

KAREL VAN MANDER

THE FOUNDATION OF
THE NOBLE FREE ART OF PAINTING

Chapters I - ~~X~~,
XIII - XIV

CHAPTER I: EXHORTATION, OR EXPOSTULATION TO THE RISING YOUNG PAINTERS

1. O Hebe's offspring, Genius's pupils, you who in place of writing scribbled all over your paper and filled it with little people, boats and various animals, so that you scarcely left a place empty and it looked as if nature wished to drive you to be a painter, so that your parents advanced you to it by body and shoulders-
2. By general circumstance it was done to you to be a painter. The word is easy to pronounce: but painter and painter, look, between the two lies a great mountain which rises so high that many must leave the journey stuck. We are not dealing with months or weeks, but for this whole years are necessary, before you taste any benefit.
3. It would not be good if one hurried you in this: this art is itself attractive enough at the start, easy to get ahold of, at everyone's command; but each sees to it that it doesn't go with him as with the silly gnat who, enjoying the shine of the beaming candle, was foolishly lead to his death trying to fly into it; for this many forget themselves in this piece.
4. Know then alert students [?] how the throat of art imitates, lifelike, the voices of the Sirens, and entices with it each one to the performance in pleasant ways; but in order to come to her one must attempt very many paths and swim through wafers; and then there is a mountain to climb, so high that you do not reach the top, early or late, unless you have recourse to nature.
5. Because nature has on a number of heights a gallery or passage, in which lie all art- and craft- instruments. Through here go all young children, even before they suck their mother's breast, and here mild nature gives each a special instrument into their hands in order to earn his bread in the earthly domains.
6. Various and costly are her gifts: here she gives ploughs, there hammers, there axes, here trowels, there books, over there brushes, but the understanding parents quite often distribute the business not in the clever ways which nature had called them to, and so it unfortunately happens sometimes that a born painter walks behind the plow, and farmers are consecrated to the brush.
7. If nature does not send you the brush, then you must in time turn away and let your fruitless desires die, and so save time and money, in order not to throw yourself to ruin like the above-named gnat. All too long and narrow the bridge will be for you; to leave off at the beginning means less harm than if one falls at the end.
8. If nature is friendly toward you, people will early judge the character of your spirit; because all at the same time from the cradle must begin to strangle snakes, who will later overcome the lions of Nemea and monsters of Krète or many-headed hydras of Lerna, with very dangerous bites, Cacuses, Cerberuses and cruel Centaurs, in order that their heads may be crowned with green laurels.
9. Herbs which we call thistles or nettles sting and burn early when they newly grow; also must wood that shall eventually be a hook begin to bend in good time. Thus, briefly, the youths called to the art of painting who wish later to fly over the usual barriers must lift themselves up and begin early to surpass others.

And
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10. But if nature draws you in such ways that you, with a skillful and thereto-inclined genius, have received such a part from her hand that you in your spirit, soul and inclination feel rise countless ideas, then I shall not dissuade you to shoot for the prize, to see whether it doesn't by any chance once have the luck that you hit your target.
11. But let no difficulty annoy you; all hold-ups must hope for overcoming. After some effort one can receive pleasures. Because here falls a parrot to be shot which scarcely one in a hundred can hit; so in art like an Ethiopian, eastern pearl of ever-exalted nature of very great worth.
12. Nature sometimes gives her painting-gifts where there is neither time nor occasion to be able to learn, but where the need pushes one to earn a living with hard work, so that such a noble spirit must remain buried like a hidden treasure; that is a sin and a shame. But when the gift and financial circumstances go together with practice, inclination and enduring industry, then the work brings about pleasant profit.
13. Now then, you young souls inclined to painting, let go of all useless childish presumptions; if you want to enter the residence of this art, then you must have an attached and enduring love for her, because she is jealous and must be very well served. You must not care for the feather bed; you must avoid sleepy idleness, as much as the bottle of Bacchus and the arrow of Cupid.
14. Always choose fellow-pupils from among those who exert themselves with eager diligence, however fine the weather is, if it thaws or freezes; and try never to loose much time with easy-going fair-weather friends. Do your best for a little bit in order not to always grieve. Offer time your time, do not play away the time of the time; deny time your time, steal away then the time to the time.
15. Coornhert, a poet, diligent in his way of life, had a much-used saying he often spoke to those who did nothing but waste their time excessively: "They have too much of what I have too little, yet we actually have the same amount of it," by which he evidently meant the time that he, active in a variety of areas, tried to win with diligence so that he was always short of time.
16. There are certainly more of the sort who never have enough time, who want to split each time in three and to get handy time from inopportune time; but also one finds those who are always rich in time, how they bring time overflowing through there too, so that they carelessly sweep him away with pots, bottles, kolf-playing and racket-playing, because they don't give much care for his worth.
17. Nevertheless, what alas shall we at last lack more than costly time, when we must leave this earthly existence? The present time is now available, but yesterday is forever past and tomorrow uncertain: no-one knows to say if he will greet tomorrow. In short, time surpasses all riches.
18. But people find it less important to lose time with song, lutes and harps, with conduct for the digestion, or so-called 'to sharpen the senses,' than to let go of gold or silver, which really are of less worth than time and its favorable opportunities, which we, when it has once flown by, can never get back.

19. So thus the loss of time signifies great ill, to be told with no gold or good. Thus, youths, be more frugal with time than with gold and drive away laziness, which is the mother of all evil and the nurse of poverty; and then every evil brings further its own rod with it for just punishment, and has no fear to strike hard its cause or master.
20. The drunkard falls in the mud and must, beggarly, endure much discomfort. And what proceeds from drunkenness but all shameful and dreadful actions which are to be regretted in soberer situations; in particular the irreparable act of murder, when man's hands grip and break the work of God, which no-one can repair.
21. See all that this barley can cause; how often it makes of men nothing but pigs as one reads of Ulysses' companions. But how much worse is the fight, and how very common it is, in order to rouse the praise of the foolish world, which on that matter names the short-tempered ones fine heroes and can amazingly blame the gentle ones. Beside?
22. Nevertheless it is, according to the word of the wise, he who perfectly wins over his own heart who is much stronger and more praiseworthy than he who kills another. The word murderer makes everyone shudder; the name thief is in many shameful ways distasteful - in order to defend the thief I call on the views of rules [?] in the right:- the thief can return that which is stolen, but the murderer can not wake the dead to life.
23. Thus, eager-to-learn spirits, avoid wisely drunkenness with her evil consequences, from which the reports should last too long and should be too useless, in order that the bad reputation of art finally might descend to the bottom of the Styx, so "as a painter is a lunatic" and so too that the popular folk-saying "how much a painter so much the wilder" might become inapplicable and change to "as much a painter so much the quiter."
24. Because it is indeed said that art must adorn as some men say: "It is a shame that this fine spirit, considering his study, is such a drunken, wild, and rough hothead and becomes so quick and so fierce an evil"; but such a thing will cool the fire of many an art-lover, and also cause some connoisseurs to be less eager to teach their children of the rules of art.
25. Let yourselves not be deterred, noble young painters, [by the fact] that as by some vines bad fruit is brought forth, to our sorrow, talk must be heard as that the greatest artists should be good for the least, for which one can sometimes thank one who can bring a great mass into discredit, as he is rebellious against the noble nature of the gentle, pure study of painting.
26. He is not worthy of being considered an "artist" who wastes this noble spirit, as if he were a savage, uncivilized, rude barbarian, for the reputation of painters has always been highly chosen by orators, senators, philosophers, poets and highly-placed rulers.
27. He who with his artistic work can open a sweet impulse to the eyes of men so that their hearts are lured from their dwelling places and remain attached to it - he should also earn the friendship of anyone through being virtuous and noble, the which is an art above all other arts, to obtain good favor, grace and friendship, according to the heart's desire, from God and all men.

friendship

28. Among all those who bear the name of painters the noble courtesy [good breeding?] should be proper to reign, which itself can often move the hearts of peasants and touch them with its intelligent, pleasant manners. In short, all orderliness, gentleness, and modesty must be particularly comprehended under the name or the word "painter-ly" [schilderachtig].
29. The painters should thus try to keep away from "artisticness" all envy, dispute and discord, to settle and to balance with gentle, wise, understanding words and not with fights, evil words and quarrels, like fishwives at the market, who often rob each other of their good name and throw baskets at their heads.
30. One must also not follow the example of the wagonner, with whom good living is seldom encountered and who mutually hurt each other with fists and knives in their quarrels, which misunderstanding is the mother of discord; but the right nature of art brings with it that those who are brought to the greatest development in art are also of the greatest courtesy. *Courtesy*
31. Seeing always the desire of the Greeks and Romans for pictures lead to such fire that they forbade with strict rules that anyone other than nobly born children should be taught painting, it is now will fitting that, to honor art, all virtue and courtesy should accompany those who are now given to the noble brush.
32. Jupiter's daughters, the Graces, with their third, were so depicted that one seemed about to run away, with her back turned to you, and then there were two frontally depicted, each further from the back; which proves that we receive back two for every one gesture of friendship; the moral incites us not to relax in courtesy, but to always be strong to get profits from it.
33. That the first-in-art Apelles was modest and courteous is not to be forgotten, seeing that Alexander was so sweetly drawn to him that he came daily to see him work; it is also worth remembering his courtesy towards Protogenes, whose person and work he brought to great respect with the inhabitants of Rhodes, as will follow, but not in rhyme. *Apelles*
34. So also Raphael, foremost painter of his time: many a good master gladly earned his wages in his company, to work together and free from envy, and none was unfriendly to another. The courteous Raphael saw to it that all ignoble thoughts were strongly driven away from his spirit. *Raphael*
35. "As much a painter, so much the quieter" thus now in the future, and not "how much a painter, so much the wilder;" the dark mists must be driven from the eyes and disappear, and they now are so clear and light through two such noble, splendid artists. Thus now young "pictorialists" [?Mod. dutch odd here] each accustoms himself so much to virtuousness that each realizes the right nature of art.
36. They stand for you as two of the most important names, one from antiquity and one from modern times, as examples that art and courtesy always belong together with artists, if you wish to get over the threshold of the temple of immortal Fame, or otherwise you will run great danger of being swallowed by the river of Lethe.

37. ~~Because as the poets have it by the proper end he is an old man who cannot avoid going in and out of the house of the three Parce quickly and continuously in order to cut off the life threads of those who die [?], and he goes in order that they (who should wish too to deny him the right) should fall with great splashes in the cold river of Lethe that they might sink or be washed away.~~
38. It seems that deer cannot trot so hard as this old greybeard, back and forth. And along the water that receives his gifts fly all screaming vultures and ravens with many another bird of divers plumage; these bring out from the water, when they descend near it, a few among all the names to light, but quickly let them fall back in again.
39. Of many thousands of these now abundant names there is sometimes found one worthy one which doesn't sink but stays on the bank on the sand, which seems too pitiful to the man, who doesn't want to let any go from the river. But two white swans fly and swim there, against his wishes, and take it away from there with them to where a hill is to be climbed.
40. On this mountain stands, lovely in architecture, a temple, as of a goddess. From it comes a nymph or lovely young woman, to take over these names from the two sweet-singing swans, glad of spirit, and she brings these names into the temple, where they are for eternity written on the pillar that bears this elevated building.
41. ~~This story outlines the usual dying, depicted with the oblivion which is named Lethe, where we only in time inherit a place, because the old hard-runner won't miss anyone. But swans [that is to say]: history writers and poets know gladly how to bring some of the thereto-sent spirits to the nymph of immortality in the temple of noble fame.~~ *history writers*
42. ~~"Molasses-smearers," tale-tellers, and sycophants have sometimes chosen to cry up someone in order to foam up the fat from the pot, like ravens and vultures, bad in way of living, while such shall be lost in the Lethe, namely men who only seem born to eat and to drink, because they leave no other memory of their life behind.~~ *Not gentle?*
43. Tortises' heads creep sooner from their shells than these shall wake up from their old and bad intentions or be satisfied in their immoderate desires, to help [themselves] to the good gotten from the world or to strew about and squander that which their parents have brought together with sweat, distress, and deliberation until their families and themselves have great shame and sorrow hanging about their necks.
44. ~~Many die thus by the thousands and thus lose their time as something that is useless and worthless; of them there remains in the world no more fame than as if they had never been, because their names remain always with the dead, in the underworld, sunk heavy as lead in the troubled, dirty water swirls of the Lethe, from which no learning falls to dream.[?]~~
45. ~~Artists, scholars, in brief many monarchs and generals have climbed to fame and to esteem through supressing laziness and with hard work and brilliant deeds. We shouldn't get far in the world without the sound practice of work, from which the fruits give use, repose and joy.~~ *Work*

46. Now hear this, young man, follow swiftly the road of work, because at the end lies a pleasant result. Paint, draw, scribble, cover easily any paper at all. Steal greedily arms, legs, bodies, hands, feet. Nothing is forbidden here; we wish to play best the role of Rapiamus. Well-cooked turnips make good soup. *work*

47. The poetic art Retorica, with her pleasant little manners, however desirable and sweet too, you must try to escape. I have myself, it is true, never gone far from her path, but it has certainly brought me from the road of the art of painting, which is to be feared. It is certainly a lovely flower; when it bears fruit, so that it may bring flour to the kitchen, then one must have the sense to study it. *Proprium*

48. When you work in a studio with other youths and are held to follow a contract, to make no quarrel, then even if you are the best help together with the others to keep the instruments in the studio. Dedicate your attention to the palette and brushes of the master, to the making-ready and the preparing of canvases and panels; further, that you rub the colors fine enough, so that they stay beautiful, and that you don't temper your ashes and smalts too much. *lia yadm
cso in
a
studio*

49. Begin to suck the untouched breasts of the ingenious maiden who bears weapons and who came from Jupiter's brain, as the poets mention, then bend your head willingly before the common opinion; keep in that the company of Apelles, for when you patiently lend your ear you will often acquire something which was unknown to you before. *Admva
Padmon*

50. Do not take notice of Midas's heralds - bad judgements which fit poorly. But guard yourself from Momus's insipidity; all that you feel to be clear mistakes, speak not of them where it concerns the work of the master, for no good can come to you from that; on the contrary: mockery of defamation, if you get the least as a reward it will be that it will be secretly taken amiss. *not talk
about
the
master's
mistake*

51. Such a thing you can well do against your fellow students, but I must always advocate courtesy's importance - it shall taste better to him when he is hungry. But do not sing of him like a flatterer or someone with a double tongue, the sweet Placebo before his eyes and then behind his back force your throat through unpleasant cadences and false tones: that is to say in his presence to praise something and to scoff at him in his absence. *↓
fellow
students
not be
flatterer
not
singback*

52. Hold from you the spirit of conceit, which can blind you quickly to being contented and shall bring your heart to pridefulness, so that you will in the future, satisfied with the teaching, become restless, without plowing ahead: because he who adds contentment to his possession, such a one is wonderfully happy: also he who is content, they say, is rich. *conceit*

53. But in our subject one must be on guard, if one wants to excell in art, and always strive to go farther; also one must not belittle anyone lightly, because there is nothing so mad and so miserable that one can't find in it often something praiseworthy so that it is striking. Which concerns the rest: wherefore people often will say, each does his best. *strive to
go
further
not belittle*

54. One must also neither praise nor blame oneself, and no more the work of one's own hands. Because praise will bring your foolishness to light and despising shall rather cause ambitiousness [?]. Thus these two manners end in shame. Let good, knowledgeable people judge, because to praise oneself is quite foolish and to despise oneself is ridiculous. *doze
praise
over
blame
oneself*

55. Many who used to stand at the market crying to vend one or another quack-remedy were accustomed thus to boast, by which they praised themselves and their littleness and belittled others, - those of their own kind. But all who shelter in the remains of Helicon must watch for that - pay attention - and take care that the punishment of the Pierides doesn't befall them.
56. Anyone who laughs to himself of the Caballini water[?], see if it doesn't bring ruin to him with such magpie's chatter, like the boasting satyr who was flayed; or who didn't hold the punishment of Arachne about her neck, who *complacency* dared to boast [?] against Minerva. Thus when you take a name in art, beware of ambitious complacency.
57. So it was clear that you were on the path to art as swiftly as a hart, and others were slower like snails, and you were as one assured of praise so that you say next to nothing or little but the many running behind you without hope, do not then be so thoughtless as to pride yourself for the gifts of God, like servants who sit upon the horses of their lord.
58. Do not be prideful of what is loaned to you but be humbly thankful to Him for procuring you from hardship for the duration of your life. Because it is only to earn your living: be it art or artist, it must all perish; however elegant, however spirited too, death takes them in the constraints of his *Uement to floor?* bridle, which holds reckoning with nothing, to the depths of his dark jail below.
59. As if art were not, like all riches, subject to the run of fortune, be not conceited of it, for there is nothing lasting in this earthly vale of tears. Your sight, now clear, can be obscured by darkness; also something may over- *Nothing lasts* come your body so that it is exposed to misery from sole to crown - the practice of art is then worth nothing.
60. Thus I advise you, however rich you may become in art, always to remain humble and familiar and not to follow that which men commonly and foolishly tend to do: if they have gotten temporarily muddled not long ago in some manner, then there is often very little chance that they will now deign to interest themselves in poor acquaintances, friends, or relations. *Be humble and familiar*
61. To honorably do your best is not to be scorned. In order not to stay stuck in the mud you should do your best in the native practice of handwork from youth on, and also not be discouraged. Avoid, in order not to remain a muddler all your life, the playful sensualist Cupid, courting desire, whose purpose is to prevent all youths from [following] the path to virtue. *Do your best Avoid Cupid desire*
62. The senses disperse themselves like the hunting hounds who devoured the flesh of their master for food, because he'd seen Diana, which was not good to do. And the fiery love of Paris laid Troy to ashes, where so much that was fine was to be found. So is many a good spirit seduced in youth by this blind god of desire, and consumed in flames; if he drank as a child, now he knows to honor the water.
63. They judge mostly with Paris as foolishly as it can be. The painter's marriage is often of this sort: beauty pleases their senses the most. But stay, and don't make such haste in this. Leave Hyman, the son of Bacchus, with the other gods. Think further: it shall not be so quickly ended. It is held to be good against headaches to breakfast early and to deal with marriage late. *Late marriage!*

64. To do good - this one can not begin too early, and doing badly cannot be put off too long. When good comes without difficulties, then it is something valuable above all treasures, whose most appropriate use is to combat sorrow. But it is not necessary to place a [specific] time: in Piero Mexia this is especially to be found in his second book, chapter 13.

65. There it states that the girl must be about ten years younger than the youth, as also the sweet-speaking poet Ariosto declares in his Sátires; but our painter should - if no heavy cause torments him - before he establishes himself well, from love for art, visit the lands in every corner of the world.

Visit lands first?

66. I should arouse you fully to journey, were I not afraid that I could set you on the wrong path. Because Rome is the city where, more than in other places, the journey of the painter is properly directed, for it is the head of the schools of painting, but it is also preeminantly the place where spendthrifts and lost sons carry out their business. One recoils from sending ones child there on a journey.

Rome

67. Men also come to know that through experience, seeing many come from there poor and beggarly. For that is where one gives food to error, and a nest of treachery, wherein all evils that today spread over the world are hatched - so Petrarch has it - and what he says further that is worse about it, too long to recount here, is difficult to separate from the truth.

68. But one should fall in love with the loveliness of the country; and Italy's people, who descended from Janus, men who have always greatly honored our art, are generally neither traitors nor thieves, but cultivated and wholly filled with courtesy; it is true with open mouth and closed fist, because there lives no people under the sun that doesn't have its particular lacks and its good qualities.

Italy
Italians
↓
was
↓
16/12

69. But when you do travel, do not let it occur without your having the spirit for it, and your parents giving their consent. Avoid little inns and bad company, and let it not be seen that you have much money with you. Conceal too that you are on a long journey. Be courteous and civil, make no disturbance, always have a good amount of money, but be careful that you don't lend too much to your own little fellow-countrymen.

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70. Become acquainted everywhere with peoples' customs, to follow the good and to avoid the bad. Depart early and also find lodgings early and inspect them; to avoid diseases and vermin in the beds and sheets. But equally - never get in with light women, for the abandonment of sin could make you disfigured [?] for life.

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↑
with
foreign
customs

71. When you come to Italy you should sometimes, just like the falcon, have to lose sight before the beautiful Circe, with all her deceitful tricks. That which the work is concerned with there consists in the making of landscapes in fresco with grotesques. Because the Italians always think that we're good at doing that and they in figures. But I hope that we can steal away from them in their area too.

AYTO

72. And I vow that with regard to this I cherish no idle hope; they see themselves enough proofs of it in canvases, stones, and copper plates. Well then, youths, take heart, although there is much that must be laid aside, do your best, that we may reach our target: that they may no longer say, in their speech, that Flemish painters can make no figures.

Or Ital.
was
our
figures
13

73. On the return you must not be negligent; try rather to visit Germany or another country where there is more gold than art, and (there being not many of bad nature in the French countries) in Provence, Bretagne, all France, Burgundy, and Spain: everywhere is there fine Indian gold and white metal to be gotten.
74. To bring home with you a good amount of coins from such alloys will sound good enough to gladden your parents and friends. And when you adorn yourself fittingly and respectably, that shall make it so that your arrival is unwelcome to no-one. People will welcome and greet you. Away then, light shoes: one travels no more; one quickly becomes tied to the sweetheart.
75. Finally: think on it that you don't return without having profitted from going away: bring from Rome the just manner of drawing and the good painting from the city of Venice, where I had to pass by for lack of time. For I too have travelled some paths, and that shall I - now I hold with my pledge - just in brief recount to you.
76. Through the art of painting I arrived at [the point where] I from desire, the sweetening for trouble [?], have climbed over the icy high, snow-covered Alps in Switzerland, and also over the unpleasant Apennines, through hard fog and dark, bad weather, which the great general Hannibal could not manage to cross.
77. I went so far that I saw the desirable city, and lived in it; the city which as one may read - was founded by two foster children of a wolf as a small town on Mount Paletine and from which the fame has spread over the whole world. Ruined buildings taught me and testified with an unquestionable evidence how great Rome once was.
78. Sometimes I took myself outside the city with the Italians to study art. There I saw Cicero's Villa Tusculana, the old country of Latium and Alba Longa. Also Monta Circeo, the honored height where Ulysses' men - according to the writings of the poets - were driven in the pigstye, and the Via Appia, with still more monuments.
79. Various waters, worthy of mention, have I also travelled far to see from the desire of art. Also I have travelled with extraordinary inconvenience over the salt waves of the Tyrrheanian sea. The wine-rich Tiber, a troubled torrent, I also saw, and the Po, proud to have attained a prominent name through an unlucky driver of the wagon of the sun.
80. I too observed the unsettled Arno, sometimes dry, sometimes flowing over its banks; but it cost Hannibal his eye, apparently from revenge because he had driven its Etruscan lands into a corner with war. I saw the water of Trebbia, where Sempronious too late repented of his pride, to the great detriment of the armies of Rome.
81. I have also travelled further on two excellent rivers, to which the others cannot be compared, because they adorn Europe as her most important. The first is the Donau, called Ister in other regions, which - as some tell - streams so hard into the Black Sea that the salt waves must give way before him and let him sweeten the salt water for forty miles.

82. The greatest and useful river Rhine, which obligingly flows through our Netherlands, I consider then the most praiseworthy. I have visited these waters and many honorable cities in order to understand art with better insight, which I've now determined to depict with a pen as well as I know them.
83. For seeing that I thus had thus taken so many a step in my youth - as far as that is of any significance - in order to please her, she saw fit in fairness to take pleasure that I should make public here natural divisions and respectively the related laws and customs, in order to be of some service to the determination of the coming spirits inclined to learning.
84. Herein I hope to act according to my ability, and not blindly, for in order to avoid mistakes I have sucked at various breasts, invented a little and borrowed much from old as well as modern writers. Because I notice that this usually occurs: that even writers who are themselves excellent, must have fished in other ponds.

1. One may call drawing, or the exalted art of drawing, the father of painting; and one can also praise it as the right access or the door through which one comes to many arts; gold-smithing, building and more. Yes, the seven free arts would not be able to live without her; because the art of drawing, which embraces all things, holds all the arts in her restraining traces. ↓ w = holds all the arts
2. She is a liberal nurse of all the arts, as Natalis Comes instructs us. Yes, also the noble, guiding concept of grammatica is nursed by her and prosperously raised, through [the way] that the art of drawing teaches her to acquire letters and signs [characteren, od; tekens, nd.], through which men in different areas can all understand eachothers meanings, even if they are now far separated from eachother they may find themselves near eachother.
3. The perfection of the art of drawing must proceed from a good understanding and this understanding must come through practice to ability, and sink in through native spirit, which is fitting to strengthen understanding on an exalted plane, and through lively vigilance. With all of that, with good judgement, the artist makes in his mind a scheme from everything which might please him to sketch with his hand.
4. This father of painting is then an efficient way of expression and a potential to reveal hidden meanings, yes, the witness of the intention, which is in highest measure to trace, sketch and outline signs of all that in the world can be viewed within the borders of the ability to see, in particular the human figure, the most important part of creation.
5. Now youths, to strive after this manner of work, that is to say: in order to become a man of understanding in the art of drawing you must begin with great devotion with the oval with the cross drawn in it; very useful and handy to learn to place a face from all sides. Because - unfortunately - one sees many painters who place faces wrongly; so that they do not of that cross let themselves be exerted in vain.
6. Further, it is not to be scorned to learn after existing works of art to place a figure in the proper stable position, without wavering, on one foot, on which the weight of the body rests, as will be given in the chapter on the proper stance; leave the hip turn out over the staying foot. Now should a great master in great measure perform thankful work, on behalf of you, youths, to give in print an ABC- book about the principles of our art. learn after existing works of art
7. I now stand confronted without satisfactory means, because I am not fitting enough for this; but others, who have enough ability for it, are too unwilling. I fear the blame, and they the trouble. So would you, worthy youth, be deprived of such a useful matter. In the old times, which are now long flown away, our art was set forth in various books, which men may now search for in vain.
8. In books students are taught the seven free arts at school; young apothecaries and surgeons are instructed enough in writings and books so that they will make no mistakes. But for you, young painters, there was nothing reliable in our subject, to make you filled with useful, teachable things (as new vessels), which could provide you with a good strong flavor of salt.

find a proper
master to
teach you

9. Therefore it would be good first to find a proper master, in order to contract a good manner of working, and to learn well certain solid ground-rules in drafting, execution, outlining, modelling, the placement of light and shadow, and to learn first to draw cleverly with charcoal, then with chalk or pen in the lightened places, so that one can easily see them, and to give nudges where the shadow falls hard.
10. You may do everything; crosshatching and wash drawings, all according to the inclination of your ability; with fierce efforts you must, through copying, accustom your hand in the use of coal and chalk on paper softened with color like ash or pale blue, in order to heighten and deepen them. But do not allow the heightenings and deepenings to touch each other: let the ground color free between the two.
11. Be diligently careful to avoid too much heightening. When you use washes of dyes or inks in water, always strive for a soft flow; or, when you work in charcoal or chalk, keep a shaft of wadding at hand, so that this working method too has flowing moderate tints on either side, whether you work after prints or after sculpture which cannot move. Everyone does gladly that to which he is inclined.
12. Good prints with ground tints and effective highlights have opened the eyes of many a mind; so for instance those of the reknowned Parmigianino and others. Thus, in order to be fruitful in art, graft your spirit to such lots. Or work after something good in a plaster cast, and note well how you bring up the lights; because the highlights truly converse with their little words.
13. When you have made your hand loose and without laboriousness, through patient exercise, and your eyes beginning to get insight, then go from fantasy to the truth, that is to say to life, which is the most favorable to us and in which there truly falls to be taken an easy pleasantness, unambiguous and direct, in still-standing and movement. She is your guide to steer the ship near by.
14. This is the goal at which to shoot, the foundation on which to build. There is no text better to draw towards you, no example is there sweeter nor more trustworthy than perfect nude men and women. These are the most learned books in which to study; namely to practice after them without end. So are also nude children, and all beasts. It would otherwise be impossible to work from the head.
15. It is wonderful what grace one sees nature pour forth in life, on all sides. Here is to be found everything we could be lacking for expressing the causes of motion, drafting and correct foreshortening, outlines and inside work, to our gladness. Through working much and taking a long time over the work one becomes experienced as an excellent master; but one must also learn to work from the head.
16. Invention must also grow up with one from youth; otherwise we would compose badly, and then we must look back to the stock of others. We must also confer good consideration on the proportions, as we might want to enlarge or diminish, and in particular we must remember well what we draw, to get more experience. For, you see, Memory is the mother of the muses.

copying

highlight

looseness
truth
life
pleasantness

perfect
nude
men +
women

as examples
not from
the head
from
life

Enlows from the head

Invention

Memory

17. It is moreover the treasure-house of learning. But when you "counterfit" you must pay attention that you place the model in the correct position, for many a painter has unnecessarily sinned against that: that is, against not placing it too high, too low, or too close by. Some use panes of glass and nets, of little frames with threads stretched cross-wise, in order to prevent faults.
18. This is the veil, which I pass by in my chapter on composition, although I want to leave anyone free to use it, as indeed any other thing. Because it is all the same who one wants to bring ones work to pleasantness and just proportion. Further, it comes to a great degree of profit in the art of drawing to have a good understanding (through flayed corpses) of where the muscles begin and end.
19. It is absolutely necessary to comprehend thw whole body of your nudes; but one must be well aware that one doesn't depict the [?musen] or muscles too rich in contrast; for otherwise our figures would disappear through thinness. One should not through thoughtlessness neglect the plump and polished softness of life.[?]
20. You can blur, that is spread about with chalk or wadding, or work it gently in a fine grain without shading or rubbing it with anything. If you want to become better in the art of shading, let your shadow lines increase from thin to heavy, and pull them away from above, while you are attentive to depict well muscles or other inequalities of the surface, as gracefully as if the Graces played in them.
21. Pastels are made in various colors, which one rubs with gum that's half-spoiled. With this one can imitate the external appearance of nature; and give color to all figures, be they youthful or dead. It is worthwhile to learn this, for the art of drawing is the father of painting: no two things can stand closer to eachother.
22. In brief, the art of drawing can be useful to all estates, be they young or old, yes, kings, generals and other military men, in order to speak of art with knowledge of these matters as well as in order to indicate the situations of fortifications and places. Therefore the noble art of drawing is to be prized; and now we will by extension continue to the proportions.

END OF THE ART OF DRAWING

CHAPTER III: PROPORTION OR MEASURE OF THE LIMBS OF A HUMAN FIGURE

1. Proportion, or pure relation of measures, is (as Plutarch recounts in this connection) a lovely noble ornament in nature. These proportions in buildings or in the figure are called by Vitruvius (always of an artistic nature) a constant agreement of relations of the limbs or subdivisions of a whole building, as they are well devised following the rules of art.
2. For according to his saying, the human body is comparable to a temple. This agrees well with the words of the Lord, where he speaks of demolishing the Temple, meaning by the Temple the unblemished body: the form of the body of an honest man is noble, and is put together wonderously by nature with particular artisticness.
3. From where the hair begins to grow on the forehead to under the chin, which we call the face, is the tenth part of the whole body's measure thought of in length; also the length of the hand, from where it can bend at the arm to the very end, that is measured to the end of the middle finger, will be in precise agreement with the measure of the face.
4. When one measures the length of the whole head, from crown to chin, one will find it the eighth part of the whole body; and when one stretches a thread on the back from the crown to the end of the neck one will also find the eighth part; and from the beginning of the hair on the forehead descending to the middle of a man's breast, to the point of its highest arch one will come out exactly a sixth.
5. When you prolong your measure to the crown you will observe a fourth part of the body's length; if you wish to search for the measure of the face, from the hair-line measured to the eyes, above the nose, between the eyebrows, is to construct a third part of the whole face; the nose is one part, and from the nostril to under the chin is the same length.
6. The foot from where the heel begins to round to the end of the second toe, positively, is found to be a sixth part of the length of the body; also the cubit, as we understand it, ~~is~~ the arm from the joint or the elbow to the end of the longest finger, will always have to cover a fourth part of the whole body. Thus 'the life's building' has its whole compass.
7. Now - the breast, measured from the beginning of the stomach, just above the navel, to up against the chin presents the same measure. Put on the navel the point of a long compass, when a man is laying wholly extended flat; let the other point go its way around and make a circle, and you will precisely hit the ends of the toes and fingers.
8. Thus the navel seems to be the middle point of this human body. And as this excellent round form is perceived in it, so one finds present in it likewise a right angle, like-sided square. Measure once amply from the crown to the soles of the feet, and then once between the finger tips when the arms are outstretched, and the same measure will be produced.
9. Vitruvius has written this before me and I also see that Pliny agrees with it - that is, that man is as tall as he can reach. One can also find proof of this often in life with practice [?]. Now there are those who have treated proportion very much in books, particularly Durer who is not to be bettered.

10. But of minutes, or the divisions of thumbs, and suchlike perplexities, I have not pursued in order not to take the youthful painter so far from the path. The custom of great masters or sculptors are unsuitable trails for youth. I have often heard painters say: he who measures too much stays continuously at the measure and thus achieves nothing outstanding.
11. Vitruvius, one of the wisest giants in the history of architecture, in order not to go astray, always gives away that is not perilous; because see, the youth must be recommended to measure with heads, feet and noses: from the man's head to the soles of his feet is eight heads, each head is divided in four noses, that is according to my advice quickly and easily to be measured with.
12. In order to measure with eight heads correctly and without any difficulty one must strive to put one's figure on a perpendicular line. The head, from crown to chin, one must take as a module; from the chin to the middle between the nipples also is an eighth; from there to the navel, following to the genitals, that makes four. The other four must be - mid-thigh, knee, mid-shin, foot sole.
13. So one must also go to work in the breadth of measure, from right to left, be it clothed or unclothed; the shoulders of a man two heads broad, the hips two face lengths; now the construction of a woman's body: the same in length, but the breadth of the hips contains exactly twice the head's measure, and her shoulders, measured in breadth, are only two face-lengths, in contrast to the man.
14. But women must exhibit no hardness in the muscles, which, as a whole, must softly withdraw to the face, or cleverly disappear, plump [soft] of flesh, with little folds and wrinkles, dimples in the hand, as with children; now we will be mindful of children: they are five heads high, but smaller in proportion; three to the genitals; thighs and forelegs they are two.
15. One will encounter various proportions in life: short of length and slender. Children are (as Pliny testifies) grown to half of their height in three years. Now, youthful painters, be agreeable to these few things. I shall give you further indications of how a figure must be placed so it doesn't totter, and how to bring him to action and movement, to execute everything with proper fitness.

END OF PROPORTION

CHAPTER IV: CONCERNING THE ATTITUDE, FITNESS AND BEAUTIFUL EXECUTION OF A FIGURE

1. Gentle and favorable Heaven would lend noble Nature many other gifts besides, which dwell within her, especially the virtue of the beauty that makes perfect and orderly, that prepares a favor for the eye. If, however, we seek for its source and means, we will find different causes that account for the beauty of nature.
2. The peculiarities among the things of nature make it clear that where some special part is lacking, beauty is diminished, the which shall lead us to our subject, that sometimes we painters, with industrious work, can draw no figure that pleases us, yet we are not sure why.
3. If our drawings [ommetrecken] lack unity and have no force, it is sometimes because placid movement is lacking in a pose, or the figure is inclining as if it will fall over or has an especially unattractive nature. In order to avoid these things, which are so hateful, in the future, will this investigation serve.
4. Thus let us take this occasion now to put forward positive rules and firm laws, of which there is much evidence that Nature herself is the guiding principle. Thus we will not unknowingly enter any situations where definite mass, law and rule do not apply.
5. In order to construct a standing figure, we must draw an exact line as though created with a plumb, from above downward. This should be like the string of a bow against the turning out of the body, and should run through the hollow of the neck clear down to the ankle of the supporting foot; in this way we can construct a figure securely standing.
6. Thus it can be seen that the human body and the column are comparable in posture and placement. The head, the heaviest member of the body, must be supported on the body and the foot must stand under it suitably as the basis, in such a way that the members that carry the body's weight carry also the head, so that a plumb line could be dropped to touch them both.
7. It is not absolutely necessary that one really draw this perpendicular plumb-line or "hanging" stroke which I mean to not be afraid in the drawing, but only that one have it in ones imagination and set it well and confidently, so that the neck, as if along a plumb-line, comes precisely over the foot on which the body rests.
8. The head can fall or move toward one or the other shoulder, since that often appears well, but the head and the trunk must correspond by being counter-balanced or, to speak clearly, one should diligently take care to avoid having the head hang towards the same side as that towards which the body is flexed or else the work will testify to our clumsiness.
9. The free foot together with the leg may move forwards in order to create a pleasing appearance but it is important to observe a common thing, not only among men but also among four-footed beasts, that the right foreleg and the left rear leg must lift, step forward and go down together, and the other two must do the same again.

10. Such movement, be it running or walking, one sees men perform in a natural way, whether they are working or standing still. In our things this should be noted, as much in children, men and female figures - then our work will be covered with perfection. We must be careful not to have the arm and the leg of a figure stretched forward on the same side.
11. But we must consider the fact that if we have the right arm coming forward and the right leg sinking back, the left leg then comes forward and the left arm goes back, always cross-wise. Whether figures are sitting or standing, the face must turn towards whichever arm that one is putting forward.
12. Such positions appear in the artful works of Raphael of Urbino and Michelangelo; the like is also to be found in antiquity in various figures artfully carved; and in Florence, the beautiful city, is such a manner particularly to be seen in the well-sculpted works of [Giovanni da] Bologna.
13. In nature one sees in the standing position that the head is usually turned in the same direction as the foot is pointed. Also one will sense that the trunk always arranges itself and moves according to the turning of the head as its support: but it is especially praiseworthy according to the rule of attitude, when the head is turned differently than the body.
14. But we should beware of doing something unnatural, so one must strive in a variety of ways to rotate the head in the most fit way, for such can entirely spoil or enhance the nature of a picture in understanding eyes. Indeed no twisting is to be used in spiritual figures, if one wants to make them devoted and modest.
15. At the same time one must not always be bound to our aforesaid pose: but it may be found necessary to vary it in some ways: because Orpheus treated his sweet-sounding harp differently and played it with deafening racket so that the giants all fell, conquered by the fearful thunder.
16. On the other hand his playing sounded much sweeter at another time when he was singing of young maidens who were suffering from a mad love that would never be requited. In this fable we see that one is sometimes required (according to the nature of the work in our things) to use such variances.
17. Thus, if one makes attitudes or positions of figures which are driving stakes or pulling on ropes, then the feet and hands must stand out on one side; also if one is stretching and raising something with the arms and legs together [?] then too the operation decides the positions of the limbs. But one must especially avoid covering the naked body with the arms, so that it always (if possible) should be free of all interruption.
18. Thus we must consider here (according to what we know) an imperfect figure, like when a person is seated with his feet placed apart and to the sides, yet whose knees are turned inwards against each other. It would be better for the sake of propriety to have the knees going outwards and the heels in.
19. Indeed, to make the feet of a woman stand or lie too far apart, particularly stand, is done contrary to dignity, which requires that the feet be placed close together according to the demands of modesty. Also one should sometimes avoid, as contrary to fitness, shortening the faces too much, since this, if it happens excessively, expresses little grace.

Raphael
Michel.
antiquity
Florence

20. Many famous painters (like the lame) take an obviously wrong path, that is, (if they don't take it ill of me), they draw the shoulders up and not to the same side where the hips are also bending out, whereas they should fall away from the side where the hip turns out: because that is the nature of art, whether the figure stands, lays, or sits.
21. It is also a sign of lack of understanding if one has the arm connected to the lower shoulder, where the figure turns out, extended high, since this does not appear correct or beautiful, even if it were made twice so long [?]. Thus according to the correct manner one should rather employ the arm connected to the higher shoulder, to avoid a graceless pose.
22. Further, in order to fortify propriety, there is also a matter worthwhile for bold [cloecke] spirits, who attend to everything, to consider: to wit - see, figures that are not working should not lift both hands and arms at the same time, for variety is pleasing. One should avoid the same thing with legs and feet.
23. It seems too that some cannot rest their spirits until they make something where they let (with permission) breast and back be seen simultaneously. It seems as if such people want to act in the park with the players [Camer-speelders] who hold as art such unnatural things as jumping and tumbling, but painters must be on guard against this.
24. By simple folk it is often countered that their work is improved by impossibilities of twisted, distorted limbs which look broken or, as the Italians say, "storpiato." Many sorts of this may be mentioned, like the hand twisted and forced to the arm, and the foot contorted contrary to the knee.
25. ~~Thus one must go to work with measure in turning and bending, following life.~~ A face looking upwards in grief should have the head hanging back no further than to allow the eyes to look directly up to heaven; and besides, in the bowing figure, it is not appropriate for the shoulder and belly to be touching together.
26. One should not turn the head further than to where the chin is directly above the shoulder. Although the arms and legs are somewhat freer, one must be aware that the position is not to be praised if the hand reaches so high that the elbow is lifted above the shoulder. Nature confirms this and like rules with a sure seal.
27. Also the man who is lifting a weight, so our daily experience teaches us, stands so that one foot stands slightly forward as a support of the body, so that the leg functions like a pillar: because man places himself so that his body remains balanced when bowing and moving, as various learned men testify.
28. If a shoulder carries something, on that side the leg must not play but should stand stiff so the load rests on it: also one should be careful not to have ones standing figure step out unnaturally and unbeautifully, ie, there should be not more than a foot between both feet: but know that ~~the ancients considered the standing figure as important as the walking and as the running figure,~~

measure //
following
life

29. with a lovely and graceful manner, swaying little or almost not at all. Indeed, they presented to all art-lovers a sweet and finely-moved pose, which must please well any such: now it sometimes happens that if figures reach up overhead they stand on the balls of their feet or on their toes.
30. For example like exuberant nymphs, female persons, dancing, springing sometimes off the ground with both legs, sometimes dancing on their toes - to render this well will make our work lovely: and if we need an example, Canachus, in earlier times valued for his art, was (as Pliny attests to us) a statue-maker in stone and bronze [coper].
31. He had made a stag, whether of bronze or of stone, worked quite marvelously, standing so artful and free on his legs that one could almost draw a thread under his four legs. From behind he seemed to lift himself so lightly on his toes into a joyful leap; from the front he seemed to rest on his heels.
32. In working figures one must observe nature sharply, since their limbs move accordingly, be it the hands or the fingers, whether [they play] the lute or the harp, whether they shoot or throw something, hit, strike, drag or carry or dig: all the limbs must go together in running figures, and absolutely all poses that indicate motion must be rendered artfully.
33. Here we may introduce the excellent work of Demon of Athens as an example, with two Hoplite soldiers, one of whom seems to sweat and the other (flinging down his weapons) seems to pant and strain. This was a source of wonderfully great pleasure to the people, because there was in that time no painter who could render the affections with so much life.
34. All the movements of the bodies or limbs of nymphs, goddesses and concubines should also appear pleasingly adroit, as Ariosto describes Alcina, who never took a step without being caught and netted by love [?], in order to catch Ruggiero in it with a graceful and natural manner.
35. And it is one of the virtues of painting to distinguish the figures according to age. First one must make innocent youthful figures as disposed to gladness, lively and simple in all their doings; also women as unaccustomed to labor - her positions are not to be praised when imbued with masculine strength.
36. We must cross Pliny's threshold in order to grasp the modesty of our women, and cite a very old example from an ancient ruined temple; there one saw a painting, unsurpassable in beauty, of Helen and Atalanta, but in Atalanta, with an embarrassed, shy, chaste manner, was revealed the appearance of a maiden.
37. The Penelope of the most excellent painter Zeuxis may also serve as a lesson, since in this picture he zealously gathered together all honorable features becoming to a princess. Also, Castiglione wants no heavy man's work for his noble lady, but only women's work, and only of an easy sort.

38. Let us adorn our maidens with modest natures, in order to strengthen decorum. Even Zeuxis in Homer (as we read) elsewhere trusted all too much in this, so that his female figures were also allowed to show difficult, hard and heavy work, which thing is only proper for youths or Amazons.
39. Especially men of strong constitution should move and stand powerfully. But youths, who know no hardships, must be more lively, with relaxed limbs, entirely free and loose. Now the position of old men: they should hold onto something with their hands in order to support their weak, falling bodies on their tired legs which are inclined to bow.
40. In sum, by the strength and nature of the character should then all figures be recognized, and also by their activity, as should well be understood: because a swordsman will conduct himself differently, more wildly, in pose and movement than a philosopher, by whose gestures it will be seen that he is answering difficult questions of judgement; all this one must distinguish to the best of ones ability.
41. Since this latter should appear to bring out his arguments, finger by finger. Now there are still many other things which are by no means unimportant and which must be brought forward in connection with art, that is, like a singer, or the distinguishing of a laughing or crying, terrified, melancholy, hopeful, or angry face, but this and other questions you will find in the chapter on the presentation of emotions.

END OF THE POSES

1. In the suitable following of rules or, put otherwise, ordering, consists all things, as well ~~as~~ God's creation above and below, as kingdoms, lands, free cities, households, and the various disciplines brought about by inventive men. One also sees ordering in dumb creatures, like busy bees and industrious ants.
2. For painters, ordering is also found to be of greatest importance, for in that the excellence and the power of art lie bound together, as much perfection, and spirit, as understanding consideration, thought and universal experience. Therefore there are few who are perfectly able in invention, who we hear praised as surpassing in comparison to others.
3. Since this is so, O picturers, let us then concern ourselves principally with ordering in our compositions, be it in the open air, in house or room, or wherever we have to place our figures; and that certain rules and laws will be followed by the history that we have applied ourselves to, according to its requirements.
4. Because a body's or figure's composition is of many limbs in a body, all encompassed within the outline: but the history has (according to its nature), by bodies or figures appropriate to it, brought together its own composition. See then, in order to properly assemble these, there are seven modes, or ways of movement.
5. The first: from above standing upright; next, under, bending down; to the right side; to the left; and yielding or going from us; then coming towards; also staying in one place in the round, like a circle; but at all times one should adjust oneself to the area's size, and avoid that the figures should support the frame, or that they should be cramped as if in a box.
6. Place your figures somewhat freely for a pleasant effect; do not let your spirit be projected so far as to make your things so large that hands or feet must run into the frame, or that they lie uncomfortably twisted as they are forced through [lack of] space: clear out and place them according to the gifts of art - as you are free, so not make your people slaves.
7. Always hold yourself free within the borders, and do not overload your ground-space, but when you set your invention to work, think through well and thoroughly first the content of the subject you have undertaken, by reading and rereading [the text]; it is never an error to place fast in your memory the proper character of the History in question.
8. Depict first your mind's imaginings, adding details spiritedly, in order to present your material with lovely grace, nobly, artistically, and easily, like good orators do in their orations, And so that you may better succeed in this, you might make some sketches of it - let them be as free as it may be accomplished.
9. Let your spirit flow - in order that art may flourish you may also after this, like the Italians, draw cartoons from your sketches, as large as the work [you are making], and this with boldness, free and unafraid. This I must urge, in order that you guard yourself against a manner that is heavy and uncomfortable, as too [?], difficult or laborious.

[ghestenteert]

Regier?

freely

AVTO

10. Also in your cartoon, in order not to err, you can well make use of life, be it with watercolors, chalk or coal, heightened and deepened, as you make your choice, and you will remain for a while: but if you wish to give your compositions the qualities of grace, beauty and good balance [decorum?], you must yet pay attention to various things.
11. Firstly you should find, through attempting, the foundations of the balance in your composition: whenever you properly fill both sides of your pictorial field with your large foreground figures, buildings or other stuff, and then have the mid-ground freely open, then you will not be able to bring within there so little, that it will at once produce a balance.
12. For our composition must enjoy a fine character, to the delight of our senses, if we allow there a place of penetration [insien] or a vista [doorsien], with small background figures and a landscape at a distance, into which the vision may plunge. Therefore we should also be careful that our figures are sometimes in the middle of the foreground, and allow one to see over them for many miles.
13. But in particular we will have little grace in our ordering ^{when} our backgrounds are not done as well as the rest; to this the Italians make use of us as foreigners, because they consider the Netherlanders to be fully expert in landscape; if they perhaps praise us in this, they think they surpass us in figures.
14. One should now try to compose well in a variety of manners, and spend some time on that, patiently, without losing courage, in order to arrange all the figures as they require; also like the Italians who speak a lot about composing with various groups, which are little gatherings or troops of people, here standing, lying, and there sitting.
15. Here they should strike fearfully in battle; elsewhere a crowd in the distance is fleeing; in front, horses and riders should fall over one another, some naturally foreshortened; here a little crowd is fighting with great gestures, and there too a little group lies weakly defeated. Thus I recount the composition with little groups, as I have seen, which does not work badly.
16. It has been much the practise of Tintoretto to compose thus with groups or crowds; and Michelangelo's Last Judgement is also composed with many little groups; but yet if anyone should stain his honor, it would not be on account of the crowds, but because he has strayed from [the demands of] the figures in that which composition requires, for there is no entry for the eye.
17. Not letting be seen, as one should, a vista opening into the heavens, and in front something large, as would be wished for: but how shall this not be held as the best, seeing this work brought forth from the fullest art, from the learned hand of Buonarotti, so many different appearances of the positions of the nudes are done there by him.
18. Also one can easily understand that the law of ordering is for the people, but the people are not to be guarding the law: for laws serve to the good of the people, so that they should encounter no ill. What else should laws signify? So one may excuse such masters who hold figures above ordering.

Not
local
←
the
figures

groups
of
figures

19. It is very commendable to strive for pleasantness in figures and in no way to deviate from this, but it gives an even greater abundance of goodness [balance?] when the ordering agrees well with that; and as many delight in music, making harmony by singing and playing, so is that done here by many differing figures. *pleasant in figures*
20. Nature is lovely through her variety: one sees that when with almost a thousand colors the earth blossoms in order to display a competition to the starry throne of heaven, when yet more things are to be perceived with pleasant delight: because without disturbance the people enjoy themselves at a table provided with food and drink, in various ways.
21. Also in the History - this is very important - the figures ought to be differing in their placement, stance, activity, shape, nature, character and disposition. And as we spoke of the seven methods, so should some be posed with both legs facing forward towards us, or walk thus, and others be with face and body seen from the side. *AYTO*
22. Some should show their heels from behind, some sit, lie, crawl, climb up or down, stand up or kneel down; sometimes one should be posed as if falling, when it is appropriate, or secretively creeping, some looking upwards, leaning, or stooping. It is also proper that one combines nude, clothed and half-clothed figures. *Variety in figures in history*
23. Many composers have also hit on a thing that I will not object to and will let you know: that they should enclose the whole entire scope of their story as if closed in a circle so that a part of the figures representing the history remain standing like the center point in the middle, like a picture which many look upon or worship.
24. But according to my feeling or opinion, the composition can scarcely increase in grace by letting half of the bodies of men, horses, steers, calves or other figures run into the frame, unless a ground-piece comes in front of them, be it of stone or something else, that one can take it that such a thing hides them from one's vision.
25. For artistic spirits are accustomed (when it is appropriate) to include in their histories an abundance of horses, dogs or other tame beasts, also beasts and birds of the forest; but what is particularly pleasant to observe are fresh youths and lovely maidens, old men, matrons, all sorts of children, old and young ages. *Not a diff. of space*
26. Besides landscape and architecture, also adornments, rigging [?] and ornaments - many sorts of fantasy in abundance; and this makes beautiful harmony of balance in Pictura's domain, according to the testimony of modern writers, like Leon Battista Alberti, and Rivius, who also had this near his heart. *Plentiful abundance*
27. But about their veil, or such a thing which they explain, I will here be silent, and rather mention that there are both copious and sober histories, so that each may choose the one which their spirit most inclines to. But good masters mostly avoid the principles of abundance or copiousness, and create delight in sobriety, with few details. *AYTO*

Expressions

28. Such ones (in a manner of speaking) do not "counterfit" procurers or advocates, who use many words in their pleading, but copy the great magistrates - kings and powerful potentates - who do not put forth much talk themselves but give their meaning verbally or with the pen in few words.

29. And such sober utterances accompany their reputation with much greater honor than the abundance of babbling and chattering, as hollow casks which sound the loudest: thus it seems that our great masters teach themselves to turn to simplicity, and know how to give their works a lovely and charming quality with few figures.

Simplicity
Few
figures

30. And through that great perfection is found in their figures, which move very lifelike, seeming to construct on poetic foundations, starting with comedy or tragedy, performed with few characters; or they follow Varro, who did not seek the great noise of many guests at the table when he used to hold festive banquets,

figures which
move
lifelike

31. but in order, according to his plan, to set forth a pleasant situation, he had invited to his banquet a group of chosen men, nine or ten, in order not to prevent any of the others from being merry. But in simplicity are not to be praised the most rough or frivolous subjects, which bring no harmony to the eyes.

32. Also when Zephyrus comes to Flora, there they - in earlier times - often kissed each other, and greeted the winged singers of Aurora; yes there the new flowerets sweetened the air; the honey-seekers, which desire sweetness, could not always rest on Adonis; they did not want to miss Crocus and Smilax, nor Ajax, Hyacinth, or Narcissus.

33. Likewise the eyes in their eager sweep search for all beauty of Pictura's domains in many places, in order to amuse themselves, wherever desire with pleasure leads them, hungering to see more, above and below, like spoiled guests tasting many foods: for in variety applied with artfulness the Charities delight.

hungering
eyes.

34. Then some are more properly done than others in a simple manner; there are also those that are easier to compose: there one can do like the merchant, who nicely sets his goods on display on high shelves, on the sides and below: so one introduces into the history a few beholders, on hills, in trees, or on stone steps,

Beholders
into the
history

35. or holding on to the columns of the architecture; also others in front kneeling on the ground. Further, it illuminates the history more like life when one introduces many and varied faces, always the most important part of the body, and as it is usual in the world to set forth the most graceful and the most diverting, that will not do badly here.

36. The important figures should stand out, standing in a high place or sitting so they rise above the others: and those they address must be distinguished by displaying obedience, in a low place and pushed away. So following all our personages, for these must be set on all sides to do their actions, as fine actors.

The imp.
figures:
must
stand
out

as fine actors.

37. So they gracefully carry out all their actions, in going, standing, fighting, courting, playing or dancing, frightened or suprised to play a sad role, through their actions making known the sense of the tale: in short, all expressions of the emotions - attitude, reflections, whatever belongs to our art-at the same time must be brought to use in the history.
38. It gives the history also no little adornment when one of the figures, usually near the men, is positioned in such a manner as if he wished to express to them, with [?] gestures, pity for some sorrow, or of something terrible which is about to occur; and soon makes well up in the work's beholder a sad solicitude, through his indication.
39. In composing one must not intertwine arms and legs with eachother and make a confusion of them, so that they seem to be fighting, but let the things follow eachother smoothly, evenly, and in proper direction. I have also often heard it praised when in the history the figures are to be seen complete in their entirety, not broken.
40. In order not to neglect the nature of the art, when making a figure or a face, as it might occur, we should make it so that one can see another behind it, even if there should almost be nothing necessary or desirable there. For this will make (as in dark stables) the shadowed figure appear to recede, and our foreground figure seem to come out from the picture.
41. Also it is especially proper that in the History we guard against (as we have mentioned elsewhere) bringing many shadows closely by eachother, also without quickly letting our hard, dark colors push strongly against clear light ones, but rather against middle tones. Then we should also bring together a great amount of smooth light, letting it dissolve like the dark color [bruyn - brown?] in the middle tone [graeu].
42. Formerly, for a long time, a confusion reigned among painters, like wandering souls, so that when viewed from a distance their histories seemed made of marble, or like a chess-board, bringing black against white like printers' pictures: but now mezzatints have come from Italy, in which there are half-colored sweet middle tones, which blurrily fade away behind eachother.
43. Now it behooves us well not to omit, but rather to industriously penetrate, to depict well the contents [meaning] of the History, remaining nevertheless in the enjoyment of our freedom and not like Andromeda bound to the rock: because the painter, according to Horace's account, in all that he undertakes or resolves to do, has the same power as the poet.
44. We look to our forefathers, namely whenever they wanted to carry out a devout History: they set forth the most important figures in a suitable fashion (as it was befitting), so they came out very strikingly, in order to distinguish them well, so that the beholders could well guess the contents of the History without spending a long time. To follow such a way is found very useful and good.



Empathy?

not confusing intertwining no broken figures

free of back figures

no sharp contrasts

middle tones

contents meaning

45. Some attempt, through such strange ways, with the addition of various skills, to bring out the facts of the History so that one can scarcely guess its contents even when one already knows the story. I set forth here an example of this, which is recounted by Jacopo [Sannazaro] the poet from the city named after one of the Sirens [Naples],
46. founded by the Chalcidens or Cumaneans: this one recounts in his Arcadia how the Arcadian shepherds, on Palas's feast day, as her wards, were come together at the temple to offer on the rocky altar. And they saw painted above the door hills and forests, run wild with trees.
47. There one saw many flocks scattered among the trees and with them about ten dogs, by whose guardianship they were held in check, lest they stray off and get lost; one saw their tracks in the sand, and of the shepherds one saw several who were milking from milk-swollen udders, and others who sheared the curly hides.
48. Several were seen to blow on bagpipes; others, singing, seemed to want to imitate the tones with their voices, and lastly there was that which enjoys in the eyes of many an especially good aspect, i.e., there were also nymphs, naked girls, only half-covered from behind with a tuft of chestnut leaves.
49. These last were looking upon a buck and laughing delightedly together, for he stood there with great ease to gnaw on an oak-bough which hung before his eyes, and in his fruitless greed forgot to graze upon the green turf and the lovely meadow round his feet.
50. Among them four satyrs with horns on their heads and goats' legs had cautiously sneaked up through the underbrush, were reaching out from behind to grab them by the shoulders. Then one saw that several, who had noticed their approach and sly intentions, fled quickly into the underbrush, fearless of twigs and stumps.
51. One saw the fastest of them clamber up a maple tree, holding in her hand a long twig she had gathered, and was defending herself with it; the others trusted no terrestrial fortress, but had, to flee disgrace, jumped into a river and swam, and one could see their white bodies stir about in the transparent water.
52. As their rescue became apparent, since they were on the other bank of the water, they were flushed and glowing because of their effort, and sat down to dry their hair, and through word and gestures [?] they let their pursuers know their scorn, because they hadn't been able to catch them.
53. In a corner near the water one saw the blond Apollo sit and lean against a wild maple tree, for at this time he was guardian of the flock of Admetus, and he seemed to observe two strong steers in the field, which were mutually and violently assaulting one another with their horns.
54. He did not see how the crafty Mercury, who in shepherdly custom was wearing a goat-skin, which he had pulled under his left arm, had stolen [and hidden] a cow under it. There stood also Battus who, as he as accuser charged him of this notorious larceny, was transformed into stone, in a field, as if he were pointing with his finger.

55. Somewhat behind a great stone sat Mercury with inflated cheeks and a merry face and rolled eyes playing a bagpipe, and with a white cow, which stood beside him, and at which he was looking and seemed to overlay with roguery, as at best the many-eyed Argus could be appraised by him.
56. On the other side lay fast against a very high oak tree leaning amidst his goods a shepherd in sleep, and his dog seemed to snuffle, as if it wanted to get something special from his pouch which lay 'neath his head, and the moon looked upon him with such wonderous joy that one can suppose him to be Endymion.
57. There too was Paris, who had begun to write 'Oneone' in the bark of an elm with a sickle, but three goddesses had come to him, so that he was not quite finished, he left it now to give the judgement, with which the quarrel of the three over the question which one, as most lively, merited the prize, would be hindered, and for this reason they stood now before him naked.
58. But what is especially to be thought over and is to be looked upon as very clever, beautiful and unusual, is the attention and the ingenious spirit of this deep-minded painter, by whom Juno and Minerva stand so wonderfully and perfectly painted, that he could not measure anything better to make.
59. Since he now, as one can hear, could not make Venus more beautiful than the other two, he had, since the first two stood turned forward, painted Venus, very finely reckoned, with her back turned, and with that excused himself- as a clever artist, through artifice, is permitted to deceive; for he suggested that, should she turn around, she would surpass the others in beauty.
60. More elegant things, various of nature, stood pictured here, according to the poet's verses; so these went to make their sacrifice before the image of Pales, with the exercise of much ceremony, in that building; but these are examples which make it easy for us to compose abundantly and cleverly, and in that pleasurable to "poetize." [poetiseren]
61. Now awakened, how shall the spirit not discover in composition to follow the footsteps of the comedies where buffoonish clowns or other characters act only for the amusement of the spectators; for such plain and simple things [few-figured compositions] are a waste of time to do, and they have no perfect nature without some additions or supplements.
62. Thus one may amplify simple histories, as such writings of the poets here exemplify for us. And it surprises me greatly that such gentlemen who perhaps have never learned to paint, have known how to write so entirely artistically [shilderachtich] about our clever secrets, that I think that we should be content with this example of how one can make additions.
63. Also one knows well that on the world's stage all sorts of characters play - here one sees kings in argument for sceptres and crowns; elsewhere on the stage are amorous youths in foolish quarrels. Here the farmers fatten and butcher the pigs; there ruddy farmers' wives hop and jump; over there playful goddesses dance forth better.

additions

*Material for
painters
in our
world?*

64. I mean this: that of wonderfully many colors, figures, and manners are all the events that are played out in the theatre of this world. of vain pleasures and wretched sorrows, and of all that the painter might make use of; so he finds here material enough to his benefit, to build up perfect compositions, according to such History as he has available.
65. One can also amplify simple [few figured] histories in various ways: for instance if one undertook to expand the simple sacrifice of Abraham, one might invent spiritual figures so that in the performance of the sacrifice each could serve as a help to him - that would be Faith, Hope and Charity.
66. Faith could hold Isaac bound in constraint with a rope; as Abraham stretches out his hand, Hope holds out to him the knife: for he hoped - I might receive him back again since God can also raise the dead; and through Faith he had brought him to that place. The fire may be commanded by Charity and her children because they burned there like fiery coals.
67. Also an example here is the Annunciation of Zuccaro, amplified with angels and prophets; and in the life of Rosso described by Vasari, we read of a depiction of Mary with the serpent crushed under her feet, and also our first parents sit bound by the tree of sin, and she takes the sin, represented by the apple, out of their mouths.
68. And as a sign that she was clothed with the sun and moon, also made by Rosso, were flying above in the air Phoebus and Diana, two nude figures - although such sorts of things are not only used for amplification, but are to be called Allegories [uytbeeldinghen =? personifications?], poetic devices [?metaphors] which in their depiction [beteyckenend] indicate a meaning.
69. Neacles, one of the famous ancients, was expert in artistic invention, as he clearly made with a brush a battle of ships where the Persians were fighting against the Egyptians on the Nile river, where he long remained concerned about how to depict the water of the Nile.
70. It was impossible for him that the Nile-- and sea- water might not be distinguished. So he painted a crocodile, which seemed secretly and stealthily to be luring an ass, which had come to stand on the water's bank, and had stuck its muzzle into the river, with lowered head, as if it were drinking from there.
71. He did this so that anyone could easily guess that this war must have occurred on the river Nile - because this is the food and the place which the crocodile particularly prefers. Such natural indicators of persons, places, or rivers give our pieces a lovely ornament.
72. Be it water, ocean, sea, river, or spring, the ancients formerly dedicated them all to some pure divinity, and they in general, so that they would resemble each other in appearance, let appear particular depictions in human form - for example; this depiction of the Nile in white marble stone.

*amplify
few figured
histories*

*amplification
allegories
figures*

73. Whether it was created by Greek, Italian or Egyptian hands, there can be no mistake that it is quite ancient, there in the Roman papal Vatican courtyard, laying under the blue sky: and the nature of the Nile is so artfully depicted there, yes, its character and actions, that it is wonderful and worthy of note.
74. As Herodianus has described, the upper part of his body is naked, and, to mention a peculiarity, his hair and beard hang very long upon it; on his body and legs sit, as if playing, sixteen little children, who are as big as his arm from hand to elbow. The explanation comes from Philostratus.
75. In describing the portrait of the god, he pays attention to the children. The Nile rose, after its habit, so that it flooded Egypt, and it stepped high over the limits of its banks by sixteen yards or cubits; this is what the sixteen children symbolize, that the floods of the Nile reached such a number.
76. It happens also in a year, at a certain time that the height is less than four cubits, then the Egyptians are not glad, for they must expect on either side in the following year the damages of increased prices. So, then, the sixteenth child is depicted seated high up on the cornucopia, because their fruitful year is measured according to that.
77. Next to the right arm he lets the overflowing, fruit-rich horn sink down and he leans with the left upon an animal, which many, incorrectly, take for a sphynx; behind, however, is a lion and a young maiden and this signifies that in this land the flooding of the earth will take place when the sun is in the constellation of Leo and Virgo.
78. Along the sides of the base are diverse plants made, as they grow there in the swamps. Reeds, papyrus, Indian waterroses [lotus?]; also diverse animals, which feed therein, like river-horses [hippos], who splash about in the water with horse's backs and manes, with wild-swine's tails and teeth, with dull mouths and feet like ox-hooves.
79. Then still Indian rats, ibises and skinks; beyond that the small-bodied dwarves, Tentirysten, from the Egyptian provinces, who like clever masters torment and anger the crocodiles with their little boats, so they must flee and save themselves, and who therefore are esteemed as lionhearted heroes. Thus we are reading once again about a Nile-statue.
80. In the 36th book Pliny says to us that the Egyptians found a certain type of marble in Ethiopia, iron-colored and also hard to carve, called basalt. For this reason Vespasian a long time ago had a Nile statue made out of this marble and had it set in the temple of freedom of Rome.
81. On this statue too ~~one~~ saw sixteen children applying themselves with joyful actions, to symbolize the rising of the river. But one of the above-mentioned crocodiles was also among the youth on this statue, to enrich the beauty of the symbolism, in which the spirit of the painter is free. Now must we speak of the Roman Tiber.

82. The Tiber statue is inside the afore-mentioned garden of the town of the painting-academies, also artfully represented with the She-wolf, who lay there and with loving attention as foster-mother suckled the infants, Romulus and Remus. On his head the River has a crown of leaves and in his right hand the cornucopia,
83. filled with grain, grapes and fruits, and in the other hand he holds a rudder as a sign that on his water-course one can navigate with great ships and boats from Rome to the sea and back again, just as it is brought to better understanding on his base, on which departing and arriving ships are made.
84. Also Eutychides was formerly able so artfully to represent Eurotas in a statue, which is the river of the Lacedaemonians, that it was said by all those who saw it that the work was flooded with art, much clearer than the water floods of the forenamed river which is always dirtied by the Furies of Hell [?].
85. All rivers and flowing waters run and turn crookedly out-and-inwards and are, to make such a thing known, painted horned, through which our mind, adroit at allegories, can be made still riper; because Ovid names too in his books a horned Numicius, which had cleansed Aeneas of mortality.
86. One can also symbolically depict towns and countries, as did Parrhasios earlier. He painted Athens with a trained hand, in which [painting] such an understanding for symbolism was brought to light, that one recognized in it the manners, customs of all types, habits, essences and customary usages of the Athenians.
87. Rome, the capital of the world, was represented as helmeted Pallas, who because of her bravery sits upon a heap of armor and other things belonging to battle, armed, in her right hand a spear or lance, and furthermore a little victory statue with a laurel wreath, and in her left hand then after the masterly custom holding a palm-wreath.
88. My grateful pupils, you have followed my many writings, to learn to compose Histories and to represent diverse things with their allegorical attributes. Now we want to alight from these steps and pass over to the following. If I have time and the desire together, we want, at another time and in another town, to explain further this great matter.

END OF ORDERING

1. In the beginning, when all created things received their origins, shapes, and beings from their highest-praised creator, all of that which the eye may visibly encompass, however various, and however strange of nature, received all its color from this most artistic depicter and painter. How can the origins of color seem more abundant?
2. But when the depths lay in darkness, or, as the poets describe it, chaos reigned, before all things stood ordered, and the air lay there concealed without light by the darkness altogether in confusion: then the colors also, with their various names, did not yet exist; or as much as they were, they were entirely hidden, to later be revealed.
3. For where the darkness can dominate or conqour the light in battle, the colors are not themselves hindered, but the sight is strong and sharp enough to be able to penetrate the thick black darkness: yet the colors possess meanwhile their own beauty, without losing any of it, though one cannot see it in the darkness.
4. In order further now to speak more broadly [to digress], I believe that the colors, as we have ever seen them, are all revealed by, and have their origins in, the four elements, hard or soft, where the sun shines on them or day makes them lightened. But what color itself is, everyone may ask - that which through various chances has her form from the four elements.
5. Color is in itself the external visibility of such an object of which it is ~~an attribute~~, and also of this object's substance; for the closeness of the darkness takes away with its blackness from the eye's perfect ability to detect the difference between them. But particularly the daylight bestows the gift of the sight, without mistakes, to well be able to distinguish the forms of all the colors.
6. The visibility of the light, when darkness is softened, brings forth the appearance of the beauty of colors; but the strengths and goodness of color are apparent, for there is nothing that may be compared but it has its color: in short, finally, no thing may exist colorless, whatever strange forms we may observe here, and on the grounds of visibility all colors are built.
7. Of two sorts (according to the assertion of Pliny) are the colors [n.d. - pigments], however many materials there are: that is, naturally- and hand-made. The natural are called after the lands from which men extract them: to tell all these names here would be less easy to do than to wish [to do], or it would distract us greatly.
8. Color is a particularly natural enlivenment of all things, whether they are still or moving; it is the uppermost clothing and the external covering, be it one-colored, mixed, or many-colored [mottled?]. Many things also receive their names from this. It causes and satisfies the hungry peering of the eyes which in the world's ample kitchen endlessly itch for the nourishment of seeing more.

9. Color can indicate the difference between things, for example it can make apparent [the difference of] gold from copper. Color gives courage to or frightens the people; color makes things uglier or more beautiful; color saddens or gladdens; color makes many things be criticized or praised: in short, color makes everything appear visible that is in the world created by God.
10. Color exercises wonderful powers in nature, of which examples are also to be found in conceiving women, whose thoughts, though so imagined, also bring forth such fruit, be it black, or other colors: but we know this, and see it occur, that the children's bodies receive spots from that which frightened their mothers.
11. Similarly whenever they are sometimes suddenly frightened by a [?bloody thing], their children are brought forth with bloody markings; or other colors abundantly mark the children whenever any fruits or blossoms come to stain their sight or elsewhere, right when they begin to bear life, and when they cannot immediatly wipe it off.
12. Thus appears the power of color. Also on this subject may the story of Jacob be cited, living with Laban in the East; there the effects of colors aided him when he put down spotted staffs before the cattle, in the [?ramminghe] times, through which many goats, sheep, donkeys, and all sorts of animals, many-colored and spotted, fell to his share.
13. The power of colors is apparent in many manners in birds and beasts, which gives them a noble, remarkable ornament, like tigers, leopards, and panthers, whom the four-footed creatures of the forest run after, without exception, because of their lovely markings or their pleasant scent, although they must pay for it with their lives.
14. Whoever also sees the Phoenix bird, according to the painting [coloreren] of Pliny, it will give them pleasure, as when one sees the peacock showing off, making a screen with his beautiful feathers, and turning toward the shine of the sun. How lovely to see the parrot display himself, and the doves, whose necks seem like gold, which is why Latin calls them "Columba."
15. Too many examples would make our material here in question grow far too great. But the heart rises up from melancholy troubles in the early summer, when the fields bloom full of light colors of such lovely variety that even Solomon was not so excellently adorned as a lily is there, as the Lord explains in the Evangelist.
16. The colors in youthful human figures, particularly in women, wonderfully arouse desires. The heart of many a one swims in a sea of enjoyment, who when he sees thinks that the Graces play on the mouths, cheeks, and lively eyes of women, for the sake of which many a stout hero has had to bend his neck in fierce wars - by which the power of color is attested

17. Scipio and Alexander the Great made a great fame arise for themselves with warlike deeds, one as well as the other; and they were considered all the more valiant for restraining their desire for the bodies of beautiful women. Yes, in order not to see lovely-colored females, some have chosen blindness, fearing to lose control over their passions.
18. Also it is very appropriate here, to the glory of color, [to mention] the art of writing on white with black, by which men hold in their memory art, science, and many histories. Writing also causes fighting, bloodshed and sorrow; makes peace, alliance, and gladness in the heart. Yes, if men be widely parted from each other, they speak together through silent messages.
19. Girolamo Benzoni of Milan writes of this, conveniently to our subject - how the simple men, the Indians, being subjugated by the Spaniards, were sent to other Spaniards with letters, and could not understand, however much they considered it among themselves, that a white thing provided with black could thus speak.
20. They knew neither of writing nor reading. Even Atabaliba, a great nobleman, the powerful king of Peru - he was being instructed by a monk in the faith, and asked for an explanation from the brother, how he knew it, that Christ who gave up his life for us, also created [?] the world; this one answered him, that his breviary-book said it to him.
21. Atabaliba, at the monk's wish, took up the book and examined it carefully, but the book did not speak, but lay silent. So he laughed, as if at a funny trick, for he didn't think much of the book, but threw it from him, which brought him to trouble. So reading and writing were held by this people as wonderous deeds.
22. But first in houses of the region hung a great group of cords of various colors, being of cotton, and full of knots of different shapes, from the number of which they would determine [read] of things which passed in the old times of the country; and for this certain men were appointed who could explain the knots' meaning.
23. In short: everywhere in the world, with every people (this is not to be mistaken) colors adorn the earth, [with their] power and their attachments; so too their effects and their symbolic function - which is quite otherwise for the eastern Javanese, for there white denotes, and gives an exhortation of, melancholy; and black is a sign [teycken] of all that causes one to reach pleasure through joy.
24. When before we spoke of drawing we did not forget the art of writing; here, writing is encompassed in the power of color: but Euphranor's book is wanting to us here, which time's inconstancy has consumed - for a singular book of color's secrets by the famous ancient painter is lost to us through envious age.

25. Finally: what more beautiful colors the Lord wished to impart, and so generously bestowed, in the rare, costly gemstones: but it goes altogether above human conjectures, imaginings, or inner ideas, of what beautiful colors hereafter shall shine in the excellently lovely, pure, and clear delightful heaven, [being] above all nature.

26. Of pure gold, and transparent glasses, sardis, and jasper and all other unusual stones - chrisolite, hyacinth, topaz, amethyst, smaragol, chrisophras, and such excellently beautiful, pure colors, John describes the Heavens' sweet domain. Thus we let color remain here, high above the earth, in her heavenly dignity.

END OF THE ORIGIN, NATURE ETC. OF THE COLORS

1. Because the sun shines forth with such power that the moon, stars, and all earthly lights must yield to her excellent lightness, and that her rays are like gold, and that gold is considered the most distinguished among metals, therefore we should build up the subject separately, particularly first dealing with the gold-indicating yellow.
2. Among all proper and recommended colors, we thus begin with yellow as the noblest because it indicates the beautiful color of gold: yes, gold, which without satisfying them feeds more hungry feelings of greedy men: this shining inwardness [?], formed within us, taken from our common mother's stomach, has always contrived much ill over the whole world.
3. Because all harms are to be blamed on the immoderate desires of our weaknesses and not on gold. Cadmus, as discoverer, first gained gold; two kings of Kolchis took the virginity of the earth in order to obtain gold from within the borders of Samniens, and went to try with sheepskins to gather gold from the water there; from which arose the fable of the golden fleece -
4. yes, a fable spread through the entire world, about the Argonauts, Jason's comrades; more strange to read than worthy of being believed: how they without Hercules, in order to overcome [their difficulties], had to set a woman to work[?]: but to recount the origin of gold's name, Hippocrates thinks its source comes from Aurora, always saffron-colored and glowing.
5. Or else from 'aurd', the latin term, says Isodorus, it received its name, which indicates a shine of the brightest sort: also Gregorius does not let its particular shiningness go unmentioned. And in general it is always considered by men to be seen, with alert senses, in whatever pleasantly shines purely and brightly.
6. The most beautiful beauty is invisible Beauty, all beauty's gracious origin, to which the bright sun (which cannot be outshone) may also be compared: and Phoebus is said to have golden hair, yes, to be entirely golden. The usefulness of gold is manifold: men make use of it in many senses, but its misuse comes from unruly desires.
7. Then because no color can surpass in beauty the beautiful color of gold, for this reason emperors, kings, and powerful persons have their sceptres, collars, crowns, and various adornments made of gold - embroidered mantles, golden cloths and clothings shot through with gold stripes, which King Attalus first used,
8. and it received the name "Attalus-work." But it was discovered in Babylonia to embroider with shining gold among many colors, and therefore they would also indicate this with the term "Babylonian-work," costly, and with many thousand pounds, for Caesar Nero bought an ornament worked in this manner for a million sesterces.
9. Also the holy writings testify unmistakably of very costly golden ornaments, and of how wise Salemon, rich of property, clothed God's house entirely with pure gold, even too adorning the floor with golden tiles: in short, cheerful and exceedingly beautiful, yes, wonderfully noble, as may well be imagined, that pure gold must have shone there.

10. Gold is, according to the indications in the scripture, the trusted, active belief's power; with it the bride of Christ is everywhere suffused, as the arm-bands of Rebecca also universally mean: because he who is there reliable and true, advised a congregation which had lapsed in belief, to take [buy?] again from him the fiery inspiring gold. [unclear]
11. Much is to be recounted from the poets about Maro's golden branch and such like: but, hear how the heralds expounded on the colors of, the blasons on the arms of noblemen: the highest metal indicated [its wearer] to be rich, wise, noble, magnanimous, and of high rank. Also through the color that was next to it they could give a further new meaning.
12. By blue, which they would by preference join to it, was meant for those who bore multicolors the enjoyment of the world's delights and pleasures; then by grey was meant nothing other than a precariousness of those who torment themselves in order not to enjoy: by green, the hope of enjoyment with good pleasures: by violet the satisfying joy of love: by black, patience and constancy in love.
13. Gold-yellow by flesh color indicates moderate riches: sometimes standing alone, it means a reasonable man, of a good estate, even-tempered, and wise in behavior, also very good in discernment, and at home everywhere: but among all pure noble gems, the topaz (to speak justly) is to be compared to this noblest gold color.
14. Thus is yellow a lovely, glad color, light and pure of appearance when right next to white: both in Moses' and Salomon's time was artistically made and woven of silk a drape, or a great curtain: but yellow was the primary color in it: I say this so that it should not seem to conflict with decorum to set gold at the forefront among the colors.
15. Since the old painters had only four sorts of colors, as we said above, then yellow-ochre was one of the four: without that, how could they have contrived that their work should seem to appear like anything? But now we have four different yellows in our houses beyond mere ochre - masticot, shot-yellow, and two orpiments.
16. Red-lead can also serve freely well for orangeish, which means a golden color: one can draw with it together with masticot, or make orpiments: because it is ridiculous to use a lot of gold - one must combine it in our work. I have not the power to forbid it entirely, but it is better to bring about all ornaments with color.
17. So, some people formerly intended to beautifully embellish their work with gold, the which men of little understanding praised highly - this should in these times be considered more a defacement than a beautification. Thus whoever would now wish to make Dido with Aeneas of Troy setting forth to the hunt need not be generous with gold.
18. So Virgil has written as follows: "there stood a horse splendidly hung with purple and gold, which bit its bridle with high-spirited pride, so that foam appeared, and finally Dido came running there with her pure hair in golden clasps, and with lovely-colored silk clothing under a special Sidonian mantle,

19. the golden quiver, with other pieces:" or whoever wishes to make Croesus when he provokingly wished to let Solon see the abundance of all his fortune, and displayed many cloths, jewels, and treasures: considering gold highlights falling on a flat, lighted part make it darker instead of lighting it up, one would do better to use colors.
20. Gold then is for [the representation of] gold not well to be justified here, because it is too bad to use it within [the painting] however much it formerly was allowed to dominate there. But outside, on the frames, edges, and borders, fittingly and ingeniously to richly ornament with mascarons, moresques, and curling bands above and below, with gold on all sides - that is not to be avoided, but to be highly praised.
21. Gualtherus Rivius, a learned man, wished that people should not honor a clever painting done by artistic hands with only a gold frame, but should augment it with noble gemstones, good and justly - so highly did he value, in his writings, a well-made piece [of art] - but he did not want to allow that men should also use gold within the work.
22. After gold, silver among all metals rightly holds the highest place in value and beauty, shining with vivid rays. It would take long to recount all that God in the Law to his credit had made of it: but look at what is signified by it - because it is perceived as white, it means innocence and freedom from sin.
23. Thus was the pure Lamb, of highest honor, white, among thousands held to be beautiful. White as snow shone His robes upon Tabor; in white appeared the Angels of the Lord: the pure truth, of sincere nature, was clothed all in white - and besides these, to see the innocent youth, women or maidens clothed in white always pleases our eyes.
24. Thus in heraldry beautiful and glowing gold can give indication of nobility and high estate; silver, purity and good justice. Red signifies grandeur and courageous bravery; blue, faith and applied knowledge; green, beauty, goodness and joy; furthermore, purple signifies abundance and the benevolence of God and men; and black, humility and sadness that live in the heart.
25. The two metals, silver and gold by name, cannot stand alone in the arms of nobility; likewise it does not befit the colors to be together without metals: Among the planets, gold corresponds with the sun, and by silver we may comprehend the moon, and Mars by red; by purple, Mercury, the messenger of the gods;
26. by blue, Jupiter; Venus by green; black corresponds to the melancholy Saturn: thus one can also easily compare all the days of the week, from Sunday on, to these colors. Also the seven Virtues, without fail: Faith with gold, mild Hope with silver, and fiery Love with red;
27. Justice with the exquisite blue of Heaven; with green, Strength, for steady persistence; Wisdom with black, discrete in its practice; two colors which have lost their names and been mixed into one - rose-violet - correspond to a temperament of moderate ways. Also one may match these colors with the seven ages of the human life.

28. A child, up to seven years old after birth, is of silver or white, innocent and comely; blue up to fifteen years the inexperienced boy; golden, the youth up to his twentieth year; and green, the young man to his thirtieth year; red to the fiftieth year, when a man is strong of heart; purple is for age until the seventieth year; black is considered correct for mourning before death.
29. The four humors or human temperaments are also expressed by four colors - first, the Sanguine, full of blood, by red; by blue, the short-tempered Choleric; and by white, the Phlegmatic, always slimey and snotty; by black, Melancholy, sad in appearance: there also is, if one wishes [to indicate] the elements, red for fire, blue for air, white for water, and black for earth.
30. Green indicates spring in the year's four seasons; red, the summer, because of the sunshine's burning heat; and blue, the autumn, with its vines besides; black is winter, sorry and without joy. Thus, the colors signify many concepts, of which I now, having washed my dirty hands, will here leave off in order to lead the youth to the lives of the painters.
31. I could, had I wished to succeed, have treated more matters, or made them longer: but architecture, with the related subjects like measure and foreshortening, have all been published, clearly brought to light in our language: also, individual circumstances and domestic matters take the pen from me and come to disturb me - otherwise I could have pursued a thousand things.
32. With this much then, O "painterly" youth, take pleasure and use it as best you can: do not scorn the path of virtue because of its difficult entrance, for see, it ends in joy through the sweet delight of prosperity finally: so you should find examples in the painters' lives and deeds and (such is my intention) while reading learn at the same time how to paint.

END OF THE FOUNDATION OF THE ART OF PAINTING