Chamberlaine, John
1745 – 1812

Original designs of the most celebrated masters of the Bolognese, Roman, Florentine, and Venetian schools; comprising some of the works of Leonardo da Vinci, the Caracci, Claude Lorraine, Raphael, Michael Angelo, the Poussins, and others, in His Majesty’s collection; engraved by Bartolozzi, P.W. Tomkins, Schiavonetti, Lewis, and other eminent engravers; with biographical and historical sketches of L. da Vinci and the Caracci.

London, Printed by W. Bulmer and Co. Shakspeare-Press, and sold by G. and W. Nicol, [etc.], 1812

Two parts, FOLIO (535 × 405 mm):

I: (9)ff. letterpress, unsigned: title-page (transcribed above); dedication, To the King; part-title, Imitations of Original Designs by Leonardo da Vinci..., dated 1796; 5ff. text, Leonardo da Vinci, including an account of the provenance of the drawings (paginated 3–12); and list of plates, Contents (enumerating sixty-six subjects); plus seventeen engraved plates on fifteen leaves (reproductions in colour of drawings by Leonardo) numbered (I–V) VII–XVII (with X/XI, XV/XVI on single sheets).

II: (4)ff. letterpress, unsigned: part-title, Engravings from the Original Designs of Annibale, Agostino, Ludovico Caracci..., dated 1797; and 3ff. text, The Caraccis (paginated 1–5); plus engraved dedication-plate (To her Serene Highness the Princess of Wurttemberg..., lettered by [Thomas] Merrifield and engraved by P.W. Tomkins) and forty-nine subjects engraved on forty-three leaves (reproductions in colour of drawings by the Carracci and others), imperfectly numbered XVIII–LXVI (with XXXIII–XXXIV, XXXVI–XXXVII, XXXIX–XL, XLIV–XLV, LIII–LIV, LX–LXI on single sheets).

A few plates lightly foxed, generally in margins; otherwise in very good state of preservation.

BOUND in russia leather, decorated in gilt, gilt edges, by Franz Sebastian Voll, with his engraved ticket (printed in blue on a black ground) Relié par Voll à Mannheim.

Reproduced opposite
‘Virgin and Child and St. Anne’ by ‘A. Caracci’ (Wittkower 65, as ‘Virgin and Child with St. Catherine’, a contemporary copy of a lost drawing by Lodovico Carracci).
Etching and aquatint by Luigi Schiavonetti (pl. XXVI)
A FINE SERIES OF PRINTS reproducing Italian drawings in the Royal Collection, selected by John Chamberlaine, the King’s Keeper of Drawings and Medals. The drawings are mostly reproduced in their actual size and a variety of techniques are employed to render them faithfully, including stipple, aquatint, roulette, and soft ground etching; to compound the effect, some drawings are printed on tinted papers.

Soon after his appointment in February 1791, Chamberlaine inaugurated three publications, each reproducing ‘in facsimile’ drawings in the Royal Collection. The first and best-known of these works is the suite of eighty-four prints after Holbein portraits of members of the court of Henry VIII, issued seriatim between March 1792 and June 1800.1 The present volume collects Chamberlaine’s next two series: one reproducing drawings by Leonardo da Vinci, issued between September 1795 and October 1806; the other reproducing drawings by the Carracci, and by Baccio Bandinelli, Canaletto, Claude Lorrain, Gaspard Dughet, Leonardo, Michelangelo, Nicolas Poussin, and Harman van Swanevelt, issued between April 1796 and April 1811. The same team of engravers was employed on all three projects: Francesco Bartolozzi, his pupils, or artists associated with him; the same printer printed the letterpress in all three works: William Bulmer; and the same bookseller and publisher conducted the sales: George Nicol, holder of the Royal warrant.

In his *Imitations of original drawings by Hans Holbein*, Chamberlaine had credited George Nicol (together with Horace Walpole) with ‘concerting… the plan of this publication’. It is likely that Nicol was also the chief promoter of a reprint of the Holbein series in reduced format, which appeared shortly after Chamberlaine’s death (12 January 1812),2 and of this reissue of the Leonardo and Carracci series published in the same year.

Judging by the title, printed in 1796 and reissued in 1812, Chamberlaine’s original intention was to reproduce a wide variety of Leonardo’s drawings: *Imitations of original designs by Leonardo da Vinci, consisting of various drawings of single figures, heads, compositions, compositions, compositions, compositions, compositions,*

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horses and other animals; optics, perspective, gunnery, hydraulics, mechanics; and in particular of very accurate delineations, with a most spirited pen, of a variety of anatomical subjects, in His Majesty’s collection. The first fascicule of the series, distributed in October 1796, contained six plates etched by Francesco Bartolozzi, of which two were reproductions of Leonardo’s anatomical studies. Another seven plates were completed in 1796 (a head, a three-quarter length study of a man, and five anatomical subjects), after which Chamberlaine laid the project aside, until October 1806, when subscribers received nine plates (reproducing eleven drawings), and the publication was discontinued.

The reasons for the decade-long interval and termination of the work are not obvious; however, distaste for the anatomical plates (one showed coition with a detail of the penis) may have been a factor. The Contents list printed for our 1812 reissue calls for seventeen prints after Leonardo, depicting human heads and figures, and the courtyard of a foundry, and eliminating all the anatomical plates:

1: Portrait of Leonardo in profile (Clark & Pedretti 12726), by Bartolozzi (De Vesme & Calabi 2085), published 1 September 1795
2: Study of a woman’s head (C.-P. 12533), by Bartolozzi (V.-C. 2086), published 1 October 1796
3: Woman’s head in profile (C.-P. 12554, as Head of a young man in profile), by Bartolozzi (V.-C. 2087), published 1 October 1796
4: Head of a man (C.-P. 12504), by Bartolozzi (V.-C. 2088), published 1 March 1796
5: ‘Mechanics’ (C.-P. 12647, as Courtyard of a foundry), by Bartolozzi (V.-C. 2089), published 13 May 1796
6: Three-quarter length study of a man (C.-P. 12584), by Bartolozzi (V.-C. 2090), published 11 April 1796
7: Review in The British Critic, 8 (October 1796), pp.419–420: ‘It contains first the characteristic head of Leonardo, sketched by himself, and engraved, in the most exquisite manner, by Bartolozzi. There are, besides, two heads, a plate of mechanics, two plates of anatomical subjects, with the author’s notes etched on the plates, so as to form a facsimile of the original manuscript, to which an English translation is subjoined.’ Cf. The Monthly review, or, Literary journal (February 1798), pp.233–234.
8 Copies with all seven anatomical plates are almost unknown; the writer has seen only Victoria & Albert Museum, National Art Library, G.58.G.100. In that copy, four plates have dated publication lines (18 August 1795, 17 September 1795, 27 April 1796, 15 August 1796) and three are undated. The prints are listed by Weigel, op. cit., pp.360–361 nos. 4351–4357, 4368; and De Vesme and Calabi, op. cit., nos. 2095–2101. For the associated drawings, see Kenneth Clark, The drawings of Leonardo da Vinci in the collection of Her Majesty the Queen at Windsor Castle, second edition revised by Carlo Pedretti (London 1968–1969), nos. 19005 (recto & verso), 19012 (recto & verso), 19013 (recto & verso), 19097 (verso); and Kenneth D. Keele and Carlo Pedretti, Corpus of the anatomical studies in the collection of Her Majesty, the Queen, at Windsor Castle (New York 1978), t, p.xxxii; ii, ff. 35 (recto), 137 (recto & verso), 142 (recto & verso), 144 (recto & verso).
The first group of six plates (unnumbered, and dated 1795 or 1796) are all signed as engraved by Francesco Bartolozzi (1727–1815); the final group (numbered, and dated October 1806) are signed as engraved by Bartolozzi, Robert Shipster (fl. 1794–1800), Peltro William Tomkins (1759–1840), or Benedetto Pastorni (circa 1746–1806/1810). Proof impressions before letters or aquatint are known. 4

Chamberlaine had meanwhile commenced work on a series of reproductions of drawings by other Italian artists in the Royal Collection: Engravings from the original designs of Annibale, Agostino, and Ludovico Caracci, in His Majesty’s Collection. Consisting of elegant compositions and studies for the various celebrated pictures in the different palaces and cabinets at Rome, Bologna, Parma, Milan, &c. Between April 1796 and April 1797, Bartolozzi reproduced seven drawings by the Caracci. 5 Work was afterwards suspended, until May 1806, when Chamberlaine published a single print by Tomkins after a drawing by Lodovico Carracci. Six more plates after drawings by the Carracci were published in 1807, engraved by Bartolozzi, Tomkins, Luigi Schiavonetti (1765–1810), Georg Siegmund Facius (circa 1750–after 1815), and James Stephanoff (circa 1786–1874), raising to fourteen the number of their drawings reproduced (order of plates in 1812 rearrangement):

XXVIII: Portrait of a boy, by Annibale (Wittkower 360), engraved by Bartolozzi (De Vesme & Calabi 2102), published 13 May 1796

XIX: Abraham entertaining the Angels, by Lodovico (W. 18), engraved by Bartolozzi (V.-C. 2103), published 18 January 1797

XX: ‘A Lawyer’ (C.-P. 12582, as Elderly man in profile), by Annibale, engraved by Bartolozzi (V.-C. 2104), published 11 April 1796

XXI: Jacob’s Dream, by Lodovico (W. 19, as Agostino), engraved by Bartolozzi (V.-C. 2105), published 18 January 1797

XXII: Monk’s head, by Annibale (W. 574, as perhaps Sisto Badalocchio), engraved by Bartolozzi (V.-C. 2106), published 11 April 1796 6 XXXII: ‘Birth of Pyrrhus’, by Agostino (W. 533, as ‘The Birth of St. John’ and School of the Caracci), 5 engraved by Bartolozzi (V.-C. 2107), published 17 April 1797

XXXI: An old man, by Annibale (W. 65), 5 engraved by Luigi Schiavonetti, published 15 April 1807

XXXII: The marriage of Isaac and Rebecca (B. 41; Roethlisberger 902), 5 engraved by F.C. Lewis, published January 1807

XXXIII: Apollo and the Nine Muses, by Annibale (W. 357), 5 engraved by Luigi Schiavonetti, published 15 April 1807

XXXIV: Apollo and the Muses, by Annibale (W. 357), 5 engraved by Luigi Schiavonetti, published 15 April 1807

XXXV: Pietà, by Annibale (W. 357), 5 engraved by Luigi Schiavonetti, published 15 April 1807

In 1807, a new artist was introduced in the series, as an ‘honorary Roman’: Claude Lorrain. Ten plates reproducing Claude’s drawings were engraved in that year by Frederick Christian Lewis (1779–1856), George Robert Lewis (1782–1871), and Tomkins; six more plates of Claude’s drawings were published in 1809, and three in 1811, for a total of nineteen, all but one of the genuine drawings by him in the Royal Collection (order of plates in 1812 rearrangement):

XXXVII: The marriage of Isaac and Rebecca (Blunt 41; Roethlisberger 902), 5 engraved by F.C. Lewis, published January 1807 7

XXXVIII: Apollo and the Nine Muses, by Annibale (W. 357), 5 engraved by Luigi Schiavonetti, published 15 April 1807

XXXIX: Apollo and the Muses, by Annibale (W. 357), 5 engraved by Luigi Schiavonetti, published 15 April 1807

The copper printing-plate is in the British Museum, Reg. No. 1917,0702.1. 8


Schilling & Blunt, op. cit., p.64.

Anthony Blunt, The French drawings in the collection of His Majesty the King at Windsor Castle (Oxford 1945), pp.21–24; Marcel Roethlisberger, Claude Lorrain: the drawings (Berkeley 1968), passim.

8 The copper printing-plate is in the British Museum, Reg. No. 1917,0702.1.

9 Rudolf Wittkower, The Drawings of the Carracci in the collection of Her Majesty the Queen at Windsor Castle (London 1952).


11 Schilling & Blunt, op. cit., p.64.

12 Anthony Blunt, The French drawings in the collection of His Majesty the King at Windsor Castle (Oxford 1945), pp.21–24; Marcel Roethlisberger, Claude Lorrain: the drawings (Berkeley 1968), passim.
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G.R. Lewis, published 1 January 1807  ●  XXXVIII: ‘Polyphemus’ (B. 42, as Acis and Galatea; R. 802), published 1 January 1807  ●  XXXIX–XL (together on a single folio): The banks of the Tiber (B. 61; R. 1) and Landscape: a valley with trees (B. 60; R. 2), by Tomkins, published 27 March 1807  ●  XLI: The Apulian shepherd changed into an olive tree (B. 43; R. 804), by G.R. Lewis, (undated)  ●  XLIV–XLV (together on a single folio): The Campo Vaccino with the entrance to the Villa Farnese (B. 51; R. 16) and A house in the Campagna (B. 57; R. 22), by G.R. Lewis, published 12 January 1809  ●  XLVII: The Crossing of the Red Sea (B. 46; R. 815), by F.C. Lewis, published January 1809  ●  L: The Temple of Apollo at Delphi (B. 47; R. 1057), by F.C. Lewis, published January 1809  ●  LII–LIII (together on a single folio): Roman arches and tower (B. 54; R. 19) and View of the Colosseum (B. 52; R. 17), by G.R. Lewis, published 1 June 1809  ●  LIV: St. John the Baptist preaching (B. 44; R. 774), by F.C. Lewis, published 17 April 1811  ●  LV–LVI (together on a single folio): An artist drawing (B. 59; R. 24) and SS. Giovanni e Paolo, Rome (B. 58; R. 23), by G.R. Lewis, published 1 June 1809.

In 1809, the ‘sixth’ fascicule was issued to subscribers. The series continued to expand, embracing representative drawings by Baccio Bandinelli, Canaletto, Gaspard Dughet (called Gaspard Poussin), Leonardo, Michelangelo, Poussin, Raphael, and Harman van Swansevelt, engraved by F.C. Lewis, Bartolozzi, Tomkins, George Hawkins (active 1795–1820), and ‘Eddy’ (order of plates in 1812 rearrangement):

XLII: Dance in honour of Pan, by Poussin (Blunt 174), engraved by F.C. Lewis, (undated)  ●  XLIII: Study for the figure of Poetry (Stanza delle Segnatura), by Raphael (Popham & Wilde 792), engraved by F.C. Lewis (Höper F6.14), published 7 February 1809  ●  XLIV: Leda and the Swan, by Raphael (P.-W. 789), published by F.C. Lewis (Höper A78), published 1 February 1809  ●  XLV: Medea killing her children, by Poussin (Blunt 264, as Studio), engraved by F.C. Lewis, published 1 June 1809  ●  XLVI: Leda: Bearded head turned to the right, by Bandinelli (P.-W. 81, as School of Baccio Bandinelli), engraved by G.R. Lewis, published 1 June 1809  ●  XLVII: Allegory of the wolf in the boat, by Leonardo (Clark & Pedretti 12496), engraved by Tomkins, published 17 April 1811  ●  XLVIII: Ruins on a shore with mountainous coastline, by Canaletto (Parker 132), engraved by Hawkins, published 17 April 1811  ●  XLIX: ‘Cephalus and Procris’ by Poussin (Blunt 158, as The death of Chione), engraved by F.C. Lewis, published 17 April 1811  ●  L: The Temple of Apollo at Delphi (B. 47; R. 1057), by F.C. Lewis, published January 1809  ●  LII: Hope, by Raphael (P.-W. 815), engraved by F.C. Lewis, published 1 February 1809  ●  LIII–LIV (together on a single folio): Roman arches and tower (B. 54; R. 19) and View of the Colosseum (B. 52; R. 17), by G.R. Lewis, published 1 June 1809  ●  LIV: St. John the Baptist preaching (B. 44; R. 774), by F.C. Lewis, published 17 April 1811  ●  LV: Medea killing her children, by Poussin (Blunt 264, as Studio), engraved by F.C. Lewis, published 1 June 1809  ●  LVI: Bearded head turned to the right, by Bandinelli (P.-W. 81, as School of Baccio Bandinelli), engraved by G.R. Lewis, published 1 June 1809  ●  LVII: Allegory of the wolf in the boat, by Leonardo (Clark & Pedretti 12496), engraved by Tomkins, published 17 April 1811  ●  LVIII: Ruins on a shore with mountainous coastline, by Canaletto (Parker 132), engraved by Hawkins, published 17 April 1811  ●  LIV: Medea killing her children, by Poussin (Blunt 264, as Studio), engraved by F.C. Lewis, published 1 June 1809  ●  LVI: Bearded head turned to the right, by Bandinelli (P.-W. 81, as School of Baccio Bandinelli), engraved by G.R. Lewis, published 1 June 1809  ●  LVII: Allegory of the wolf in the boat, by Leonardo (Clark & Pedretti 12496), engraved by Tomkins, published 17 April 1811  ●  LVIII: Ruins on a shore with mountainous coastline, by Canaletto (Parker 132), engraved by Hawkins, published 17 April 1811  ●  LIX: St. John the Baptist preaching (B. 44; R. 774), by F.C. Lewis, published 17 April 1811  ●  LX: The Temple of Apollo at Delphi (B. 47; R. 1057), by F.C. Lewis, published January 1809  ●  LXI: Landscape with river: a merchant crosses by stepping stones, by ‘G. Poussin’ (Gaspard Dughet), engraved by Bartolozzi (V.-C. 2110), published 1 July 1809  ●  LXII: Hope, by Raphael (P.-W. 815), engraved by F.C. Lewis (Höper A109), published 1 June 1809  ●  LXIII: The Virgin and Child, by Michelangelo (P.-W. 426), engraved by F.C. Lewis, published 17 April 1811  ●  LXIV: Travellers on a sunken road winding through a mountainous valley, by Swansevelt (White & Crawley 457), engraved by ‘Eddy’, published 17 April 1811  ●  LXV: SS. Giovanni e Paolo, Rome (B. 58; R. 23), by G.R. Lewis, published 1 June 1809.

Most copies of the 1812 edition contain sixty-six engraved subjects printed on fifty-eight folios, as enumerated in the list of ‘Contents’, and have the text ‘Leonardo da Vinci’ printed on five leaves (paginated 3–12). These variations are known:

- 73 engraved subjects printed on 65 folios: the usual 66 subjects on 58 folios, plus seven ‘supplementary’ anatomical plates; and an additional leaf of letterpress transcribing and translating Leonardo’s ‘mirror writing’ on the anatomical plates (paginated 13–14)  


14 A.E. Popham and Johannes Wilde, The Italian Drawings of the XV and XVI Centuries… at Windsor Castle (London 1949).


17 De Vese and Calabi, op. cit, p.530 no. 2110, read the publication line as ‘Published July 1, 1800’ and record a previous state of the print dated ‘1796’; Marie-Nicole Boisclair, Gaspard Dughet: sa vie et son œuvre, 1615–1675 (Paris 1986), p.361 no. G138.

18 Karl Theodore Parker, The drawings of Antonio Canaletto in the collection of His Majesty the King at Windsor Castle (Oxford 1948).

19 Christopher White and Charlotte Crawley, The Dutch and Flemish drawings of the fifteenth to the early sixteenth centuries in the collection of Her Majesty the Queen at Windsor Castle (Cambridge 1994), p.328.

20 Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Pal. 10-b-A-7-11 (described by Alberici, op. cit., 1992, pp.28–47) ● Los Angeles, UCLA, Elmer Belt Library, ND623.L5 C37 1796 (‘12 p., [57] leaves of plates’). Cf. Gale EECO Database, Document CB42980881 (● Oxford, Bodleian Library), for Imitations of original designs by Leonardo da Vinci (as pp.[4] 12. 17 plates). When the plates were gathered and reissued in 1812, they were rearranged: some were renumbered, leaving the previous engraved numbers; for example – plate number in 1812 rearrangement (earlier number) – XXIV (XIV), XXV (VII), XXVII (XI), XXIX (IX), XXXVI–XXXVII (V–VI), XXXIX–XL (VIII–IX).

21 Apparently (copies not examined) ● Cambridge, MA, Harvard University, FA5682.1 PF (‘73 plates (incl. ports.) on 65½’ ● Oxford, Sackler Library, 913.0 Roy [la. fol.] (‘3’–14 p. 73 plates, 65 leaves’).
86 engraved subjects printed on 60 folios: the usual 66 subjects on 58 folios, plus two of the seven anatomical plates; and the additional leaf of letterpress (paginated 13–14)

67 engraved subjects printed on 59 leaves: the usual 66 subjects on 58 folios, plus a print after Guido Reni (not included in the contents list), without the letterpress title-pages. Imitations of original designs by Leonardo da Vinci (1796) and Engravings from the original designs of Annibale, Agostino, and Ludovico Caracci, in His Majesty’s Collection (1797), without text Leonardo da Vinci (SII, pp.3–12).

Our copy is in a fine binding of Russia leather decorated in gilt by a broad roll and signed with the ticket of the Mannheim bookbinder Franz Sebastian Voll (1783–1846). Born in Würzburg, Voll was admitted to the guild of binders in Mannheim in 1807. His clients included the princely house of Fürstenberg, Grand-Duchess Stephanie von Baden, and perhaps Ernst August I, King of Hannover.

22 British Library, 3.Tab.22. The two prints are: ■ Skeleton of thorax, pelvis, arms and legs: six figures (Clark & Pedretti, op. cit., 19012), engraved by Bartolozzi, with publication line dated 15 August 1795. ■ Muscles of upper limbs, thorax, head and neck: six figures (Clark & Pedretti, op. cit., 19003), engraved by Bartolozzi, with publication line dated 27 April 1796.

23 Head of Christ, by Guido Reni, engraved by Bartolozzi (Des Esme & Calabi, op. cit., 2084), published 25 December 1802. Cf. Weigel, op. cit., p.52 no. 40/1 and p.293 no. 3483 (subject of ‘Chamberlaine, Orig. Designs 1’ identified as Guido’s ‘Ecce Homo, in Lebensgrösse’); and p.346 no. 4183 (where subject of ‘Chamberlaine, Orig. Designs 1’ indentified as Leonardo’s ‘Portrait des Meisters’). For the drawing, see Otto Kurz, Bolognese drawings of the 17th & 18th centuries in the collection of Her Majesty the Queen at Windsor Castle (London 1955), p.127 no. 385: ‘A coloured stipple engraving after this drawing by F. Bartolozzi was published as frontispiece to J. Chamberlaine, Original designs… 1812’.


27 A copy of Franz Heinrich Georg von Drais, Geschichte der Regierung und Bildung von Baden (Karlsruhe 1816–1818), bound in red leather and apparently presented by the Grand Duchess to Hortense de Beauharnais (Schloßmuseum, Mannheim), is cited by Friedrich Walter, ‘Einbände der Mannheimer Buchbinderzunft’ in Zeitschrift für Bücherfreunde 37 (1933), pp.85–86; a volume of

Border roll employed by the binder Franz Sebastian Voll of Mannheim

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Q. Horati Flacci opera (London: John Pine, 1733–1737) bound by Voll in violet leather circa 1825 (Mannheim, collection Dr. Fritz Bassermann) is illustrated (fig. 6).