrsus and wears a wreath.

CIV.33 Dionysus and Ariadne

Pompeii VI.11.4.17

References: Helbig, no. 1233; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 125; Hodske, cat. 315.

On the left, Ariadne lay on the ground turned on her side and facing forward. She rests her head on her arms. Dionysus stands on the right, unclothed and facing forward. He rests his left elbow on a tall pediment.

CIV.34 Ariadne and Dionysus

Pompeii (house unknown)

76 x 63 cm

45-79 AD

MANN 9271

Bibliography: Helbig, no.1235; Curtius, 310; Rizzo, 59 tav; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 315, 342; *Rosso pompeiano*, 125

A nude Dionysus stands in the center of the composition flanked on his right by Silenus and his left by Eros. He is modeled in pink and reds with white highlighting; he wears a crown and carries a thyrsus. In the lower right corner Ariadne sleeps on a pillow. She is draped by a gauzy white garment, which a satyr lifts from the top of her body revealing her nude, milky torso from the waist up. Dionysus looks down at Ariadne. The background is a gray, rocky landscape in which are visible a group of five observers in the top left corner. Their figures are sketchily painted in gray and white; they have no distinguishing features.

CIV.35 Epiphany of Dionysus (*fig. 76*)

Pompeii I.4.5/25, Casa del Citarista

exedra 35, south wall

MANN inv. 9286; Fair condition

References: PPM 1, 136-37; Helbig no. 1239; Rizzo, 59; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 16; Hodske cat. 21.

Ariadne lays sleeping in the bottom right corner with her back facing outward. Her chiton falls from her hips exposing her buttocks. She rests her head on her elbows. Dionysus approaches from the right and stands looking at the sleeping Ariadne. His mantle billows behind him. A winged, female stands at Ariadne's head, looking towards the approaching Dionysus. A crowd of revelers surround the god.

CIV.36 Ariadne and Dionysus

Stabiae, Villa Ariana

Ariadne sleeps in the right hand corner. She lays on her back with her purple mantle wrapped around her hips exposing her breasts. She raises her right arm above her head. Dionysus stands on the left, approaching from afar. He looks at Ariadne. A winged, female hovers behind Ariadne and looks towards Dionysus. A group of revelers occupy the back of the scene.

CIV.37 Dionysus (*fig. 78*)

Pompeii VII.4.31/51, Casa di Arianna

MANN inv. 9278

164 x 192 cm; Fair condition

References: PPM.VI, 1047; Helbig no. 1237; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 184 (i); Peters, *Landscapes*, 143 n. 536; LIMC VIII s.v. Ariadne p. 1062, n. 127; PPP III, 124; Hodske, cat. 473.

Ariadne sleeps in the righthand corner. Her torso and breasts are exposed and she raises her right hand above her head. Dionysus stands in the center of the panel and looks down at Ariadne. He rests on his thyrsus, which he holds in his right arm. A winged, female figure kneels behind Ariadne, looking down at the sleeping figure. Cupid hovers over Ariadne, pointing at the woman and gazing up at Dionysus. Several satyrs surround Dionysus, one of whom hoists Silenus from a lower plane on the left side. Silenus wears his normal potbelly and white beard.

CIV.38 Ariadne and Dionysus (*fig. 77*)

Pompeii IX.7.20, Casa della Fortuna

Room I, west wall

Destroyed

References: PPM.IX, 862; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 271; PPP III, 507; Lorenz, *Bilder machen Räume*, K7blW; Hodske, cat. 765.

Epiphany of Dionysus. Ariadne sits on the ground in the lower righthand corner. She crosses her legs in front of her and props up her body with her left hand. Her light torso is uncovered and a garment drapes her lower body. Dionysus stands on the left. He holds a thyrsus and wears a grape leaf crown. His skin is dark and garment falls from his waist. Ariadne points towards Dionysus and looks up at him as he looks down towards her.

CIV.39 Ariadne and Dionysus (*fig. 79*)

Pompeii IX.7.20, Casa della Fortuna

Room I, south wall

Destroyed;

References: PPM.IX, 848; Lorenz, *Bilder machen Räume*, K78aS.

Epiphany of Dionysus: Ariadne sleeps in the foreground, her legs are crossed in front of her and her right arm is bent above her head, resting on her forehead. A female figure stands behind Ariadne. She is winged and covered in a chiton. On the left, Dionysus walks towards Ariadne. He is followed by members of his retinue and Silenus. Dionysus is youthful and nude. He wears a crown of grape leaves. Silenus stands on the left with a rounded belly and carrying a thyrsus.

CIV.40 Dionysus and Ariadne (*fig. 35*)

Pompeii VIII.4.4/49, Casa dei Postumii e i suoi annessi

Room 31 west wall

Not in situ

122 x 99 cm

Bibliography: PPM VIII, 505-515; Helbig, no. 1240; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 224; PPP III, 341; Lorenz, *Bilder machen Räume*, K78aS; Hodske, cat. 600.

Dionysus rescues Ariadne on Naxos. Ariadne lies partially nude in the bottom-right corner of the composition. Her back faces the viewer and she sleeps with her head buried in her elbow. Dionysus and his retinue approach Ariadne in the middleground. Dionysus

is identified from his thyrsus and accompanying bacchantes, including maenads and a satyr. He looks towards her. A crowd of bacchantes appear in the background.

CIV.41 Dionysus and Ariadne (*fig. 8*)

Pompeii VI.15.1/2, House of the Vettii

Triclinium p, south wall; in situ

52 x 46 cm; Good condition

References: PPM.V, 482; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 141; PPP II, 306; Hodske, cat. 352.

Dionysus rescues Ariadne on Naxos. Ariadne lies partially nude in the bottom-right corner of the composition. Her back faces the viewer and she sleeps with her head buried in her right elbow. She raises her right arm over her head. Dionysus and his retinue approach the sleeping female in the middle ground. The god is identified from her thyrsus, grape leaf crown and bacchantes. Dionysus looks towards Ariadne while several small maenads and satyrs look on from the background. In particular, a small, dark-skinned satyr stands in the center of the composition looking and gesturing up towards Dionysus.

CIV.42 Dionysus and Ariadne

Pompeii IX.5.14/16, Casa del Ristorante

MANN inv. 111481

Good condition

References: PPM.IX, 627; Sogliano, no. 168; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 260; PPP III, 482; Hodske, cat. 727.

Dionysus sits in the center of the composition on a chair or throne. His garment falls from his hips exposing his torso, hips, and genitals. He tilts his head back and turns to look at Ariadne who stands to the right. Several attendant figures stand in the background.

CIV.43 Dionysus and Ariadne

Pompeii V.2.1, Casa della Regina Margherita

References: PPM.III, 796; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 70; PPP II, 57; Hodske cat. 141.

The panel is badly damaged with only the top and a fragment of the right side preserved. On the top, two figures are shown, one bearded and the second possibly a female. In the center right, Ariadne's head is shown. Her eyes are closed and she rests her head on her hand, asleep.

CIV.44 Dionysus and Ariadne

Pompeii VII.12.26, Casa di Cornelius Diadumenus

Triclinium h, north wall; in situ

Good Condition

References: PPM.VII, 576; Elsner, *Roman Eyes*, 99.

Dionysus sits in the center flanked by Ariadne and his retinue. He is perched on a ledge and wears only a green mantle that falls from his hips leaving his torso and genitals exposed. He leans back on his right arm and looks over his shoulder at Ariadne who sits on his right. Ariadne sits upright and wears a light purple mantle on her legs. She faces

Dionysus, meeting his gaze. Four spectators watch the scene. On the right, two satyrs sit on a ledge, on the left an unidentified (male?) figure stands and looks at the scene, and in the center a third (female?) figure looks on at the two figures.

CIV.45 Dionysus and Ariadne

Pompeii I.10.10/11, Casa degli Amanti

Room 8, south wall; in situ

Now Destroyed

References: PPM.II, 472f Abb.51; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 48; PPP I, 143; Lorenz, *Bilder machen Räume*, K9aS; Hodske, cat. 76.

This painting is almost entirely destroyed, but it is possible to discern a figure standing in the center [Dionysus] as well as a figure laying on the ground in the right-hand foreground [Ariadne].

CIV.46 Dionysus and Ariadne

Pompeii IX.5.2, Casa di Achille

Room c, south wall; in situ

References: PPM.IX, 374ff Abb.8ff; PPP III, 451; LIMC.III s.v. Ariadne, 87; Lorenz, *Bilder machen Räume*, K71aS.

CIV.47 Dionysus and Ariadne

Pompeii IX.3.19

Now Destroyed

References: PPM.IX, 351; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 251; Hodske, cat. 697.

Ariadne's sleeping body is in the lower left-hand corner. She rests on a cushion with her body propped on a pillow. Dionysus stands in the center, fully clothed and holding his thyrsus. A male figure, possibly a satyr, holds Dionysus right arm. The god looks down towards Ariadne.

CIV.48 Dionysus and Ariadne

Pompeii House Unknown

96 x 65 cm; MANN inv. 9269

References: PPM.VII, 302f; Helbig, no. 367; Fiorelli, 241; Hodske cat. 847.

The painted fragment is cut off on all sides. Dionysus stands in the center shifting his weight to one foot, his body faces forward. Three figures stand behind him: Silenus and a female bacchante on the right and a second female bacchante on the left. Ariadne is not shown in the panel, but would likely have appeared

CIV.49 Ariadne, Dionysus, Theseus

Pompeii VII.4.31/51, Casa di Arianna

Room 28, east wall

Destroyed

References: PPM.VI, 1072f; Helbig no. 1234; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 184; PPP III, 124; Lorenz, *Bilder machen Räume*, K48fO; Hodske, cat. 475.

Ariadne sits on the ground facing the left with her legs crossed in front of her. She props up her upper body with her left arm. Theseus' ship appears on the horizon on the left hand of the panel and a group of four male figures appear behind Ariadne on the right. Ariadne looks towards the ship in the distance. She is nude wearing only a thin garment around her hips and legs. She lifts a corner of the garment to wipe tears from her eyes. Dionysus stands behind Ariadne identified by his thyrsus and grape-leaf crown. He is youthful. Silenus stands to the left of Dionysus with two small horns protruding from his head. Two additional satyrs stand behind Dionysus.

CIV.50 Dionysus

Pompeii VII.7.32

MANN inv. 9269

References: PPM.VII, 302f; Helbig, no. 395; Hodske, cat. 507.

Dionysus stands in the center, shifting his weight onto his right foot. He holds his thyrsus in his left hand and a mantle hangs over his right arm, which is stretched out holding a kantharos. He looks to the right. Silenus stands to Dionysus' left. He holds a lyre.

CIV.51 Dionysus and Maenad

Pompeii I.11.6, Casa di Venere in Bikini

Tablinum 7, south wall; in situ

56 x 50 cm

Fair condition

References: PPM.III.796; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 70; PPP, II, 57; Hodske, cat. 141.

Dionysus stands in the center of the composition, his body and face forward. A small amorini stands in the lower left corner. Behind Dionysus, a maenads stands swirling her drapery around her and watching the god.

Ariadne and Theseus

CIV.52 Theseus and Ariadne (*fig. 80*)

Pompeii VII.4.51/31, Casa dei Capitelli Colorati

oecus 33, north wall; MANN inv. 9052

61 x 59 cm. Fair condition

References: Helbig, no. 1217; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, p. 183; Peters, *Landscapes*, p142 ss n. 533 per confronti; LIMC VIII, s.v. Ariadne p. 1058 n. 62; Parise Badoni, "Arianna," 1990, p. 77 fig.5; VI p. 1090 fig. 138; Hodske, cat. 465.

Ariadne sleeps in the left corner, her torso and breast exposed. She rests her head and upper body on a large cushion. Her head is turned to the left. Theseus stands on the right, stepping onto the gangway of his ship. His body faces right as he prepares to leave, but he turns his head back to look at the sleeping Ariadne. Theseus is nude, a red mantle falling from his hips and shoulder.

CIV.53 Ariadne and Theseus

Pompeii V.1.26, Casa di L. Caecilius Iucundus

Triclinium o east wall; MANN inv. 115396

125 x 106 cm; Good condition

References: PPM.III, 612; Schefold, *Wände Pompeji*, 355; LIMC III add. s.v. Ariadne p. 1058 n. 66; Parise Badoni "Arianna," 73-89, fig. 3; PPP II, 26; Hodske cat. 126.

Ariadne abandoned on Naxos. Ariadne lies in the right-hand of the composition. She is nude from the waist-down, wearing only a purple drape on her lower half. She languishes with her right arm shielding her eyes and her head tilted backwards. Theseus stands on the left in a position of action, with his legs askance as if in the process of boarding his ship to leave the island. He is nude and has darker skin than Ariadne. His body faces the ship while he looks back towards Ariadne. Several onlookers appear on Theseus'

CIV.54 Theseus and Ariadne

Pompeii Villa Imperiale

Room a, north wall; In situ

Poor condition

References: Parise Badoni, "Arianna," Abb.1; Lorenz, *Bilder machen Räume*, K82aN; Hodske, cat. 571.

Only the right side of the painting survives. Theseus faces the right, stepping onto the gangway towards his ship. He turns his head over his right shoulder to look backwards. On the ship, a figure leans towards Theseus and offers a hand.

CIV.55 Ariadne and Theseus (*fig. 81*)

Pompeii VI.8.3/5, Casa del Poeta Tragico

Triclinium 15 east wall; in situ

116 x 93 cm; Good condition

References: PPM.IV, 572; Helbig, no. 1218; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 105; PPP II, 171; Hodske, cat. 233.

Theseus stands on the right directly in front of his ship. His body faces the ship as he prepares to leave Naxos, but he turns his head back to look towards Ariadne. Ariadne A male figure stands in the ship's aft gazing to the left, perhaps also at Ariadne.

CIV.56 Ariadne and Theseus

Pompeii VI.16.15/19, Casa dell'Ara Massima

Triclinium g west wall; In Situ

Bibliography: PPM.V, 877.

Ariadne abandoned on Naxos. Ariadne lies nude from the waist down in the right hand of the composition. A nude male figure stands above her and to the left. The figure's face is damaged, but the nudity and position suggest it is Theseus in the process of leaving Naxos. Several attendant figures surround the scene, most noticeably a larger figure behind Ariadne who holds a dish and appears to touch the woman's arm.

CIV.57 Ariadne and Theseus

Pompeii IX.6.d, Casa di Dido ed Aeneas

Now Destroyed

References: ; PPM.IX, 726; Sogliano, no. 532; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 266; PPP III, 490; Hodske, cat. 746.

On the left, Ariadne lays asleep on her back on a cushion or mat. Theseus stands on the right, walking up the gangway. He turns his head back over his shoulder and looks at Ariadne. Four figures stand in the ship, one reaches out to Theseus. In the top, left corner, Athena sits on a cliff. She holds a shield and spear and wears her helmet.

CIV.58 Ariadne and Theseus

Pompeii IX.9.3

Now Destroyed

References: *PPM.X*, 88; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 284; *PPP III*, 548; Hodske cat. 7891.

On the left, Ariadne lays asleep on her back, propped up by a cushion. Theseus stands on the right walking away from Ariadne towards his ship at the right. A male figure stands behind him holding a shield.

CIV.59 Ariadne and Theseus

Pompeii I.11.15/9, Casa del piano superiore

room 14, south wall; in situ

94 x 72 cm

Poor condition

References: *PPM.II*, 639; *PPP I*, 162; Hodske, cat. 83.

Ariadne lays asleep on the left side of the composition her breast and torso exposed. Her head rests on a cushion. Theseus stands on the right at the base of the gangway. He takes a step up, but turns his head back to look at Ariadne as she sleeps. A figure stands at the ship's aft, reaching towards Theseus.

CIV.60 Theseus and Ariadne

Pompeii VI.14.43, Casa degli Scienziati

Room 11, west wall; Now Destroyed

References: *PPM.VI*, 447; Helbig, no. 1219; Parise Badoni 1990, Abb. 8; *PPP II*, 301; Lorenz, *Bilder machen Räume*, K36aW; Hodske, cat. 349.

Top left portion of the painting is missing. Ariadne lays asleep on the left side. On the right, Theseus boards the ship, stepping on the ganway. A figure in the ship reaches towards Theseus.

CIV.61 Theseus and Ariadne

Pompeii VII.14.5, Casa del Banchiere

Room 26, wall unknown; Now Destroyed

References: *PPM.VIII*, 683 Abb. 43 *PPP III*, 218; Parise Badoni 1990, Abb.10; *LIMC.III* "Ariadne," 63; ; Lorenz, *Bilder machen Räume*, K56a.

On the left, Ariadne sleeps with her body propped on a cushion. Her head turned to the left and her eyes closed. On the right. Theseus stands above Ariadne, waving his arm above her. Behind Theseus a soldier stands wearing a helmet and carrying a spear and shield.

CIV.62 Theseus and Ariadne (*fig. 82*)

Pompeii I.8.17, Casa dei Quattro Stili

Room 16, north wall; in situ

Poor condition

References: PPM.I, 896f; PPP I, 87; Parise Badoni 1990, Abb. 11; Lorenz, *Bilder machen Räume*, K7bn.

Ariadne sleeps in the background. She lays on her side, wrapped in a garment. Theseus stands in front of Ariadne in a contrappasto stance. He looks to the left at Athena. Athena gestures towards Theseus with her right hand. She wears her helmet.

Ariadne

CIV.63 Ariadne (fig. 83)

Pompeii VI.15.1/2, Casa dei Vettii

Cubiculum d, south wall; in situ

113 x 103 cm; Good condition

References: PPM.V, 538f; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 145; PPP II, 316; Hodske, cat. 358.

Ariadne sits on the right, woken from her sleep. She props up her body with her left arm and looks out over the horizon. A winged, female figure stands behind her. Theseus' ship is large on the horizon; four figure sit in the ship. A small fisherman stands on the coastline.

CIV.64 Ariadne (fig. 84)

Pompeii VI.9.2/13, Casa di Meleagro

Peristyle 16 west wall; MANN inv. 9051

47 x 42 cm

References: PPM IV, p. 719, fig. 116; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 112; Peters, *Landscapes*, 1963, p. 143; Parise Bodani, "Arianna," 1990, p. 73-89 fig. 13; Elsner, *Roman Eyes*, 97; Hodske, cat. 262.

Ariadne abandoned on Naxos. Ariadne sits in the right-hand corner of the composition. She is nude from the waist-down with a golden drapery covering her lower body. She lifts this same drapery to her eyes, presumably to wipe tears. Two erotes stand near her. One is behind her pointing to Theseus' departing ship in the background and gazing towards the horizon. The other stands at Ariadne's feet and cries. On the horizon line, Theseus' ship is shown small and sailing away.

CIV.65 Ariadne

Herculaneum IV.4, Casa di Alcove

Ariadne sits on the right, having just woke up from her sleep. She props her body up with her right arm and bends her right knee. She looks out towards the horizon. A female attendant stands in the background and rests her hand on Ariadne's shoulder. She points to Theseus' ship on the horizon. Cupid stands at Ariadne's feet. He looks to the left, off the picture panel.

CIV.66 Ariadne

Pompeii, Unknown House; MANN inv. 9047

References: Helbig no. 1228; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 335; Hodske, cat. 804.

Ariadne sits on the right and looks out at the horizon. A winged, female figure stands behind her, echoing her gaze and pointing at the horizon with her left hand. Cupid stands in front of Ariadne, looking down at his feet.

CIV.67 Ariadne

Pompeii VIII.4.4/49, Casa dei Postumii e i suoi annessi

Room 14, west wall; Now Destroyed

References: PPM.VIII, 484f; Helbig, no. 1229; PPP III, 339; Parise Badoni, "Arianna," 1990, Abb.20; Lorenz, *Bilder machen Räume*, K61cO; Hodske, cat. 598.

On the right, Ariadne sits on the ground, propping herself up and facing the left. She looks at Theseus' ship in the upper left-hand corner and raises her right hand to her face. A winged female figure stands behind Ariadne and points towards the ship.

CIV.68 Ariadne

Pompeii V.1.18, Casa degli Epigrammi

References: PPM.III, 558; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 65; PPP II, 13; Hodske, cat. 116.

Ariadne sits on the right and faces left. She props her body up with her left hand and raises her right hand to her face. She looks to the upper left-hand corner where Theseus' ship sails into the distance. Cupid stands at her feet, raising his hand to his eyes as he weeps. A winged female figure stands behind Ariadne and points with her right hand towards the ship.

CIV.69 Ariadne

Pompeii IX.2.5 Casa di Arianna abbandonata

References: PPM.VIII, 1055ff; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 239; PPP II, 406; Hodske, cat. 646.

On the right, Ariadne sits on the group and props her body up with her left hand. She looks to the upper left-hand corner at Theseus' ship. Cupid stands to the left and wipes tears from his face. A female figure stands behind Ariadne, places a hand on her shoulder and points toward the ship.

CIV.70 Ariadne

Pompeii IX.9.17

Room I, south wall; Now Destroyed

References: PPP III, 548; Parise Badoni, "Arianna," bb.9; Lorenz, *Bilder machen Räume*, K80bs.

CIV.71 Ariadne

Pompeii V.3.4, Casa della Soffitta

room o west wall; Now Destroyed

Poor condition

References: PPM.III, 899; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 899; PPP II, 73.

Ariadne lounges on the left, having just woken from her sleep. She raises her torso, leaning on her right arm and looks out over the horizon at Theseus' ship. Cupid stands

next to Ariadne and looks at the goddess. A male figure sits at Ariadne's feet. He holds a club and echoes her gaze.

CIV.72 Ariadne

Pompeii, Unknown House, MANN inv. 9046

36 x 31 cm

References: Helbig no. 1223; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 335; Hodske cat. 803;.

Ariadne sits on the left and rests on her right arm. She looks at the horizon. Cupid stands next to her.

CIV.73 Ariadne

Pompeii VI.8.3/5, Casa del Poeta Tragico

45 x 50 cm; Now Destroyed

References: Hodske, cat. 231; Helbig no. 1225; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, *Wände Pompejis*, 105; *PPM.IV*, 562; *PPP II*, 169.

Ariadne sits on the left, facing the right side. She stretches bends her knees slightly and props her body up with her right arm. She raises her left hand to her face and looks to the right at Theseus' ship as it sail into the distance. Cupid stands to the right and points towards the ship.

CIV.74 Ariadne

Pompeii VIII.5.5, Casa del Gallo

Room z, west wall; Now Destroyed

References: *PPM.VIII*, 565 Abb. 3; Helbig, no. 1226; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 1962, 175; *PPP III*, 348; ; Parise Badoni, "Arianna," Abb. 15; *LIMC.III* "Ariadne" 84; Lorenz, *Bilder machen Räume*, K62aW; Hodske, cat. 616.

On the left, Ariadne sits on the ground propping her body with her left hand. Her legs and torso face the left and she turns her head over her shoulder. On the right, Theseus ship sails off into the distance. To Ariadne's left, Cupid stands and points towards the ship.

Selene and Endymion

CIV.75 Selene and Endymion (fig. 85)

Pompeii VI.16.15/19 Casa dell'Ara Massima

Tablinum f, west wall; in situ

50 s 52 cm; Good condition

References: *PPM.V*, 869; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 157; *PPP II*, 359; Hodske, cat. 384.

Selene stands on the left and steps forward with her right foot towards Endymion sleeps on the right. A light chiton billows around her, but leaves her body nude. She wears a light necklace. A halo surrounds her head. Endymion lounges on a ledge, his legs crossed in front of him and his right arm raised above his head in a gesture of sleep. He leans his head backwards and closes his eyes. A dark green mantle chiton falls from his waist exposing his soft, youthful body.

CIV.76 Selene and Endymion

Pompeii VII.13.18, Casa di Ganimede

References: PPM.VII, 625; Helbig, no. 952; PPP III, 211; Hodske, cat 534.

In the lower right-hand corner, Endymion lays on the ground, his head and shoulders propped up by his left elbow. He raises his right arm and bends at the elbow to frame his head. In the upper left-hand corner, Selene floats from left to right towards Endymion. She raises her left hand above her head to grasp a mantle that billows behind her.

CIV.77 Selene and Endymion

Pompeii IX.8.3/6, Casa del Centenario

In situ

53 x 46 cm; Poor condition

References: PPM.IX, 1062; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 280; PPP III, 532; Hodske cat. 776.

Endymion sleeps on the left. He sits on a ledge with his legs crossed in front, leaning his body backwards. He raises his left arm above his head. Drawings suggest that Selene appeared in the right hand corner, however, a lacunae blocks (WORD) this space in the panel.

CIV.78 Selene and Endymion

Pompeii VII.4.29, Casa del Forno a Riverbo

References: PPM.VI, 993; Helbig, no. 954; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 186; PPP III, 116; Hodske, cat. 457.

Endymion sleeps in the lower right-hand corner. He tilts his head back and towards the right. His right arm is lifted and bent at the elbow to frame his head. In the upper left-hand corner, Selene floats towards Endymion. A mantle billows behind her. Cupid hovers to Selene's right carrying a torch and grasping her hand.

CIV.79 Selene and Endymion (fig. 86)

Pompeii, Unknown House

MANN inv. 9241

76 x 56 cm; Poor condition

References: PPM.IV, 449; Helbig, no 953; Hodske, cat. 805.

Endymion forms a diagonal on the right, He is asleep with his right arm raised above his head. On the left, Selene swoops down from the sky looking straight at Endymion.

CIV.80 (fig. 87)

Endymion and Selene

Pompeii IX.2.10/14, Casa del Gallo

Triclinium d, wall unknown; MANN inv. 9247

54 x 52 cm; Fair condition

References: PPM.VII, 625; Helbig no. 959; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 241; PPP III, 211; Hodske cat. 651.

Endymion sits on the left looking at Selene who flies in on the right side. His body and face are in three quarter profile. A dark mantle drapes his left leg and genitals, but leaves his torso nude. He holds a staff in his right hand. Selene flies into the scene from the right

side and looks towards Endymion. She wears a chiton and her mantle billows around her. Selene raises her right arm above her to grab the end of her mantle.

CIV.81 Selene and Endymion

Pompeii VI.9.6/7, Casa dei Dioscuri

MANN inv. 9240

82 x 82 cm; Fair condition

References: PPM.IV, 895; Helbig no. 960; Sogliano, no. 456; Peters, *Landscapes*, 151 n. 515; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 117; PPP II, 211; Hodske cat. 284.

Endymion sits on the left side looking at Selene who flies in on the right side. His body and face are in three-quarter profile. His upper torso is nude and he holds a staff in his left hand. Selene floats in from the sky and looks towards Endymion. A dark mantle billowing around her body, but leaving her upper torso exposed. She raises her right arm above her. Two figures stand in the background watching the scene.

CIV.82 Selene and Endymion

Pompeii VI.16.15/17, Casa dell'Ara Massima

Triclinium g, south wall; in situ

61 x 60 cm; Good condition

References: PPM.V, 876; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 157; PPP II, 360; Hodske, cat. 385.

This painting is an unusual representation of the Selene and Endymion myth. Endymion is typically shown asleep while Selene gazes voyeuristically at the youth. Here, Endymion sits upright in a throne staring out at the viewer and Selene also directs her gaze out from the wall. The two are not alone in the composition, with two unidentified onlookers in the background.

CIV.83 Selene and Endymion

Pompeii VIII.4.34, Casa di Omfale

References: PPM.VIII, 545; Helbig, 956; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 225; PPP III, 345.

On the right, Endymion lounges with his eyes open. His arm is raised and bent over his head. On the left, Selene flies towards Endymion, she holds a fan. A winged, female figure stands behind Endymion and looks toward Selene. Second female in the upper right-hand corner, background.

CIV.84 Selene and Endymion

Pompeii VII.1.25/47 Casa di Sirico

References: PPM.VI, 350; Helbig, no 957; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 166; PPP III, 40; Hodske, cat. 418.

On the left, Endymion sits, facing the left and turns his head over his shoulder. On the right, Selene floats towards Selene. Cupid rides a stag in the center foreground

Mars and Venus:

CIV.95 Mars and Venus (*fig. 39*)

Pompeii V.4.a, Casa di Marco Lucretio Frontone

Tablinum 7, north wall; in situ

Good condition

References: PPM.III, 1016, 1018; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 85; PPP II, 87f; DAIR 37.158; Hodske, cat. 167.

The marriage of Mars and Venus. Mars and Venus appear on the left: Venus is seated while Mars stands behind her wearing his helmet. The couple are watched by a retinue of figures including a Cupid and several attendants in the foreground. In the background are three figures, one of which is identified by John Clarke as Heymen, the god of marriage. All of these sideline figures look at the couple while Venus looks at herself in a hand mirror and Mars looks over her shoulder, presumably at the reflection in her mirror.

CIV.96 Venus and Mars (*fig. 88*)

Pompeii VII.2.23, Casa dell'amore Punito

Tablinum f, south wall; MANN inv. 9249

154 x 117 cm; Good condition

References: PPM.VI, 675; Helbig, no. 325; Curtius, fig. 147; Peters, *Landscapes*, 11-110; LIMC II, 547 n. 374; Richardson, *Figure Painters*, 33; Ling, *Roman Painting*, fig. 144; Braggantini and Sampaolo, 256; Hodske, cat. 435.

Venus sits in a throne fully draped in a deep purple mantle. She faces the front. Mars stands behind her and reaches around to touch her breast. Mars wears his helmet. A ornatrix kneels in the background, reaching into a jewelry box and Cupid hovers in the air above Venus' shoulder

CIV.97 Venus and Mars (*fig. 40*)

Pompeii I.7.10/12, Casa dell'Efebo

Porticus 19; in situ

References: PPM.I, 798ff; Strocka, "Mars und Venus," 130; PPP I, 74; Lorenz, *Bilder machen Räume*, K5dW; Hodske, cat. 43

Venus and Mars sit on the left surrounded by a crowd of spectators. Venus sits enthroned while Mars stands behind her. He reaches around to touch her breast. On the right sit a pair of female attendants who watch the scene. Two additional figures stand in the background behind a low wall. Cupid stands near Venus and Mars, holding a quiver, He looks towards the lovers.

CIV.98 Venus and Mars (*fig. 89*)

Pompeii VII.9.47, Casa delle Nozze di Ercole

tablinum 7, west; MANN 9248

99 x 90cm; Good condition

Bibliography: PPM.VII, 370; Helbig no. 320; Rizzo 1929 tav. 104; Curtius, 252 fig. 149 tav. I; Peters *Landscapes*, 142 n. 526; Richardson, *Figure Painters* 2000, p. 174.

Venus leans against Mars who supports her upper body with his hands. She raises right arm up and back towards Mars emphasizes her backwards motion. Venus turns her head

back towards Mars, however, her eyes are positioned forward, facing out from the wall. Mars looks towards Venus as he counters her weight. Mars' shield rests against the wall. A small amorini hovers to the left of Venus. He holds an arrow. A second amorini plays with Mars' helmet in the foreground.

CIV.99. Venus and Mars (*fig. 20*)

Pompeii VI.9.2/13, Casa di Meleagro

tablinum 8 south wall; MANN 9256

96 x 91 cm

Bibliography: *PPM*.IV, 682 fig. 51; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 111; *LIMC* II s.v.Ares/Mars p. 547 n. 377; ; *PPP* IV, 672; Hodske, cat. 246.

Venus leans back towards Mars while he reaches towards her cradling her right breast in his hand. She is depicted with milky skin while he is shown with darker skin. Two small erotes observe the scene: one stands next to Mars holding his helmet while the other stands near Venus offering a jewelry box to the goddess. Behind Mars rests his shield as well as his spear. A very faint reflection is visible in the shield, although it is not recognizable.

CIV.100 Venus and Mars (*fig. 90*)

Pompeii V.1.26, Casa di L. Caecilius Iucundus

Room t south wall

Poor condition.

References: *PPM*.III, 618; Sogliano, no. 138; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 68; *PPP* II, 29; Lorenz, *Bilder machen Räume*, K16cS.

The couple sit in the center, Venus leans against Mars with her legs and body facing the left. She raises her right hand above her head and lifts his left arm up to touch Mars' chest. Mars sits upright, supporting Venus' elbow with his left hand. A cupid stands in the right side background holding a spear and Mars' shield while a second stands in the left-hand foreground corner holding a small box.

CIV.101 Venus and Mars (*fig. 91*)

Pompeii V.1.18, Casa dei Epigrami

Exedra o, north wall; in situ

68 x 64 cm; Poor condition

References: *PPM*.III, 556; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 65; *PPP* II, 13; Hodske, cat. 144.

Mars and Venus sit together in the center of the panel. Mars sits upright while Venus leans against his chest in an intimate pose. The center of the panel is missing. A female attendant stands in the left background and three amorini surround the pair on the left, right, and foreground.

CIV.102 Venus and Mars (*fig. 92*)

Pompeii VI.16.15/17, Casa dell'Ara Massima

Triclinium g, north wall; in situ

61 x 59 cm; Good Condition

References: *PPM*.V, 872; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 157; *PPP* II, 360; Hodske, cat. 387.

Mars and Venus sit together in the center of the panel. Mars sits upright on a couch while Venus leans against his chest. He reaches around her with his arms. Venus croons her head upward to see his face and he bends forward to meet her stare. A small amorini watches from the background.

CIV.104 Venus and Mars

Pompeii VIII.5.37, Casa di Pareti Rosse

Room b north wall; in situ

40 x 37 cm; Fair condition

References: PPM.VIII, 626; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 228; PPP III, 355; Hodske, cat. 623.

Mars and Venus sit together in the center of the composition. Mars sits upright while Venus leans against him. She turns her head to look at his face.

CIV.105 Venus and Mars

Pompeii IX.7.20, Casa della Fortuna

Room I, east wall; in situ

58 x 58 cm; Poor condition

References: PPM.IX, 842; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 271; PPP III, 505; Hodske, cat. 144.

Mars and Venus sit together in the center. Venus leans against Mars with her legs and body facing the left. She raises her right arm above her head. Mars reaches his right arm around Venus and holds a himation or veil out. He tilts his head down and looks towards Venus who shifts her own head up and to the right. A cupid hovers on the right, next to Mars' face.

CIV.106 Venus and Mars

Pompeii VI.9.2/13, Casa di Meleagro

cubiculum 12, west wall; MANN 9250

Good condition

References: PPM.IV, 816; Helbig no. 314; Guida, 1379; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 114; Hodske, cat. 247.

Venus and Mars sit close to one another and both nude from the waist-up. Venus wears a golden mantle and Mars wears a rose colored mantle. Venus leans back on Mars, resting her left arm on his right knee. She lifts up her right arm, which holds a fan. Mars reaches out to hold Venus and cradles her left breast with his left hand. Both figures look out from the surface. The scene lacks superfluous elements of setting, however there is a drapery hanging from the ceiling in the background creating depth and indicating that they sit in a small, enclosed room.

CIV.107 Venus and Mars

Pompeii VI.9.2/13, Casa di Meleagro

Cubiculum 12, west wall; MANN 9254

96 x 91 cm; Good condition

References: PPM.IV, 689; Peters, *Landscapes*, 142; LIMC.II, "Ares/Mars," 547.

Venus is represented with light, milky skin and is nude from the waist-up. A light-pink, purple bordered mantle drapes her lower body. She sits on the left side of the composition resting her left hand on Mars' thigh and raising her right hand in the air. Her head is turned slightly over her left shoulder, gazing back at Mars. Mars is similarly nude from the waist-up and with darker skin. His right arm is wrapped intimately around Venus and he looks toward her, turning his head to the right.

CIV.108 Venus and Mars

Pompeii VI.2.4.30/31, Casa di Sallustio

Room 34, south wall; in situ

Poor condition

References: PPM.IV, 140ff; Strocka, "Mars und Venus," 1997, 130; Lorenz, *Bilder machen Räume*, K22bS.

Venus sits on the left looking towards Mars on the right. She lifts her arm above her head and leans towards Mars.. Mars, sits upright and rests his arm on Venus' shoulder. He looks towards her. On the left, Cupid holds Mars' shield.

CIV.109 Venus and Mars

Pompeii VII.3.8

References: Helbig, no. 321; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 1957, 176; PPM.IV, 848; Hodske, cat. 442.

The lovers sit together, Venus on the left, Mars on the right. Venus raises her right arm above her head to raise her veil. Mars wraps his right arm around her shoulders. She looks over her left shoulder towards him. Cupid stands in the lower left-hand corner holding a jewelry box.

CIV.110

Venus and Mars

Pompeii VIII.7/16/7

References: Helbig, no. 322; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 234; Hodske, cat. 632.

The couple sit together in the center, Mars on the right and Venus leaning against him with her legs stretched out to the left. She reaches her right arm above her head and he stretches his right arm behind her, holding a mantle. Two cupids wrestle in the foreground holding Mars' helmet and a third stands behind the couple holding a spear. A female attendant stands in the background holding a jewelry box.

CIV.111 Venus and Mars

Pompeii VII.15.1/2, Casa di Marinaio

References: PPM.VII, 739; Sogliano, no. 137; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 206; PPP III, 227; Lorenz, *Bilder machen Räume*, K57c; Hodske, cat. 548.

Venus leans against Mars and reaches her right arm over her head. Mars' helmet is visible in the center foreground. The lower left portion of the painting does not survive and the drawing is in poor condition.

CIV.112 Venus and Mars

Pompeii VII.4.56, Casa della Fontana

Destroyed

References: Lorenz, *Bilder machen Räume*, 160.

CIV.114 Venus and Adonis (fig. 93)

Pompeii VI.9.2/13, Casa di Meleagro

Peristyle 16, west wall; MANN inv. 9255

54 x 48 cm; Good condition

References: PPM.IV, 717; Helbig, no. 337; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 112; Hodske, cat. 260.

Adonis and Venus sit on a ledge or rock. Adonis leans his upper body against Venus who supports his torso with her arm. Both figures face forward, but their faces and expression are no longer visible. A Cupid stands behind Adonis, supporting his left arm.

CIV.115 Venus and Adonis (fig. 20)

Pompeii VI.7.18 Casa di Adone Ferito

Viridarium 14, north wall; in situ

Fair condition

References: PPM.IV, 428; Helbig, no. 340; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 101; PPP II, 152; Hodske, cat. 215.

Adonis sits in the center with legs crossed and his right arm outstretched above him. He is nude. Behind him, Venus stands wearing a gauzy drapery. She looks down towards Adonis. The pair are flanked on either side by pairs of anonymous figures. An amorino stands in front of Venus. A second, holds a mantle above Adonis' leg and a third hovers behind the pair.

CIV.116 Venus and Adonis

Pompeii I.4.5/25, Casa del Citarista

References: PPM.I, 131; Helbig, no. 330; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 16; Hodske, cat. 23.

Top of the painting damaged. A male figure [Adonis] sits in the center, his legs and body facing the left. He leans onto his left elbow, which rests against the draped knees of a female figure. Her feet appear at the bottom right, but her upper body is no longer visible due to the painting's damage.

CIV.117 Adonis [and Venus?]

Pompeii V.2.d

Now Destroyed

References: PPM.III, 635; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 74; PPP II, 31; Hodske, cat. 131.

Upper left-hand side of the painting no longer remains. Male figure, identified as Adonis, sits in the center with his legs and body facing the left. His upper body is not visible due to damage. Two spears rest gently in his left hand.

CIV.118 Venus and Adonis

Pompeii VI.15.6, Casa del Focolare di Ferro

Triclinium I, north wall; in situ

Fair condition

References: PPM.IV, 164; Helbig, no. 331; Hodske, cat. 322.

Adonis sits in the center with crossed legs, leaning his weight on Venus behind him. He is nude except for a mantle around his waist. The two look at one another.

CIV.119 Venus and Adonis

Pompeii VI.9.2/13, Casa di Meleagro

Now Destroyed

References: PPM.IV, 717; Hodske, cat. 268.

The lovers sit together in the center, Adonis leans against Venus. She supports his head with her left hand and rests her right arm on his shoulder. He leans his head back. A cupid support Adonis' right arm. Venus wears a chiton.

CIV.120 Venus and Adonis

Pompeii VIII.5.24, Casa di Medico

Rudimentary drawing

References: Helbig no. 336; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 227; PPP III, 353; Hodske, cat. 621.

The couple sit together, Adonis rests on Venus' lap. A cupid stands behind the couple on the right and covers his eyes, crying. A second cupid sits in the lower right corner. Adonis' right leg is bandaged.

CIV.121 Venus and Adonis

Pompeii VII.4.31/51, Casa dei Capitelli Colorati

Exedra 22, north wall, in situ

46 x 41 cm; Fair condition

References: PPM.VI, 1040; Helbig no. 329; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 184; PPP III, 12; Hodske, cat. 471.

Adonis sit in the center with crossed legs. He is nude save a mantle around his leg. Venus' head is behind the youth. She looks at Adonis. Opposite Adonis are two amorini who look up at the lovers.

CIV.122 Venus and Adonis (fig. 94)

Pompeii I.4.5/25, Casa del Citarista

Room 29, north wall; MANN 112282

253 x 150 cm; Good condition

References: PPM.I.131; Helbig no. 330; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 16; Hodske, cat. 23.

Adonis sits on a rocky ledge supporting his body with his left arm. He wears only a red garment that drapes off of his leg. Venus perches on his right leg and wraps her arms around his neck. A light blue garment drapes from her waist. Adonis reaches his right arm around her body. The two lovers look directly at one another.

CIV.123 Venus and Adonis

Pompeii VI.13.6, Casa del Forno di Ferro

Now Destroyed

References: PPM.IV, 165; PPM.1995, 269; Helbig, 331; Hodske, 322.

The lovers face one another in the center, Adonis sitting on Venus' lap. She A female figure stands in the left, background behind a wall watching the couple. In the right-hand background, a cupid leans against a rock watching the scene. A second cupid stands in the left-hand foreground corner.

CIV.124 Venus and Adonis

Pompeii IX.7.16/17, Casa del Cavallo Troiano

References: PPM.IX, 804; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 269; PPP III, 500; Hodske, 762.

The couple sit together in the center, facing one another. Venus wraps her right arm around Adonis' shoulder. Both faces are in profile.

CIV.125 Venus and Adonis

Pompeii VI.1.7/25, Casa dell Vestali

References: PPM.IV, 22; Helbig, no.316; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 91; ; Hodske, 180.

Venus and Adonis face one another. Venus wraps her arms around Adonis' neck and he loops his right arm around her waist. A cupid hovers in the air to the right of Adonis' head.

CIV.126 Venus and Adonis

Pompeii VII.1.25/47, Casa di Sirico

References: PPM.VI, 349; Helbig, 317; Schefold, *Wände Pompejis*, 166; PPP III, 40; Hodske, cat. 420.

Venus and Adonis sit facing one another. Venus wraps her arms around Adonis' neck and leans towards him. He looks straight at her, his face in profile, while she leans her head slightly backwards. The illustrator has added a halo around Venus' head, most likely a modern addition.

CIV.127 Venus and Adonis

Pompeii VI.15.7/8, Casa di Principe di Napoli

Triclinium k, east wall; in situ

Poor condition

References:

Venus stands on the right and Adonis stands on the left. A small Cupid, identified by his wings, appears in between the two lovers. The painting's current condition makes any further description impossible.

FIGURES



Fig. 1. Evil Eye mosaic pavement, Antioch, House of the Evil Eye
(Çimok, *Mosaics of Antioch*, 37)



Fig. 2 Oplontis, Villa A, triclinium 14 west wall.
(Fergola and Guzzo, *Oplontis*, 42)

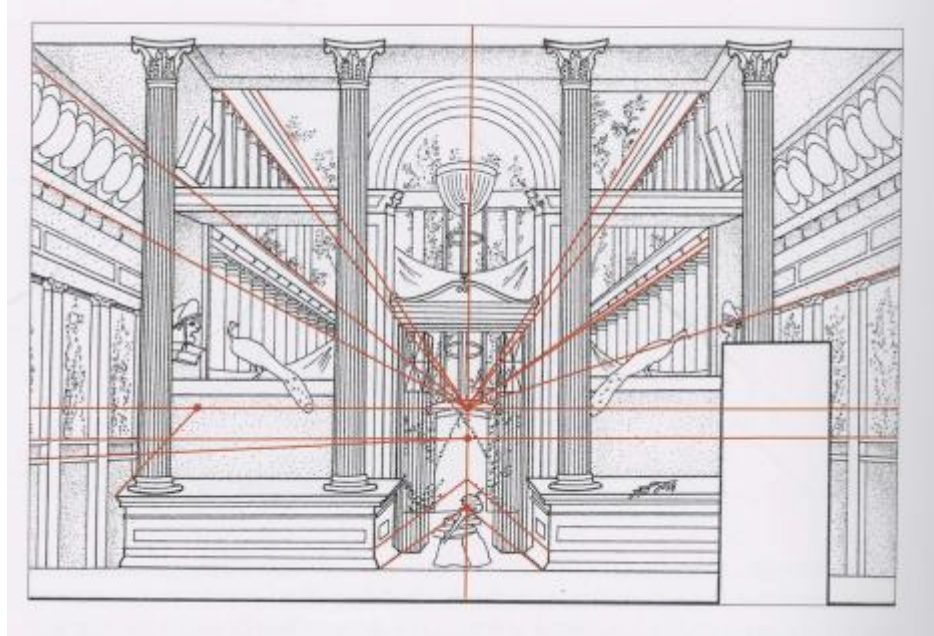


Fig. 3. Pompeii Casa di Labrintino showing axial perspective, (DeSantis "On the Reconstructions," 226)



Fig. 4. Oplontis, Villa A, triclinium 14 with vanishing axis drawn (Adapted from Fergola and Guzzo, *Oplontis*, 42)



Fig. 5. cat. CI.1
Marine Venus, Pompeii II.3.3 Casa della Venere in Conchiglia,
(Photo by Author)



Fig. 6. cat. CI.2
Seated Bride, Pompeii Villa dei Misteri,



Fig. 7. cat. CII.1
 Theseus, Pompeii VII.2.16-17, Casa di Gavius Rufus,
 (Photo by Author)

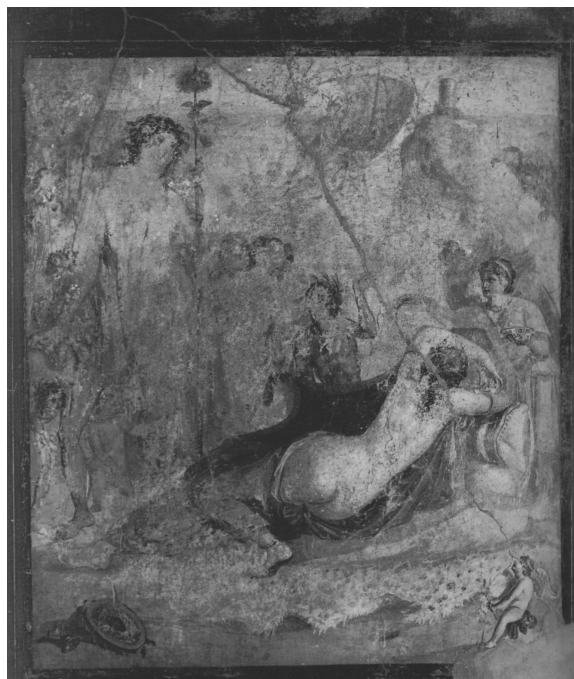


Fig. 8. cat. CIV.41
 Dionysus and Ariadne, Pompeii VI.15.1/2, House of the Vettii,
 (PPM.V, 482)



Fig. 9. *cat.* CII.10
Pan and Nymphs, Pompeii IX.5.18, Casa di Giasone, MANN inv. 111473,
(Photo by Author)



Fig. 10. *cat.* CII.3
Aeneas and Polyphemus, Pompeii VI.14.28/31, Casa di Laocoonte, MANN inv. 111211,
(Hodske *cat.* 341)



Fig. 11. cat. CII.34
 Medea Pompeii VI.9.6/7 Casa dei Dioscuri, MANN inv. 8977,
 (Photo by Author)



Fig. 12. cat. CII.35
 Pirithous and Centaurs, Pompeii VII.2.16/17 Casa di Gavius Rufus, MANN inv. 9044,
 (Photo by Author)



Fig. 13. *cat. CII.4*
Cassandra, Pompeii I.10.4, Casa del Menandro, (*PPM.II*, 281)



Fig. 14. Cassandra, Pompeii IX.7.16/17 Casa del Cavallo Troiano
MANN inv. 120176 (*PPM.IX*, 793, fig.18)



Fig. 15. *cat. CII.5*
Priam and Cassandra, Pompeii I.10.4, Casa del Menandro,
(*PPM.II*, 277)



Fig. 16. *cat. CII.6*
Laocoon, Pompeii I.10.4 Casa del Menandro, (Photo by Author)



Fig. 17. *cat. CII.7*

Laocöon, Pompeii VI.15.28/31, Casa di Laocöonte, MANN inv. 111210,
(Photo by Author)



Fig.18. *cat. CII.9*

Pan and Eros, Pompeii VI.15.1/2, Casa dei Vettii,
(AND 26469)



Fig. 19. *cat.* CIII.7
Rome, Villa della Farnesina, MNN, (Photo by the Author)



Fig. 20. *cat.* CIV.99
Venus and Mars, Pompeii VI.9.2/13, Casa di Meleagro,
(Photo by Author)



Fig. 21. *cat. CIV. 115*
Venus and Adonis, Pompeii VI.7.18 Casa di Adone Ferito,
(Photo by Author)



Fig. 22. *cat. CIV.3*
Helen and Paris, Pompeii VI.16.7, Casa degli Amorini Dorati,
(Photo by Author)



Fig. 23. *cat.* CIII.53

Thetis, Pompeii IX.1.7 Casa di Paccius Alessandro, MANN inv. 9529, (Photo by Author)



Fig. 24. cat. CII.17
Polyphemus and Galatea, Pompeii, House Unknown,
MANN inv. 8983, (*PPM* III, 104)



Fig. 25. cat. CII.18
Callisto and Artemis, Pompeii VII.12.26, Casa di L. Cornelius Diadumenus, MANN inv.
111441, (*Hodske, cat.* 140)



Fig. 26. *cat.* CIII.11

Mars and Venus, Pompeii I.11.15/9, Casa del Piano Superiore, (*PPM*.II, 636)



Fig. 27. *cat.* CII.19

Dido, Pompeii VI.9.2/13, Casa di Meleagro, MANN inv. 8898, (Photo by Author)



Fig. 28. *cat.* CII.20
Iphigenia, Pompeii V.1.26, Casa di L. Caecilius Iucundus, MANN inv. 111439,
(Photo by Author)



Fig. 29. *cat.* CII.21
Pasiphaë and Daedalus, Pompeii VI.15.1/2, Casa dei Vettii,
(*PPM.V*, 534)



Fig. 30. cat. CIII.16
Narcissus, Pompeii VI.7.20/22, Casa dell'Argenteria, MANN inv. 9388,
(Photo by Author)



Fig. 31. cat. CIII.33
Narcissus, Pompeii I.7.10/12 Casa dell'Efebo, (Photo by Author)



Fig. 32. cat. CIV.8

Hercules and Omphale, Pompeii VII. Ins. Occ. 16-10 Casa di Principe del Montenegro,
MANN inv. 9000, (*PPM* VII 841f)



Fig. 33. cat. CIV.6

Hercules and Omphale, Pompeii VII.1.25/47 Casa di Sirico,
(*PPM* VI, 266)



Fig. 34. *cat.* CII.28
Dionysus and Maenad, Pompeii VI.17 Ins. Occ. 42-44 Casa di Bracciale d'Oro,
(*PPM.VI*, 80)



Fig. 35. *cat.* CIV.40
Dionysus and Ariadne, Pompeii VIII.4.4/49, Casa dei Postumii e i suoi annessi,
(*PPM VIII*, 505-515)



Fig. 36. *cat. CII.30*

Perseus and Andromeda, Pompeii VII.Ins. Occ. 16-10 Casa del Principe de Montenegro, MANN inv. 8997, (Photo by Author)



Fig. 37. *cat. CII.31*

Perseus and Andromeda, Pompeii VI.9.6/7 Casa dei Dioscuri, MANN inv. 8998, (Photo by Author)



Fig. 38. *cat.* CII.32
Helen, Pompeii V.2.14, MANN inv. 119690,
(*PPM*.III, 851)



Fig. 39. *cat.* CIV. 95
Mars and Venus, Pompeii V.4.a, Casa di Marco Lucretio Frontone,
(Photo by Author)



Fig. 40. cat. CIV.97
 Venus and Mars, Pompeii I.7.10/12, Casa dell'Efebo,
 (PPM.I, 798ff)

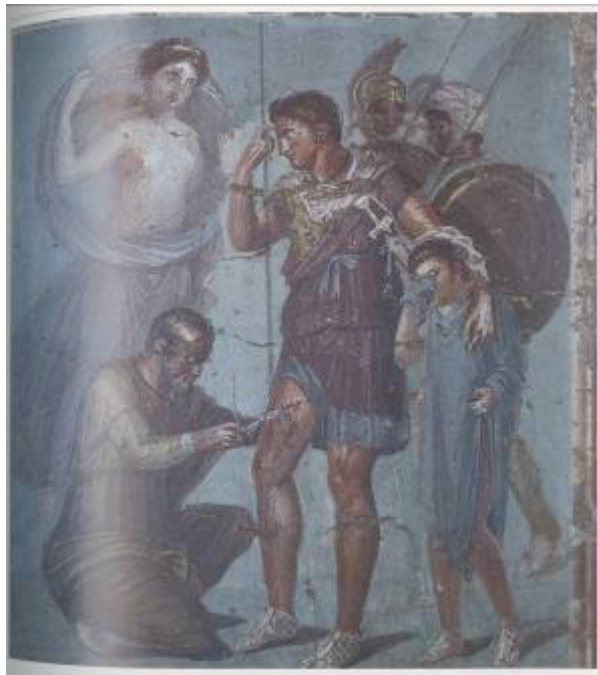


Fig. 41. cat. CII.38
 Venus and Aeneas, Pompeii VII.1.25/47, Casa di Sirico, MANN inv. 9009,
 (PPM.VI, 245)



Fig. 42. *cat. CII.39*

Iphigenia, Pompeii VI.8.3/5 Casa del Poeta Tragico, MANN inv. 9112,(Photo by Author)



Fig. 43. *cat. CII.40*

Icarus and Daedalus, Pompeii I.7.7, Casa dell'affresco di Spartaco,
(Photo by Author)



Fig. 44. *cat.* CII.43
Daedalus and Icarus, Villa Imperiale,



Fig. 45. *cat.* CII.48
Daedalus and Icarus, Pompeii, Unknown House, BM inv. 1867, (Photo by Author)



Fig. 46. *cat.* CII.50
Achilles and Briseide, Pompeii VI.8.3/5, Casa del Poeta Tragico,
MANN inv. 9105, (Photo by Author)



Fig. 47a. *cat.* CII.51
Iphigenaia, Stabiae, Villa San Marco, (Photo by Author)



Fig. 47b. *cat. CII.51*
Iphigenaia, Stabiae, Villa San Marco, Room 30, view from west,
(Photo by Author)

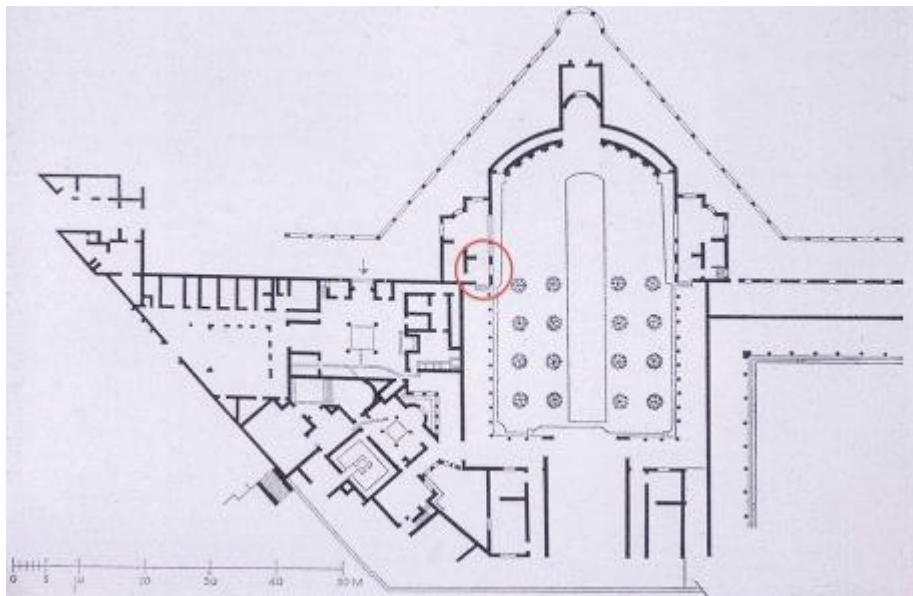


Fig. 48. Plan, Stabiae Villa San Marco, Room 30 in red
(Adapted from site materials)



Fig. 49. *cat. CII.52*
Hercules and consort, Pompeii VII.16.Ins.Occ.17-19, Casa di Fabio Rufo,
(*PPM.VII*, 1067)



Fig. 50. Silver Hand Mirror from Naukratis H: 107 cm, BM 1886, 0401.1749
(Photo by Author)



Fig. 51. Female Toilette, Herculaneum, House Unknown, MANN inv. 3022
(Photo by Author)



Fig. 52. *cat. CIII.2*
Venus, Pompeii VI.7.23, Casa di Apollo, (Photo by Author)



Fig. 53. *cat. CIII.8*
Venus, Pompeii V.4.a, Casa di Marco Lucrezio Frontone,
(Photo by Author)



Fig. 54. Drawing of Casa di Apollo by N. La Volpe (*PPM. Disegnatori*, 574)



Fig. 55. *cat.* CIII.6

Venus and Helios, Pompeii IX.1.20, Casa di M. Epidius Rufus, (*PPM.VIII*, 947)



Fig. 56. *cat.* CIII.4

Venus and Eros, Pompeii I.14.5, (*PPM.II*, 936)



Fig. 57. *cat.* CIII.20
Narcissus, Pompeii VII.16.Ins.Occ. 17-19, Casa di Fabio Rufo,
(*PPM.*VII,1072)



Fig. 58. *cat.* CIII. 23
Narcissus, Pompeii V.3.6, Casa di Narcisso,
(Photo by Author)



Fig. 59. cat. CIII.18
Narcissus, Pompeii V.2.1 Casa della Regina Margherita,
(PPM III, 792)



Fig. 60. cat. CIII.41
Narcissus, Pompeii VII.16 Ins.Occ.17-19, Casa di Fabio Rufo,
(Photo by Author)



Fig. 61. *cat.* CIII.34
Narcissus, Pompeii VII.15.1/2 Casa di Marinaio,
(Elsner, *Roman Eyes*, fig. 6.2)



Fig. 62. *cat.* CIII.17
Narcissus, Pompeii II.2.2, Casa di Octavius Quartio,
(*PPM* III, 104)



Fig. 63. cat. CIII.24
Narcissus, Pompeii V.4.a, Casa di Marco Lucrezio Frontone,
(Photo by Author)



Fig. 64. cat. CIII.50
Perseus and Andromeda, Pompeii VII.4.29.57 Casa dei Capitelli Figurati,
(Lorenz, *Bilder machen Räume*, abb. 45)



Fig. 65. *cat.* CIII.46
Perseus and Andromeda, Pompeii VII.4.31/51, Casa di Arianna,
MANN inv. 8996, (Photo by Author)



Fig. 66. *cat.* CIII.52
Perseus and Andromeda, Unknown House,
(Hodske, *cat.* 834)



Fig. 67. *cat.* CIII.49
Perseus and Andromeda, Pompeii VI.15.8, Casa del Principe di Napoli,
(Photo by Author)



Fig. 68. *cat.* CII.13
Achilles, Pompeii IX.5.2, Casa di Achille, MANN inv. 116085,
(*PPM*.IX, 394)



Fig. 69. *cat.* CII.14
Achilles, Pompeii VI.9.6/7 Casa dei Dioscuri, MANN inv. 9110,
(*PPM*.IV, 910)



Fig. 70. *cat.* CIV.1
Helen and Paris, Pompeii I.7.7, Casa dell'affresco di Spartaco,
(*PPM*.I, 607-9)



Fig. 71. *cat.* CIV.10
Pyramus and Thisbe, Pompeii IX.5.14/16, Casa del Ristorante,
MANN inv. 111483, (Photo by Author)



Fig. 72. *cat.* CIV.12
Pyramus and Thisbe, Pompeii II.2.2, Casa di Octavius Quartio,
(*PPM* III, 105)



Fig. 73. *cat.* CIV.18
 Apollo and Daphne, Pompeii I.7.10/12, Casa dell'Efebo,
 (Photo by Author)



Fig. 74. *cat.* CIV.31
 Dionysus and Ariadne, Pompeii VII.10.3/14, Casa della Caccia Nuova,
 (PPM.VII, 409)



Fig. 76. *cat.* CIV.35

Epiphany of Dionysus, Pompeii I.4.5/25, Casa del Citarista, MANN inv. 9286, (*PPM* 1, 136-37)



Fig. 77. *cat.* CIV.38

Ariadne and Dionysus, Pompeii IX.7.20, Casa della Fortuna, nineteenth-century sketch by Discannio, (*Elsner, Roman Eyes*, 4.17)



Fig. 78. *cat. CIV.37*

Dionysus, Pompeii VII.4.31/51, Casa di Arianna, MANN inv. 9278, (Photo by Author)



Fig. 79. *cat. CIV.39*

Ariadne and Dionysus, Pompeii IX.7.20, Casa della Fortuna, nineteenth-century sketch by Discannio, (Elsner, *Roman Eyes*, 4.16)



Fig. 80. *cat. CIV.52*
 Theseus and Ariadne, Pompeii VII.4.51/31, Casa dei Capitelli Colorati,
 MANN inv. 9052, (Photo by Author)



Fig. 81. *cat. CIV.55*
 Ariadne and Theseus, Pompeii VI.8.3/5, Casa del Poeta Tragico,
 (PPM.IV, 572)



Fig. 82. *cat.* CIV.62 Theseus and Ariadne, Pompeii I.8.17, Casa dei Quattro Stili, (PPM.I, 896f)



Fig. 83. *cat.* CIV.63 Ariadne, Pompeii VI.15.1/2, Casa dei Vettii, (PPM.V, 538f)



Fig. 84. *cat. CIV.64*
Ariadne, Pompeii VI.9.2/13, Casa di Meleagro, MANN inv. 9051,
(Photo by Author)



Fig. 85. *cat. CIV.75*
Selene and Endymion, Pompeii VI.16.15/19 Casa dell'Ara Massima,
(Photo by the Author)



Fig. 86. *cat. CIV.79*
Selene and Endymion, Pompeii, Unknown House, MANN inv. 9241,
(Hodske, *cat.* 805)



Fig. 87. *cat. CIV.80*
Selene and Endymion, Pompeii IX.2.10/14, Casa del Gallo, MANN inv. 9247,
(Hodske *cat.* 651)



Fig. 88. *cat. CIV.96*
 Venus and Mars, Pompeii VII.2.23, Casa dell'amore Punito, MANN inv. 9249,
 (Photo by Author)



Fig. 89. *cat. CIV.98*
 Venus and Mars, Pompeii VII.9.47, Casa delle Nozze di Ercole,
 MANN inv. 9248, (Photo by Author)



Fig. 90. *cat.* IV.100
Venus and Mars, Pompeii V.1.26, Casa di L. Caecilius Iucundus,
(*PPM.III*, 618)



Fig. 91. *cat.* CIV.101
Venus and Mars, Pompeii V.1.18, Casa dei Epigrami,
(Photo by Author)



Fig. 92. *cat.* CIV.102
Venus and Mars, Pompeii VI.16.15/17, Casa dell'Ara Massima,
(Photo by Author)



Fig. 93. *cat.* CIV. 114
Venus and Adonis, Pompeii VI.9.2/13, Casa di Meleagro, MANN inv. 9255,
(Photo by Author)



Fig. 94. *cat. CIV. 122*
Venus and Adonis, Pompeii I.4.5/25, Casa del Citarista,
MANN inv. 112283, (Photo by Author)

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