



Carl Gustav  
**Carus**

Nine Letters on  
Landscape Painting

Nine Letters on Landscape Painting,  
Written in the Years 1815–1824;  
with a Letter from Goethe by Way of Introduction  
Carl Gustav Carus  
Introduction by Oskar Bätschmann  
Translation by David Britt

Texts & Documents

In 1831, the German physician, philosopher, and sometime artist Carl Gustav Carus published this literary exploration of the aims of landscape painting. Begun under the spell of Caspar David Friedrich's brooding, melancholic scenes of nature, the letters eventually took a turn, as Carus ventured into intellectual terrain mapped by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, Alexander von Humboldt, and Friedrich Schelling. Seeking an alliance of artistic skill and scientific knowledge in the depiction of nature, Carus formulated the practice of *Erdleben-Bildkunst* (earth-life painting), which he believed would allow landscape painting to not only reveal the harmony of the particular and the universal but also inspire mystic apprehension of the natural world.



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Published by the Getty Research Institute

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Carl Gustav Carus, *Neun Briefe über Landschaftsmalerei, geschrieben in den Jahren 1815–1824* (Leipzig: Gerhard Fleischer, 1831), and Oskar Bätschmann's introductory essay were translated by David Britt

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Frontispiece: Carl Gustav Carus, *The Studio Window*, 1823–24, oil on canvas, 28.8 × 20.9 cm (11<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub> × 8<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> in.). Lübeck, Behnhaus. Photo: Donata von der Osten-Bernhardt, Lübeck

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**Fig. 1. Rudolf Julius Benno Hübner (1806–82)**  
*Carl Gustav Carus*, 1844, oil on canvas, 92 × 72 cm  
(36¼ × 28⅜ in.)  
Frankfurt am Main, Goethe-Museum



**Fig. 2. Joseph Karl Stieler (1781–1858)**  
*Friedrich Wilhelm von Schelling*, 1835, oil on canvas,  
71.4 × 58 cm (28⅞ × 22⅞ in.)  
Munich, Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen

# Carl Gustav Carus (1789–1869): Physician, Naturalist, Painter, and Theoretician of Landscape Painting

Oskar Bätschmann

## *A Scientist as Amateur Artist*

In his memoirs, composed late in life between 1846 and 1856, Carl Gustav Carus (fig. 1) remarked of his *Briefe über Landschaftsmalerei, geschrieben in den Jahren 1815–1824* (Letters on landscape painting, written in the years 1815–1824): “There appeared in these letters a curious blend of science and art, and it is this, if anything, that will give them a lasting place in literature. What Schelling was trying to express at that time through the concept of the *world soul* was precisely the cardinal point around which these thoughts revolved.”<sup>1</sup>

Carus first discovered the teachings of Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph von Schelling (1775–1854; fig. 2) while a medical student at the Universität Leipzig between 1806 and 1811. There he initially found himself exposed to a chaotic flood of isolated facts and disconnected materials; although he worked hard to absorb them, he was unable to grasp them in any coherent context until he discovered a “new, original, and meaningful principle”: “This principle was that of a higher unity, which emerged in the light of the nature philosophy that was then first making its way.”<sup>2</sup> For Carus, even the great binomial system of nomenclature of the Swedish botanist Carl von Linné (also known as Linnaeus, 1707–78) took on life and coherence only through nature philosophy, “when the thought, guessed at by many philosophers of antiquity, of the inner, necessary, and ineluctable connection of the cosmic edifice into a single, endless, organic whole—in a word, the idea of the world soul—first found its way back into science through the emergence of Schelling’s great and luminous mind.”<sup>3</sup>

After studying philosophy in Tübingen, Schelling turned his attention to the natural sciences while working as a tutor in Leipzig, and published his books *Ideen zu einer Philosophie der Natur* (Ideas toward a philosophy of nature) and *Von der Weltseele* (On the world soul) as early as 1797 and 1798, respectively.<sup>4</sup> In subsequent publications on nature philosophy he expounded the idea of a teleological evolution of nature into intelligence. In his lengthy treatise *Von der Weltseele*, with the subtitle *Eine Hypothese der höheren Physik zur Erklärung des allgemeinen Organismus* (A hypothesis of the higher physics directed toward the explanation of the universal organism), Schelling

defines two forces as the principles of nature. One is positive, corresponding to a constant motion forward; the other is negative, leading “all the world’s phenomena back into eternal circulation.” Schelling develops the idea of an eternal conflict between these two principles: “These two conflicting forces, represented simultaneously in unity and in conflict, lead to the idea of an organizing principle that shapes the world into a system. It is such a principle, perhaps, that the ancients adumbrated in their notion of the world soul.”<sup>5</sup>

Schelling does not reject the mechanistic approach, or the inquiry into cause and effect, but he does assert that the “idea of nature as a whole” has abolished the opposition between “mechanism and organism,” and that the succession of causes and effects should henceforth be regarded only as “infinitely small straight lines in the universal circular line of the organism.”<sup>6</sup> Soon afterward, in a dialogue entitled “Bruno; oder, Über das göttliche und natürliche Princip der Dinge” (Bruno; or, on the divine and natural principle of things), Schelling explicitly took up the ideas of an animate universe put forward by the philosopher and cosmologist Giordano Bruno (1548–1600), who was burned as a heretic and apostate by the Catholic Church on the Campo de’ Fiori in Rome on 17 February 1600.<sup>7</sup>

Carus likened the idea of the world soul to a political revolution. In its wake, many unqualified persons had thrust themselves forward with “all manner of undue haste and exaggeration.” Whom he had in mind he did not say; perhaps one of them was Gotthilf Heinrich Schubert, who in Dresden in 1808 dedicated his book *Ansichten von der Nachtseite der Naturwissenschaft* (Views of the nightside of natural science) to “his friend and auditor, Mr. J. Gerhard von Kügelgen, the celebrated historical painter.” If nothing else, this dedication reveals that one respected artist took an interest in a theory of the cosmic whole directed against the mechanistic approach.<sup>8</sup> In his voluminous work—which treats of the cosmic edifice, oracles, inorganic and organic nature, magnetism, and the shapes of mountain ranges—Schubert listed as his principal concerns: “The oldest relationship between man and nature, the living harmony of the individual with the whole, the coherence of a present existence with a future and higher one, and how the germ of new, future life gradually unfolds in the midst of present life.”<sup>9</sup>

One writer whom Carus exempted from his strictures on unqualified interlopers was the nature philosopher and physician Lorenz Oken (1779–1851), a confessed adherent of Schelling’s teaching, who had published his successful *Lehrbuch des Systems der Naturphilosophie* (Manual of the system of nature philosophy) in Jena in 1809–11. Together, Carus and Oken were to found the *Gesellschaft deutscher Naturforscher und Ärzte* (Society of German naturalists and physicians) in 1822. Carus praised Oken’s contribution to the evolutionary idea that was his own prime concern: “He it was who first dared, with vigorous strokes, to reduce the chaotic multiplicity of natural forms and natural facts to a single central point, a single new, animating principle; and that principle was the principle of genesis, of evolution.”<sup>10</sup>

When Carus embarked on the writing of his *Letters on Landscape Painting*,

he was already a professor at the Königlich-sächsische Chirurgisch-medizinische Akademie (Royal Saxon surgical and medical academy) and director of the Dresden maternity hospital. He had entered the Universität Leipzig as a student of natural sciences in 1804, switching to medicine two years later. In 1811 he took doctorates in philosophy and medicine and became qualified to teach in the faculty of philosophy. On publication of his sizeable work *Versuch einer Darstellung des Nervensystems und insbesondere des Gehirns nach ihrer Bedeutung, Entwicklung und Vollendung im thierischen Organismus* (1814; Essay on the nervous system, and the brain in particular, with reference to its importance, development, and maturation within the animal organism) Carus received offers of professorships at the Deutsche Universität Dorpat (Tartu, Estonia) and at the Provisorische Lehranstalt für Medizin und Chirurgie (Provisional school of medicine and surgery) in Dresden, the latter to be held in conjunction with the superintendence of the city's maternity hospital. Carus accepted the offer from Dresden and moved there with his family in the winter of 1814 to 1815. In 1815 he was confirmed in office as professor at the newly founded Königlich-sächsische Chirurgisch-medizinische Akademie and delivered the inaugural address at its opening in August 1816. It was at this time that he began writing the *Letters on Landscape Painting*, which were to occupy him, with lengthy interruptions, until 1824.<sup>11</sup>

In his schooldays at the Thomasschule in Leipzig, between 1801 and 1804, Carus had already shown a keen interest in painting. On country walks in the environs of Leipzig with his drawing teacher, Julius Dietz (1770–1843), he had made studies of rocks, plants, and trees, and he had hiked to Dresden to see the famous paintings at the Gemäldegalerie. At the Universität Leipzig, Carus joined a student reading circle in which he became friendly with Johann Gottlob Regis (1791–1854), later the translator of Rabelais, Shakespeare, and Swift; the two men kept up a lifelong correspondence.<sup>12</sup> Also in Leipzig, Carus attended the drawing academy in Pleißenburg, which was run by Johann Friedrich August Tischbein (1750–1812), the “Leipzig Tischbein,” and by Veit Hans Schnorr (1764–1841).<sup>13</sup> In Dresden he sought artistic and technical advice from the landscape painter Johann Christian Klengel (1751–1824), professor of landscape painting at the Dresdner Kunstakademie since 1800, although he learned nothing from him.<sup>14</sup> In 1816, for the first time, he sent in work (four paintings) to the exhibition of the Kunstakademie.<sup>15</sup> That seems to have been the year he first met Caspar David Friedrich (1774–1840), who was already a famous artist. Carus subsequently won Friedrich's trust; for ten years or so, the two men remained close friends.<sup>16</sup> Years later, in 1840, writing Friedrich's obituary for *Kunst-Blatt*, Carus cited extracts from the artist's notes and described him as having “saved and uplifted” landscape painting from its previous state of insignificance: “In landscape it was Friedrich above all whose profound and vigorous mind, with total originality, laid hold of this tangle of banality, staleness, and tedium and — cutting through it with a mordant melancholy — raised from its midst a distinctively new and radiant poetic tendency.”<sup>17</sup>

Carus described Friedrich (fig. 3) as “a markedly clear-cut, north German type, with fair hair and sideburns,” noting the “distinctive expression of melancholy on his mostly pallid features.” Carus admired Friedrich, while recognizing that his friend exemplified certain features of the artist’s classic predicament: “Add to this a very exalted notion of art, an essentially gloomy nature, and—arising from both—a profound dissatisfaction with his own work, and it becomes understandable that on one occasion he was so misguided as to attempt suicide.”<sup>18</sup> Carus went on to describe Friedrich’s isolation from other artists and from society, his habit of taking long walks at twilight, and his tendency to retreat into work and cogitation: “In his dark, shadowy room, he brooded almost incessantly on his own work.”<sup>19</sup>

In September 1820 Carus met an artist of a very different kind: an antique “hero of art.” This was the celebrated Danish sculptor Berthel Thorvaldsen (1770–1844), who stopped off in Dresden on a journey from Warsaw to Vienna. Introduced by a mutual friend, Thorvaldsen visited Carus, who showed him his own painting *Marius on the Ruins of Carthage* and was heartened by his response: “Thorvaldsen saw it and sat for a long time before it, deep in thought. Clearly, the idea caught his imagination, and he mentally remedied the imperfections of the execution. Such interest could not fail to hearten me greatly. . . . Little did I think, then, that ten years later I would see that hero in Rome, surrounded by his own creations, and in such different circumstances! The impression that he left with me on that first occasion was a powerful and a lasting one.”<sup>20</sup>

When Carus went to Italy in 1828, as companion to Crown Prince Friedrich August on his Grand Tour, the party called on Thorvaldsen in his studio in Rome. As was customary, the crown prince conferred a royal decoration on the famous sculptor, and Carus was moved to note: “This simple, capable man is extremely popular with his students, and a true protector and consoler to all the young German painters.”<sup>21</sup>

Thorvaldsen impressed Carus deeply, but Friedrich interested him more as an artist, and Carus made efforts to learn from Friedrich’s methods without ever losing sight of the contradiction between Friedrich’s gloomy artistic temperament and his own “therapeutic” view of the practice of art and of science. The “therapeutic” effect of both art and authorship is a recurring topic in Carus’s memoirs.<sup>22</sup> To free the spirit from a “mood of profound melancholy,” such as frequently arises in youth, and to dispel “false gloom,” Carus recommended that the mood should be “expounded and presented through the creation of a work of art: an utterance and a metaphor for the psychic state as a whole, which can truly hold a mirror up to the mind.”<sup>23</sup>

An enduring source of mental anguish for Carus was the death of his first-born son, Ernst Albert, in 1816. His memoirs give an account of the scarlet fever that struck Carus, his daughter Charlotte, and the three-year-old Ernst Albert in the spring of that year. Carus and his daughter soon recovered, but the boy died, to his father’s intense grief. It was a blow from which he was slow to recover. He was to attribute his healing to the balm of nature and art:



**Fig. 3. Caspar David Friedrich (1774–1840)**  
*Self-Portrait*, ca. 1810, black chalk, 22.8 × 18.2 cm  
(9 × 7 1/8 in.)  
Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett



**Fig. 4. Carl Gustav Carus (1789–1869)**  
*Self-Portrait*, 1822, graphite pencil, 23.1 × 17.8 cm  
(9 1/8 × 7 in.)  
Dresden, Stadtmuseum

“There is something miraculous in art’s power to show a man his own inner life as an objective reality in the outside world. Then, as in the spring of 1814, while smarting from the heavy blows of war and disease, I felt drawn to the easel in every hour of leisure. As the sore distress within me, my deep and solitary pain, took shape in some dark and brooding image and appeared as if reflected in a mysterious mirror, peace returned to me.”<sup>24</sup>

### *The Writing of the Letters on Landscape Painting*

Among the activities that Carus took up or continued after the death of his beloved Ernst Albert (whose portrait he had painted in 1815) was the writing of what became *Letters on Landscape Painting*. He commemorated his son by calling the supposed writer of the letters “Albertus” and their addressee “Ernst.”<sup>25</sup> The letters conform to the literary type of “letters from father to son,” with Carus as writer assuming his dead son’s second given name and addressing him by the first.

With extended interruptions, the writing of *Letters on Landscape Painting* occupied Carus until 1824, a period of eight or nine years. During this time, he produced a number of major scientific works. In 1818 he published his *Lehrbuch der Zootomie* (Manual of zootomy); two years later came the successful *Lehrbuch der Gynäkologie* (Manual of gynecology), and two years later he published *Zur Lehre von Schwangerschaft und Geburt* (On the theory of pregnancy and childbirth). In 1822 he and Oken founded the Gesellschaft deutscher Naturforscher und Ärzte, and the firm of Ernst Fleischer in Leipzig published Carus’s inaugural address to the society: *Von den Anforderungen an eine künftige Bearbeitung der Naturwissenschaften* (On the requirements of the future practice of the natural sciences). Additionally, Carus investigated numerous other scientific topics, including the species of algae and mold. His paper *Von den äußern Lebensbedingungen der weiß- und kaltblütigen Thiere* (On the outward conditions of life for white-blooded and cold-blooded creatures) was awarded a prize by the Kongelige Danske Videnskabernes Selskab (Danish royal academy of sciences and letters) in Copenhagen and was published in Leipzig in 1824. As this intensive research and publishing activity—over and above Carus’s many duties as a doctor and medical professor—clearly suggests, his *Letters on Landscape Painting* is not, and could never have been, any more than the product of the leisure hours of an extremely busy scientist and clinician (fig. 4).<sup>26</sup>

Carus frankly admits this in his preface, written in 1830 for the first edition, in which he describes *Letters on Landscape Painting* as “a true impression of the mind of one to whom, amid earnest endeavors and onerous duties of many kinds, art has been a true friend and a silent comforter.”<sup>27</sup> During the long period of the letter’s composition, Carus’s views on landscape painting altered considerably. After all—as he makes abundantly clear in the preface—in the course of ten or even five years a person’s mind may change: “We shall also find that in the meantime some of the flowers of our intellect have withered on the bough, while new blossom has burst forth in precisely the oppo-



site direction.”<sup>28</sup> *Letters on Landscape Painting* bears witness to this change of direction: the letters start out from a viewpoint close to that of Caspar David Friedrich and ultimately reach a view of landscape painting in which science and art combine to produce an image that aims at nothing less than the all-embracing ensoulment of nature.

The break in the composition of *Letters on Landscape Painting* is generally located between letters V and VI. In 1963 Marianne Prause was the first to ask just how many of the letters Carus had by him in February 1822 to send to Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749–1832). Based on the correspondence between Carus and Regis, she reconstructed the following sequence of dates:

By 1820: letters I and II completed.

Fall 1820: letter III completed; letter IV set aside, unfinished.

In 1821: work starts on letter V, probably still in draft form in 1822.

Fall 1823: work resumes after a lengthy hiatus; letters IV and VI completed.

In 1824: letters VII, VIII, and IX written.

Accordingly, Goethe could have seen only letters I, II, III, and V.<sup>29</sup>

At the beginning of letter VI the fictitious writer, Albertus, mentions that his work has been interrupted for a number of years. He explains the delay in terms of the sheer difficulty of the undertaking: “I felt the weight of the responsibility that I assumed in promising to give you in a further letter my ideas on how a significant work of landscape painting might be produced, now and in the future, despite the multitude of artistic precedents that constantly mislead us and seek to draw us into their own ambit.”<sup>30</sup>

This expression of Carus’s desire to distance himself from the history of landscape painting, combined with an express rejection of traditional patterns and models and a declared intention of unfolding universally and permanently valid principles for the art, is perhaps the clearest statement of the author’s dilettante status, both as an artist and as a theoretician. For this belief in the possibility of a permanently valid principle, not subject to future revision, is predicated on the idea that landscape painting can be established on the supposedly stable foundation of natural science or nature philosophy; and that, like these, it can progress by the accrual of knowledge.

In his dealings with the art and theory of landscape painting, Carus remained an amateur and a dilettante: one who practiced and pondered art in his leisure hours, for his own pleasure and recreation — not without ambition, certainly, but with none of the dangerous, brooding melancholy of an artist like Friedrich. Far from imperiling his psychic stability and his social relationships, art for Carus was a form of compensation, an antidote to the hard knocks of fate and to his own depression. At the same time, Carus remained a dilettante in the pejorative sense of the word, in that — on the strength of his scientific and medical training — he assumed the right to set landscape painting on the path that he considered the best.

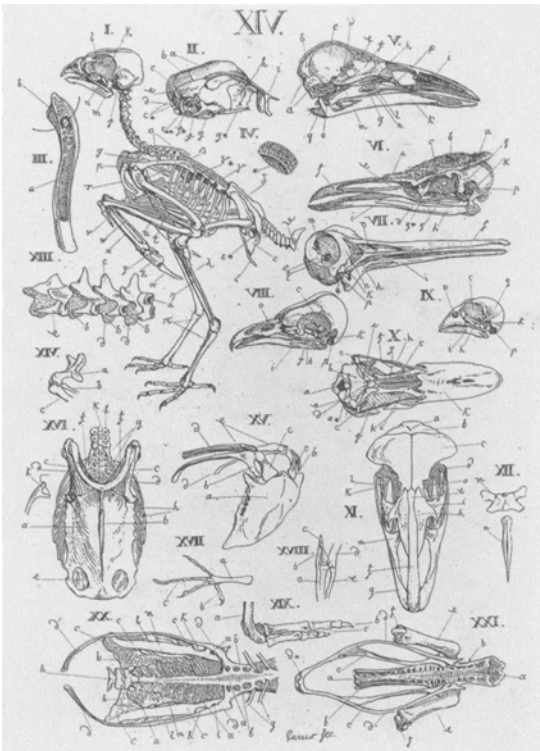
We must bear two facts in mind in describing Carus as an artistic dilettante.

One is that he also was and remained a scientific illustrator who used drawing as an aid to medical and scientific research and publication. In his memoirs he has this to say of Tischbein's and Schnorr's traditional practice of drawing from the antique: "At the same time, this art was almost devoid of any higher poetic element; it was the mere pleasure of directly depicting nature; and as such, as I have said, it was useful in many respects for my scientific and medical studies."<sup>31</sup> Carus drew his own illustrations for his 1814 treatise on the nervous system and the brain, and — with the assistance of Julius Dietz — most of the drawings and tables for his work on zootomy in 1818 (fig. 5).<sup>32</sup> For the alliance between science and art propounded in *Letters on Landscape Painting* Carus's work as a scientific illustrator is not without importance. This practical grounding has so far received little attention.

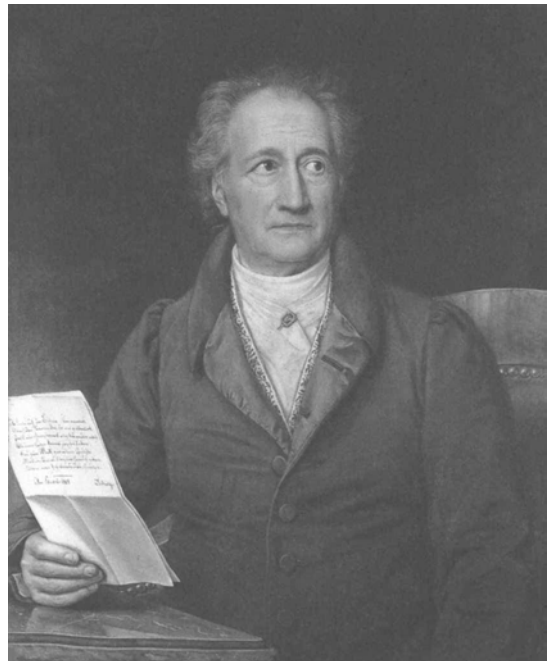
The second fact is that from 1815 or 1816 onward Carus was an active member of the Mineralogische Gesellschaft (Mineralogical society) founded by Abraham Gottlob Werner (1750–1817), then famous as the founder of geognosy (see p. 40 in this volume). In 1816 Carus visited Werner at his base, the Bergakademie (Academy of mines) at Freiberg in the Erzgebirge. Carus commented that Werner's "Neptunism" was obsolete, but that his services to *Oryktognosie* — or mineralogy — were not.<sup>33</sup>

For the young Carus, it was of extreme importance that his reverence and admiration for Goethe (fig. 6) received acknowledgment from the great man, who recognized his status as a scientist, a theoretician of landscape painting, and a painter. Carus managed to meet the world-famous poet only once, on 21 July 1820, as Carus passed through Weimar on his way to Switzerland.<sup>34</sup> He had sent his *Lehrbuch der Zootomie* to Goethe in 1818 and had been in correspondence with him ever since.<sup>35</sup> In 1822 he sent the first letters on landscape painting to Goethe, together with four of his scientific illustrations, and they were returned with a letter that encouraged him to place the letters ("as well conceived as they are beautifully written") before the public. At the same time, Goethe asked to receive the illustrations to *Von den Ur-Theilen des Knochen- und Schalengerüstes* (On the primitive portions of the bone and shell skeleton) as they were produced, and promised to send Carus the next fascicle of his own *Morphologie*. Carus used Goethe's letter of 20 April 1822 as an introduction to the first edition of *Letters on Landscape Painting*.<sup>36</sup>

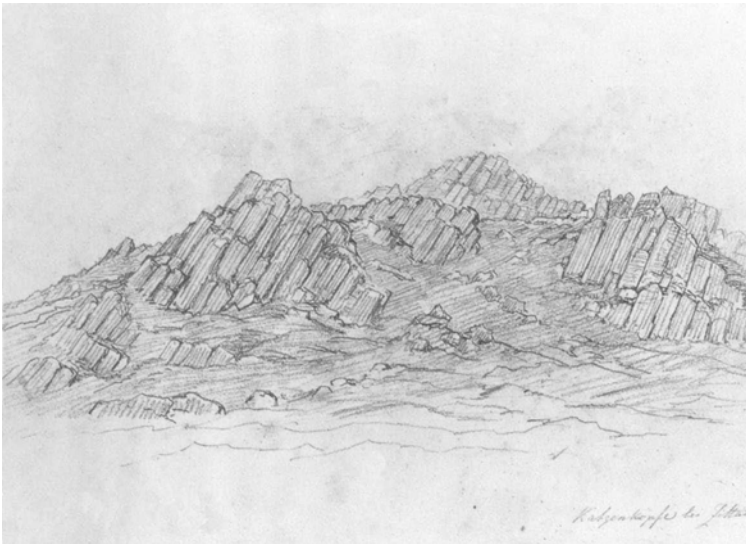
In 1820, in his periodical *Über Kunst und Altertum*, Goethe reviewed the two "geognostische Landschaften" (geognostic landscapes) that Carus exhibited in Weimar in September of that year. These were the *Memory of the Sandstone Mountain Range* (1819) and *Geognostic Landscape: Katzenköpfe near Zittau* (1820). Remarking on the "grace and variety" to be found in the former, Goethe said of the latter: "The rock and its distinctive character is excellently rendered, with admirable veracity, both in regard to form and to handling and color."<sup>37</sup> In his memoirs, Carus describes the making of his drawing of the Katzenköpfe (fig. 7), one of the basalt groups on the ridge of the Riesengebirge, during a hike in August 1820.<sup>38</sup> Shortly before this, passing close to the Nollendorfer Höhe on his way from Dresden to Carlsbad, Carus



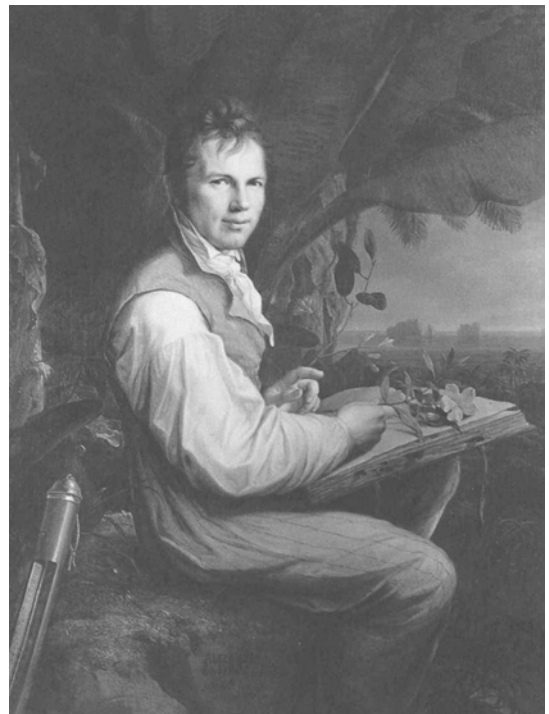
**Fig. 5. Carl Gustav Carus (1789–1869)**  
The class Aves  
From Carl Gustav Carus, *Lehrbuch der Zootomie* (Leipzig:  
Gerhard Fleischer, 1818), pl. XIV



**Fig. 6. Joseph Karl Stieler (1781–1858)**  
*Johann Wolfgang von Goethe*, 1828, oil on canvas,  
78.2 × 63.8 cm (30¾ × 25⅛ in.)  
Munich, Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen, Neue  
Pinakothek



**Fig. 7. Carl Gustav Carus (1789–1869)**  
*Geognostic Landscape: Katzenköpfe near Zittau*, 1820,  
graphite pencil, 18.7 × 26.8 cm (7<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub> × 10<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> in.)  
Dresden, Kupferstich-Kabinett



**Fig. 8. Friedrich Georg Weitsch (1723–1803)**  
*Alexander von Humboldt*, 1806, oil on canvas, 92.5 × 63.5 cm  
(36<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub> × 25 in.)  
Berlin, Nationalgalerie

had been struck by the contrast between the “Plutonic elevations” of the Böhmisches Mittelgebirge and the “great, tranquil lines of the granite Erzgebirge.” It was this perception of the contrast between different mountain forms that first gave Carus the idea of a “physiognomy of mountain ranges,” as discussed in *Letters on Landscape Painting*.<sup>39</sup>

Both as a naturalist and as a theoretician of landscape painting, Carus attached great importance to his close acquaintanceship with the eminent explorer and geographer Alexander von Humboldt (1769–1859; fig. 8). After studying at the universities of Frankfurt an der Oder and Göttingen, Humboldt published his first geological paper in 1790. In 1791 he went to Werner’s Bergakademie in Freiberg, and he subsequently worked for the Prussian Mining Department until 1797. In 1799 he set out on a five-year expedition to Venezuela, Ecuador, Colombia, Peru, and Mexico. Humboldt published the scientific results of his extensive studies in a vast work containing several albums of plates (Paris, 1814–32, and Stuttgart, 1815–32). Carus was particularly fascinated by Humboldt’s volume of essays *Ansichten der Natur* (Views of nature), published in Tübingen and Stuttgart in 1808. Humboldt first called on Carus in 1826, as he passed through Dresden while accompanying King Friedrich Wilhelm III from Berlin to take the waters at Bad Teplitz in Bohemia. Carus admired Humboldt’s “vitality of mind,” and was surprised to find the “perfect refinement of the courtier combined with such depth of knowledge and wealth of experience.”<sup>40</sup> He especially valued Humboldt’s ability to make science comprehensible to the general public. Carus counted himself among the many scholars whom Humboldt had helped and encouraged: “I, too, was to receive much help of this kind from him in the years that followed, notably during a later stay in Paris. In those early years I was elated and encouraged to find that a man so experienced and so deservedly famous repeatedly took a genuine interest in my work.”<sup>41</sup>

### *Landscape Painting Revalued*

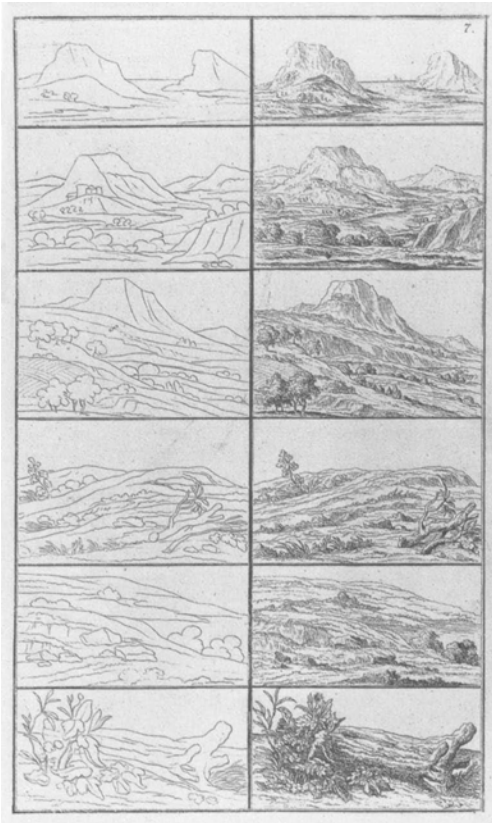
In 1770 the poet Salomon Gessner (1730–88), famous for his bucolic *Idyllen* (1756), published a letter on landscape painting in which he undertook to give younger artists the benefit of his experience. In this text Gessner—a self-taught artist who had taken up landscape painting in the 1760s—described how he began by drawing, naively, from nature, but that the results were so unsatisfactory that he then turned to engravings of landscapes in order to study such details as leaves and trees. Realizing that he did not know how to form his parts into a whole, he set out to study and imitate landscape compositions by Peter Paul Rubens (1577–1640), Nicolas Poussin (1594–1665), Gaspard Dughet (1615–75), and Claude Lorrain (1600–1682). Eventually, he dispensed with all these prototypes in order to make his own way and create inventions of his own.<sup>42</sup> Gessner expressly warned younger artists against the drawing manual by Johann Daniel Preissler, director of the Akademie der bildenden Künste in Nuremberg, first published in 1740, which contained specimen drawings of trees and landscape compositions for copying (fig. 9).<sup>43</sup>

In his letter on landscape painting Gessner took up the problems of the imitation of nature and of art, or harmonious composition, and of the invention of landscapes, which were central to landscape painting and its theoretical discussion in the second half of the eighteenth century. To these were added two further issues: the aesthetic problem of the effect on the viewers (which featured in the theoretical debate concerning the beautiful and the sublime) and the moral problem of the comparative value of landscape painting within the hierarchy of genres.

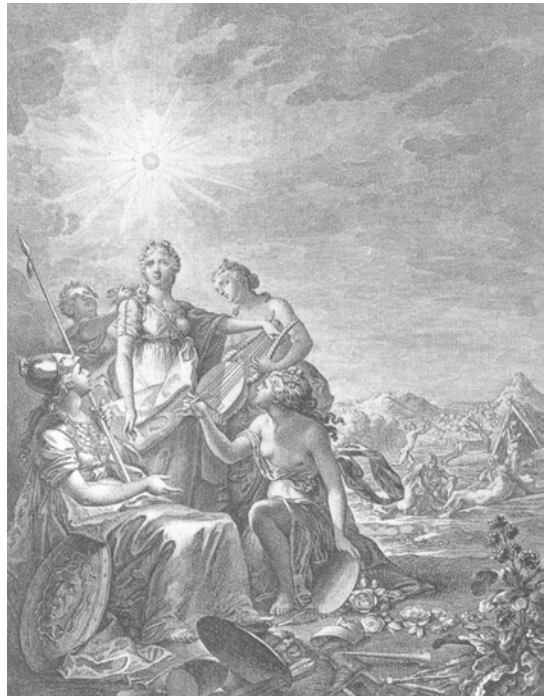
In his *Allgemeine Theorie der schönen Künste* (General theory of the fine arts) Johann Georg Sulzer (1720–79) postulated that the contemplation of “inanimate nature” was man’s first step toward reason and order in his mental life. Daniel Chodowiecki’s frontispiece for the first edition of Sulzer’s *Allgemeine Theorie* (fig. 10) shows the allegorical personifications of the arts ranged behind the seated figure of Pallas Athena and bathed in the radiance of the Sun of Enlightenment; this group contrasts with a huddle of primitive humans who crouch, naked, on the ground before their primitive hut. This wretched state is improved, according to Sulzer, by advances in morality, technology, and science; the arts promote development and increase happiness, insofar as they are led by reason. Landscape painting, says Sulzer, turns to advantage the beneficial effect of nature on human emotion and understanding. It intensifies that moral benefit by including narrative action: “In inanimate nature, painting thus finds an inexhaustible store of material with which to improve men’s minds; and the landscape painter has many useful ways of pleasing us: most of all, when he enlists the higher powers of his art to combine moral and passionate subjects with the scenes of inanimate nature.”<sup>44</sup>

In this way, landscape painting might aspire to the level of history painting, thus ascending from the lowest or second-lowest rank in the hierarchy of genres to the highest. Sulzer cites one exemplary instance of this alliance between landscape and moral content: the celebrated painting *Et in Arcadia ego* (1638–40) by Poussin. To elevate the status of landscape in this way, the painter must not content himself with the multiplicity of colors and forms, but must understand the language of nature: “If he has sufficient intelligence and sensibility to feel the spirit and soul of the matter that lies before him, he will have no difficulty in bringing us to feel it more intensely, by introducing moral subjects of his own invention.”<sup>45</sup>

Sulzer took his cue from the attempts that had already been made to overthrow the French system of the classification of pictorial genres, in which landscape painting appeared near the bottom. André Félibien, in the preface to his published *Conférences de l’Académie royale de peinture et de sculpture* (Lectures at the Royal Academy of Painting and Sculpture; 1669), had formulated this doctrinaire hierarchy of genres by analogy with the continuum that runs from inanimate to animate nature, and thence to mind and spirit. The lowest rank is that of the still-life painters; above them are the landscapists, then the animaliers and portrait painters. History painters occupy the second-highest rank; above them are the inventors of allegorical compositions.<sup>46</sup> This



**Fig. 9. Johann Daniel Preissler (1666–1737)**  
Outlines and shadings of various landscapes  
From Johann Daniel Preissler, *Gründliche Anleitung, welcher man sich im Nachzeichnen schöner Landschaften oder Prospecten bedienen kann...*, 5th ed. (Nuremberg: Preissler, 1759), pl. 7



**Fig. 10. Daniel Nikolaus Chodowiecki (1726–1801)**  
Pallas Athena, art, and the primordial state of humanity  
From Johann Georg Sulzer, *Allgemeine Theorie der schönen Künste in einzeln...* (Leipzig: Weidmann & Reich, 1771–74), vol. 1, frontispiece

hierarchy is defined both by the relative status of the subject matter and by the distinction between imitation and invention.

Sulzer's argument, and his analogy, derived from the treatise on landscape painting published in 1762 by Christian Ludwig von Hagedorn (1712–80), director of the Gemäldegalerie and Kunstakademie in Dresden.<sup>47</sup> Hagedorn, in turn, based himself on the work of Gérard de Lairesse in *Het groot schilderboek* (1707), published in German translation as *Großes Mahler-Buch* (Nuremberg, 1728–30).<sup>48</sup> Lairesse followed in the wake of Carel van Mander (1604) and Joachim von Sandrart (1675) to produce the longest treatise on landscape painting to date; this occupies book 7 of part 1 of his work.<sup>49</sup> From the French side, this proposed enhancement of the status of landscape enjoyed the support of Roger de Piles, who in his *Cours de peinture par principes* (1708) devoted separate chapters to only two genres: portrait and landscape. In the latter he drew the distinction between the heroic and pastoral styles, later adopted by Hagedorn.<sup>50</sup> In France the attempt to enhance the status of landscape as a genre lasted only until the 1750s, when the Académie royale de peinture et de sculpture reinstated the hierarchy of genres and, with governmental support, promoted the practice of history painting.<sup>51</sup>

A new explanation of the pleasure derived from landscape painting came from Denis Diderot (1713–84), who, in his review of the Salon of 1767, put forward his theory of compensation. Diderot maintained that gardens and landscape paintings alike exist to compensate us for the loss of nature. His experience of art, and his specific thesis, reflect the influential social criticism of Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712–78). In 1750 Rousseau's denunciation of the sciences and arts as products of luxury—a legacy of Geneva Calvinism—and his theory of social degeneration had (surprisingly) won the first prize in a competition held by the Académie de Dijon, and had subsequently made a lasting impression all over Europe.<sup>52</sup> However, Diderot's conclusions as to the estrangement of humanity from nature were different from those of Rousseau.

Diderot's account of the landscape paintings of Claude-Joseph Vernet (1714–89) takes an unexpected turn. Diderot asks his readers to suppose that he has several times stopped work on his review of the Salon of 1767 to take walks in the real countryside. These excursions inspire in him an unprecedented sense of delight in nature; he turns away in contempt from society and its hollow amusements. Waking in the morning to a moment of intense clarity, Diderot suddenly understands why people make gardens and parks, and why they cover the walls of their rich but depressing homes with paintings of landscapes and animals. They are using their wealth to transplant the forest close to their own houses; there, for a moment, they “enact the pantomime of natural man.” Landscape and animal paintings testify to the long-lost bliss of our ancestors. Instead of actually returning to the land, people compensate for the loss of nature through painted surrogates, and through artificial parks in which nature is alienated from itself: “There, for a moment, we will play the savage; for a moment, we, the slaves of our customs and our passions, will enact the pantomime of natural man. Unable to apply ourselves to the



employments and amusements of rustic life—to roam through a rural scene, to tend a flock, to dwell in a thatched cottage—we pay out gold and silver and enlist the brush of the Wouwermans, of Berghem, or of Vernet to retrace for us the manners and the history of our distant ancestors. And the walls of our sumptuous, dismal dwellings are decked with the images of a happiness for which we pine.”<sup>53</sup>

On reaching the sixth of these experiences with nature, Diderot finally confesses, with feigned embarrassment, that his country walks have been entirely imaginary, and that he has derived his taste of nature and of felicity solely from the landscape paintings by Claude-Joseph Vernet that he has seen in the Salon.<sup>54</sup>

The article “Erhaben” (Sublime) in Sulzer’s *Allgemeine Theorie* is by Johann Heinrich Füssli (Henry Fuseli), who writes: “In nature and in art, the merely beautiful and good pleases us; it is agreeable or delightful; it makes a gentle impression that we enjoy in tranquility. But the sublime deals massive blows, sweeps us away, and seizes the mind irresistibly.” Fuseli concludes that the sublime is “the highest thing in art.”<sup>55</sup>

This lengthy article by Fuseli harks back to the revival, a century earlier, of the debate launched by the treatise *Περὶ ὑψους* (On the sublime), then attributed to the rhetorician Cassius Longinus. According to this, the sublime is the supreme quality of poetry; it stands for the effect of ecstatic enthusiasm. In 1757 Edmund Burke associated the sensations of the sublime and the beautiful with two categories of passion, those connected with self-preservation and those connected with society. According to Burke, we receive the sensation of the sublime when something vast, infinite, or powerful makes us fear for our own safety and stirs the fibers of our being, although we simultaneously recognize the danger as imaginary. The sensation of the sublime stirs the emotions of astonishment, admiration, reverence, and respect. The sensation of the beautiful, prompted by an object that possesses smallness, smoothness, and gradual variation, provokes enjoyment and sympathy.<sup>56</sup>

Burke’s publication revived the debate on the sublime and the beautiful and led to an increased demand for paintings containing sublime motifs: that is to say, storms at sea with shipwrecked mariners, thunderous waterfalls, horrific chasms, awe-inspiring mountain ranges, fathomless caves, and volcanoes belching fire. This market was supplied by specialists. Claude-Joseph Vernet and Philippe-Jacques de Loucherbourg painted coastal thunderstorms, with shipwrecks to match (fig. 11). Caspar Wolf depicted Alpine scenes for tourists in the Bernese Oberland, who could select an image from the specimens on display and have it reproduced at any desired size. James Mallord William Turner (1775–1851), visiting Switzerland in 1802, recorded the motifs that he would need in order to paint the corresponding pictures at home in England.<sup>57</sup>

In Switzerland in 1791, and again in the summer of 1793 or 1794, Joseph Anton Koch (1768–1839) drew and painted scenes of the sublime, which he then combined with the theme of political liberty. Koch, who dropped out of



**Fig. 11. Claude-Joseph Vernet (1714–89)**  
*Stormy Sea with Shipwrecks*, 1780, oil on canvas,  
49.5 × 65 cm (19½ × 25⅝ in.)  
Basel, Kunstmuseum

**Fig. 12. Joseph Anton Koch (1768–1839)**  
*The Schmadribach Waterfall*, 1794, watercolor over graphite  
pencil and pen, with white highlights, 48.8 × 40.5 cm  
(19¼ × 16 in.)  
Basel, Kupferstichkabinett

the Hohe Carlsschule art academy in Stuttgart in 1791, first went briefly to Strasbourg, where he joined the Jacobins, before making his way to Switzerland. There, he interpreted the Schaffhausen waterfall on the Rhine as nature's chaotic call to revolt against despotism.<sup>58</sup> In all probability, Koch associated his motifs of the sublime in the Bernese Oberland — the great waterfalls in particular — with the libertarian sentiments expressed by such writers as Albrecht von Haller and Jean-Jacques Rousseau (fig. 12).

In 1771, in the fourth of his *Discourses on Art*, the first president of the Royal Academy of Arts in London, Sir Joshua Reynolds, discussed the issue of composition and imitation in relation to the hierarchy of styles. Reynolds drew a contrast between Lorrain and the Dutch school. Whereas the Dutch painters imitated an individual and imperfect landscape, Lorrains's paintings were “a composition of the various draughts which he had previously made from various beautiful scenes and prospects”<sup>59</sup> (fig. 13). Reynolds insisted that landscape painting should follow the same principles of selection and invention as history painting, although only the latter could achieve the “grand style.” For Reynolds, as for most of his contemporaries, the problem of imitation versus invention was inseparable from the distinction between the study of nature, through sketches and drawings, and the creation of paintings. Drawing is confined to imitation, whereas painting must conform to artistic prototypes in order to fulfill its historic mission of improving on nature. The classical academic doctrine, which Reynolds proclaimed, regards nature as decadent and contingent: in painting, it is incumbent on art to use study and invention to bring nature to the perfection of which it is capable.<sup>60</sup>

The turning point in the revival of the composed, harmoniously ordered landscape was the successful publication by John Boydell (1777) of the complete engraved version of Lorrain's *Liber Veritatis* (circa 1648) made by Richard Earlom (1775–77).<sup>61</sup> Boydell's three sumptuous volumes contributed to the immense popularity of the classical landscape in England, France, Germany, and Italy around the turn of the nineteenth century: a popularity that was also fueled by a plentiful supply of reproductive engravings of paintings by Lorrain and Poussin.<sup>62</sup> At that time, Lorrain's landscapes were identified with “nature” — as may be seen from a passage in which Friedrich Schlegel (1772–1829) warns that in landscape painting “the impression of nature may largely and very easily outweigh and suppress the true artistic sense.” Schlegel prefers Jacob Isaackszoon van Ruisdael to Lorrain, because Ruisdael produces a beautiful work of art through an artistic treatment of ordinary nature: “Here, the painting affords us a genuine artistic vision; whereas in that other, all-embracing, seemingly far superior genre in which Claude Lorrain excels, and in which he remains supreme — in which the painter aspires to compete with nature herself in the reproduction of her most exalted spectacles — the admiration of nature sweeps away all other feelings and drowns the voice of pure artistic sensibility. Besides, no art can ever attain the magnificence of nature.”<sup>63</sup>

In Dresden in 1792 an aristocratic amateur artist, Joseph Friedrich, Freiherr



**Fig. 13. Richard Earlom (1743–1822), after Claude Lorrain (1604–82)**  
Pastoral landscape  
From Richard Earlom, *Liber Veritatis; or, A Collection of Prints, after the Original Designs of Claude le Lorrain; in the Collection of His Grace the Duke of Devonshire* (London: Boydell, 1777–1819), vol. 2, no. 105

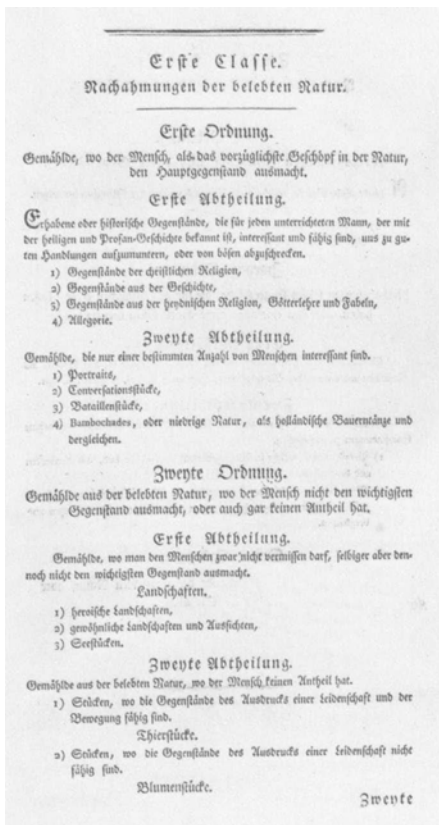
zu Racknitz, a court chamberlain and a member of the Königlich-Preußische Akademie der Künste (Royal Prussian academy of the arts), published his *Briefe über die Kunst an eine Freundin* (Letters on art to a female friend). In his introduction Racknitz described himself as a “mere dilettante,” who had chosen the epistolary form in order to avoid the impression that he intended “to write a learned and complete work on the fine arts”; by his own admission he had not consulted the writings of Leonardo da Vinci, Roger de Piles, Claude-Henri Watelet, or Christian Ludwig von Hagedorn but had relied solely on his own observation of works of art and on Sulzer’s *Allgemeine Theorie*.<sup>64</sup> For Racknitz, painting is “the art of imitating visible objects on a flat surface by means of drawing and colors”; it may be divided into two “classes” (imitation of animate nature and of inanimate nature) and a number of “orders,” made up in turn of “divisions” and “subdivisions.”<sup>65</sup> This bureaucratic scheme of classification, proposed to amateurs of painting by a dilettante, is set out in his “Entwurf einer Classification der Werke der Malerey” (Outline of a classification of works of painting; fig. 14).<sup>66</sup>

Toward the close of the eighteenth century, the issues involved in landscape painting had thus been aired in theoretical debate and in practice. Its position within the hierarchy of genres remained to be redefined, as did its relationship with nature. The question of imitation or invention was an open one: imitation was widely associated with the technique of drawing or sketching, whereas invention was associated with the labor of composition in front of the painting in the studio. As for effect, the beautiful was identified with harmonious compositions, and the sublime with imposing or awe-inspiring subjects.

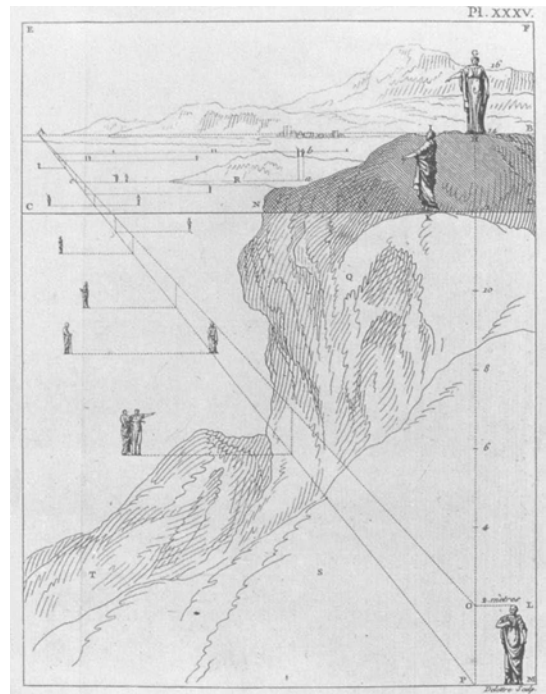
### *Reflections on Landscape Painting around 1800*

In 1800 the French painter Pierre-Henri de Valenciennes (1750–1819) published his voluminous manual *Éléments de perspective pratique, à l’usage des artistes* (Elements of practical perspective, for use by artists); it appeared in German translation three years later. In his part 1, which occupies more than half of the book, Valenciennes deals with linear and aerial perspective (fig. 15).<sup>67</sup> Part 2 consists of “Réflexions et conseils à un élève sur la peinture et particulièrement sur le genre du paysage” (Reflections and advice to a student on painting, and on the landscape genre in particular). It begins with a description of idealized nature according to the inspired inventions of Lorrain, Poussin, and Gaspard Dughet. For this kind of landscape painting that combines a historical or mythological scene with the ideal beauty of nature Valenciennes coined the term *paysage historique* (historical landscape), as distinct from the imitative reproduction of landscape in the “prospect” or *veduta*.<sup>68</sup>

However, both types of landscape painting have a common basis in “études d’après nature” (studies from nature). This is where the student must begin (but only after first spending several months in drawing under supervision and making copies from the best masters). For these studies from nature,



**Fig. 14. Joseph Friedrich, Freiherr zu Racknitz (1744–1818)**  
Part of an outline of a classification of works of painting  
From Joseph Friedrich, Freiherr zu Racknitz, *Briefe über die Kunst an eine Freundin* (Dresden: gedruckt by Carl Christian Meinhold, 1792), after p. iv



**Fig. 15. Delettre, after Pierre-Henri de Valenciennes (1750–1819)**  
Schematic representation of the perspectival diminution of figures at varying distances  
In Pierre-Henri de Valenciennes, *Éléments de perspective pratique à l'usage des artistes* (Paris: Valenciennes, 1800), pl. xxxv

Valenciennes provides important guidance. In particular, he offers a way of dealing with the constantly shifting nature of light and atmospheric conditions by making rapid color sketches on the spot:

We have already observed that the effects of nature are almost never the same at the same moments or the same time of day. These variations depend on a multitude of circumstances, such as the greater or lesser purity of the light, the quantity of vapors in the atmosphere, the wind, the rain, the altitude, the varying reflections created by clouds of differing color, luminosity, or density—in short, by an infinite number of causes that would be impossible to enumerate, especially in a work as brief as the present one. But we have said enough to show that it is absurd for an artist to spend a whole day copying from nature one single view. . . . In consequence, those students who desire to profit by the study of nature must go about it differently. First of all, copy, as accurately as possible, only the principal tones of nature, within the chosen effect; begin with the sky, which sets the tone of the backgrounds; proceed to the backgrounds, and work from there, one level of depth at a time, to finish with the foreground—which is consequently always in agreement with the sky that serves to establish the local tone. It will be perceived that, with this method, it is impossible to include any detail, since any study from nature must be completed without fail within two hours at most; if it is an effect of sunrise or sunset, give it no longer than half an hour.<sup>69</sup>

The first artists to attempt painted studies from nature had been Lorrain and Joachim von Sandrart, in Rome after 1630—as the latter tells us in his *L'Academia Todesca*.<sup>70</sup> Valenciennes formulated precise guidelines for this procedure, and these were probably followed by his nineteenth-century successors, Camille Corot, the Barbizon school, and the impressionists. The practice of painting in oils from nature became a great deal easier and more popular when metal tubes for oil colors were invented and perfected by Winsor and Newton, around 1842.<sup>71</sup>

Valenciennes regarded the painted study from nature as no more than a preparatory exercise for the grand landscape that the artist would then invent and compose in his studio, and into which he would insert figures engaged in suitable actions. Valenciennes explicitly took issue with those who say that one can make a good painting simply by copying nature. He confined the imitation of nature to the painted sketch and required the landscape painting as such to reflect the artistic skills of invention and composition. Furthermore, by dividing the genre into subcategories—“paysage historique/héroïque” (historical/heroic landscape), “paysage pastoral” (pastoral landscape), “paysage portrait” (portrait landscape), “la marine” (seascape), “les chasses et les batailles” (hunting and battle pieces)—Valenciennes sought to advance the status of landscape within the *École des Beaux-Arts*. However, efforts to institute a Rome Prize for landscape painting, first proposed by Antoine-Chrysostôme Quatremère de Quincy (1755–1849) back in 1791, achieved partial success only in 1816. A Rome Prize for landscape was introduced, but—unlike the

annual Rome Prize for history painting—it was to be awarded only once in four years, and for a *paysage historique* at that.<sup>72</sup>

In Dresden, toward the end of the eighteenth century, the librarian and writer on art Christian August Semler (1767–1825) was working on a theory of his own, which would be published in Leipzig in 1800 in the lengthy *Untersuchungen über die höchste Vollkommenheit in den Werken der Landschaftsmalerei* (Studies of the highest perfection in works of landscape painting), part of which appeared in the magazine *Der Kosmopolit* in 1797. Immanuel Kant's *Kritik der Urtheilskraft* (Critique of judgment; 1790) was his most important precedent. Semler discusses the antithesis between the beauty of the particular and the beauty of the whole, which goes to form the total impression or total effect. Accordingly, he concerns himself above all with the psychological effect of landscape painting on the viewer.<sup>73</sup>

The landscape painters who belonged to the German artistic colony in Rome found an advocate in Carl Ludwig Fernow (1763–1808), whose long essay on landscape painting was first published in *Der Neue Teutsche Merkur* in 1803 and, in expanded form, in the second volume of his *Römische Studien* in 1806. On the current state of landscape painting, and the difficulties attendant on any theoretical discussion of the subject, Fernow had this to say in his prologue: “This branch of painting, which modern art has brought to such a pitch of perfection that it leaves something to be desired only, perhaps, in the poetic aspect of invention, presents particular difficulties for theoretical treatment, since the underlying idea of the genre remains undefined; in this respect very little has yet been done that would satisfy the philosophical inquirer.”<sup>74</sup>

Fernow's chosen point of departure was the revival of the classical landscape by German painters in Rome, to one of whom, his friend Johann Christian Reinhart (1761–1847), he dedicated his long essay.<sup>75</sup> Fernow divided landscape painting into two categories: the representation of a “real and existing scene,” to which he gave the name of “prospect” —synonymous with *veduta*— and the “image of an ideal natural scene on land or water.”<sup>76</sup> He defined the true task of painting as the poetic invention of ideal natural scenes based on reality:

Every representation of nature in landscape, if it is not a depiction of a real view, must be a poem; for even the painter is a true artist only to the extent that he is a poet. But whether his poem is a scene from reality, or from the past, or from the world of literature, can be recognized only from the *staffage* and the accessories; for landscape painting can never compose its ideal scenes except in the character and style of real nature, since in nature neither the particular nor the whole permits of an ideal: that is to say, an elevation above reality to which nature with all the perfection of its productions cannot attain.<sup>77</sup>

In his essay “Ruysdael als Dichter” (Ruisdael as poet; 1816) Goethe admired this quality of poetic invention in three paintings by Jacob van



Ruisdael in the Gemäldegalerie in Dresden, and particularly in *The Jewish Cemetery near Ouderkerk* (fig. 16).<sup>78</sup>

Fernow rated “dramatic painting” — namely, history painting — more highly than landscape, while pointing out that the two genres differed in their relationship to viewers: an action is for onlookers only, but in landscape painting no such limitation exists; viewers find themselves inside the natural scene depicted, because the painting puts them into an “aesthetic mood.” Fernow ascribed this effect not to the content or the specific objects in the picture but entirely to the “total impression on the mind.” Herein lies the affinity between landscape painting and music: “A beautiful landscape is steeped in a harmony of colors that affects the mind in much the same way as melody and harmony in the art of music.”<sup>79</sup> The term “total impression” was taken up by Humboldt and used by Carus, who also referred to the affinity between landscape painting and music, though without mentioning Fernow’s name.<sup>80</sup>

In 1800 Reinhart had painted *Stormy Landscape with Two Horsemen* and dedicated a large engraving of the work (fig. 17) to the celebrated poet Friedrich Schiller (1759–1805). In composition and effect, the painting derives from the tragic landscapes of Poussin. Reinhart’s choice of artistic prototype, the historical costumes worn by his figures, and the identity of his dedicatee show that he aspired to combine poetic invention with harmonious composition and sublimity of effect.<sup>81</sup> In his cover letter to Schiller, Reinhart referred to the old friendship between the two of them: “As I like to etch occasionally, I have engraved one of my paintings in copper and dedicated it to you, so that my image may be in your memory as yours stands fresh and firm in mine.”<sup>82</sup>

A particular problem for Fernow was the status of the paintings of Jacob Philipp Hackert (1737–1807), which he discussed only in the expanded version of his essay (1806). Fernow had become professor of aesthetics at Jena in 1803; one year later Goethe interceded to secure him an appointment as librarian to Duchess Anna Amalia in Weimar. Goethe admired Hackert, who had given him drawing lessons in Italy, followed his growing fame, and continued to rate him highly even when his reputation went into decline. In 1804 Goethe published a brief article on two landscape paintings by Hackert, in which he explicitly applied Fernow’s distinction: “It would be a grave injustice to paintings like these two works by Hackert, which represent views faithfully painted from nature, if one were to attempt to judge them in terms of the most elevated conception of landscape painting.” However, when seen strictly as *vedute* of the environs of Rome and Florence, these two paintings should in Goethe’s view be regarded “almost as the acme of art,” rather than assigned to the “subordinate category” of landscape painting.<sup>83</sup>

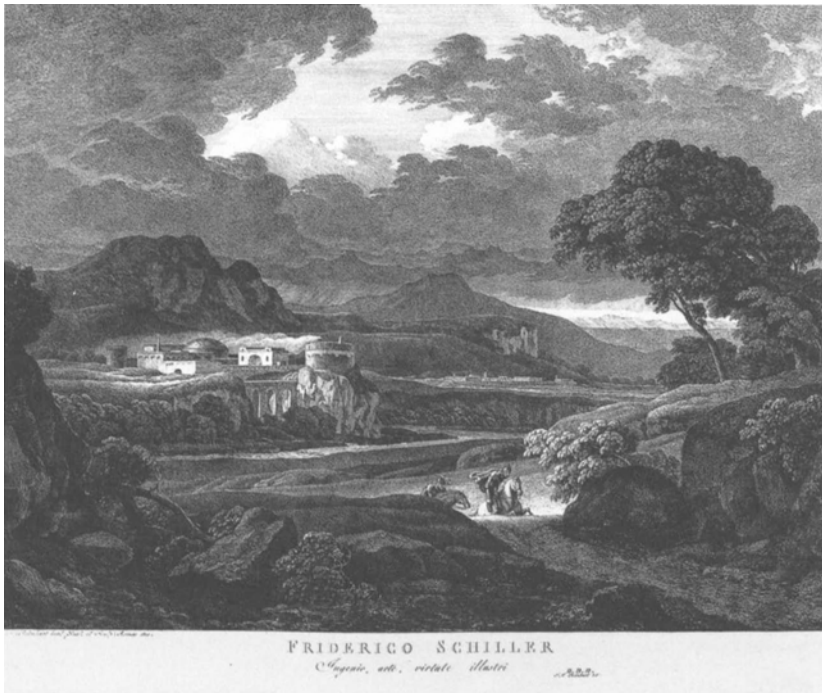
Such a verdict, from his own mentor, obliged Fernow to make amends for his neglect of Hackert. In the second published version of his essay he continued to exclude Hackert from the category of “inventive” landscape painters but followed Goethe in giving him a leading position among painters of “prospects,” both for his selection of views (fig. 18) and for his distinctive characterization of the Italian countryside.<sup>84</sup>



**Fig. 16. Jacob Isaackszoon van Ruisdael (ca. 1628–82)**

*The Jewish Cemetery near Ouderkerk*, 1653–55, oil on canvas, 84 × 95 cm (33 $\frac{1}{8}$  × 37 $\frac{3}{8}$  in.)

Dresden, Gemäldegalerie Alter Meister



FRIDERIGO SCHILLER  
*«Gegen die, virtute illustri»*



**Fig. 17. Johann Christian Reinhart (1761–1847)**  
*Stormy Landscape with Two Horsemen*, 1800, etching,  
35.8 × 50.2 cm (14 $\frac{1}{8}$  × 19 $\frac{3}{4}$  in.)  
Nuremberg, Germanisches Nationalmuseum

**Fig. 18. Jacob Philipp Hackert (1737–1807)**  
*View of Vicovaro*, from the series *Ten Views from Horace's Villa*, 1780, gouache, 33 × 44 cm (13 × 17 $\frac{3}{8}$  in.)  
Düsseldorf, Goethe-Museum

Issues of the same kind constantly recur in the numerous theoretical discussions of landscape painting that appeared around and after the turn of the nineteenth century. With minimal variations, these analyses bear consistent witness to a conflict that was impossible to resolve. In the hierarchy of genres, landscape painting was now expected to occupy a higher rank than before. To this end, its relationship to the imitation of nature and of previous art needed to be clarified, since a superior artistic purpose had nothing to do with the imitation of nature, or indeed with that of artistic prototypes. For the pursuit of that superior purpose, the imitation of the forms of nature was necessary but not in itself sufficient. The imitation of nature was acceptable for purposes of study or sketching, or for the *veduta*: it was therefore limited in its application. The nub of the question was this: where is the superior aspiration in landscape painting? This had to be found and identified in order to raise the status of landscape painting and distinguish it from mere imitation. One obvious way out of the problem was to appeal to the landscape painting of the seventeenth century, as practiced by Poussin, Lorrain, Ruisdael, and Dughet: artists whose work was elevated to the rank of the ideal. However, the introduction of a normative or archetypal ideal led to a direct conflict with the historical relativization of artistic creativity, and with the prohibition against the imitation of artistic prototypes.

In Dresden, Philipp Otto Runge (1777–1810) paved the way for a resolution of this difficulty. After studying in Copenhagen, Runge arrived in Dresden in 1801 to continue his training. He set out to resolve the intractable conflict by setting painting on an entirely new foundation. He had read *Franz Sternbalds Wanderungen* by Ludwig Tieck (1773–1853) immediately after its publication in 1798, and he remarked to a correspondent that nothing had ever moved him to his “innermost being” as this book had done.<sup>85</sup> A conversation with Tieck taught Runge, to his surprise, that there was an association between the end of an age and the flowering of art. This filled him with hope. Art could enjoy a new start, he said, but only by combining intimations of divinity with the sensibility of the artist, in relation to the single whole that was art and religion.<sup>86</sup> There could be a revival of art and beauty only after the elimination of “pernicious recent works of art”: a category in which Runge included the attempts by Goethe and Heinrich Meyer to revive “historical art” in Weimar. “I cannot well believe,” Runge wrote, “that anything as beautiful as the supreme achievement of historical art will ever again be done until all the pernicious recent works of art have perished — unless this were to come about in an entirely new way. What is more, that way is already fairly clear; and perhaps it might soon be time for an art of true beauty to emerge once more: that is, in landscape.”<sup>87</sup>

When Runge wrote these words, in 1802, it was not clear how this painting of the future was to be defined; it was, however, clear to him that there was no point in carrying on with traditional landscape painting, and with the dispute between imitation and invention. In April 1803 Runge wrote to Tieck with what he called an “Erste Figur der Schöpfung” (First figure of creation),

a compass-drawn, ornamental configuration consisting of six equal circles arranged around a seventh, central circle. Runge assigned these circles to the days of Creation. First come six days marked by the separation of three antithetical pairs: I and Thou, Good and Evil, Light and Darkness. On the seventh day of Creation, which is still to come, all things revert to the Light from whence they came. Analogies have been found between this system and the mystic structures of correspondences devised by the Silesian shoemaker and “Philosophus Teutonicus,” Jacob Böhme or Behmen (1575–1624), in whose writings mysticism mingles with nature philosophy. Tieck may have introduced Runge not only to Böhme but also to Indian mythology; among its earliest students in Germany were Johann Gottfried Herder (1744–1803) and his disciple and friend Friedrich Majer (1772–1818).<sup>88</sup>

*Four Times* occupied Runge from late 1802 onward. Initially conceived as a cycle on the times of the day intended to decorate a room, it became for its creator the long path to a new art. The painting *The “Small” Morning* (1808; fig. 19) brings before our eyes, according to Runge, the “limitless illumination of the universe”:<sup>89</sup> Aurora appears as the harbinger of light before the rising sun. From her, angels go forth, symbolizing the music of the spheres; children dance out over the endless landscape or hail the newborn child that lies in a natural paradise beneath the light of Aurora. On the frame, below and above, a solar eclipse and a celestial radiance stand for the polarity of darkness and light; to right and left, genies and flowers illustrate the ascent into light through the three primary colors.<sup>90</sup> *Four Times* is an embodiment of Runge’s new art, which no longer depicts “landscape” but is obliged to present to the eye mystic parables that evoke comprehensive analogies between cosmic and historical events.

Runge’s interest in color theory led him to devise the color sphere, a globe with black and white at the poles, primary and secondary colors at the equator, and a gradation of light and dark between equator and poles. At the core of the globe is a neutral gray, in which “all diametrically opposed colors and mixtures” resolve themselves.<sup>91</sup> In his publication of 1810 Runge outlined his views on the harmony of colors and included a long essay by the Norwegian-born naturalist and philosopher Henrich (Henrik) Steffens (1773–1845), “Über die Bedeutung der Farben in der Natur” (On the significance of colors in nature).<sup>92</sup> That same year Goethe published his own massive work *Zur Farbenlehre* (On color theory).<sup>93</sup> Runge had developed his ideas on color in contact with Goethe—who hailed him as a kindred spirit on learning that he rejected Isaac Newton—and had devised the color sphere with the aid of Steffens, who was probably also responsible for introducing him to Schelling’s concept of the world soul.<sup>94</sup>

Steffens was one of numerous savants who practiced a philosophical science of nature inspired by Schelling. He attended Schelling’s lectures in Jena and later studied geology under Abraham Gottlob Werner in Freiberg. After publishing an article on the oxidation and deoxidation process of the earth in Schelling’s *Zeitschrift für die speculative Physik*, Steffens brought out his



**Fig. 19. Philipp Otto Runge (1777–1810)**  
*The "Small" Morning*, 1808, oil on canvas, 109 × 85.5 cm (42 $\frac{7}{8}$  × 33 $\frac{3}{8}$  in.)  
Hamburg, Hamburger Kunsthalle

*Beyträge zur innern Naturgeschichte der Erde* (Studies in the internal natural history of the earth) in 1801. In that work he undertook to deal with the immense variety of natural processes and phenomena (from South Sea coral reefs, by way of snake venom, rock formations, and much else, to light and heat) by means of a simple theory of polarities. Following Schelling, whom he credited with having explained electricity, Steffens undertook to incorporate magnetism and electricity in a single system. He outlined a dual system of polarities, in which hydrogen and oxygen occupy the positive pole of electricity, and carbon and nitrogen the negative pole of magnetism. On the basis of this speculation, which he described as a proof, Steffens promised himself and his readers a future comprehensive explanation of the universe: “Through this proof, electricity becomes the principle of a meteorology; just as, through the proof conducted in this part of the work, magnetism became the principle of a geology. These two will lay the empirical foundation for a theory of nature.” This twofold duality, said Steffens, would enable us “to construct the dynamic process of the earth.”<sup>95</sup>

By these means, Steffens intended to counter the mechanistic natural sciences and their purely “analytic art” — which he regarded as incapable of reaching “the infinite depth of the formative force” — with a “true” theory.<sup>96</sup> This would be based on doctrines of the correspondence between macrocosm and microcosm, of polarities, of metamorphoses, and of the earth as a living organism — to which Steffens added the thesis of the continual emergence of life from primal matter, which he deduced from the presence of fungal spores on a mineral substance.<sup>97</sup> Steffens’s “philosophical science of nature” reveals an attempt to deal with the immense multiplicity of observed phenomena by applying simple concepts largely derived from alchemy (which was the source of the notions of transmutation, microcosm and macrocosm, generation of life, and primal matter).<sup>98</sup> In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the Saxon court in Dresden had been one of the major centers of alchemy.<sup>99</sup>

Sending a copy of his little book *Farbenkugel* (Color sphere) to Schelling on 1 February 1810, Runge acknowledged the currently enfeebled state of art and expressed the hope that “scientific results in the practice of art” might be attached more to “general scientific ideas.” Art might reconnect with the world, if only science would do its part by turning away from dissection and analysis and becoming receptive to connections.<sup>100</sup> Runge also offered to communicate to Schelling his thoughts on the mighty works that might arise from collaboration between architects, sculptors, and painters — in the full knowledge, of course, that since 1806 his correspondent had been secretary general of the Akademie der bildenden Künste (Academy of the fine arts) in Munich.

It was with a similar call for a landscape painting based on science that Carus entered the debate. In Ludwig Schorn’s *Kunst-Blatt*, in June and July of 1826, he published letter VIII of *Letters on Landscape Painting* with the following note: “Over the past decade, numerous reflections on this art, which has as its true task the great object of representing individual scenes, individual moods, of the universal life of nature — and which I would therefore prefer

to call *nature's history painting*, or *earth-life painting*—have given rise to a series of nine letters, which I have previously shown only to a few friends. At the wish of several of those friends, I here tentatively set a link from this chain before a wider public.”<sup>101</sup>

Carus chose for publication the letter in which he had to his own satisfaction directed landscape painting to a new purpose, marked by the coining of the new term *Erdleben-Bildkunst* (earth-life painting). He dealt both with the academies and with the training necessary for the young landscape painters who were to be led to practice “earth-life painting.” First, the artist’s eye must become capable of perceiving “the true and wondrous life of nature,” and the hand must be trained “to do the soul’s bidding quickly, easily, and beautifully.” Young artists must learn to understand the connection between the forms of mountains and their structure, the causal relationship between the locality and its flora, the laws that govern plant growth, and the laws of atmospheric phenomena. Once initiated into the first three elements, the student must be introduced to the mysteries of the fourth element, light, and its operations in the genesis of color.<sup>102</sup> Carus marveled that, hitherto, “the need for a scientific element has been so completely overlooked in the teaching of landscape painting; especially since elsewhere in the fine arts scientific studies have been so readily accepted as indispensable.”<sup>103</sup>

To pursue their exploration of “earth-life,” Carus would wish artists to converse with naturalists, and to read such books as the *Ansichten der Natur* (Views of nature) by Humboldt; he would also wish to see the publication of a book that would make the various aspects of “earth-life” known to young artists. At the very time when Carus published his text in the *Kunst-Blatt*, he himself started to write such a book. He worked on it through the 1830s and published it in 1841 under the title *Zwölf Briefe über das Erdleben* (Twelve letters on earth-life).<sup>104</sup>

For the time being, however, he had no better advice to offer than to school the eye and the hand by “the frequent, careful copying and independent construction of basic geometric figures”; this served both to counter “the temptations of carelessness” (*Lüderlichkeit*) and to teach “the first principles of all organic forms.”<sup>105</sup> Other preliminary exercises proposed by Carus are perspective and shading. These done, and once the student has mastered the representation of solids on a plane, he can go on to represent life. In this way, Carus undertakes to lead young artists to their goal, which is “to learn to speak the language of nature.”<sup>106</sup>

In conclusion, and in all innocence, Carus formulated the purpose of “earth-life painting” as follows:

When the soul is saturated with the inner meaning of all these different forms; when it has clear intimations of the mysterious, divine life of nature; when the hand has taught itself to represent securely, and the eye to see purely and acutely; and when the artist’s heart is purely and entirely a consecrated, joyous vessel in which to receive the light from above: then there will infallibly be earth-life paintings, of a



new and higher kind, which will uplift the viewer into a higher contemplation of nature. These works will truly deserve to be named mystic and orphic; and earth-life painting will have attained its culmination.<sup>107</sup>

This peroration is artless and naive by comparison with a very similarly worded passage in the short story “Die Jesuiterkirche in G.” (The Jesuit Church in G—), by Ernst Theodor Amadeus Hoffmann (1776–1822), published in 1816 in part 1 of his *Nachtstücke*. After a variety of employments Hoffmann had moved to Dresden in 1813 as musical director of the Joseph Seconda theater company, only to leave in 1814 for Berlin, where he became a counsel to the high court in 1816. “Die Jesuiterkirche in G.” is an account, supposedly written by an enthusiastic dilettante, of the tragic fate of a young German painter, Berthold; it is also the most acute contemporary analysis of the problems of landscape painting.

Berthold makes his way to Rome, where he learns that his own primary concern, the imitation of nature, counts for nothing by comparison with the superior genre of history painting. Not until he travels to Naples to become a pupil of Jakob Philipp Hackert does he receive any encouragement in the imitation of nature; he shows a landscape painting in one of his master’s exhibitions, with some success. But from the crowd of visitors to the exhibition there emerges an evil spirit, a rich Greek from Malta, who takes on the role of demonic tempter, destroys the young man’s faith in the *veduta*, and holds out to him a more elevated conception of art:

The understanding of nature in the deepest interpretation of its highest meaning, which sets all beings afire with aspiration toward the higher life: such is the sacred purpose of all art. Can this be achieved by merely copying nature?... From tree, bush, flower, mountain and water, the voice of nature speaks to the adept of an impenetrable mystery; its wondrous tones form intimations of the divine within his breast. Then, like the spirit of God himself, there comes upon him the gift of conveying those intimations in visible form through his work.... Study nature, therefore, even in the mechanical sense, with care and application, in order to acquire the practical skill of representation; but do not mistake practical skill for art itself. When you have plumbed the deeper meaning of nature, its images will appear within you, in all their sublimity and splendor.<sup>108</sup>

The temptations of genius, thus laid before Berthold by the demonic Greek, lure him on to his downfall. He can see what he wants to paint only in his dreams; he can no longer produce any works at all. In this state of artistic paralysis, he retires to a cave, only to be tormented by fantastic dreams of art. There he enjoys a vision of his ideal; he is able to work again, but all his works are mere reproductions, and he lapses into paralysis once more. The dilettante narrator meets Berthold in the village of G—, where the artist is engaged in transferring a squared-off design to the church wall, and is struck by Berthold’s eccentric mien, his noble bearing, his eccentric garb, and his

evident state of deep distress. The narrator's interest in the artist, and his naive remarks on the subject of art, reveal him as an honest but limited Everyman. He ventures some disparaging remarks on the subject of mural painting; he expects an artist to give him ideas of genius rather than mere technical perfection. In his naïveté, he thus repeats the demonic blandishments of the Greek from Malta. Berthold knows that such talk is pernicious and attempts to refute it by describing painting as normal work, no different in essence from the building of sawmills or the making of spinning machinery. As the story proceeds, this argument is revealed in its turn as specious. The artist finishes his painting, but then he disappears, leaving his hat and stick on the riverbank.

Hoffmann's tale, with its theme of irresolvable inner conflict, demolishes all naive assumptions concerning the nature of the artist's work. The mere *veduta* is seen as a betrayal of the artist's true task; but to assume a higher calling, which leads from the imitation of nature to a deeper knowledge of its inward reality—as Runge attempted to do, and as Carus wanted “earth-life painting” to do—leads to artistic paralysis. In Hoffmann's tale, that higher calling is a satanic temptation; to yield is the Fall of Man, and the end of the artist. Carus, for his part, places his faith in the natural sciences as a basis for deeper artistic insights into nature—and for the representation of such insights.

His advice on the training of youthful artists is, however, both extremely general and appallingly inept. It does not depart from the content of the numerous contemporary manuals of the geometrical elements of drawing.<sup>109</sup> Unlike the manuals, however, Carus agrees with Runge in surmising that elementary geometric forms enshrine the secret mysteries and laws of nature.<sup>110</sup>

Carus's reasons for publishing his ideas on “earth-life painting” in 1826 are interesting. One year earlier, he had published in the *Kunst-Blatt* a short piece on the representation of eyes by a number of old masters, taking as his point of departure Fra Angelico's *Coronation of the Virgin* in Paris.<sup>111</sup> This had established his connection with the *Kunst-Blatt*, which under the editorship of the art historian Ludwig Schorn (1793–1842) was an important journal. In 1826 Peter von Cornelius (1783–1867), who had moved from Düsseldorf to Munich in 1825 to become director of the Akademie der bildenden Künste in Munich, pensioned off the professor of landscape painting, Wilhelm von Kobell (1766–1855), who had occupied the post since 1814, and abolished the chair, because he disapproved of all “genre” painting.<sup>112</sup> Instead, Cornelius appointed a professor of aesthetics and art history, who was none other than Schorn, editor of the *Kunst-Blatt*.<sup>113</sup>

It is likely that in June and July of 1826 Carus submitted his letter on “earth-life painting”—which also deals with the training of young artists and criticizes the traditional teaching of the academies—to the *Kunst-Blatt* in order to intervene in the topical debate that was taking place in Munich. In the pages of the *Kunst-Blatt* the controversy over imitation and the ideal in landscape painting ran on until 1831. However, none of the contributors took

any notice of Carus's essay; none adopted his new name for landscape painting or any of his proposals.<sup>114</sup>

### *Science and Landscape Painting*

In his memoirs Carus wrote that he had found a “great limpness” in art in Dresden in 1815 or so, but that he had detected signs of “a future evolution,” related to the painter Caspar David Friedrich:

Friedrich, with his somewhat stiff and diffuse but highly poetic manner, was the first artist—in painting as a whole, but more especially in landscape painting—who ever assailed and shook up the philistines of Dresden. There had been a great stir when one of his paintings, a crucifix on a rock beneath dark fir trees and against the dying glow of an evening sky, had given rise to a literary controversy conducted on Friedrich's behalf by his friend Gerhard von K $\ddot{u}$ gelchen [K $\ddot{u}$ gelgen] and on the opposing side by a prosaic dilettante, a certain Herr von Ramdohr—to the latter's eventual discomfiture.<sup>115</sup>

Carus refers here to the celebrated artistic dispute that arose in Dresden when Friedrich exhibited his painting *The Cross in the Mountains* (fig. 20). At the end of 1808 the artist put his newly completed work on public view for a few days in his own Dresden apartment. In order to reproduce the dim light of a chapel, a cloth was hung over the window of the room. The painting in its heavy gilt frame stood on a table draped with a black cloth. This image of a crucifix on a dark mountain peak in the crimson evening twilight came under severe criticism from Friedrich Basilius von Ramdohr. He enumerated the faults in the depiction of landscape, condemned the artist for trying to arouse a “pathological emotion” in its viewers, and went on to denounce the religiosity and mysticism that he perceived to be at work on every side, both in art and in science.<sup>116</sup>

Friedrich, for his part, angrily rejected the criticisms of this “heartless critic of art” and replied: “If a painting has a soulful effect on the viewer, if it puts his mind into a soulful mood, then it has fulfilled the first requirement of a work of art. However bad it might be in drawing, color, handling, etc.”<sup>117</sup>

In his memoirs Carus set out his own views on Friedrich's mode of working and reiterated his own statement of principle: “A picture must not be invented but felt.”<sup>118</sup> Additionally, in 1840 Carus had published an essay, and in 1841 a pamphlet, on Friedrich, with a selection from the artist's notes.<sup>119</sup>

Carus was thus still standing up for Friedrich in the 1840s; and yet it is only the first part of his *Letters on Landscape Painting* that reflects a view close to Friedrich's own. In letter III, Carus seeks to define “the principal task of landscape painting” as the creation of a correspondence of mood between humanity and nature: “The representation of a certain mood of mental life (meaning) through reproduction of a corresponding mood of natural life (truth).”<sup>120</sup>

As in this formulation, so in his own painting, Carus in the 1820s and



**Fig. 20. Caspar David Friedrich (1774–1840)**  
*The Cross in the Mountains*, 1808, oil on canvas, canvas: 115 × 110.5 cm  
(45¼ × 43½ in.); frame by Karl Gottlob Kühn  
Dresden, Gemäldegalerie Neue Meister



**Fig. 21. Carl Gustav Carus (1789–1869)**

*Cemetery near Inning*, ca. 1822, oil on canvas, 21.5 × 28.8 cm (8½ × 11⅜ in.)  
Schweinfurt, Museum Georg Schäfer

1830s remained as close to Friedrich as an imitator ever can be to any artist. Carus chose the same motifs as Friedrich, reproduced the same moods of twilight and moonlight, and never denied, as a painter, his dependence on his great mentor. A small painting such as *Cemetery near Inning* (fig. 21), a scene of studied melancholy in which crosses in a Bavarian graveyard are seen against the sunset, touchingly confirms the devotion of the dilettante to his mentor, circa 1822.<sup>121</sup>

There is a marked contrast between this lasting discipleship and the message of letters IV to IX, in which Carus prescribed for landscape painting objectives and tasks that are incompatible with the ideas of Friedrich. On the grounds of the gap of almost two years in Carus's work on the *Letters on Landscape Painting* between 1822 and 1824, most commentators have located the fault line between letters I to IV and VI to IX, and have defined the difference between the two groups as that between a "romantic" and a "scientific" approach.<sup>122</sup> In 1995, however, Jutta Müller-Tamm proposed a tripartite division: she assigned letters I to III to the category of "early romanticism" but excluded letter VI, which is about the stylistic ideal, and letter V, which is about the history of landscape painting.<sup>123</sup> Letters VI to IX, which attempt to establish a landscape painting of the future, based on science, under the new name of "earth-life painting," are a response to Goethe's and Humboldt's calls for a landscape painting that would restore the lost unity between the scientific knowledge of nature and the artistic rendering of nature.

The gulf between Friedrich's views and this new project of Carus's may be gauged by the artist's response to Goethe's suggestion that he should study Luke Howard's classification of clouds. Though interested in the rendering of clouds, Friedrich dismissed the idea — when it reached him through an intermediary — with the remark that to allow himself to be coerced into such categorizations would entirely undermine the art of landscape painting.<sup>124</sup> Friedrich's reaction must have caused Carus some perplexity. The second enclosure of letter III, devoted to the elements, describes the sky as "the true image of infinity" and ascribes to cumulus and cirrus clouds an influence on the human mind: "When our view of this infinity is narrowed down, constrained, and obscured by clouds or by tall accumulations of other objects, the mind is proportionately constrained and oppressed; but let the veil of cloud break into silvery cloudlets, or disperse in the steady glow of the rising moon or of the sun, and our inner gloom is dispelled; we are uplifted by the thought that the infinite has prevailed over the finite."<sup>125</sup>

This passage bears reading in association with the cloud studies of Friedrich.<sup>126</sup> In letter VI, however, Carus turns his back on any such metaphysical view of clouds by referring to Goethe's published account of Howard's cloud classification and describing it as a liberating and illuminating lesson.<sup>127</sup>

Carus begins letters I to IV and letter IX with "romantic" mood paintings of the seasons. In letter I the writer sits in a cozy room, in the "pleasing half-light" of a lamp, with snow running down the window. In letter II it is still winter; in letter III it is late summer, and we look back on spring and "the

pretty, late-flowering elders.” Letter IV moves on to autumn: “the chill, damp, misty air, and the bare branches” provoke a seasonal melancholy that the writer strives in vain to shake off. In letter IX winter has come; and thus, as Carus says, the cycle of the year is complete.<sup>128</sup> Perhaps these literary mood paintings can be described as “romantic” in a loose sense of that word, but a more accurate description would be “Biedermeier”; for this bourgeois version of “sensibility” implies a combination of nonthreatening emotion, domestic harmony, quiet sociability, modest aspirations (both material and intellectual), and a mellow, rather middle-aged sense of being at peace with oneself and with the world.<sup>129</sup> What is more, Carus’s *Letters on Landscape Painting* are not in the least audacious, provocative, or opinionated: they thus offer no justification for the facile attribution to “early romanticism.” Nor are these contemplative word paintings of the seasons the only typically Biedermeier feature of the book: so too are the apostrophe to the addressee at the beginning of letter IV and the disquisition on the artist in letter IX.

In letter IV, Carus turns from his evocation of the melancholy mood of late fall to write of the inner harmony and happiness to which he aspires: “So let me recover, in an exchange of thoughts with you, my old and well-tried friend, the inner equanimity and tranquillity that you and I have always believed to be the only true source of happiness.”<sup>130</sup>

In letter IX, Carus quotes a disgruntled artist as saying that artists have become an anachronism, devoid of political, statistical, or mercantile significance and reduced to the role of “servants of luxury.”<sup>131</sup> This verdict echoes Hegel’s celebrated dictum that, as a consequence of the evolution of mind and spirit, art has lost its role as the supreme means of “being conscious of the Absolute.”<sup>132</sup> Carus tries to deal with the loss of art’s central relevance to life by simply asserting its imperishability: “This is not to say that the age of true art and true artists is past, just because the world at large seems to ignore them: the time for true art can never be past, if only because it transcends time: it is *eternal*.”<sup>133</sup>

What is more, Carus expects the artist, “whose heart is in landscape painting, in the higher sense of the term,”<sup>134</sup> to renounce such mundane needs as housing, food, and clothing as a proof that his mind is on higher things. This self-abnegation will have its own reward, says Carus, especially if the artist also has scientific interests. He goes on to suggest, however, that the artist earn his living “by some entirely ordinary activity,” and practice his art on the side, lest he be corrupted:

The artist aspires to a goal that the vulgar world ignores; why then should he not gain the ordinary necessities of life by some entirely ordinary activity? Indeed, I would say that even this struggle with ordinary life—in which it will be open and indeed natural to him to see the most ordinary things in a magnificent and noble light—will give him inner strength and complete his education as a human being; just as a healthy body appears truly healthy only if all its organs and faculties, both lower and higher, are active and vigorous.

Sad to say, I have watched all too many artists, and scholars too, treating their own art or science as a mere milk cow, and asking, like artisans, only “What pleases the crowd? What flatters the follies of the day?” As they became more and more embroiled in such concerns, their brief flush of youthful enthusiasm gave way to a philistine dullness in which the brush or pen was ruled no longer by the head and heart but by the stomach.<sup>135</sup>

Despite his friendship with Friedrich, Carus was only superficially aware of the problems that confronted his artistic contemporaries. Instead of attempting any thorough analysis, he advised them to retreat to the status of part-time artists; this, of course, was the way in which he himself practiced art.<sup>136</sup>

After their Biedermeier mood paintings, the first three letters cast up important questions of a general nature. These include: the justification of a systematic investigation of art and beauty; the relationship between science and art; the purpose of landscape painting; and the correspondences between “within” and “without.” Carus rejects the widespread belief that any systematic investigation of the nature of art and beauty belittles or profanes both. On the contrary, reflection alone can procure a “full and genuine poetic enjoyment.”<sup>137</sup> His chosen metaphor is that of looking down from a mountain at a landscape: the overall impression of the view repeats and reinforces the observer’s past enjoyment of individual localities within it. But the analysis of art, like “any true investigation of natural history,” must lead humanity “to the threshold of higher mysteries.” Here lies the justification of his statement in letter II that art is “the messenger of religion.”<sup>138</sup>

Carus draws a contrast between natural science, which kills what it analyzes, and art, which creates something with the appearance of life. He goes on to say, however, that the contrast is merely apparent. He postulates “an eternal, supreme, infinite unity,” which underlies all feeling and all thought, and which manifests itself inwardly in reason and outwardly in nature. Science and art are antithetical: the one, through knowledge, leads multiplicity back to divine unity; and the other, through the quasi-divine activity of creation, generates multiplicity. Both, however, have the same goal, which is the manifestation of the divine. “From awareness comes *knowledge*, or science; and from skill comes *art*. In science, man feels himself in God; in art, he feels God in himself.”<sup>139</sup>

Carus goes on to say that science and art build on each other: science requires art for its exposition, and art must have a scientific basis.<sup>140</sup> Such an assertion directly reflects Carus’s own activity as a scientific illustrator (see fig. 5). He repeatedly evokes a mysterious harmony that unites the kingdoms of nature; the fundamental forms of thought; the arts of poetry, music, and architecture; the physiological organization of man; the primary colors; and the notes of a musical triad—all of which he regards as manifestations of the “eternal, supreme, infinite unity.” In the third enclosure of letter III, Carus defines beauty, in a musical metaphor, as “the triad [Dreiklang] of God, nature, and man.”<sup>141</sup>



Plainly, by invoking mystical notions of this kind, derived however remotely from Schelling's concept of the world soul, Carus was steering his treatise into dangerous waters. Such ideas offered no conclusions, applications, or new perspectives for landscape painting. In the following letters, IV and V, which are concerned with style and with the history of landscape painting, respectively, Carus adopted a completely different approach, based largely on the writings of Fernow.<sup>142</sup> Just why Goethe, to whom Carus sent letters I to III and V in 1822, responded by saying that they were "as well conceived as they are beautifully written," is not easy to explain. In view of Goethe's unremitting opposition to everything romantic, these first three letters were bound to annoy him; only the content of letter V might have engaged his interest.<sup>143</sup> Perhaps he leafed through Carus's first three letters only cursorily, before responding with his customary courtesy to his admirer's offering. It was Carus's historical-anatomical studies that really interested him.<sup>144</sup>

In letter V, Carus sketches a brief history of landscape painting. He is puzzled by the sudden emergence of landscape as an autonomous pictorial genre in the seventeenth century. To explain this, he resorts to a fragmentary outline of the development of humanity, based on a parallel between the development of nations and of the human individual. Carus views Greek mythology as a projection of humanity onto the phenomena of nature. Sculpture, which is about the human image, appears as the "true art of the heroic age." This was the first art form in history; the second was painting, which is "the more ideal art" of the two. As for landscape painting, Carus conjectures that it requires "a degree of superior education and experience." As he explains, "There is an element of abstraction and abnegation involved in treating the external world no longer simply as the element in which we live and act but as something with a beauty and sublimity of its own."<sup>145</sup>

Landscape painting, Carus tells us, appeared only after the human race had learned to abandon its purely selfish relationship to nature, had comprehended nature as the revelation of divinity, and had become capable of taking the beauty of the universe as an artistic goal: "Man had first to recognize the divinity of nature as the true bodily revelation or—in human terms—language of God."<sup>146</sup> There is no place here for the *veduta* or "painting of prospects" (*Prospectmalerei*), which is relegated to a lowly status. Carus also rejects the "sentimental" painting of nature, which neglects its truth in favor of symbols or hieroglyphs and uses objects to convey symbolic meaning. As an example of this, Carus cites a landscape described in Tieck's *Franz Sternbalds Wanderungen* (1798); at the same time, he distances himself from the views of Friedrich.<sup>147</sup>

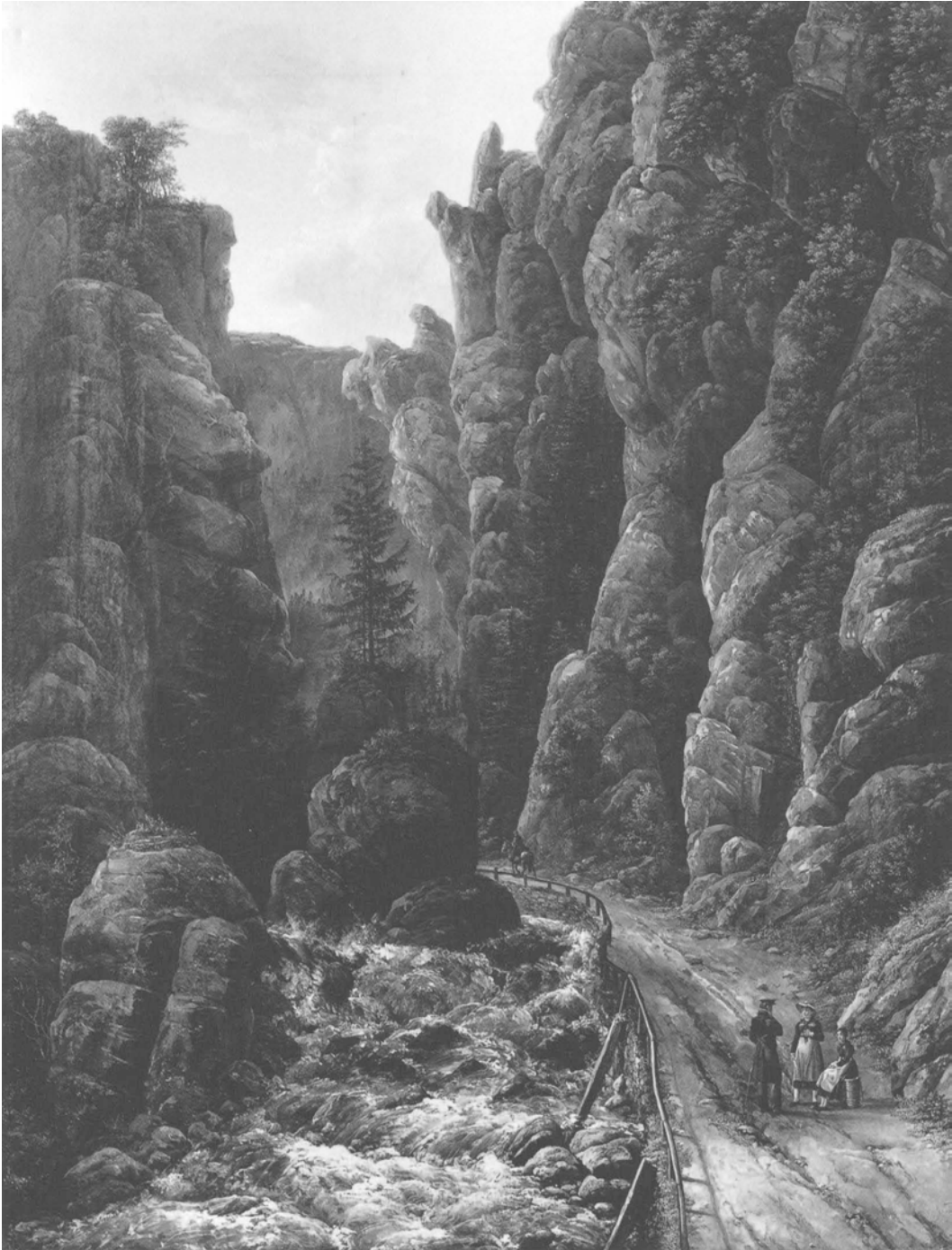
Letter V left Carus with no idea where to go next. Nor did the subsequent insertion of letter IV, on the style and character of landscape painting, do anything to relieve the gloomy future prospect with which letter V closes. This perplexity lasted more than a year. Then Carus was overtaken by a sudden revelation of the future of landscape painting, inspired by Goethe's interest in Howard's classification of clouds; this formed the subject of letter VI.<sup>148</sup> For

Carus, the task of landscape painting had suddenly widened to encompass the “mysteries of nature,” which lie concealed in the laws that govern the motion of clouds, the forms of mountain ranges, the outlines of trees, and the waves of the sea. The artist can engage with all this on the strength of his “knowledge of the wonderful reciprocities of earth and fire and sea and air.”<sup>149</sup> Carus fantasizes over the future art of nature: paintings that will show the history of the mountains, of the plant world, and of atmospheric phenomena. But what examples can he show? He tackles this rhetorical question in the following letter by citing the poetic descriptions of nature in the works of Goethe and Humboldt, and he inserts as supporting evidence an extract from a botanical work by Christian Gottfried Daniel Nees von Esenbeck (1776–1858).<sup>150</sup>

Carus has given us no examples from painting, although a number of painters had long since taken an interest in geology: he would have had every right to count such a painting as Johan Christian Clausen Dahl’s *Gorge in Saxon Switzerland* (fig. 22) of 1820 as a representation of “earth-life”; he himself drew the same gorge, possibly in the 1820s.<sup>151</sup> However, it was only after the publication of *Letters on Landscape Painting* that Carus identified his first example of an “earth-life painting”: this was a work by the young artist Georg Heinrich Crola (1804–79), a Dresden protégé of both Friedrich and Dahl, who evolved in Munich into a specialist in trees and woodland subjects.<sup>152</sup>

By publishing letter VIII separately in the *Kunst-Blatt* in 1826, Carus hoped to give effect to his idea of “earth life painting” and encourage young artists to take an interest in the laws of “earth-life.” At the same time, he embarked on his project that was to become the *Zwölf Briefe über das Erdleben*, on which he was to work all through the 1830s.<sup>153</sup> In the seventh letter of that work, published in 1841, Carus takes up the theme of the physiognomy of the earth’s surface, which he had already put forward in enclosure I to letter IX of *Letters on Landscape Painting*.<sup>154</sup> He borrowed the term from Humboldt’s essay *Ideen zu einer Physiognomik der Gewächse* (Ideas toward a physiognomy of plants) of 1806.<sup>155</sup> In this matter Carus based himself on the science that was practiced everywhere, before and after 1800, under the name *geognosy*.<sup>156</sup> In 1840 the Prussian geologist Christian Keferstein drew the distinction between mineralogy (classification of rocks), geognosy (investigation of the mineral masses of the earth’s crust), and geology (speculation as to the evolution of the earth as a planet).<sup>157</sup> There was a long-running and vigorous controversy between the Neptunists, who argued that rocks were the product of crystallization in water, and the Plutonists, who asserted their volcanic origin. The main point at issue was the origin of basalt. After field research in the Auvergne and on Mount Vesuvius—the latter conducted by Humboldt—it became impossible even for such sworn Neptunists as Goethe to doubt the volcanic origin of this rock.<sup>158</sup>

As early as 1834 Carus attempted to draw the celebrated Fingal’s Cave, on the basalt Isle of Staffa off the west coast of Scotland, from written accounts and existing illustrations.<sup>159</sup> When he traveled to Britain in 1844, in the suite of King Friedrich August II, the royal party visited the cave itself. Carus



**Fig. 22. Johan Christian Clausen Dahl (1788–1857)**  
*Gorge in Saxon Switzerland*, 1820, oil on canvas, 62.9 × 48 cm (24¾ × 18⅞ in.)  
Munich, Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen, Neue Pinakothek



**Fig. 23. Carl Gustav Carus (1789–1869)**

*Fingal's Cave*, after 1844, watercolor and pen, 24.7 × 29.2 cm (9¾ × 11½ in.)  
Basel, Kupferstichkabinett

described the visit in his account of the journey and produced a number of watercolors based on his own sketches.<sup>160</sup> In a pen-and-wash drawing now in Basel (fig. 23), he shows the clusters of basalt columns in all their irregularity and displacement.

In treating geognosy as one of the scientific foundations of landscape painting, Carus was concerned with the laws governing the relationship between the exterior and the interior—between forms, on the one hand, and the structure and history of mountain ranges, on the other—and with the linking of the parts with the whole through a combination of close and remote viewpoints. “In the investigation of all natural objects,” he wrote, “we are led to draw a distinction between the *exterior* and the *interior*: the exterior enabling us to form a mental image of the whole, and the interior showing us the parts. Only when these two combine do we gain a global idea of the nature of the object in itself.”<sup>161</sup>

In the *Zwölf Briefe über das Erdleben* of 1841 Carus refers back to his earlier remarks from a “higher vantage point.” Letters VII to IX of that work are devoted to an account of “earth-life” in terms of the four elements of Empedocles.<sup>162</sup> Like Schubert or Steffens, Carus has no compunction in combining precise observations of detail with remarkably free-ranging and unsubstantiated speculations about the universe.<sup>163</sup>

The idea of correspondences between exterior and interior led Carus, even after completing the *Zwölf Briefe über das Erdleben*, to concern himself on a number of occasions with dubious and already discredited disciplines such as phrenology or cranioscopy, chiromancy, and physiognomy.<sup>164</sup> While invariably deploring the merely superstitious and fortuitous aspects of these practices, he cited the analogy of symptomatology in medicine to argue that anthropology, anatomy, and physiology could yield scientific knowledge of man’s interior through the scrutiny of the exterior. In his book on physiognomy (1853) Carus spoke of the “science of the significance of external human configuration in relation to inner psychic and mental life, which I here discuss, for the sake of concision, under the name of *symbolism*.” Among its practical applications, Carus included the art of portraiture.<sup>165</sup>

The program of “earth-life painting”—to express the structure and history of mountains through their form, and to render the other elements in such a way as to reveal the universal rule of law and demonstrate the harmony between the particular and the universal—was far beyond the capacity of landscape painting.<sup>166</sup> It is striking, however, that, although in theory Carus had the most exalted ideas of what painting could be expected to do, in practice he clung to his old predilection for Friedrich, while resting content with quite modest achievements by others (as in the case of the painting by Crola).

In *Letters on Landscape Painting* Carus tackled a major theme and a number of important issues while armed with an extremely slender knowledge of landscape painting and of its history. This is something that he would never have allowed himself to do on a scientific subject, at least not at the beginning



**Fig. 24. Carl Gustav Carus (1789–1869)**  
*Goethe Memorial; or, In Memory of Goethe: Landscape Fantasy, 1832,*  
oil on canvas, 71.5 × 53.5 cm (28 $\frac{1}{8}$  × 21 $\frac{1}{8}$  in.)  
Hamburg, Hamburger Kunsthalle

of his career. He did very little reading in the specialized literature of art; in his text he appears to be deliberately avoiding references to that literature. Instead, he cites such illustrious authorities as Goethe, Schiller, Schelling, and Humboldt. He mentions only one writer on landscape painting, Salomon Gessner; he also refers to William Hogarth's "line of beauty," though only to dismiss it. His only direct quotation, in letter IV, is from Fernow's study of Antonio Canova.<sup>167</sup> He makes no reference to Heinrich Meyer, to Fernow's lengthy essay on landscape painting—a work that he used constantly throughout the composition of *Letters on Landscape Painting*—or indeed to any other literature on the subject. The opening of letter VIII, "Landscape painting has often been likened to music," is a clear but unavowed reference to a passage in which Fernow takes issue with Goethe: "A beautiful landscape is steeped in a harmony of colors that affects the mind in much the same way as melody and harmony in the art of music."<sup>168</sup>

Carus's suppression of his literary sources is probably not a sign of negligence or deceit. It reflects his diffidence about competing with established authors on territory that was not entirely familiar to him; it also reflects the dilettante's willful delusion that he can produce all the essential insights from his own resources, and that he can substantiate them on the strength of his own conviction and his own chosen authorities alone. His supreme authority was Goethe, whom he quotes in a number of his writings. When the poet died in 1832, Carus created a remarkable memorial to Goethe in the form of a painting (fig. 24).<sup>169</sup> Outlined against the moonlight, a dark sarcophagus, accompanied by an Aeolian harp and two kneeling angels, stands at the foot of a mighty rock face. In the hollows, wisps of mist cling to the fir trees; high in the sky hang light-colored clouds; and from the wooded cliff there plunges a waterfall, the symbol of the eternal cyclic motion of nature. For Goethe, Carus has devised a mystical "earth-life painting" in which the music of the spheres, the harmony of the cosmos, presides over the harmonious complementarity of geological and meteorological interests. Like Friedrich's *Cross in the Mountains* (see fig. 20), the Goethe memorial is an altarpiece; it evokes the very analogy between music and landscape painting that Goethe himself had refused to countenance.<sup>170</sup>

### ***The Influence and Reception of Letters on Landscape Painting***

Despite the widespread debate on landscape painting that was taking place in Germany, the publication of letter VIII of Carus's *Letters on Landscape Painting* in Schorn's *Kunst-Blatt* in 1826 generated no reaction whatever. However, the first edition of *Letters on Landscape Painting* (1831) received a belated but detailed and appreciative review from the theologian Carl Grüneisen, writing in the *Kunst-Blatt* for 1833.<sup>171</sup> Grüneisen welcomed Carus's new coinages, *Erdlebenbild* and *Erdlebenbildkunst*, despite their awkwardness, but noted with disapproval that Carus had neglected or marginalized the great contemporary masters of historical landscape:

It is frustrating, however, that in this respect the author does not give due acknowledgment to what has been called the historical landscape, as practiced by the great masters of our own time, Koch, Reinhard, Schick, Steinkopf, and Reinhold; indeed, he tends to dismiss it as insignificant, as seems to be the case on page 121 [end of letter VI]. Frustrating, because in it [historical landscape] the quality of natural life is most often closely allied to the spirit of the action and the mental state of the persons depicted; and, conversely, a mythological or historical scene may be supported—and indeed called for—by the distinctive quality of the Greek natural scene and by the specific form, air, and coloring of a landscape.<sup>172</sup>

When Carus visited Koch and Reinhart in their Roman studios in 1828, he came away with an unfavorable impression of both artists and their works. He had been looking forward to meeting Reinhart, because he himself had derived much inspiration from his etchings; but in Rome he found him “elderly and dull, with something of a beer-drinker’s physiognomy; in short, he struck me as an extinct artistic talent.” His response to Koch, who had given the royal party a guided tour of his mural paintings on subjects from Dante, was equally unsympathetic: “As for Koch, he enjoys a significant reputation as a landscape painter; but I confess that, among his few conceptions that are halfway to being Old German, I found nothing attractive.”<sup>173</sup>

Grüneisen’s review of the first edition of *Letters on Landscape Painting*, which consists mostly of a summary of the content, concludes with a cautious judgment, praising the thoroughness of the exposition while exhorting artists and their public to take landscape more seriously: “To summarize our verdict on the whole: the nature and purpose of landscape painting are here described in a thorough manner; this is an encouragement to artists and to the public to pay greater heed to this highly significant branch of art, to inquire into it more earnestly, and to promote it by relating it to intellectual life and to the states of mind.”<sup>174</sup>

The first edition of *Letters on Landscape Painting* was not a commercial success. It is evident that in 1835 there were still printed, unbound sheets of the first edition available. Carus added a tenth letter and some additional material, had the title page reset, and described the version including pages 209 to 276 as a “second edition, with an additional letter and several enclosures.”<sup>175</sup> In 1836 this expanded edition of *Letters on Landscape Painting* (1835) was reviewed in the *Literatur-Blatt*, along with a number of other publications on aesthetics, by Wolfgang Menzel, an inveterate adversary of Goethe and Hegel. Menzel covered more than a dozen recent German publications, all of which he greeted with more or less acid comments. He began his account of *Letters on Landscape Painting* by saying: “Little matter and an astounding profusion of words.” He went on to quote a number of passages and concluded as follows: “What is the landscape painter to do with such empty phrases? It is only in the enclosures that the author goes into any detail: on the physiognomy of mountains, for example, the effects of moonlight, the contemplation of a number of paintings by Ewerdingen, and so



on.”<sup>176</sup> Menzel was condemning the *Letters on Landscape Painting* for a lack of practical usefulness, something that Carus had never regarded as central to his intention.

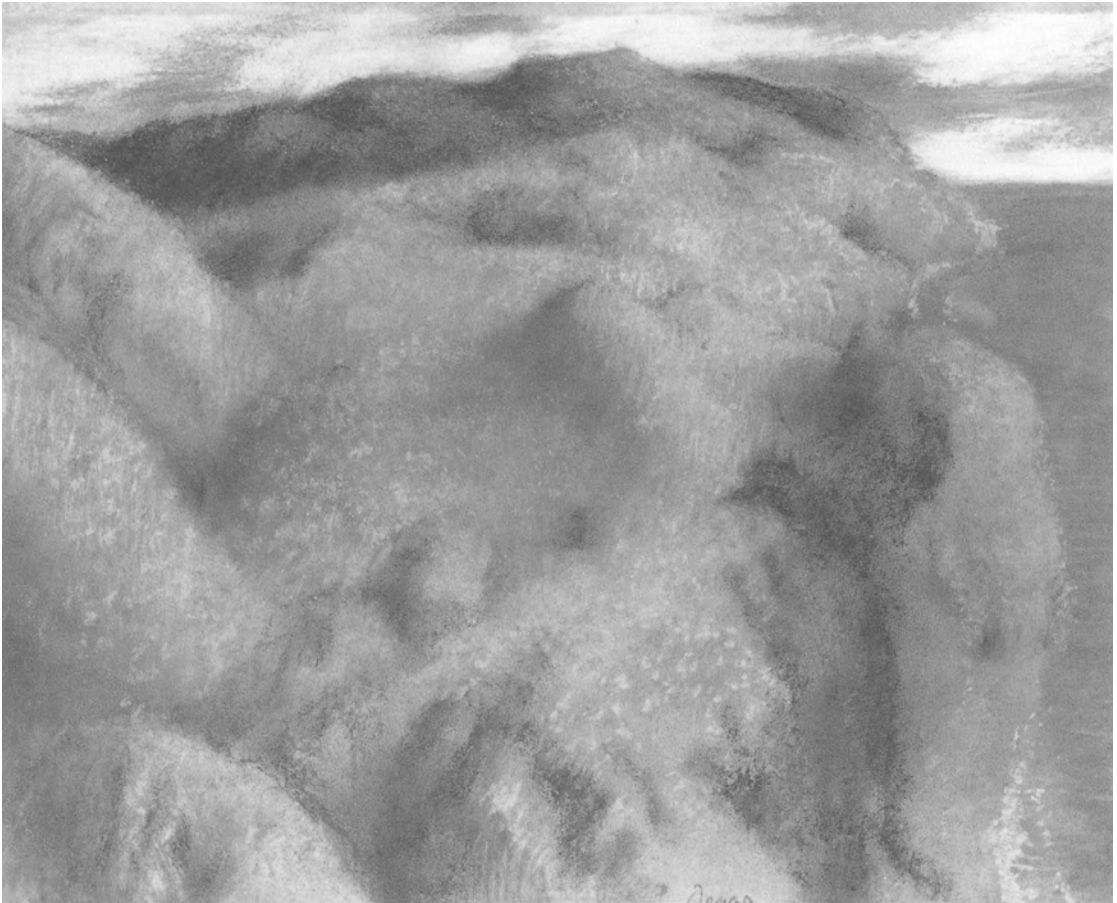
Neither the publication of Carus’s *Zwölf Briefe über das Erdleben* in 1841 nor Humboldt’s *Kosmos: Entwurf einer physischen Weltbeschreibung* (Cosmos: Notes for a physical description of the world), begun in 1845, did anything to remedy the lack of influence of Carus’s “earth-life painting.” The satirical drawing *Das organische Leben in der Natur* (Organic life in nature; fig. 25), by Moritz von Schwind (1804–71), published in the Munich periodical *Fliegende Blätter* in 1848, may be regarded as one of the rare public responses to the “earth-life” idea.<sup>177</sup> Schwind transformed the roots of a clump of trees into weird, anthropomorphic, long-nosed figures, some seated, some reclining, some apparently in the act of rising to depart, and one towering above eye level in a striding pose. The occasion of Schwind’s mockery is unknown; the magazine published no text to accompany the caricature. Schwind had moved to Munich as a professor at the Akademie in 1847, and, in his first few years there, he drew many illustrations for the *Fliegende Blätter* and *Münchener Bilderbogen*.

In all probability Schwind’s caricature marks the end of the direct reception of Carus’s idea of “earth-life” as the subject of landscape painting. Although the ideas of the world soul and of the analogy between microcosm and macrocosm were later taken up in a variety of ways, these have no connection with Carus. In 1851 Gustav Theodor Fechner (1801–87) attempted to breathe new life into nature philosophy. Fechner had become professor of physics at the Universität Leipzig in 1834; an eye complaint compelled him to retire from teaching in 1839, and he subsequently concentrated on nature philosophy, aesthetics, and anthropology. In 1848 he brought out a book entitled *Das Seelenleben der Pflanzen* (The psychology of plants); in 1851 he published his magnum opus of nature philosophy, *Zend-Avesta; oder, Über die Dinge des Himmels und des Jenseits* (Zend-Avesta; or, on things celestial and transcendental), in three volumes, in which he asserted, contrary to prevailing opinion, that plants and indeed heavenly bodies are “animate beings.”<sup>178</sup>

In his preface Fechner admits that nature philosophy has declined from the respect that it formerly enjoyed. His publication is an attempt to rehabilitate the ancient belief “that the whole of nature is alive and divinely informed with soul.”<sup>179</sup> Fechner repeatedly invokes the doctrine of correspondence between macrocosm and microcosm. In a chapter titled “Vergleichende physische Erd- und Himmelskunde” (A comparative physical study of earth and the heavens) he dilates at some length on the following analogy: “Classifying materials according to their mode of cohesion (aggregative form), we can identify in the earth, as within our own bodies, the firm, the fluid, the airy, the vaporous, and the imponderable. We have rocks in our bones; rivers run through our veins; vapors and air blow through our respiratory apparatus; light enters through our eyes; heat permeates our body; a subtle agent may circulate through our nerves. Macrocosm, microcosm.”<sup>180</sup>



**Fig. 25. Moritz von Schwind (1804–71)**  
*Das organische Leben in der Natur*  
Cover of *Fliegende Blätter* 6, no. 144 (1848)



**Fig. 26. Edgar Degas (1834–1917)**  
*Landscape (Cliffs)*, 1892, pastel, 42 × 55 cm (16 1/8 × 21 5/8 in.)  
Geneva, Collection Jan and Marie-Anne Krugier-Poniatowski

Fechner quoted Goethe and Humboldt, among others, but not Carus, whose views on “earth-life” he evidently did not use. Remarkably, even in Charles Blanc’s systematic manual of drawing, *Grammaire des arts du dessin* (1867), the same view of the correspondence between earth and man reappears. Man is “the intelligent abstract of the world,” according to Blanc, who continues:

His skeleton is the image of those rocks that are the bones of the earth. His bony framework is joined by nerves, which, like metals, are subject to the action of electricity; it is clothed in muscles, which, by their convexities and concavities, remind us of mountains and valleys; and his whole body is watered by rivulets of purple which transpire through the skin as rivers transpire through the surface of the globe. Finally, the hair that shades the organ of thought is, in Herder’s poetic expression, an emblem of the sacred groves where once the mysteries were celebrated. Man, considered in his organic life, is thus an abstract of the universe.<sup>181</sup>

Counterparts to Fechner’s and Blanc’s ideas are to be found in anthropomorphic landscape paintings, a few examples of which are known from the second half of the nineteenth century. Gustave Courbet (1819–77), Arnold Böcklin (1827–1901), and Emil Nolde (1857–1956) made attempts in this direction — as did Edgar Degas (1834–1917), in his extraordinary pastel *Cliffs* (circa 1890–92; fig. 26), in which the contours of the terrain generate the earth figure of a woman, her skull being a rocky coastal promontory.<sup>182</sup>

By the end of the nineteenth century Carus was forgotten. The exhibition in Berlin in 1906 — which had the effect, among others, of reviving awareness of Friedrich as a painter — included two paintings by Carus.<sup>183</sup> One year later Alfred Peltzer published the first art historical discussion of Carus’s *Letters on Landscape Painting*, in a sixty-seven-page booklet prefaced with Carus’s prophecy that there would one day be landscape paintings of a higher beauty, in which “nature will appear in its higher truth, as it is seen in the mind’s eye.”<sup>184</sup> Peltzer believed that Carus’s prophecy had been fulfilled in the art of Arnold Böcklin (1827–1901) and of Hans Thoma (1839–1924), the dedicatee of his essay. Two decades later, in 1927, Kurt Gerstenberg brought out his edition of *Nine Letters on Landscape Painting*, which was reissued by a different publisher in 1947.<sup>185</sup> In 1972 Dorothea Kuhn wrote an intelligent commentary for a facsimile reprint of the second (1835) edition of *Letters on Landscape Painting*.<sup>186</sup> A French translation of the work appeared in 1983, and an Italian translation in 1991.<sup>187</sup> The only English translations to date are of a number of individual letters.<sup>188</sup>

Carus’s reputation has always stood highest among students of anthroposophy. As a “Goetheanist,” he was ripe for enlistment under the banner of theosophical doctrine, especially in view of his theory of “earth-life.” Rudolf Steiner (1861–1925) planned a new edition of *Zwölf Briefe über das Erdleben*, and this was completed by Christoph Bernoulli and Hans Kern in 1926.<sup>189</sup> In 1986 Ekkehard Meffert published another edition of *Zwölf Briefe*

*über das Erdleben* and a biography of Carus written from an anthroposophical viewpoint.<sup>190</sup>

As Werner Busch has pointed out, Carus's principal work on psychology, *Psyche* (1846), mediates between Schelling's world soul theory and the psychoanalysis of Sigmund Freud. On the one hand, Carus is numbered among the precursors of depth psychology; on the other, *Psyche*, with its theory of the "unconscious" as a "life force," seems to live on (in the context of the anthroposophical response to Carus) in the work of the artist Joseph Beuys (1921–86).<sup>191</sup>

## Notes

Julia Gelshorn has rendered me invaluable assistance with literary research. I have been able to discuss the project with Professor Werner Busch, of Berlin, who has also kindly taken the trouble to review the manuscript. Thanks are due to him for his many suggestions.

1. Carl Gustav Carus, *Lebenserinnerungen und Denkwürdigkeiten* (Leipzig: Brockhaus, 1865–66), 1:181: "Es trat in diesen Briefen eine eigenthümliche Vermählung von Wissenschaft und Kunst hervor, und dies ist es auch jedenfalls, wodurch ihnen eine bleibende Stellung in der Literatur erhalten werden wird. Das, was um jene Zeit Schelling durch den Begriff der *Weltseele* auszusprechen suchte, es war recht eigentlich der Cardinalpunkt, um welchen sich diese Gedankenzüge bewegten." See also his later remark in the same text (3:176) concerning "die eigentliche Mission dieses Begründers der Naturphilosophie . . . , nämlich die Lehre von dem organischen Zusammenhange des Ganzen, wie sie sich in seinem Begriffe der *Weltseele* ausdrückt" (the true mission of this founder of nature philosophy . . . , namely, the doctrine of the organic cohesion of the whole, as expressed in his concept of the world soul). Unless otherwise noted, all translations are by David Britt.

2. Carus, *Lebenserinnerungen und Denkwürdigkeiten* (note 1), 1:67–75, esp. 1:69: "neues eigenthümliches und bedeutungsvolles Princip. . . . Dieses Princip war *das einer höhern Einheit*, hervorgegangen im Lichte der damals zuerst sich geltend machenden Naturphilosophie."

3. Carus, *Lebenserinnerungen und Denkwürdigkeiten* (note 1), 1:70–71: "als der bereits von vielen Philosophen des Alterthums geahnte Gedanke von der innern nothwendigen und unerlaßlichen Verbindung des Weltgebäudes zu einem einzigen unendlichen organischen Ganzen, mit *einem Worte der Gedanke von der Weltseele*, durch Schelling's damals gross und lichtvoll hervortretenden Geist zuerst wieder in die Wissenschaft eindrang."

4. Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph von Schelling, *Ideen zu einer Philosophie der Natur, als Einleitung in das Studium dieser Wissenschaft* [1797; 2d ed., 1803], pt. 1, vol. 2 (1857) of idem, *Sämmtliche Werke* (Stuttgart: J. G. Cotta, 1856–61), 1–343; Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph von Schelling, *Von der Weltseele: Eine Hypothese der höheren Physik zur Erklärung des allgemeinen Organismus, nebst einer Abhandlung über das Verhältniß des Realen und Idealen in der Natur; oder, Entwicklung der ersten Grundsätze der Naturphilosophie an den Principien der Schwere und des Lichts* [1798; 2d ed., 1806;

3d ed., 1809], pt. 1, vol. 2 (1857) of idem, *Sämmtliche Werke* (Stuttgart: J. G. Cotta, 1856–61), 345–583. Schelling taught at the Universität Jena from 1798 through 1804, initially alongside Johann Gottlieb Fichte (1762–1814), who was, however, dismissed in 1799 in the aftermath of the “atheism controversy.” In 1803 Schelling went to Würzburg for a short time; in 1806 he moved to the Königlich-Bayerische Akademie der bildenden Künste (Royal Bavarian academy of fine arts) in Munich, to become its secretary general. In 1827 he became full professor of philosophy at the newly founded Universität München; and in 1841 he accepted an invitation to transfer to Berlin.

5. Schelling, *Von der Weltseele* (note 4): “[führt] alle Erscheinungen in der Welt in den ewigen Kreislauf zurück” (p. 381); “Diese beiden streitenden Kräfte zugleich in der Einheit und im Conflict vorgestellt, führen auf die Idee eines *organisirenden*, die Welt zum *System* bildenden *Princips*. Ein solches wollten vielleicht die Alten durch die *Weltseele* andeuten (p. 381).

6. Schelling, “Vorrede zur ersten Auflage,” *Von der Weltseele* (note 4): “Idee der Natur als eines Ganzen . . . Mechanismus und Organismus” (p. 348); “unendlich kleine gerade Linien in der allgemeinen Kreislinie des Organismus” (p. 350).

7. Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph von Schelling, “Bruno; oder, Über das göttliche und natürliche Princip der Dinge” [1802], in idem, *Sämmtliche Werke* (Stuttgart: J. G. Cotta, 1856–61), 4:213–332, esp. 258–64. In Germany, before Schelling, Friedrich Heinrich Jacobi (1743–1819) had drawn attention to Bruno in his *Über die Lehre des Spinoza, in Briefen an den Herrn Moses Mendelssohn* (Breslau: Gottlob Löwe, 1785; reprint, Brussels: Culture & Civilisation, 1968).

8. Carus, *Lebenserinnerungen und Denkwürdigkeiten* (note 1), 1:71: “vielfältigen Ueberstürzungen und Uebertreibungen.” Gotthilf Heinrich Schubert, *Ansichten von der Nachtseite der Naturwissenschaft* (Dresden: Arnoldische Buchhandlung, 1808; reprint, Eschborn: Dietmar Klotz, 1992): “Seinem Freunde und Zuhörer Herrn J. Gerhard von Kugelgen, berühmten Historienmaler.” J. Gerhard von Kugelgen (1772–1820), a well-known portrait painter, moved to Dresden in 1805 and became a professor at the Kunstakademie in 1814. In the 10 and 21 March 1809 issues of *Zeitung für die elegante Welt* he published a defense of Caspar David Friedrich against the onslaught that F. W. B. Ramdohr published there; see Caspar David Friedrich, *Caspar David Friedrich in Briefen und Bekenntnissen*, ed. Sigrid Hinz (Berlin: Henschelverlag Kunst & Gesellschaft, 1984), 175–77, 254. Carus does not seem to have attempted to make contact with Kugelgen.

9. Schubert, *Ansichten von der Nachtseite der Naturwissenschaft* (note 8), 3: “Das älteste Verhältnis des Menschen zu der Natur, die lebendige Harmonie des Einzelnen mit dem Ganzen, der Zusammenhang eines jetzigen Daseyns mit einem zukünftigen höheren, und wie sich der Keim des neuen zukünftigen Lebens in der Mitte des jetzigen allmählig entfalte.” On Schubert, see Alice Rössler, ed., *Gotthilf Heinrich Schubert: Gedenkschrift zum 200. Geburtstag des romantischen Naturforschers* (Erlangen: Universitätsbund, 1980).

10. Carus, *Lebenserinnerungen und Denkwürdigkeiten* (note 1): “Mit großen gewaltigen Zügen wagte er es zuerst in die chaotische Mannichfaltigkeit von Natur-Formen und -Thatsachen einen einzigen Mittelpunkt, ein einziges neues belebendes Princip einzuführen, und dies Princip war das genetische, das Princip der Entwicke-

lung” (1:71–72); see also 1:188–95. Lorenz Oken came to Jena as an associate professor of medicine in 1807, and in 1812 he was appointed to the full chair of natural science. From 1816 until 1848 he edited the periodical *Isis*, resigning his university post in Jena for the sake of press freedom. In 1828 he was appointed to the newly founded Universität München, and in 1832 he transferred to the Universität Zürich; see Wolfgang Pross, “Lorenz Oken: Naturforschung zwischen Naturphilosophie und Naturwissenschaft,” in Nicolas Saul, ed., *Die deutsche literarische Romantik und die Wissenschaften* (Munich: Iudicium, 1991), 44–71.

11. Carl Gustav Carus, *Neun Briefe über Landschaftsmalerei, geschrieben in den Jahren 1815–1824: Zuvor ein Brief von Goethe als Einleitung* (Leipzig: Gerhard Fleischer, 1831); the first edition dates the writing to the years 1815–24.

12. Carus’s letters to Regis are in the Sächsische Landesbibliothek, Dresden: Mscr.dresd.h 45, 2 vols. (Briefe 1–369, 1814–1847); Mscr.h 45, vol. 4, Nachträge (Briefe 105–14); and Preußische Staatsbibliothek, Berlin acc.Ms. 9796 (Briefe 3–63, 1847–56). See Marianne Prause, “Carl Gustav Carus als Maler” (Ph.D. diss., Universität Köln, 1963), 150.

13. Carus, *Lebenserinnerungen und Denkwürdigkeiten* (note 1), 1:76.

14. Carus, *Lebenserinnerungen und Denkwürdigkeiten* (note 1), 1:165–66. Klengel became associate professor of landscape painting in 1800 and full professor in 1816.

15. Marianne Prause, *Carl Gustav Carus: Leben und Werk* (Berlin: Deutscher Verlag für Kunstwissenschaft, 1968), 95 (cat. no. 39): *Eingang zur Unterwelt* (Entrance to the underworld); 112–13 (cat. no. 100): *Felsenlandschaft mit ruhendem Kind und Kapelle* (Rocky landscape with recumbent child and chapel); 167 (cat. no. 373): *Wald-einsamkeit* (Woodland solitude); and 167–68 (cat. no. 374): *Weide im Herbstnebel* (Willow in autumn mist).

16. Carus, *Lebenserinnerungen und Denkwürdigkeiten* (note 1), 1:205, writes of the year 1818: “Was meinen verewigten Freund Kaspar David Friedrich betrifft, wo waren wir schon um das Jahr 1818 einander näher gekommen” (As for my late friend Caspar David Friedrich, we became close friends as early as 1818 or thereabouts). This statement has been taken to mean that Carus first met Friedrich in 1818; clearly, however, it means that they got to know each other *better* at that time. For the correction, see Prause, “Carl Gustav Carus als Maler” (note 12), 13–14.

17. Carl Gustav Carus, “Friedrich der Landschaftsmaler, mit Fragmenten aus nachgelassenen Papieren desselben,” *Kunst-Blatt*, no. 86 (27 October 1840): 357–58; no. 87 (29 October 1840): 362–63, esp. 357: “Errettung und Erhebung... daß in der Landschaftsmalerei namentlich *Friedrich* es war, welcher mit einem durchaus tief sinnigen und energischen Geiste, auf absolut originale Weise, in den Wust des Alltäglichen, Prosaischen, Abgestandenen hineingriff, und, indem er ihn mit einer herben Melancholie niederschlug, aus dessen Mitte eine eigenthümlich neue, leuchtende poetische Richtung hervorhob.”

18. Carus, *Lebenserinnerungen und Denkwürdigkeiten* (note 1): “eine recht scharfgezeichnete norddeutsche Natur mit blondem Haar und Backenbart” (1:206); “eigenen melancholischen Ausdruck in seinem meist bleichen Gesicht” (1:206); “Kam nun hinzu ein sehr hoher Begriff von der Kunst, ein an sich düsteres Naturell und eine aus beiden hervorgehende tiefe Unzufriedenheit mit seinen eigenen Leistungen, so begriff

man leicht, wie er einst wirklich zu einem Versuche des Selbstmords sich verleitet finden konnte” (1:206).

19. Carus, *Lebenserinnerungen und Denkwürdigkeiten* (note 1), 1:207: “übrigens brütete er in seinem stark beschatteten Zimmer fast fortwährend über seinen Kunstschöpfungen.”

20. Carus, *Lebenserinnerungen und Denkwürdigkeiten* (note 1), 1:196–97: “Auch Thorvaldsen sah es und saß lange sinnend davor. Ihn erfaßte sichtbar die Idee desselben, und er ergänzte im Geiste, was die Ausführung noch hier und da mangelhaft zurückgelassen hatte. Natürlich konnte es nicht fehlen, daß eine solche Theilnahme mich eigenthümlich ermuthigte. . . . Ich ahnte damals noch nicht, daß ich zehn Jahre später diesen Heros mitten unter seinen Schöpfungen in Rom und unter so viel andern Verhältnissen wiedersehen sollte! Indess er hatte schon hier mächtig und nachhaltig auf mich gewirkt.” Carus locates this surprise visit from Thorvaldsen in 1818 or shortly afterwards, but the biography of Thorvaldsen affords only one possible dating, which is September 1820. The correct dating is given in Prause, *Carl Gustav Carus* (note 15), 15, 60 n. 21, with reference to Carus’s letter no. 49 to Regis of 12 October 1820. On *Marius on the Ruins of Carthage*, 1818, see Prause, *Carl Gustav Carus* (note 15), 87–88 (cat. no. 9).

21. Carl Gustav Carus, *Reise durch Deutschland, Italien und die Schweiz im Jahre 1828* (Leipzig: Gerhard Fleischer, 1835), 1:348–50, esp. 350: “Dabei haben den einfachen, tüchtigen Mann seine Schüler sehr lieb und ausserdem ist er noch allen jungen deutschen Malern ein wahrer Schutz und Trost”; see also 2:22. On Thorvaldsen in Rome, see Ursula Peters, ed., *Künstlerleben in Rom: Bertel Thorvaldsen (1770–1844): Der dänische Bildhauer und seine deutschen Freunde*, exh. cat. (Nuremberg: Verlag des Germanischen Nationalmuseums, 1991).

22. Carus, *Lebenserinnerungen und Denkwürdigkeiten* (note 1), 1:74–75, 127–28, 169–70; on the effect of Thorvaldsen’s visit, see also 1:196–97.

23. Carus, *Lebenserinnerungen und Denkwürdigkeiten* (note 1): “tiefmelancholische Stimmung” (1:127); “falsche Umnachtungen” (1:128); “das Ausführen und Darlegen derselben durch die Entwerfung eines Kunstwerks; eines Kunstwerks, welches gleichsam als Ausdruck und Gleichniß des gesammten Seelenzustandes dem Geiste dann wirklich einen Spiegel vorzuhalten vermag” (1:128). In Carus’s view, this is more effective than the often recommended habit of writing down one’s ideas.

24. Carus, *Lebenserinnerungen und Denkwürdigkeiten* (note 1), 1:169–70: “Es liegt etwas Wunderbares in jener Macht der Kunst, dem Menschen sein eigenes Innere im Aeussern gegenständlich werden zu lassen! So zog es mich also auch jetzt, wie im Frühjahr 1814, nach den schweren Kriegs- und Krankheitsstürmen, in allen Mussestunden wieder an die Staffelei, und je mehr die schwere Trübung des Innern und der einsame tiefe Schmerz in irgendeinem sinnigen dunkeln Bilde offenbar wurde, und wie in einer geheimnissvollen Spiegelung dort widerschien, um so mehr kehrte der Friede wieder ein.”

25. On the portrait of his son, see Prause, *Carl Gustav Carus* (note 15), 89 (no. 15). For the names of the fictitious writer and addressee of the letters, see the letter from Carus to Regis, 26 February 1831: “Carus an Regis, eine Brieffolge 1814–1847” (nos. 1–369), no. 152, Dresden, Sächsische Landesbibliothek; see Prause, “Carl Gustav Carus als Maler” (note 12), 13, 150.



26. Carus, *Lebenserinnerungen und Denkwürdigkeiten* (note 1), 1:199–200.
27. Carl Gustav Carus, *Nine Letters on Landscape Painting*, in this volume, 77; Carus, *Neun Briefe über Landschaftsmalerei* (note 11), vi: “Sie sind der treue Abdruck eines Gemüthes, dem neben mannigfaltigen ernsten Bestrebungen und schweren Pflichten die Kunst eine treue Freundin und stille Erheiterung gewesen ist.”
28. Carus, *Nine Letters on Landscape Painting* (note 27), 77; Carus, *Neun Briefe über Landschaftsmalerei* (note 11), iv: “man wird aber auch finden, dass während der dazwischenliegenden Zeit manche Blüte unsres Geistes abgewelkt ist, indeß vielleicht ebendarum in entgegengesetzter Richtung neue Blüten hervorgetrieben haben.”
29. Prause, “Carl Gustav Carus als Maler” (note 12), 68–70.
30. Carus, *Nine Letters on Landscape Painting* (note 27), 113; Carus, *Neun Briefe über Landschaftsmalerei* (note 11), 103: “denn ich fühlte wohl, daß ich etwas Schweres unternommen hatte, als ich versprach: fernerhin meine Gedanken darüber Dir vorzulegen, wie ein landschaftliches bedeutendes Kunstwerk in jetziger und künftiger Zeit, trotz der Menge von Vorbildern, welche ewig irre leiten, ewig uns in ihren Kreis zu ziehen suchen, entstehen könnte.”
31. Carus, *Lebenserinnerungen und Denkwürdigkeiten* (note 1), 1:76.
32. Carus, *Lebenserinnerungen und Denkwürdigkeiten* (note 1), 1:185, 195; see the letter from Carus to Regis, no. 2, Dresden, Sächsische Landesbibliothek, Mscr. dresd. h 45, vol. 1; reprinted in part in Wolfgang Genschorek, *Carl Gustav Carus: Arzt, Künstler, Naturforscher* (Leipzig: Hirzel & Teubner, 1983), 58–59.
33. Carus, *Lebenserinnerungen und Denkwürdigkeiten* (note 1), 1:202–5. On Abraham Gottlieb Werner, see Wolf von Engelhardt, “Neptunismus und Plutonismus,” *Fortschritte der Mineralogie* 60, no. 1 (1982): 21–43; and Martin Guntau, *Abraham Gottlob Werner* (Leipzig: Teubner, 1984).
34. Carus, *Lebenserinnerungen und Denkwürdigkeiten* (note 1), 2:9–13; see also 2:266, where Carus laments that he never followed up any of the later invitations that he received to visit Goethe.
35. The correspondence between Goethe and Carus is in the Goethe-Schiller-Archiv in Weimar.
36. Carus, *Nine Letters on Landscape Painting* (note 27), 79; Carus, *Neun Briefe über Landschaftsmalerei* (note 11), vii–ix. All subsequent editions also include Goethe’s letter as a foreword.
37. Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, “Über die Gemälde des Herrn Dr. Carus auf der Ausstellung des Großherzogl. Zeicheninstituts zu Weimar im September 1824,” *Über Kunst und Alterthum* 5, no. 2 (1825): 180–83, esp. 180: “Das Gestein und dessen eigentümlicher Charakter ist vortrefflich mit lobenswürdiger Wahrheit dargestellt, so in Hinsicht auf Gestalt wie auf Behandlung und Farbe.” See Prause, *Carl Gustav Carus* (note 15), 162 (cat. no. 350) and 104–5 (cat. no. 72). In the drawing *Geognostic Landscape: Katzenköpfe near Zittau* the location is now thought to be wrongly identified. The subject is clearly the Steinberg, near Bertsdorf, which Carus saw on his Riesengebirge trip from near Waltersdorf; see Albrecht Flieger, “Der Steinberg bei Bertsdorf: Lokalisierung des Bildes ‘Geognostische Landschaft’ von Carl Gustav Carus,” *Work in Progress*, no. 5 (1995): 19–33.
38. Carus, *Lebenserinnerungen und Denkwürdigkeiten* (note 1), 1:303–7.

39. Carus, *Lebenserinnerungen und Denkwürdigkeiten* (note 1): “plutonischen Erhebungen” (p. 298); “grossen ruhigen Linien des granitischen Erzgebirges” (p. 298); “Physiognomik der Gebirge” (p. 298).

40. Carus, *Lebenserinnerungen und Denkwürdigkeiten* (note 1): “Lebendigkeit des Geistes” (1:197); “vollendete Feinheit des Hofmannes bei einer solchen Tiefe des Wissens und solchem Reichthum von Erfahrungen” (1:197).

41. Carus, *Lebenserinnerungen und Denkwürdigkeiten* (note 1), 1:197–98: “Auch ich sollte von ihm in folgenden Jahren und namentlich bei einem spätern Aufenthalte in Paris, mannichfaltige Förderungen dieser Art erfahren, und in jenen ersten frühern Jahren fühlte ich mich wesentlich gehoben und in meinen Bestrebungen ermuthigt, daß ein so Erfahrener und mit Recht Gerühmter an meinen Arbeiten eine wiederholte und aufrichtige Theilnahme bezeugte.” The visit to Paris took place in 1835, and Carus published his notes one year later: Carl Gustav Carus, *Paris und die Rheingegenden: Tagebuch einer Reise im Jahre 1835*, 2 parts (Leipzig: Gerhard Fleischer, 1836).

42. Salomon Gessner, letter to Johann Caspar Füssli on landscape painting, originally published in Füssli, “Vorrede,” *Geschichte der besten Künstler der Schweiz* (Zurich: Orell, Gessner & Comp., 1770–72), 3:xxxvi–lxiv; published as “Brief über die Landschaftsmahlerey,” in Gessner, *Schriften* (Zurich: Orell, Gessner, Fuessli & Cie., 1772), 4:229–73; facsimile reprint in Gessner, *Sämtliche Schriften*, ed. Martin Bircher, 3 vols. (Zurich: Orell Füssli, 1974).

43. Johann Daniel Preissler, *Gründliche Anleitung, welcher man sich im Nachzeichnen schöner Landschaften oder Prospecten bedienen kann...* (Nuremberg: Preissler, 1740). Preissler’s appendix on landscape also appeared in numerous subsequent editions.

44. Johann Georg Sulzer, s.v. “Landschaft,” in idem, *Allgemeine Theorie der schönen Künste in einzeln, nach alphabetischer Ordnung der Kunstwörter aufeinander folgenden Artikeln abgehandelt*, 2d ed. (Leipzig: Weidmannsche Buchhandlung, 1792–99; reprint, Hildesheim: Olms, 1967), 3:145–54, esp. 147: “Die Mahlerey findet demnach in der leblosen Natur einen nie zu erschöpfenden Stoff, vortheilhaft auf die Gemüther der Menschen zu wirken; und der Landschaftmahler kann uns sehr vielfältig auf eine nützliche Weise vergnügen; fürnehmlich, wenn er mit den höhern Kräften seiner Kunst bekannt, sittliche und leidenschaftliche Gegenstände mit den Szenen der leblosen Natur verbindet.” This article first appeared in the first edition: Sulzer, *Allgemeine Theorie der schönen Künste* (Leipzig: M. G. Weidemanns Erben und Reich, 1771–74), 2:653–76. The second, expanded edition was revised by Christian Friedrich von Blankenburg.

45. Sulzer, “Landschaft” (note 44), 3:148: “Hat er aber Verstand und Empfindung genug, den Geist und die Seele der vor ihm liegenden Materie zu empfinden, so wird er ohne Mühe, um sie auch uns desto lebhafter fühlen zu lassen, sittliche Gegenstände seiner eigenen Erfindung einmischen können.”

46. André Félibien, “Préface,” *Conférences de l’Académie royale de peinture et de sculpture, pendant l’année 1667* (Paris: Frederic Leonard, 1669), fol. e iij v. – e iv v.

47. Christian Ludwig von Hagedorn, *Betrachtungen über die Mahlerey* (Leipzig: Johann Wendler, 1762; reprint, Hildesheim: Olms, 1997), 1:334–400. On Hagedorn, see Claudia Susannah Cremer, “Hagedorns Geschmack: Studien zur Kunstkennerchaft in Deutschland im 18. Jahrhundert” (Ph.D. diss., Universität Bonn, 1989).

48. Hagedorn, *Betrachtungen über die Mahlerey* (note 47), 1:334–400. Gérard de Lairesse, *Großes Mahler-Buch* (Nuremberg: n.p., 1728–30).

49. Joachim von Sandrart, “Vom Landschaft-Mahlen,” *L’Academia todesca della architectura, scultura & pittura; oder, Teutsche Academie der edlen Bau- Bild- und Mahlerey-Künste...* (Nuremberg: Joachim von Sandrart, 1675–79), 1:70–71. Carel van Mander, *Den grondt der edel vry schilder-const* (Haarlem: Paschier van Wesbusch, 1604); and *Het schilderboeck* (Amsterdam: Jacob Pieters Wachter, 1618), fol. 1–22; reprint of the Haarlem 1604 ed., Karl van Mander, *Den grondt der edel vry schilder-const*, ed. Hessel Miedema, 2 vols. (Utrecht: Dekker & Gumbert, 1973).

50. Roger de Piles, *Cours de peinture par principes* (Paris: Jacques Estienne, 1708; reprint, Geneva: Slatkine, 1969), 200–59; first translated into German as *Einleitung in die Malerey aus Grundsätzen* (Leipzig: Johann Gottfried Dyck, 1760). Hagedorn, *Betrachtungen über die Mahlerey* (note 47), chap. 27, 1:358–68.

51. Jean Locquin, *Catalogue raisonné de l’œuvre de Jean-Baptiste Oudry, peintre du roi, 1686–1755* (Paris: H. Champion, 1912; reprint, Paris: Nobelet, 1968).

52. Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Discours qui a remporté le prix à l’Académie de Dijon en l’année 1750, sur cette question proposée par la même Académie: si le rétablissement des sciences & des arts a contribué à épurer les mœurs* (Geneva: Barillot & Fils, 1750); Oskar Bätschmann, *Entfernung der Natur: Landschaftsmalerei, 1750–1920* (Cologne: DuMont, 1989), 11–44; and Pross, “Lorenz Oken” (note 10).

53. Denis Diderot, *Salons*, ed. Jean Seznec and Jean Adhémar (Oxford: Clarendon, 1957–67), 3:129–67, esp. 139: “Là, nous allons contrefaire un moment le rôle du sauvage, esclaves des usages, des passions, jouer la pantomime de l’homme de Nature. Dans l’impossibilité de nous livrer aux fonctions et aux amusemens de la vie champêtre, d’errer dans une campagne, de suivre un troupeau, d’habiter une chaumière, nous invitons à prix d’or et d’argent le pinceau des Wouwermans, de Berghem ou de Vernet à nous retracer les mœurs et l’histoire de nos anciens aïeux. Et les murs de nos somptueuses et maussades demeures se couvrent des images d’un bonheur que nous regrettons.” *Diderot et l’art de Boucher à David: Les Salons, 1759–1781*, exh. cat. (Paris: Ministère de la culture, Éditions de la Réunion des musées nationaux, 1984), 405–9.

54. The Vernet paintings to which Diderot refers in this imaginary promenade are lost; two of them were engraved by Jacques-Philippe Le Bas and exhibited in the Salon of 1771. See *Diderot et l’art de Boucher à David* (note 53), 405–9.

55. Johann Heinrich Füssli, s.v. “Erhaben,” in Johann Georg Sulzer, *Allgemeine Theorie der schönen Künste in einzeln, nach alphabetischer Ordnung der Kunstwörter aufeinander folgenden Artikeln abgehandelt*, 2d ed. (Leipzig: Weidmannsche Buchhandlung, 1792–99; reprint, Hildesheim: Olms, 1967), 1:341–49, esp. 341: “Das bloß Schöne und Gute in der Natur und in der Kunst, gefällt, ist angenehm oder ergötzend; es macht einen sanften Eindruck, den wir ruhig genießen; aber das Erhabene wirkt mit starken Schlägen, ist hinreißend und ergreift das Gemüth unwiderstehlich. . . . Es ist demnach in der Kunst das Höchste.”

56. Edmund Burke, *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful* (London: R. & J. Dodsley, 1757). On the sublime, see also Carsten Zelle, “Angenehmes Grauen”: *Literaturhistorische Beiträge zur Ästhetik des Schrecklichen im achtzehnten Jahrhundert* (Hamburg: Meiner, 1987); Christian Begemann,

*Furcht und Angst im Prozess der Aufklärung* (Frankfurt am Main: Athenäum, 1987); Christine Pries, ed., *Das Erhabene: Zwischen Grenzerfahrung und Größenwahn* (Weinheim: VCH, Acta Humaniora, 1989); and Gernot Böhme and Hartmut Böhme, *Das Andere der Vernunft: Zur Entwicklung von Rationalitätsstrukturen am Beispiel Kants* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1985), 215–24.

57. Diderot, *Salons* (note 53), 3:162–67; Hugh Honour, *Romanticism* (New York: Harper & Row, 1979), esp. chap. 2: “The Morality of Landscape,” 57–118; Willi Raeber, *Caspar Wolf, 1735–1783: Sein Leben und sein Werk, ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Schweizer Malerei des 18. Jahrhunderts* (Munich: Prestel, 1979); and Walter Amstutz, ed., *Turner in Switzerland* (Dubendorf: De Clivo Press, 1976).

58. Theodor Musper, “Das Reiseskizzenbuch von Josef Anton Koch aus dem Jahre 1791,” *Jahrbuch der Preussischen Kunstsammlungen* 56 (1935): 167–93.

59. Joshua Reynolds, *Discourses on Art*, ed. Robert R. Wark (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1975), 70.

60. See Reynolds, “Discourse IV,” *Discourses on Art* (note 59), 55–73.

61. Richard Earlom, *Liber Veritatis; or, A Collection of Prints after the Original Designs of Claude le Lorrain*, 3 vols. (London: Boydell, 1777).

62. On the reception of Claude Lorrain, see Marcel Roethlisberger et al., *Im Licht von Claude Lorrain: Landschaftsmalerei aus drei Jahrhunderten*, exh. cat. (Munich: Hirmer, 1983).

63. Friedrich Schlegel, “Nachtrag italiänischer Gemälde” [1803], in *Kritische Ausgabe seiner Werke*, ed. Ernst Behler (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 1959), 461–78, esp. 473–74: “Denn hier ist es wirklich eine Kunstanschauung, welche uns das Gemälde gewährt; dagegen in jener andern, umfassenden, dem Anschein nach viel grossartigeren Gattung, in welcher Claude Lorrain so unübertrefflich und der Erste geblieben ist, wo der Maler mit der Natur selbst, in der Nachbildung ihrer höchsten Prachtszenen wetteifern will, die Naturbewunderung jede andre Empfindung mit sich fortreißt, und auch das reine Kunstgefühl übertäubt; während auf der andern Seite die Herrlichkeit der Natur doch durch keine Kunst jemals erreicht werden kann.”

64. Joseph Friedrich, Freiherr zu Racknitz, *Briefe über die Kunst an eine Freundin* (Dresden: Carl Christian Meinhold, 1792), v–viii: “[eines] bloßen Dilettanten” (p. vii); “[als hätte ich] ein gelehrtes und vollständiges Werk über die bildenden Künste schreiben wollen” (p. vii).

65. Racknitz, *Briefe* (note 64), 27: “die Kunst, sichtbare Gegenstände auf flachem Grunde vermittelt Zeichnung und Farben nachzuahmen.”

66. Racknitz, *Briefe* (note 64), 42; the eighth through the tenth letters of the first series constitute an explanation of this “Entwurf,” 34–56.

67. Pierre-Henri de Valenciennes, *Éléments de perspective pratique, à l’usage des artistes, suivis de réflexions et conseils à un élève sur la peinture, et particulièrement sur le genre du paysage* (Paris: the author, year VIII [1800]; reprint, Geneva: Minkoff Reprint, 1973); first translated into German as *Praktische Anleitung zur Linear- und Luftperspektive für Zeichner und Mahler*, trans. Johann Heinrich Meynier (Hof: Gottfried Adolph Grau, 1803).

68. Valenciennes, *Éléments de perspective pratique* (note 67), 380–86.

69. Valenciennes, *Éléments de perspective pratique* (note 67), 405, 407:

Nous avons déjà fait observer que les effets de la Nature ne sont presque jamais les mêmes aux mêmes instans ou à pareille heure. Ces variations dépendent d'une multitude de circonstances, telles que la lumière plus ou moins pure, la quantité de vapeurs de l'atmosphère, le vent, la pluie, les sites plus ou moins élevés, les différens reflets des nuages causés par leur couleur, leur légèreté ou leur épaisseur, enfin par un nombre infini de causes qu'il seroit impossible d'indiquer, sur-tout dans un ouvrage aussi peu étendu que celui-ci. Mais ce que nous avons dit doit suffire pour prouver qu'il est absurde à un Artiste de passer toute une journée à copier d'après Nature une seule vue. En conséquence, les Elèves qui voudront faire des études d'après nature, avec fruit, doivent s'y prendre différemment. Il faut d'abord se borner à ne copier, le mieux possible, que les tons principaux de la Nature dans l'effet que l'on choisit ; commencer son étude par le ciel, qui donne le ton des fonds; ceux-ci, celui des plans qui leur sont liés, et venir progressivement jusques sur les devants, qui se trouvent en conséquence toujours d'accord avec le ciel qui a servi à créer le ton local. On sent bien qu'en suivant cette marche, il est impossible de rien détailler, car toute étude d'après nature doit être faite rigoureusement dans l'intervalle de deux heures au plus: et si c'est un effet du soleil levant ou couchant, il n'y faut pas mettre plus d'une demi-heure.

70. Sandrart, "Vom Landschaft-Mahlen" (note 49), 70–71:

Endlich aber, als mein nächster Nachbar und Hausgenoss zu Rom, der berühmte Claudius Gilli, sonst Loraines genant, immer mit ins Feld wolte, um nach dem Leben zu zeichnen, aber hierzu von der Natur gar nicht begünstet war, hingegen zum Nachmahlen eine sonderbare Fähigkeit hatte: als haben wir ursach genommen [an statt des Zeichnens oder Tuschens mit schwarzer Kreide und dem Pense] in offnem Feld, zu Tivoli, Frescada, Subiaca, und anderer Orten, auch als S. Benedetto, die Berge, Grotten, Thäler und Einöden, die abscheuliche Wasserfälle der Tyber, den Tempel der Sibylla, und dergleichen, mit Farben, auf gegründet Papier und Tücher völlig nach dem Leben auszumahlen. Dieses ist, meines darfürhaltens, die beste Manier, dem Verstande die Warheit eigentlich einzudrucken: weil gleichsam dadurch Leib und Seele zusammen gebracht wird.

(But in the end, since my nearest neighbor and housemate at Rome, the celebrated Claudius Gilli, otherwise known as Loraines, always wanted to come with me into the country to draw from life, but lacked the natural talent for it, although he had a singular ability for painting what he saw, we took occasion (instead of drawing or making washes with black chalk and the brush) to paint in the open—at Tivoli, Frescada, Subiaca, and elsewhere, also at S. Benedetto—the hills, caves, valleys, and wildernesses, the horrid waterfalls of the Tiber, the temple of the Sibyl, and the like, with colors, on grounded paper and canvases, entirely from life. I consider that this is the best way to impress the truth on the mind, because it brings body and soul, as it were, together.)

See also Sandrart, "Vom Landschaft-Mahlen" (note 49), 332. See Philip Conisbee, "Pre-Romantic *Plein-air* Painting," *Art History* 2 (1979): 413–28; Werner Busch, "Die autonome Ölskizze in der Landschaftsmalerei: Der wahr- und für wahr genommene Ausschnitt aus Zeit und Raum," *Pantheon* 61, no. 2 (1983): 126–33; and Philip

Conisbee, Sarah Faunce, and Jeremy Strick, eds., *In the Light of Italy: Corot and Early Open-Air Painting*, exh. cat. (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1996).

71. Lynda Fairbairn, comp., *Paint and Painting: An Exhibition and Working Studio Sponsored by Winsor & Newton to Celebrate Their 150th Anniversary* (London: Tate Gallery, 1982), 8–9, 67–69. In 1822 James Harris introduced a metal cylinder as a container for oil colors, to replace the customary pig's bladder; in 1840 Winsor & Newton patented a glass cylinder; and in 1841 an American, John G. Rand, invented the squeezable metal tube. Rand's patent was taken over by Winsor & Newton one year later ("Rand's Patent Collapsible Tubes").

72. Philippe Grunchev, *Le grand prix de peinture: Les concours des Prix de Rome de 1797 à 1863* (Paris: École nationale supérieure des Beaux-Arts, 1983); and Pierre Miquel, *Le paysage français au XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle, 1824–1874: L'école de la nature*, 3 vols. (Mauves-la-Jolie: Éditions Martinelle, 1975). On the institution of the Rome Prize for landscape painting, see Albert Boime, *The Academy and French Painting in the Nineteenth Century* (London: Phaidon, 1971).

73. Christian August Semler, *Untersuchungen über die höchste Vollkommenheit in den Werken der Landschaftsmalerei: Für Freunde der Kunst und der schönen Natur*, 2 vols. (Leipzig: Schäfer, 1800); Christian August Semler, "Bruchstücke aus einem Werke über die Landschaftsmalerei," *Der Kosmopolit: Eine Monatsschrift zur Beförderung wahrer und allgemeiner Humanität* 2, no. 12 (1797): 507–23. See Hilmar Frank, "Die mannigfaltigen Wege zur Kunst: Romantische Kunstphilosophie in einem Schema Caspar David Friedrichs," *Idea* 10 (1991): 165–96.

74. Carl Ludwig Fernow, *Römische Studien* (Zurich: H. Gessner, 1806–8), 2:v–vi: "Dieser Zweig der Malerei, den die neuere Kunst zu einer so hohen Stufe der Vollkommenheit ausgebildet hat, dass er nur etwa noch in dem dichterischen Theile der Erfindung einer grösseren Vervollkommnung fähig seyn dürfte, hat wegen der Unbestimmtheit der Idee, die dieser Kunstart zum Grunde liegt, besondere Schwierigkeiten für die theoretische Behandlung; auch ist in der derselben bisher noch wenig geleistet worden, was dem filosofischen Forscher genügen möchte."

75. Inge Feuchtmayr, *Johann Christian Reinhart, 1761–1847: Monographie und Werkverzeichnis* (Munich: Prestel, 1975), 26–28, 86–90.

76. Fernow, *Römische Studien* (note 74): "wirklich vorhandene Gegend" (2:12); "Bild einer idealischen Naturscene der Land- oder Wasserwelt" (2:12).

77. Fernow, *Römische Studien* (note 74), 2:34–35:

Jede Darstellung der landschaftlichen Natur, wenn sie nicht Abbildung einer wirklichen Aussicht ist, sol eine Dichtung seyn; denn auch der Maler ist nur in sofern ein wahrer Künstler, als er dichtet. Ob aber seine Dichtung eine Scene aus der Wirklichkeit, oder aus der Vorzeit, oder aus der Dichterwelt ist, kan nur aus der Staffirung und dem Beiwerke erkant werden; denn die Landschaftsmalerei kan ihre idealischen Scenen nie anders als im Charakter und Stil der wirklichen Natur dichten, da weder das Einzelne noch das Ganze in ihr ein Ideal, d.h. eine solche Erhebung über das Wirkliche zuläst, wo die Natur mit der Vollkommenheit ihrer Erzeugnisse nicht hinan reicht.

78. Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, "Ruysdael als Dichter," *Morgenblatt für gebil-*

*dele Stände*, no. 107 (3 May 1816): 425–27; Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Werke*, edited under the auspices of Großherzogin Sophie von Saxe-Weimar-Eisenach (Weimar: Hermann von Böhlau, 1887–1919; reprint, Munich: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 1987), pt. 1, 48:162–68; and Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Sämtliche Werke, Briefe, Tagebücher und Gespräche*, ed. Hendrik Birus (Frankfurt am Main: Deutscher Klassiker Verlag, 1987–), 19:632–36.

79. Fernow, *Römische Studien* (note 74), 2:22: “Die Harmonie der Farben, welche über eine schöne Landschaft ausgegossen ist, macht eine ähnliche Wirkung auf das Gemüth, wie die Melodie und Harmonie in der Tonkunst.”

80. Carus, *Nine Letters on Landscape Painting* (note 27), 138; Carus, *Neun Briefe über Landschaftsmalerei* (note 11), 16–17, 131. See Alexander von Humboldt, *Ansichten der Natur* [1808], vol. 5 of idem, *Studienausgabe*, ed. Hanno Beck (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1987–97), 181: “Totaleindruck einer Gegend.” On Humboldt’s *Totaleindruck*, see Gerhard Hard, “Der ‘Totalcharakter der Landschaft’: Re-Interpretation einiger Textstellen bei Alexander von Humboldt,” *Geographische Zeitschrift* suppl. 23 (1970): 49–73.

81. The painting passed to Friederike Brun and is now in the Kunstsammlungen der Veste Coburg. In 1803 Reinhart painted a replica in a larger size, *Stormy Landscape*; see Feuchtmayr, *Johann Christian Reinhart* (note 75), 316 (cat. no. G 6), 332 (cat. no. G 68). Either the first or the second version is described in “Die Maleren in Rom,” *Kunstblatt*, no. 14 (16 February 1824): 53. See also F. Carlo Schmid, “‘Der Sturm, eine heroische, Schillern dedicirte Landschaft,’” in idem, *Naturansichten und Ideallandschaften: Die Landschaftsgraphik von Johann Christian Reinhart und seinem Umkreis* (Berlin: Gebr. Mann, 1998), 270–96.

82. Feuchtmayr, *Johann Christian Reinhart* (note 75), 139–40 (letter from Reinhart to Schiller, 8 May 1801): “Ich habe nämlich—wie ich mitunter gern etwas radire—eines meiner Gemälde in Kupfer gekrazt, und es Ihnen dedicirt, um auch in Ihrem Gedächtnis mein Bild hervorzurufen, wie das Ihrige in meinem Gedächtnis frisch und fest dasteht.” On the etching, see Feuchtmayr, *Johann Christian Reinhart* (note 75), 404–5 (cat. no. A 96); and Andreas Andresen, comp., *Die deutschen Maler-Radierer (Peintres-Graveurs) des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts, nach ihren Leben und Werken*, 5 vols. (Leipzig: Rudolph Weigel, 1866–74; reprint, Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 1971), 311–12 (no. 96).

83. Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, “Zwei Landschaften von Philipp Hackert,” *Intelligenzblatt der Jenaischen Allgemeinen Literatur-Zeitung*, nos. 19–20 (1804), cols. 151–52, 159–60: “Gemälden, welche so wie diese zwei Hackertischen Werke treu nach der Natur gemalte Aussichten darstellen, würde großes Unrecht widerfahren, wenn man sie nach dem Maßstabe beurteilen wollte, den der höchste Begriff von der Landschaftsmalerei dem Kunstrichter an die Hand gibt”; Goethe, *Werke* (note 78), pt. 1, 48:125–29; and Goethe, *Sämtliche Werke* (note 78), 18:929–31. The coauthor, if not the sole author, of the piece is thought to have been Heinrich Meyer; see Wolfgang Krönig and Reinhard Wegner, *Jakob Philipp Hackert: Der Landschaftsmaler der Goethezeit* (Cologne: Böhlau, 1994), 25 and 198 n. 22.

84. Fernow, *Römische Studien* (note 74), 2:117–18 n. On the Hackert issue, see Krönig and Wegner, *Jakob Philipp Hackert* (note 83); and esp. Verena Krieger, “Hackert in der Kunstkritik,” 171–225.

85. Philipp Otto Runge, *Briefe und Schriften*, ed. Peter Betthausen (Munich: C. H. Beck, 1982), 26 (letter to Johann Heinrich Besser, 3 June 1798): “nie etwas so im Innersten . . . ergriffen.” Ludwig Tieck, *Franz Sternbalds Wanderungen: Eine alt-deutsche Geschichte*, vol. 1 of idem, *Werke in vier Bänden*, ed. Marianne Thalmann (Munich: Winkler, 1963).

86. Philipp Otto Runge, *Hinterlassene Schriften*, ed. Daniel Runge (Hamburg: Friedrich Perthes, 1840–41), 1:7–16 (letter to his brother Daniel, 9 March 1802); and Runge, *Briefe und Schriften* (note 85), 1:71–77.

87. Runge, *Hinterlassene Schriften* (note 86), 1:14–15 (letter to his brother Daniel, 9 March 1802): “Ich glaube schwerlich, daß so etwas Schönes, wie der höchste Punct der historischen Kunst war, wieder entstehen wird, bis alle verderblichen neueren Kunstwerke einmal zu Grunde gegangen sind, es müßte denn auf einem ganz neuen Wege geschehen, und dieser liegt auch schon ziemlich klar da, und vielleicht käme bald die Zeit, wo eine recht schöne Kunst wieder erstehen könnte, *das ist in der Landschaft*”; Runge, *Briefe und Schriften* (note 85), 76. See also Runge’s letter to Tieck, 1 February 1802, in Runge, *Hinterlassene Schriften* (note 86), 1:23–28; Runge, *Briefe und Schriften* (note 85), 1:7–16.

88. Werner Hofmann, “Runge’s Versuch, das verlorene Paradies aus seiner Notwendigkeit zu konstruieren,” in idem, ed., *Runge in seiner Zeit: Kunst um 1800*, exh. cat. (Munich: Prestel, 1977), 33–35; on Runge and Böhme, see Jörg Traeger, *Philipp Otto Runge und sein Werk: Monographie und kritischer Katalog* (Munich: Prestel, 1975), 54–55, 122–27; and Thomas Leinkauf, *Kunst und Reflexion: Untersuchungen zum Verhältnis Philipp Otto Runge’s zur philosophischen Tradition* (Munich: Fink, 1987).

89. Runge, *Hinterlassene Schriften* (note 86), 1:36.

90. Hanna Hohl, “Die Epiphanie des ‘Morgen,’” in Werner Hofmann, ed., *Runge in seiner Zeit: Kunst um 1800*, exh. cat. (Munich: Prestel, 1977), 204–6.

91. Philipp Otto Runge, *Farbenkugel; oder, Construction des Verhältnisses aller Mischungen der Farben zu einander, und ihrer vollständigen Affinität, mit angehängtem Versuch einer Ableitung der Harmonie in den Zusammenstellungen der Farben* (Hamburg: Friedrich Perthes, 1810), 10: “alle diametral entgegenstehenden Farben und Mischungen.”

92. Henrik Steffens, “Über die Bedeutung der Farben in der Natur,” in Philipp Otto Runge, *Farbenkugel; oder, Construction des Verhältnisses aller Mischungen der Farben zu einander, und ihrer vollständigen Affinität, mit angehängtem Versuch einer Ableitung der Harmonie in den Zusammenstellungen der Farben* (Hamburg: Friedrich Perthes, 1810), 29–60.

93. Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Zur Farbenlehre* (Tübingen: J. G. Cotta’sche Buchhandlung, 1810); Goethe, *Werke* (note 78), pt. 2, vol. 1; and Goethe, *Sämtliche Werke* (note 78), vols. 32/1 and 32/2. For modern views, see Dennis L. Sepper, *Goethe Contra Newton: Polemics and the Project for a New Science of Color* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1988); and John Gage, *Color and Meaning: Art, Science and Symbolism* (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1999), 169–76.

94. On Runge’s color sphere, see Heinz Matile, *Die Farbenlehre Philipp Otto Runge’s: Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Künstlerfarbenlehre* (Bern: Benteli, 1973); Gage, *Color and Meaning* (note 93), 173–76. On Runge and Steffens, see Traeger,



*Philipp Otto Runge und sein Werk* (note 88), 58, 211; at full length, Leinkauf, *Kunst und Reflexion* (note 88), 177–245, 247–78; and Timothy F. Mitchell, *Art and Science in German Landscape Painting, 1770–1840* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), 77–79. See also Runge's letter to Steffens in Halle, March 1809, in Runge, *Briefe und Schriften* (note 85), 212–16.

95. Henrich Steffens, *Beyträge zur innern Naturgeschichte der Erde*, pt. 1 (Freyberg: Crazische Buchhandlung, 1801): “Durch diesen Beweiss wird die Electricität Princip einer *Meteorologie*, so wie durch den, in diesem Theil, geführten Beweiss, der Magnetismus *Princip einer Geologie* geworden ist. Beyde werden die empirische Grundlage zu einer *Natur-Theorie* legen” (p. 270); “der dynamische Process der Erde construiren” (p. 269). See Dietrich von Engelhardt, “Naturgeschichte und Geschichte der Kultur in der Naturforschung der Romantik,” in Karin Orchard and Jörg Zimmermann, eds., *Die Erfindung der Natur: Max Ernst, Paul Klee, Wols und das surreale Universum*, exh. cat. (Freiburg im Breisgau: Rombach, 1994), 53–59.

96. Steffens, *Beyträge zur innern Naturgeschichte der Erde* (note 95): “zerlegenden Kunst” (p. 53); “der unendlichen Tiefe der bildenden Kraft” (p. 53). Steffens became professor in Halle in 1804, became full professor of physics in Breslau in 1811, and transferred to Berlin in 1832. In Berlin in 1806 he published a remarkable catechism under the title *Grundzüge der philosophischen Naturwissenschaft* (Berlin: Verlag der Realschulbuchhandlung, 1806), and in 1810 he called a collection of essays a “preparation for an inner natural history of the earth,” *Geognostisch-geologische Aufsätze: Als Vorbereitung zu einer innern Naturgeschichte der Erde* (Hamburg: Hoffmann, 1810).

97. Steffens, *Grundzüge der philosophischen Naturwissenschaft* (note 96); and Steffens, *Geognostisch-geologische Aufsätze* (note 96).

98. Karl Christoph Schmieder, *Geschichte der Alchemie* (Halle: Verlag der Buchhandlung des Waisenhauses, 1832; reprint, Ulm-Donau: Arkana, 1959).

99. Schmieder, *Geschichte der Alchemie* (note 98), 469–602.

100. Philipp Otto Runge, *Hinterlassene Schriften* (note 86), 1:157–58: “die wissenschaftlichen Resultate in der Kunstaübung mehr an allgemeine wissenschaftliche Ideen”; Runge, *Briefe und Schriften* (note 85), 223–24.

101. Carl Gustav Carus, “Bruchstück aus einer Reihe von Briefen über Landschaftsmalereyen,” *Kunst-Blatt*, nos. 52–54 (1826): 205: “Aus mannichfaltigen Betrachtungen über diese Kunst, welche als ihre eigentliche Aufgabe den großen Gegenstand hat, einzelne Scenen, einzelne Stimmungen des allgemeinen Naturlebens darzustellen und, welche ich desshalb lieber *die Historienmalerey der Natur*, oder *Erdleben-Bildkunst* nennen möchte, ist im Laufe eines Jahrzehends eine Reihe von neun Briefen entstanden, welche ich bisher nur einigen Freunden mitgeteilt habe. Nach dem Wunsche Einiger lege ich hier ein Glied dieser Kette versuchsweise einem größern Publikum vor.” In subsequent notes the text of this letter will be cited from Carus, *Neun Briefe über Landschaftsmalerei* (note 11) and the translation from the present volume.

102. Carus, *Nine Letters on Landscape Painting* (note 27), 125; Carus, *Neun Briefe über Landschaftsmalerei* (note 11), 138: “das wundervolle, eigenste Leben der Natur . . . den Willen der Seele schnell, leicht und schön zu vollziehen.” On the elements, see Carus, *Nine Letters on Landscape Painting* (note 27), 126; Carus, *Neun Briefe über Landschaftsmalerei* (note 11), 142–43.

103. Carus, *Nine Letters on Landscape Painting* (note 27), 127; Carus, *Neun Briefe über Landschaftsmalerei* (note 11), 145–46: “Es ist in Wahrheit merkwürdig, daß bei dem bisherigen Unterricht in Landschaftsmalerei man die Nothwendigkeit eines solchen naturwissenschaftlichen Theiles so ganz übersehen konnte, da man in andern Zweigen bildender Kunst die Unerläßlichkeit des Zuziehens naturwissenschaftlicher Studien so bald einsah.”

104. Carl Gustav Carus, *Zwölf Briefe über das Erdleben* (Stuttgart: P. Balz'sche Buchhandlung, 1841); Carl Gustav Carus, *Zwölf Briefe über das Erdleben*, ed. Ekkehart Meffert (Stuttgart: Verlag Freies Geistesleben, 1986).

105. Carus, *Nine Letters on Landscape Painting* (note 27), 130; Carus, *Neun Briefe über Landschaftsmalerei* (note 11), 156: “das vielfältige und sorgsame freie Nachbilden und Selbstconstruiren geometrischer Grundformen... gegen eine gewisse Liederlichkeit... die Grundlagen aller organischen Bildungen.”

106. Carus, *Nine Letters on Landscape Painting* (note 27), 130; Carus, *Neun Briefe über Landschaftsmalerei* (note 11), 157: “Die Sprache der Natur... reden lernen.”

107. Carus, *Nine Letters on Landscape Painting* (note 27), 130–131; Carus, *Neun Briefe über Landschaftsmalerei* (note 11), 158:

Ist nun aber die Seele durchdrungen von dem innern Sinne dieser verschiedenen Formen, ist ihr die Ahnung von dem geheimen göttlichen Leben der Natur hell aufgegangen und hat die Hand die feste Darstellungsgabe, sowie auch das Auge den reinen, scharfen Blick sich angebildet, ist endlich die Seele des Künstlers rein und durch und durch, ein geheiligtes freudiges Gefäß, den Lichtstral von oben aufzunehmen, dann werden Bilder vom Erdenleben einer neuern höheren Art, welche den Beschauer selbst zu höherer Naturbetrachtung heraufheben und welche mystisch, orphisch in diesem Sinn zu nennen sind, entstehen *müssen*, und die Erdlebenbildkunst wird ihren Gipfel erreicht haben.

108. Ernst Theodor Amadeus Hoffmann, *Sämtliche Werke: Historisch-kritische Ausgabe mit Einleitungen, Anmerkungen und Lesarten*, ed. Carl Georg von Maassen (Munich: G. Müller, 1908–28), 3:104–35:

Auffassung der Natur in der tiefsten Bedeutung des höhern Sinns, der alle Wesen zum höheren Leben entzündet, das ist der heilige Zweck aller Kunst. Kann denn das blosses Abschreiben der Natur jemals dahin führen?... Der Geweihte vernimmt die Stimme der Natur, die in wunderbaren Lauten aus Baum, Gebüsch, Blume, Berg und Gewässer von unerforschlichem Geheimnis spricht, die in seiner Brust sich zu frommer Ahnung gestalten; dann kommt, wie der Geist Gottes selbst, die Gabe über ihn, diese Ahnung sichtlich in seine Werke zu übertragen... Daher studiere die Natur zwar auch im Mechanischen fleissig und sorgfältig, damit du die Praktik des Darstellens erlangen mögest, aber halte die Praktik nicht für die Kunst selbst. Bist du eingedrungen in den tiefen Sinn der Natur, so werden selbst in deinem Innern ihre Bilder in hoher glänzender Pracht aufgehen.

109. See Wolfgang Kemp, “...einen wahrhaft bildenden Zeichenunterricht überall einzuführen”: *Zeichnen und Zeichenunterricht der Laien, 1500–1870: Ein Handbuch* (Frankfurt am Main: Syndikat, 1979); and Ann Bermingham, *Learning to Draw:*

*Studies in the Cultural History of a Polite and Useful Art* (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 2000).

110. Werner Hofmann, “Geometrie und Farbe,” in idem, ed., *Runge in seiner Zeit: Kunst um 1800*, exh. cat. (Munich: Prestel, 1977), 136–40.

111. Carl Gustav Carus, “Über einen besondern Typus in Darstellung des Auges, bey mehreren alten Malern,” *Kunst-Blatt*, no. 103 (26 December 1825): 413–16; the occasion was the publication of the fifteen drawings after the painting by Wilhelm Ternite, with an explanatory text by August Wilhelm Schlegel (Paris, 1817).

112. Armin Zweite, “Aspekte der Münchner Landschaftsmalerei,” and Barbara Eschenburg, “Landschaftsmalerei in München zwischen Kunstverein und Akademie und ihre Beurteilung durch die Kunstkritik,” in Armin Zweite, ed., *Münchner Landschaftsmalerei, 1800–1850*, exh. cat. (Munich: Lenbachhaus, 1979), 33–34, 93–115.

113. On Ludwig Schorn, see Peter Batthausen, ed., *Metzlers Kunsthistoriker Lexikon: Zweihundert Porträts deutschsprachiger Autoren aus vier Jahrhunderten* (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1999), 369–70.

114. Ludwig Schorn, “Kunstaussstellung in München, im Oktober 1826,” *Kunst-Blatt*, no. 89 (6 November 1826): 353–56; Ernst Förster, “Gedanken über Landschaftsmalerey,” *Kunst-Blatt*, no. 29 (10 April 1828): 113–15; no. 30 (14 April 1828): 117–18; no. 31 (17 April 1828): 123–24; no. 34 (28 April 1828): 135–36; no. 37 (8 May 1828): 147–48; no. 38 (12 May 1828): 151; Karl Schnaase, “Über die Richtung der Malerei unserer Zeit,” *Kunst-Blatt*, no. 82 (18 October 1831): 325–28; no. 83 (20 October 1831): 329–32; no. 84 (23 October 1831): 333–36; no. 85 (27 October 1831): 340; on further contributions and the debate, see Eschenburg, “Landschaftsmalerei in München” (note 112), 100–106.

115. Carus, *Lebenserinnerungen und Denkwürdigkeiten* (note 1): “eine große Flaueheit der Kunst” (1:180); “eine künftige Entwicklung” (1:180);

Friedrich mit seiner etwas starren und trüben, aber hochpoetischen Weise, war überhaupt und insbesondere in der Landschaftsmalerei der erste, der hier das Philistertum angriff und aufschüttelte, und es hatte viel Aufsehen gemacht, als über eins seiner Bilder, ein Crucifix auf dem Felsen unter dunklen Tannen und vor den verglühenden Wolken der Abendröthe, ein literarischer Streit sich erhob, der für ihn, von dem ihm befreundeten Gerh. von Kugelchen, gegen ihn von einem banalen Dilettanten, einem gewissen Herrn von Ramdohr, zum Nachtheil des letztern durchgefochten wurde (1:180–81).

116. Ramdohr quoted in Friedrich, *Caspar David Friedrich in Briefen und Bekenntnissen* (note 8), 138–57, esp. 151: “pathologische Rührung”; see also the defense of Friedrich by Semler in an article of 1809: Hilmar Frank, “Die mannigfaltigen Wege zur Kunst: Romantische Kunstphilosophie in einem Schema Caspar David Friedrichs,” *Idea* 10 (1991): 181–86.

117. Caspar David Friedrich, “Brief vom 8. Februar 1809 an den Akademie-direktor Schulz,” in Helmut Börsch-Supan and Karl Wilhelm Jähniq, *Caspar David Friedrich: Gemälde, Druckgraphik und bildmässige Zeichnungen* (Munich: Prestel, 1973), 182–83, esp. 183: “Wenn ein Bild auf den Betrachter seelenvoll wirkt, wenn es sein Gemüth in eine schöne Stimmung versetzt; so hat es die erste Forderung eines

Kunstwerkes erfüllt. Wäre es übrigens auch noch so schlecht in Zeichnung, Farbe, Art und Weise der malerei u.s.w.”

118. Carus, *Lebenserinnerungen und Denkwürdigkeiten* (note 1), 1:207: “Ein Bild soll nicht erfunden, sondern empfunden sein.”

119. Carus, “Friedrich der Landschaftsmaler” (note 17); Carl Gustav Carus, *Friedrich, der Landschaftsmaler: Zu seinem Gedächtniß nebst Fragmenten aus seinen nachgelassenen Papieren, seinem Bildniß und seinem Faksimile* (Dresden: B. G. Teubner, 1841).

120. Carus, *Nine Letters on Landscape Painting* (note 27), 91; Carus, *Neun Briefe über Landschaftsmalerei* (note 11), 41: “Hauptaufgabe landschaftlicher Kunst... Darstellung einer gewissen Stimmung des Gemüthlebens (Sinn) durch die Nachbildung einer entsprechenden Stimmung des Naturlebens (Wahrheit).”

121. Prause, *Carl Gustav Carus* (note 15), 113–14 (cat. no. 104).

122. Kurt Karl Eberlein, “Goethe und die bildende Kunst der Romantik,” *Jahrbuch der Goethe-Gesellschaft* 14 (1928): 55–60; and Prause, *Carl Gustav Carus* (note 15), 45–51.

123. Jutta Müller-Tamm, *Kunst als Gipfel der Wissenschaft: Ästhetische und wissenschaftliche Weltaneignungen bei Carl Gustav Carus* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1995), 154–69; see Werner Busch, ed., *Landschaftsmalerei* (Berlin: Reimer, 1997), 263–66.

124. Eberlein, “Goethe und die bildende Kunst der Romantik” (note 122), 44; Kurt Badt, *Wolkenbilder und Wolkengedichte der Romantik* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1960), 18–32; Bätschmann, *Entfernung der Natur* (note 52), 117–24; and Werner Busch, “Die Ordnung im Flüchtigen: Wolkenstudien der Goethezeit,” in Sabine Schulze, ed., *Goethe und die Kunst*, exh. cat. (Stuttgart: Hatje, 1994), 523–24. See also Christa Lichtenstern, “Beobachtungen zum Dialog Goethe–Caspar David Friedrich,” *Baltische Studien*, n.s., 60 (1974): 75–100.

125. Carus, *Nine Letters on Landscape Painting* (note 27), 94; Carus, *Neun Briefe über Landschaftsmalerei* (note 11), 51: “das eigentliche Bild der Unendlichkeit.” Carus, *Nine Letters on Landscape Painting* (note 27), 94–95; Carus, *Neun Briefe über Landschaftsmalerei* (note 11), 51: “Wie daher durch Wolken, ja selbst durch hochaufgethürmte andere Gegenstände das Anschauen dieser Unendlichkeit mehr und mehr eingengt und endlich gänzlich verhüllt wird, so regt dies auch im Gemüth mehr und mehr eine beklommene Stimmung an, wenn dagegen das Übergehen dieses Wolken-schleiers in lichte Silberwölkchen, das Zertheilen desselben durch des aufgehenden Mondes oder der Sonne ruhige Klarheit, die innere Trübheit verlöscht und zum Gedanken des Sieges eines Unendlichen über ein Endliches uns erhebt.”

126. See for instance the cloud study *Abend*, which has been dated 1824, or the painting *Der Abendstern*, which has been dated circa 1825: Börsch-Supan and Jähnig, *Caspar David Friedrich* (note 117), 393 (cat. no. 319), 423–25 (cat. no. 389).

127. Carus, *Nine Letters on Landscape Painting* (note 27), 113; Carus, *Neun Briefe über Landschaftsmalerei* (note 11), 104–8.

128. Carus, *Nine Letters on Landscape Painting* (note 27), 81; Carus, *Neun Briefe über Landschaftsmalerei* (note 11), 13: “anmuthiges Dämmerlicht.” Carus, *Nine Letters on Landscape Painting* (note 27), 89; Carus, *Neun Briefe über Landschaftsmalerei* (note 11), 32: “die spät blühenden anmuthigen Fliederbüsche.” Carus, *Nine Letters on Landscape Painting* (note 27), 101; Carus, *Neun Briefe über Landschaftsmalerei* (note 11), 65: “die naßkalte Nebelluft und das dürre Gezweig.”

129. For a comprehensive account of the Biedermeier, see Friedrich Sengle, *Biedermeierzeit: Deutsche Literatur im Spannungsfeld zwischen Restauration und Revolution, 1815–1848*, 3 vols. (Stuttgart: J. B. Metzler, 1971–80).

130. Carus, *Nine Letters on Landscape Painting* (note 27), 101; Carus, *Neun Briefe über Landschaftsmalerei* (note 11), 65: “Laß mich denn im geistigen Umgange mit Dir, alter geprüfter Freund, völlige Herstellung der innern Heiterkeit und Ruhe finden, in welcher wir ja immer das alleinige und wahre Glück begründet hielten.”

131. Carus, *Nine Letters on Landscape Painting* (note 27), 133; Carus, *Neun Briefe über Landschaftsmalerei* (note 11), 161: “Diener des Luxus.”

132. Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Werke*, ed. Eva Moldenhauer and Karl Markus Michel (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1970), 13:23–26, esp. 24: “sich des Absoluten bewußt zu sein.”

133. Carus, *Nine Letters on Landscape Painting* (note 27), 134; Carus, *Neun Briefe über Landschaftsmalerei* (note 11), 162: “Nur aber sollte nicht gesagt werden, die Zeit echter Kunst, echter Künstler sei deshalb vorüber, weil der Weltlauf sie unbeachtet zu lassen scheint; für echte Kunst kann ja schon darum die Zeit nie vorüber sein, weil sie selbst über aller Zeit, weil sie *ewig* ist.”

134. Carus, *Nine Letters on Landscape Painting* (note 27), 134; Carus, *Neun Briefe über Landschaftsmalerei* (note 11), 162–63: “dem Landschaftskunst im höheren Sinne am Herzen liegt.”

135. Carus, *Nine Letters on Landscape Painting* (note 27), 135; Carus, *Neun Briefe über Landschaftsmalerei* (note 11), 165–66:

Warum soll der Künstler, dem ein Ziel vorschwebt, nach dem die gemeine Welt sich nicht umsieht, den alltäglichen Bedarf nicht durch irgend ein ganz alltägliches Treiben erwerben? ja ich behaupte: selbst dieser Kampf mit dem alltäglichen Leben, wobei es ihm frei und sogar natürlich bleiben wird, das Alltägliche selbst von einer großartigen und edlen Seite zu nehmen, wird ihn innerlich kräftigen und wird ebenso seine gesammte menschliche Ausbildung vervollständigen, wie ein gesunder Körper nur durch gleichzeitige tüchtige Regsamkeit seiner niedern und höhern Organe als wahrhaft gesund erscheint. — Leider habe ich Künstler genug, sowie Gelehrte gesehen, denen ihre Kunst wie jenen ihre Wissenschaft nur die melkende Kuh war, die rein handwerksmäßig nur fragten: was schätzt die Menge? was schmeichelt den Narrheiten der Zeit? — und indem sie in diesen Trachten sich immer mehr verwickelten, nach bald verflogener erster jugendlicher Begeisterung in philisterhafter Dumpfheit ihren Pinsel und Stift nicht sowol von Kopf und Herzen, sondern allein vom Magen aus regieren ließen.

On the issue that Carus superficially touches on here, see Oskar Bätschmann, *The Artist in the Modern World: The Conflict between Market and Self-Expression* (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1997).

136. On letter IX, see Müller-Tamm, *Kunst als Gipfel der Wissenschaft* (note 123), 183–92.

137. Carus, *Nine Letters on Landscape Painting* (note 27), 82; Carus, *Neun Briefe über Landschaftsmalerei* (note 11), 16: “den vollen und echten poetischen Genuß.”

138. Carus, *Nine Letters on Landscape Painting* (note 27), 82; Carus, *Neun Briefe*

über *Landschaftsmalerei* (note 11), 17: “jede echte Naturforschung [muß] ... an die Schwelle höherer Geheimnisse führen.” Carus, *Nine Letters on Landscape Painting* (note 27), 86; Carus, *Neun Briefe über Landschaftsmalerei* (note 11), 25: “Vermittlerin der Religion.”

139. Carus, *Nine Letters on Landscape Painting* (note 27), 89; Carus, *Neun Briefe über Landschaftsmalerei* (note 11), 34: “eine ewige, höchste, unendliche Einheit.” Carus, *Nine Letters on Landscape Painting* (note 27), 90; Carus, *Neun Briefe über Landschaftsmalerei* (note 11), 35: “Aus dem Erkennen geht das Wissen, die Wissenschaft hervor, aus dem Können die Kunst. In der Wissenschaft fühlt der Mensch sich in Gott, in der Kunst fühlt er Gott in sich.” On the issue of science and art, see Joachim Ritter, *Landschaft: Zur Funktion des Ästhetischen in der modernen Gesellschaft* (Münster: Achendorff, 1963); Wolf Lepenies, *Das Ende der Naturgeschichte: Wandel kultureller Selbstverständlichkeiten in den Wissenschaften des 18. und 19. Jahrhunderts* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1978); Richard Hoppe-Sailer, “Carl Gustav Carus: Einige Anmerkungen zum Verhältnis von Kunst und Wissenschaft im 19. Jahrhundert,” in Karin Orchard and Jörg Zimmermann, eds., *Die Erfindung der Natur: Max Ernst, Paul Klee, Wols und das surreale Universum*, exh. cat. (Freiburg im Breisgau: Rombach, 1994), 67–73; and Sabine Schulze, ed., *Goethe und die Kunst* (note 124), 485–570, especially the articles by Werner Busch: “Der Berg als Gegenstand von Naturwissenschaft und Kunst: Zu Goethes geologischem Begriff,” 485–97, and “Die Ordnung im Flüchtigen: Wolkenstudien der Goethezeit,” 519–27.

140. Carus, *Nine Letters on Landscape Painting* (note 27), 90; Carus, *Neun Briefe über Landschaftsmalerei* (note 11), 36.

141. Carus, *Nine Letters on Landscape Painting* (note 27), 96; Carus, *Neun Briefe über Landschaftsmalerei* (note 11), 56.

142. Fernow, *Römische Studien* (note 74).

143. Frank Büttner, “Abwehr der Romantik,” in Sabine Schulze, ed., *Goethe und die Kunst*, exh. cat. (Stuttgart: Hatje, 1994), 456–67.

144. Büttner, “Abwehr der Romantik” (note 143).

145. Carus, *Nine Letters on Landscape Painting* (note 27), 106; Carus, *Neun Briefe über Landschaftsmalerei* (note 11), 83: “eigentliche Kunst des Heroenalters.” Carus, *Nine Letters on Landscape Painting* (note 27), 106; Carus, *Neun Briefe über Landschaftsmalerei* (note 11), 83: “die idealere Kunst.” Carus, *Nine Letters on Landscape Painting* (note 27), 106; Carus, *Neun Briefe über Landschaftsmalerei* (note 11), 83: “eine höhere Bildung und Erfahrung.” Carus, *Nine Letters on Landscape Painting* (note 27), 106–7; Carus, *Neun Briefe über Landschaftsmalerei* (note 11), 83: “Es liegt eine gewisse Abstraction und Selbstaufopferung darin, die Außenwelt, früher nur das Element für unsere Thätigkeit, auch an und für sich als etwas Schönes und Erhabenes gelten zu lassen.”

146. Carus, *Nine Letters on Landscape Painting* (note 27), 107; Carus, *Neun Briefe über Landschaftsmalerei* (note 11), 84: “Der Mensch mußte die Göttlichkeit der Natur als der eigentlichen leiblichen Offenbarung, oder menschlich ausgedrückt, als der Sprache Gottes anerkennen.”

147. Carus, *Nine Letters on Landscape Painting* (note 27), 107; Carus, *Neun Briefe über Landschaftsmalerei* (note 11), 86–87. See editorial note 38 in this volume, 152; see

also the repetition of his denunciation of this (under the name “cross-and-rosary mysticism”) in Carus, *Nine Letters on Landscape Painting* (note 27), 114; Carus, *Neun Briefe über Landschaftsmalerei* (note 11), 107: “Kreuz- und Rosenkranzmystik.”

148. Carus, *Nine Letters on Landscape Painting* (note 27), 113; Carus, *Neun Briefe über Landschaftsmalerei* (note 11), 104–5. See Badt, *Wolkenbilder und Wolkengedichte der Romantik* (note 124), 33–44; and Mitchell, *Art and Science in German Landscape Painting, 1770–1840* (note 94), 166–73.

149. Carus, *Nine Letters on Landscape Painting* (note 27), 114; Carus, *Neun Briefe über Landschaftsmalerei* (note 11), 108: “Geheimnisse des Naturlebens.” Carus, *Nine Letters on Landscape Painting* (note 27), 114; Carus, *Neun Briefe über Landschaftsmalerei* (note 11), 108: “Erkenntnis der wunderbaren Wechselwirkungen von Erde und Feuer und Meer und Luft.”

150. Humboldt, *Ansichten der Natur* (note 80); Christian Gottfried Daniel Nees von Esenbeck, *Das System der Pilze und Schwämme: Ein Versuch*, 2d ed., 2 vols. (Würzburg: Stahelschen Buchhandlung, 1817).

151. Carl Gustav Carus, *Schlucht in der sächsischen Schweiz*, undated, charcoal with white highlights, Dresden, Kupferstichkabinett; see Ekkehard Meffert, *Carl Gustav Carus: Sein Leben, seine Anschauung von der Erde* (Stuttgart: Verlag Freies Geistesleben, 1986), fig. 40, 146. On the contemporary interest in geology, see Bättschmann, *Entfernung der Natur* (note 52), 57–67; and Sabine Schulze, ed., *Goethe und die Kunst* (note 124), 485–517, especially the article by Werner Busch, “Der Berg als Gegenstand” (note 139).

152. Later, writing in *Kunst-Blatt*, Carus opined that his prophecy in *Letters on Landscape Painting* had come true: that young Crola’s painting was superior to the best works of Ruisdael. See Carl Gustav Carus, “Über eine Landschaft (Erdlebenbild) von Crola in München,” *Kunst-Blatt* 27, no. 43 (28 May 1833): 169–71, esp. 171.

153. Carus, *Zwölf Briefe über das Erdleben*, 1841 (note 104); Carus, *Zwölf Briefe über das Erdleben*, ed. Meffert (note 104). Parts of the work were initially published between 1838 and 1840 in the Altona periodical *Der Freihafen: Galerie von Unterhaltungsbildern aus den Kreisen der Literatur, Gesellschaft und Wissenschaft*.

154. Carus, *Nine Letters on Landscape Painting* (note 27), 136–41; Carus, *Neun Briefe über Landschaftsmalerei* (note 11), 169–85.

155. See Alexander von Humboldt, *Studienausgabe*, ed. Hanno Beck (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1987–97), 5:175–92.

156. See Abraham Gottlob Werner, *Kurze Klassifikation und Beschreibung der verschiedenen Gebürgsarten* (Dresden: Waltherischen Hofbuchhandlung, 1787).

157. See Christian Keferstein, *Geschichte und Litteratur der Geognosie: Ein Versuch* (Halle: Joh. Fried. Lippert, 1840).

158. Rachel Laudan, *From Mineralogy to Geology: The Foundations of a Science, 1650–1830* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1987); and Busch, “Der Berg als Gegenstand” (note 139).

159. In the Kupferstichkabinett Dresden; see Sabine Schulze, ed., *Goethe und die Kunst* (note 124), 513 (cat. no. 340). On the Isle of Staffa, see Charlotte Klonk, *Science and the Perception of Nature: British Landscape Art in the Late Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries* (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1996), 80–90.

160. Prause, *Carl Gustav Carus* (note 15), 57, 70 n. 237. Two of the watercolors are lost; the one in Dresden is now dated 1834. On the travel narrative, see Meffert, *Carl Gustav Carus* (note 151), 134–39; on the drawings, see Hoppe-Sailer, “Carl Gustav Carus” (note 139).

161. Carus, *Nine Letters on Landscape Painting* (note 27), 137; Carus, *Neun Briefe über Landschaftsmalerei* (note 11), 174: “Bei der Untersuchungsweise sämtlicher Naturkörper nämlich werden wir auf Berücksichtigung eines Äußern und eines Innern geleitet; das Äußere gibt uns die anschauliche Idee des Ganzen, das Innere zeigt uns die Theile.”

162. Carus, *Zwölf Briefe über das Erdleben*, ed. Meffert (note 104), 142–230. On the theory of the elements, see Gernot Böhme and Hartmut Böhme, *Feuer, Wasser, Erde, Luft: Eine Kulturgeschichte der Elemente* (Munich: Beck, 1996).

163. Schubert, *Ansichten von der Nachtseite der Naturwissenschaft* (note 8); Steffens, *Beyträge zur innern Naturgeschichte der Erde* (note 95); Steffens, *Grundzüge der philosophischen Naturwissenschaft* (note 96); and Steffens, *Geognostisch-geologische Aufsätze* (note 96).

164. Carl Gustav Carus, *Grundzüge einer neuen und wissenschaftlich begründeten Craniscopie (Schädellehre)* (Stuttgart: Balz'sche Buchhandlung, 1841); Carl Gustav Carus, *Psyche: Zur Entwicklungsgeschichte der Seele* (Pforzheim: Flammer und Hoffmann, 1846); and Carl Gustav Carus, *Symbolik der menschlichen Gestalt: Ein Handbuch zur Menschenkenntnis* (Leipzig: F. A. Brockhaus, 1853).

165. Carus, *Symbolik der menschlichen Gestalt* (note 164), vi–vii: “Wissenschaft von der Bedeutung der äussern menschlichen Bildung für inneres seelisches und geistiges Leben die ich hier, um sie mit einem Worte kurz zu bezeichnen, unter dem Namen der ‘Symbolik’ abhandle.” On Lorenz Oken and his rationalization of the ideas of nature philosophy, see Pross, “Lorenz Oken” (note 10).

166. Busch, “Der Berg als Gegenstand” (note 139), 495–97.

167. Carus, *Nine Letters on Landscape Painting* (note 27), 98, 102, and 127; Carus, *Neun Briefe über Landschaftsmalerei* (note 11), 63, 70, 147 (references to Gessner, Fernow, and Hogarth, respectively).

168. Fernow, *Römische Studien* (note 74), 2:22: “Die Harmonie der Farben, welche über eine schöne Landschaft ausgegossen ist, macht eine ähnliche Wirkung auf das Gemüth, wie die Melodie und Harmonie in der Tonkunst.”

169. Prause, *Carl Gustav Carus* (note 15), no. 98, 111–12; see also no. 6, 87: *Allegorie auf Goethes Tod*. See Carus, *Lebenserinnerungen und Denkwürdigkeiten* (note 1), 2:342; and Donat de Chapeaurouge, “Carus’ Gemälde ‘zu Goethes Ehrengedächtnis’ von 1832,” *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 61, no. 1 (1998): 113–17.

170. Fernow, *Römische Studien* (note 74), 2:22; and Carus, *Nine Letters on Landscape Painting* (note 27), 123; Carus, *Neun Briefe über Landschaftsmalerei* (note 11), 31.

171. Carl Grüneisen, review of *Neun Briefe über Landschaftsmalerei*, by Carl Gustav Carus, *Kunst-Blatt*, no. 17 (26 February 1833): 65–68; no. 18 (28 February 1833): 71–72. Carl Grüneisen (1802–78), of Stuttgart, was a theologian—a follower of Friedrich Schleiermacher—as well as an art connoisseur and poet. Until 1868, he was successively court chaplain, court preacher, and chief court preacher to King Wilhelm I of Württemberg.



172. Grüneisen, review of *Neun Briefe über Landschaftsmalerei* (note 171), 71:

Befremdlich ist es aber, daß der Verf[asser] in solcher Hinsicht nicht die Anerkennung des bisher sogenannten historischen Landschaftsbildes, wie es von den grossen Meistern unserer Zeit, Koch, Reinhard, Schick, Steinkopf, Reinhold behandelt worden ist, hervorhebt und vielmehr es, wie S. 121 zu geschehen scheint, beseitigt; – befremdlich, da doch in demselben der Charakter des Naturlebens mit dem Geiste der Handlung, mit der Stimmung der dargestellten Personen die genauesten Beziehungen zu unterhalten pflegt und auch umgekehrt eine mythologische oder geschichtliche Scene von der Eigenthümlichkeit griechischer Natur und von der besondern Form, Luft und Farbentönen einer Landschaft getragen und gleichsam gefordert seyn kann.

173. Carus, *Reise durch Deutschland, Italien und die Schweiz im Jahre 1828* (note 21), 1:351; 352: “ältlich trocken, mit einer gewissen bierhaften Physiognomie; kurz, er kam mir vor wie ein untergegangenes Kunsttalent... Was Koch betrifft, so genießt dieser eines bedeutenden Rufes als Landschaftsmaler; doch gestehe ich, auch bei ihm unter den wenigen halb altdeutschen Conceptionen nichts Anmuthiges gefunden zu haben.” See Caspar David Friedrich’s adverse verdict on the German artists resident in Rome, in Caspar David Friedrich, *Kritische Edition der Schriften des Künstlers und seiner Zeitzeugen*, ed. Gerhard Eimer and Günter Rath (Frankfurt am Main: Kunstgeschichtliches Institut, 1999– ), esp. 21, 28, 71, 74, 108, and 127.

174. Grüneisen, review of *Neun Briefe über Landschaftsmalerei* (note 171), 72: “Fassen wir ein Urtheil über das Ganze zusammen, so ist es diess, dass hier Wesen und Bestimmung der Landschaftsmalerei auf eine gründliche Weise dargestellt und dem Künstler wie dem Publikum Anregung geworden sey, diesen Kunstzweig in seiner grossen Bedeutung höher zu achten, ernstlicher zu erforschen, und durch Beziehung auf Geistesleben und Gemüthsstimmung zu fördern.”

175. Carl Gustav Carus, *Briefe über Landschaftsmalerei, geschrieben in den Jahren 1815–1835*, 2d, expanded ed. (Leipzig: Gerhard Fleischer, 1835), title page: “Zweite durch einen Brief und einige Beilagen vermehrte Ausgabe.” On the additional material for the second edition, see Dorothea Kuhn, “Nachwort,” in Carl Gustav Carus, *Briefe über Landschaftsmalerei, zuvor ein Brief von Goethe als Einleitung* (Heidelberg: Lambert Schneider, 1972), [34]–[35]. The tenth letter, added in 1835, is accompanied by five enclosures. The first two contain descriptions of moonlight scenes, the third reprints a critique of a landscape painting by Crola, the fourth is an account of Allart van Everdingen’s painting *The Great Waterfall*, and the fifth is entitled “Vorlesung über die rechte Art Gemälde zu betrachten” (Lecture on the right way to look at paintings).

176. Wolfgang Menzel, “C. G. Carus: ‘Briefe über Landschaftsmalerei’: Besprechung.” *Literatur-Blatt des Morgenblattes für gebildete Stände*, no. 125 (12 December 1836): 498–99: “Wenig Stoff und zum Erstaunen viele Worte... Was soll doch der Landschaftsmaler mit solchen leeren Redensarten anfangen? Nur in den Beilagen geht der Verfasser ins Einzelne ein, in die Physiognomie der Gebirge z.B., in die Wirkungen des Mondscheins, in die Betrachtung einiger Bilder von Ewerdingen etc.” Wolfgang Menzel (1798–1873), born in Silesia, studied in Berlin, Jena, and Bonn. In 1820, as a

political émigré, he took a teaching post at the Kantonsschule in Aarau, Switzerland, and there introduced the teaching of gymnastics on the system devised by his mentor, the “father of gymnastics” (*Turnvater*), Friedrich Ludwig Jahn (1778–1852). In 1825 Menzel moved to Stuttgart and became editor of the *Literatur-Blatt*, the literary supplement to the daily *Morgenblatt* published by the Stuttgart press baron Johann Friedrich Cotta, Freiherr von Cottendorf (1764–1832). Menzel became an influential literary historian and critic, noted in particular for his opposition to Goethe and to Hegel. The *Morgenblatt* appeared from 1807 through 1865.

177. Eschenburg, “Landschaftsmalerei in München” (note 112), 111.

178. Gustav Theodor Fechner, *Zend-Avesta; oder, Über die Dinge des Himmels und des Jenseits: Vom Standpunkt der Naturbetrachtung*, 3 vols. (Leipzig: L. Voss, 1851). According to the explanation supplied by Fechner (1:v), *Zend-Avesta* means “lebendiges Wort” (living word). The ancient Persian scriptures, the *Avesta*, reached Europe in a translation by the French Orientalist Abraham-Hyacinthe Anquetil-Duperron in 1771, under the title *Zend-Avesta*; this was published in a German version as early as 1776. Further German translations appeared in Vienna in 1853 and in Leipzig from 1852 to 1863. Fechner’s intention was to bring about “die Wiedergeburt des Uralten” (the rebirth of the primordially ancient) and the conjunction of purified religious ideas with exact science (1:v).

179. Fechner, *Zend-Avesta* (note 178), 1:v: “daß die ganze Natur lebendig und göttlich beseelt sei.”

180. Fechner, *Zend-Avesta* (note 178), 1:48–178, esp. 102–3: “Je nach der Zusammenhangsweise (Aggregationsform) der Stoffe können wir in der Erde wie in unserem Leibe Festes, Flüssiges, Luftiges, Dunstiges und Unwägbares unterscheiden. Wir haben Felsen in unsern Knochen, Ströme laufen durch unsere Adern, Dämpfe und Luft blasen durch unsere Athemwerkzeuge, Licht dringt durch unsere Augen, Wärme durchdringt unsern Leib, ein feines Agens mag in unseren Nerven kreisen. Makrokosmos, Mikrokosmos.” On this, see also 2:104–73.

181. Charles Blanc, *Grammaire des arts du dessin: Architecture, sculpture, peinture* (Paris: Renouard, 1867), 33:

l’intelligent abrégé du monde . . . son squelette est l’image de ces rochers qui sont les ossements de la terre. Sa charpente osseuse est reliée par des nerfs, qui sont soumis à l’action de l’électricité comme les métaux; elle est revêtue de muscles qui, par leurs saillies et leurs dépressions, rappellent les montagnes et les vallées, et tout son corps est arrosé par des ruisseaux de pourpre qui transpirent à travers la peau, comme les fleuves transpirent à travers la surface du globe. Enfin la chevelure qui ombrage l’organe de sa pensée est, suivant l’expression poétique de Herder, un emblème des bois sacrés où l’on célébrait jadis les mystères. L’homme, considéré dans sa vie organique, est donc un abrégé de l’univers.

182. See Oskar Bätschmann, “The Landscape *Oeuvre* of Ferdinand Hodler,” in *Ferdinand Hodler: Landschaften*, exh. cat. (Zurich: Swiss Institute for Art Research, 1987), 42–45.

183. Vorstand der deutschen Jahrtausstellung, ed., *Katalog der Gemälde*, vol. 2 of *Ausstellung deutscher Kunst aus der Zeit von 1775–1875 in der königlichen*

*Nationalgalerie Berlin 1906*, exh. cat. (Munich: Friedrich Bruckmann, 1906), 72–73; the works by Carus exhibited were cat. no. 253, *Hünengrab im Mondschein* (Prause, *Carl Gustav Carus* [note 15], 153 [cat. no. 304]), and cat. no. 254, *Frühlingslandschaft im Rosental* (Prause, *Carl Gustav Carus* [note 15], 143 [cat. no. 259]). Caspar David Friedrich (paintings, cat. nos. 505–35, studies, cat. nos. 536 a–h), Johan Christian Claussen Dahl (cat. nos. 305–20, 321 a–m), and Joseph Anton Koch (cat. nos. 869–84) were all far better represented than Carus.

184. Alfred Peltzer, *Goethe und die Ursprünge der neueren deutschen Landschaftsmalerei* (Leipzig: E. A. Seemann, 1907), 1–6. Carus's prophecy is found at the end of letter VI: Carus, *Nine Letters on Landscape Painting* (note 27), 115; Carus, *Neun Briefe über Landschaftsmalerei* (note 11), 111: “es wird in ihnen die Natur, mit geistigem Auge erschaut, in höherer Wahrheit erscheinen.”

185. Carl Gustav Carus, *Neun Briefe über Landschaftsmalerei*, ed. Kurt Gerstenberg (Dresden: Wolfgang Jess, 1927); Carl Gustav Carus, *Neun Briefe über Landschaftsmalerei, geschrieben in den Jahren 1813 bis 1824* (Villingen: Reichelt, 1947).

186. Carl Gustav Carus, *Briefe über Landschaftsmalerei, zuvor ein Brief von Goethe als Einleitung* (Heidelberg: Lambert Schneider, 1972).

187. Carl Gustav Carus, *Neuf lettres sur la peinture de paysage*, trans. Erika Diekenherr, Alain Pernet, and Rainer Rochlitz (Paris: Klincksieck, 1983); Carl Gustav Carus, *Lettere sulla pittura di paesaggio*, trans. Alessandro Nigro (Pordenone: Studio Tesi, 1991).

188. Excerpts from letters III, VI, and VII in Lorenz Eitner, comp., *Restoration/Twilight of Humanism*, vol. 2 of idem, comp., *Neoclassicism and Romanticism, 1750–1850* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1970), 47–52; excerpts from letters II, III, and VII, translated by Gertrude Harms Halloway and Gerhard Groehlich, in Elizabeth Gilmore Holt, ed., *A Documentary History of Art; From the Classicists to the Impressionists: Art and Architecture in the Nineteenth Century* (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1986), 87–93; letter II, translated by Michael Snideman, in Joshua C. Taylor, ed., *Nineteenth-Century Theories of Art* (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1987), 270–74; excerpts from letters I, II, III, and V translated by Nicholas Walker in Charles Harrison, Paul Wood, and Jason Gaiger, eds., *Art in Theory, 1815–1900: An Anthology of Changing Ideas* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1998), 101–7.

189. Carl Gustav Carus, *Zwölf Briefe über das Erdleben*, ed. Christoph Bernoulli and Hans Kern (Celle: Kampmann, 1926).

190. Carl Gustav Carus, *Zwölf Briefe über das Erdleben*, ed. Meffert (note 104); Meffert, *Carl Gustav Carus* (note 151).

191. Busch, letter to author of 8 January 2001; Carus, *Psyche* (note 164); Wolfgang Köppe, “Carl Gustav Carus,” in Josef Rattner, ed., *Vorläufer der Tiefenpsychologie* (Vienna: Europaverlag, 1983), 57–80.

This volume is dedicated to its translator, David Britt, who died while it was still in production. The Text & Documents series has been greatly enriched by his elegant translations of the writings of Aby Warburg, Friedrich Gilly, Nicolas Le Camus de Mézières, Jean-Nicolas-Louis Durand, Giovanni Battista Piranesi, and Julien-David Le Roy, and most of the volumes published in this series have benefited from his scholarly contributions and astute counsel. We will miss his studious and exacting work and the enthusiasm he brought to each project. The series has lost a great friend, as have we all.

—Getty Research Institute Publications Program

# Nine Letters on Landscape Painting

Written in the Years 1815–1824;  
with a Letter from Goethe by Way of Introduction

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# Author's Preface

Anyone who habitually traces the evolution of his own inner life will be obliged to confess that its successive states appear to have little in common. Ten or even five years on, his views on many subjects have changed; his scope of vision is enlarged; and he no longer feels, thinks, or acts as he did before. Only the more penetrating eye will discern that all these disparate outward forms proceed from the same ego, just as a single root may produce leaves of different shapes at different times.

This being so, when we take up our own earlier work after a lapse of time and subject it to close scrutiny, our position is an anomalous one. There will of course be much that no longer compels our assent; we shall take issue, to varying degrees, with the form of expression; we shall also find that in the meantime some of the flowers of our intellect have withered on the bough, while new blossom has burst forth in precisely the opposite direction. Be that as it may, the worst error that we can commit is to try to remake an earlier work to suit our later views; we may be able to correct an error here and there, or fill a gap, or patch some piece of clumsy workmanship, but we shall mar the rounded form and the organic cohesiveness of the whole.

Such were the thoughts that came to mind when I took in hand the manuscript of these letters, which were begun fifteen years ago and have since passed through the hands of a number of friends, with the intention of preparing them to become, through print, the property of all like-minded readers. I did so in deference to the wishes of a number of friends who had been reminded of the existence of these essays by a favorable mention from the pen of His Excellency, Privy Councilor von Goethe, in his *Tages- und Jahreshefte*<sup>1</sup> [Day and year books].\*

And so may these pages float down the broad river of our literature, in the company of so many others, both better and worse! They bear a true impression of the mind of one to whom, amid earnest endeavors and onerous duties of many kinds, art has been a true friend and a silent comforter. If, here and there, they once more produce such an effect, I shall regard the purpose of this communication as fully achieved.

13 September 1830

CARUS

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<sup>1</sup> A numbered note indicates an editorial note; see pp. 149–56. —ED.

\* In *Goethe's Werke, Ausgabe letzter Hand* 32:222. The letter in which he first expressed his approval of these essays, as long ago as 1822, I have had bound in at the front of the manuscript, and so it will follow them into print.

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# Letter from His Excellency, Privy Councilor von Goethe

Honored Sir,

In sending back the pleasing pictures, I also enclose the essay. The two are most perfectly related; they reveal a tender and sensitive mind that is truly and solidly grounded within itself. Lovers of art here have made constant pilgrimages to this delightful piece of work, and each has adopted his own favorite. Very many thanks are due to you for sending it to us; I only hope that these delicate works reach you safely. I would be obliged if you would let me know.

Your letters on landscape painting are as well conceived as they are beautifully written; you ought not withhold them from the public. They will not fail to produce an effect and will delight both artists and amateurs by opening their eyes to the manifold associative harmonies within nature.

At the same time, when I reflect on the depth and thoroughness with which you investigate organic structure and the vividness and accuracy with which you characterize it, I can only wonder that, with such objectivity, you reveal yourself to be so profoundly versed in matters that appear to belong wholly to the subjective realm.

The error that has found its way onto the printer's block, despite the clarity of your drawing, is unfortunately beyond repair; let the erratum therefore read as you have indicated. From time to time, as your plates are completed, let me see a proof, to allay my impatience, since your work is not to be hoped for until next year.\*

I shall shortly be sending the next fascicle of my *Morphologie* . . .

Yours very truly,  
J. W. VON GOETHE  
Weimar, 20 April 1822

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\* This was a reference to my work *Von den Ur-Theilen des Knochen- und Schalen-gerüstes* [Primitive portions of the bone and shell skeleton], which was eventually published six years later. —CARUS

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# Letter I

The study of art, like that of the ancient authors, gives us a point of attachment, a pleasure that lies within ourselves. By filling our inner life with grand objects and ideas, it holds our outward-directed impulses in check while cherishing our finer longings within our hearts. Our need of communication becomes less and less; like painters, sculptors, and architects, the lover of art works in solitude, for the sake of enjoyments that he is rarely in a position to share with others.

— Goethe, *Aus meinem Leben*<sup>2</sup>

The chill, damp snow slides down the window; profound silence is all around me; the room is pleasantly warm, and the lamp, which is lit early on these long, murky evenings that presage the onset of winter, sheds a pleasing half-light all around me. At such times, surely, nothing can be more delightful than to yield, in all tranquillity of spirit, to thoughts that arise from art and carry us so entirely into the realm of beauty that we forget the darkness of the days and banish the memory of all earlier unease. My dear Ernst,<sup>3</sup> I hope that you will look as kindly as ever on these outlines of the thoughts that have occupied my mind at such times; please also accept this in fulfillment of my earlier promise to set down for you my views on the meaning and purpose of art in general and of landscape painting in particular.

You are only too likely to find these papers lacking in sustained order and adequate breadth of scope and to conclude that much of this is founded on my individual temperament, rather than confirmed by other minds. If so, regard it, as Hamlet says, as so many bubbles arising from my brain; where you can, show me a better and a straighter road to follow.<sup>4</sup>

I hope you will not suppose, as many moderns do, that to speak or write of art and beauty as an investigator is to belittle or even profane them; as if nothing counted in such matters but feeling and sentiment, and as if depth and clarity were entirely incompatible.

Surely, man in his true feelings is always *one*; only as a whole being can he attain the sublime and the beautiful. Why should our feelings be impaired, even blunted, simply because that which warms the emotions has become clear to the mind? How can the beautiful, which is ultimately none other than the whole and the perfect (κόσμος), ever be profoundly known and inwardly absorbed unless it is embraced with the whole soul?

It is my firm conviction that all art is dead and buried if the emotions are not moved; that a cold calculation of contrasts<sup>5</sup> and rational concepts can give birth to nothing but poetic cripples. I am entirely in agreement with the Master's whimsical remark:

Fortzupflanzen die Welt sind alle vernünft'ge Discurse  
Unvermögend; durch sie kommt auch kein Kunstwerk hervor.<sup>6</sup>  
[Procreation is never a matter for rational discourse;  
Similarly, with Art, reasoning does you no good.]

However, I am daily confirmed in my belief that emotion, left entirely to itself, will fail for want of inner certainty and calm, since:

Nirgends haften  
Die unsicheren Sohlen,  
Und mit ihm spielen  
Wolken und Winde.<sup>7</sup>  
[His unsteady feet  
Find no purchase,  
And he is the plaything  
Of clouds and winds.]

I feel that a true poetic mood is an elevation of the *whole* being, involving all the powers of the soul; I perceive the error of those who by reflecting *doubly* eschew reflection in all matters of art; and I therefore have no hesitation in embracing beauty with every part of my soul. In the presence of a work of art, the vital response of my emotions combines with my clear understanding of inner perfection and my awareness of a pure artistic will. Only then do I experience a full and genuine poetic enjoyment. Such enjoyment, being based on beauty, truth, and rightness, never fails or lessens on subsequent encounters with the work of art, which it thereby defines as a classic. Let us freely and wholeheartedly yield to inner impulse, ranging in thought over every part of beauty's realm. Our delight in gazing down from a mountaintop is no less if we have previously made our way through all the intricacies of the lower valleys; indeed, the total experience<sup>8</sup> is all the finer because it recapitulates, as it were, and encapsulates our previous enjoyment of individual places on the lower slopes. In the same way, a far-ranging train of thought need not impair our eager delight in the wondrous and mysterious workings of art. Rather, just as any true investigation of natural history conducts us to the threshold of higher mysteries with a yet more sacred awe, we may expect an open-minded consideration of art to do the same; though we can hardly blame artists for their irritation at much of the claptrap that currently passes for aesthetic discussion, both in print and in the lecture hall.

You too, my dear Ernst, must surely have felt that there is some miraculous

power in artistic genius, with its ability to re-create, to imitate an eternal, cosmic creative process, to produce and reproduce in perfect freedom.

Where else can man create even the least thing that has life? What science have we that directly brings life rather than (as in dissection) death?

A leaf of a plant is dissected into its cells, its respiratory pores, its vascular and fibrous structure; comparative anatomy<sup>9</sup> teaches us to divide even the smallest creature into yet smaller structures; and yet, with all this science, who has ever brought to life the smallest mite or assembled even the smallest leaf?

And now look at the creations of art, which, though not alive in the real world, are able to seem alive for us; created by human beings, they testify to the kinship between man and the world spirit. Think of those fictional characters whose ideas and words, created by the poet, bring them before us as real individuals:

Ich weiß es, sie sind ewig, denn sie sind!<sup>10</sup>

[I know they are eternal: they exist!]

says Tasso, or rather Goethe, speaking of his own creations: and rightly so. Achilles, Odysseus, Orlando, Sigismund, Hamlet, Eleonora d'Este, Ophelia, Gretchen: are not all these, as we know them, the creatures of a divine art? Is it not as if they had walked among the living? Do we not know their thoughts and actions as well as those of a departed friend?

He who thus brings a mind forth from his own mind: has he not a power beyond the reach of many? And should not man be uplifted by finding such power in man?

Let us turn from poetry to the harmony of sounds!

Swifter and more fleeting than poetry, music cannot so readily create a whole human spirit, with all its sorrows and its actions; but music can encompass a moment, a mood of the soul, and bring it to life with infinite power, so that we are caught up in it despite ourselves, as if the sounds of the music were intimate friends, dragging us willy-nilly into *their* circle, their turn of mind.

Architecture does the same, albeit in a different and more tranquil way. Both arts hold aloof from the imitation of nature as such;<sup>11</sup> both express themselves through pure proportion, in time and in space respectively. Together with poetry, they comprise the supreme triad, the noblest chord that stirs—and must stir—the human heart; for in it, through the handiwork of a single human individual, the divine freely and directly approaches and uplifts all men alike.

Do you not feel, as I do, that some inner analogy must exist between these three arts and the three realms of nature, the three fundamental forms of thought, the threefold inner organization that physiologists discover within man, the three primary colors, and the three fundamental notes:<sup>12</sup> an inner connection so profound as to be guessed at but never fully explored?

Carus

My dear Ernst, in these matters I feel as if I were standing on a mountain precipice, with a mighty river crashing into the depths beside me; wave upon wave surges forward, and all plunge into the bottomless depths; and yet the river remains full, and the rock onto which I step stands no less firm.

I can write no more today.

Yours,

ALBERTUS

## Letter II

On these glorious winter days I have been spending much of my time in the open air, delighting in the varied and exquisite interplay of light between blue sky and snow-covered earth. Countless beautiful effects of refracted color present themselves to the *practiced* eye: these are truly wondrous and magnificent!

There, a bright gleam of snow-light sparkles on a rocky ledge, set off by the brownish stone with its sparse covering of moss and lichen; here, snowdrifts lie in shade, and the raised parts of their surfaces show as bluish, occasionally purplish tones. Down below, the mountain stream splashes between banks of ice; against the dazzling brightness of the snow, its surface catches and refracts the light in greens and purples, partly as true and partly as physiological colors.<sup>13</sup>

It was a delight that I was unable to share with you, my dear Ernst; but to spend this very evening with you, to spin out with you today's newly started train of thought on the art of landscape – this meeting of minds should not be hindered by any intervening distance.

In my previous letter I took the free, poetic impulse, at the point where it begins to assume a form and enter life as a work of art, and traced it in those three aspects in which it remains free of all literal reproduction of nature and expresses itself instead through the pure proportional relationships of speech, musical sound, and solid mass. Here was *one* realm of the fine arts, the *first* realm, complete in itself.

We now enter the second circle, in which the enduring forms of nature supply the substance that will embody the Promethean spark of art. For nothing is ever entirely beyond art's reach; art is true humanity; everything that man perceives and measures must in some sense be available to art. Art can mold the realm of thought into a poem; shape our innermost bodily stirring, palpitation, or resonance into music; and shape rigid, inanimate substance into architecture; equally, images of everything in the three realms of nature spring forth to serve the ends of *representational* art; and we could readily draw analogies between the depiction of inorganic nature and architecture, between that of the plant world and music, or between that of the higher animal world, notably the human race itself, and poetry.

The productions of representational art are made in one of two ways: either in the round and truly corporeal, that is, in the mass; or through shading or

coloring on a surface, that is, in light. They thus divide into sculpture and painting;<sup>14</sup> unless we are to count as a third, hybrid kind the rearrangement of natural objects themselves, as practiced in the arts of gardening, acting, and dancing.

The sculpture of natural objects is limited by its materials to the rendering of animal and human figures; painting, by contrast, embraces all three kingdoms of nature (and indeed also reproduces works of architecture and sculpture), further subdividing itself into landscape and history painting. Landscape painting employs an alphabet made up of the phenomena of inorganic nature and of the plant world; history painting uses the animal kingdom, mostly through its noblest representative, the human figure. These distinctions are half-obsured by countless transitional cases: thus sculpture and painting combine together in relief; landscape painting often incorporates human and animal figures; and landscape, in turn, frequently does service as a setting for history painting.

And so the creative force of art works unceasingly, and in its hands the world before our eyes takes shape anew. In its works all manner of things speak to us, in pursuit of the artist's ends, in a wonderful language that is all its own. Sun and moon, air and clouds, mountain and valley, trees and flowers, the beasts in all their variety, man in his nobler and still more various individuality: in art, all these are reborn and affect us with all their intrinsic force: now gloomy, now full of cheer, but always lifting us above the common ground through contemplation of the divine, that is, the creative power within man himself. Art thus comes before us as the messenger of religion;<sup>15</sup> it brings to us the primal power and soul of the universe, which as a whole remains beyond human understanding, and makes it known to us through one of its particles: the human mind itself. The artist must accordingly regard himself as a consecrated vessel, exempt from all that is impure, base, or presumptuous. At the same time the work of art must never adhere too closely to nature but must rise above it; for, if we ever forget that this is the *work of the human spirit*, art will lose its human reference.

Dear friend, let us move on to look more closely at the purpose and significance of landscape painting. This is an art with origins in recent times, and one that still awaits perfect definition; an art whose full flowering may still lie in the future, whereas most other arts either recall the backward-looking face of Janus or adorn the sepulchers of the past as emblems of better days. Every imitative form of art affects us in two ways: *first, through the nature of the object depicted*, which will affect us in an image very much as it does in reality; and *second, insofar as the work of art is a creation of the human mind, which, by truthfully manifesting its thoughts* (just as, in a higher sense, the universe may be called a manifestation of divine thoughts), elevates a kindred spirit above the common ground.<sup>16</sup>

Let us take these two effects of the art of landscape one at a time, with an eye to a productive conclusion that will embrace them both. What then is the effect produced by objects in the real landscape? To pose that question first



will better enable us to assess their effect in painting. The solid ground, in all its manifold forms of rock, mountain, valley, and plain; the waters, whether at rest or in motion; the air and clouds, with all their diverse phenomena: such, in essence, are the forms in which earth manifests its life: a life so far beyond us that we human beings, in our littleness, barely acknowledge or accept it as life at all. Then there is the life of plants, which is both higher and closer to ourselves; and this, in conjunction with the other phenomena just mentioned, forms the true subject of landscape painting.<sup>17</sup>

In nature these phenomena give us no feeling that our passions have been powerfully addressed; they seem too remote from us—if, indeed, they can be said to produce any aesthetic effect at all. Clearly, the beauty of the surf cannot be of interest to shipwrecked mariners, or that of the lighting to the victims of a fire. Only what touches us directly and is closely bound up with us can involve our passions in its changes, filling us with desire or hate; but the natural landscape appears to us in a light of total objectivity, and in it we perceive a quiet, self-contained, consistent, law-abiding life. The alternation of hours and seasons; the motion of the clouds, and all the majestic colors of the sky; the ebb and flow of the tides; the slow but sure transformation of the earth's surface; the weathering of bare mountain crags into grains of earth that are washed downstream and eventually create fertile ground; the emergence of springs, which follow the lie of the land and combine to form streams and finally great rivers: all of these obey peaceful and eternal laws, to which we ourselves are subject; which carry us along, resist how we may; and which, in compelling us by some secret power to contemplate a great, indeed gigantic cycle of natural events, distract us from ourselves, making us feel our own littleness and weakness; and yet their contemplation serves to calm our inward storms and to give us peace in every way. Climb to the topmost mountain peak, gaze out across long chains of hills, and observe the rivers in their courses and all the magnificence that offers itself to your eye – what feeling takes hold of you? There is a silent reverence within you; you lose yourself in infinite space; silently, your whole being is purified and cleansed; your ego disappears. *You are nothing; God is all.*

Not only immensity, as it appears in the life of a planet, but any true observation of the quiet joys of plant life operates in a similar way. See how the plant slowly but powerfully raises itself from the earth; how its leaves unfold stage by stage; how in quiet evolution they transform themselves into the calyx and the flower, concluding the cycle with the seed that simultaneously launches it anew. When we find ourselves in the midst of an unspoiled, luxuriant world of plant life; if we take in at a single glance the diverse life cycles of many organisms; if we come upon some venerable tree, almost old enough to put us in mind of the lifetime of the earth, in which millennia pass like days: the effect in every case is similar to that described above. Tranquil reflection takes hold of us; we feel our unruly ambitions and aspirations held in check; we enter into the cycle of nature and transcend ourselves. Remarkably enough, the vegetable kingdom produces similar effects on our physical being: the

fragrances of flowers—that is, of the plant in its highest state of evolution—often tend to make us drowsy, inducing sleep and bodily repose; certain juices, frequently associated with blossoms, produce this effect to an extreme degree, even provoking a total dissolution into ambient nature, or death. The ancients pictured the lair of the god of dreams as a cave stocked with herbs and somniferous poppies. What is more, an exclusively vegetable diet tends to make both animals and human beings mild and quiet, whereas meat eating seems to incline them toward violent desires and actions.

In themselves, these observations cast some light on the effects produced by landscape subjects in painting; they reveal the source of that grateful sensation of inner peace and clarity that we enjoy in the presence of true works of landscape art, and they will afford further guidance in the course of this exposition. But enough for the moment. Dear friend, I look forward to your response.

Yours,  
ALBERTUS

## Letter III

Spring came; the trees blossomed, and the blossom fell; the rose season came and went; now, even the pretty, late-flowering elders have shed their tiny star-shaped blossoms, and summer draws to an end: here and there the leaves are on the turn; autumnal mists hang over the fields on some early mornings; and I, dear Ernst, have still found neither the leisure nor the inspiration to send you, as you requested, the next installment of the observations on landscape on which we embarked.

It is rather as if the life of nature in its joyous prime had forbidden dissection and analysis. The true masters of art live such full lives, both inwardly and outwardly, that they can seldom bring themselves to engage in such inquiries; and we too, with so much to contemplate all around us, feel too happy to be able to reflect on *why* we are happy. But before pursuing the path on which I started earlier I must first deal with the remarks in your last letter. First, you suggested that the relationship between science and art, on which I touched in my first letter, should be more precisely defined, lest science be dismissed as inferior and destructive to the life of art. Second, in response to my account of the effect of nature on man you argued that the sense of liberation and elevation provoked in us by the beauty of landscape derives not so much from the loss of our ego amid the all-encompassing life of nature as from our gaining a clear and vivid sense of our own position in this world.

First of all, let us look for a closer consensus on these matters. We have, after all, long felt that there can be only *one* truth and that differences of opinion mean only that our cognitive powers are impeded by a veil, which must and will sooner or later fall away.

All that we feel and think, all that is, and all that we are, rests on an eternal, supreme, infinite unity. A deep, inner consciousness, which as the source of all knowledge, proof, and explanation can never in itself be explained or proved (just as the equation  $a = a$  is incapable of further proof but must be recognized as true in and by itself), persuades us of this truth with greater or lesser clarity according to the degree of our individual development. Our language indicates this immeasurable something by using the word *God*.

To us, this supreme reality is manifest both inwardly, through the rational mind, and outwardly, through nature; but we feel ourselves to be a part of this same revelation, in that we are both natural and rational; we are a whole that carries both nature and reason within itself and is therefore, *to that extent*,

divine. In our higher, mental life two possible paths present themselves: either we set out to reduce all that is multiple and infinite in nature and reason to its original divine unity; or else the ego itself grows productive, and inner unity manifests itself through outward multiplicity. In the latter case, we show *skill*; in the former, we show awareness. From awareness comes *knowledge*, or science; and from skill comes *art*. In science, man feels himself in God; in art, he feels God in himself.

Art cannot therefore be regarded as superior to science; for science, as the path that leads man to supreme unity, clearly remains supreme. At the same time it is evident that science, as the diametrical opposite of art, annuls individual existence: it kills the body so that the mind may live; and this is corroborated by what I have said above about science. You cite the construction of an edifice of scientific theory as proof that science too is able to create form; but surely such a creation forms no part of our present concern, as it is not part of science at all but of art. In this, as in other respects, man can manifest himself only as a whole; and art and science, though distinct in our minds, can never wholly be so in reality. Science can never be expounded without the assistance of art (without an artistic ordering of ideas and words); conversely, no work of art can ever be made without science (skill without knowledge).

We can even more readily agree on your second point. When I say that man, when he contemplates nature as a single, magnificent whole, becomes aware of his own pettiness—and that, once he feels that all of this exists directly in God, he himself becomes caught up in all this infinitude and, as it were, surrenders his individual existence—I feel that I have said nothing more or less than what you mean. For such surrender is no loss: it is pure gain. Something that is otherwise attainable only in the mind—namely, a conviction of the unity within infinity—here becomes almost accessible to the bodily eye, and it is for us to refine, more and more, our awareness of our own true position, our relationship with nature.

Now, however, let me retrieve the thread that was lost from view at the end of my last letter, and let us consider further the effect of the beauty of landscape *in the pictorial image*.

First, however, I must draw some distinctions among landscape images in terms of their truth, their meaning, and their subject matter. Truth of representation is naturally our first concern; this is, as it were, the body of the work of art, through which it exists in the first place and is brought from realms of purely arbitrary form into the reality in which all visual art must function. How is it that you are moved when you find in a good painting a pure remoteness of depth, the clear or troubled surface of water, the play of delicate foliage on bushes and trees, or any other form of the inexhaustible wealth of natural landscape well and faithfully depicted?

Surely, insofar as you have evolved the requisite knowledge and imagination—the organs with which to interpret the colored marks of the brush, though this has only a limited connection with “truth to nature”—surely you

find yourself, as you look, progressively transported into the landscape in question.<sup>18</sup> You have the sensation of breathing that bright, pure air; you long to walk beneath those trees; you seem to hear the very rushing of the waters. Drawn into the sacred circle of nature's mysterious life, your mind expands; you sense the eternal life of creation; all petty, individual concerns fall away; you are strengthened and uplifted by this immersion in a higher world, like an Achilles made invulnerable by being dipped in the river Styx.

Yet mere truth is not in itself the noblest feature or sole attraction of the painting, as can be shown by comparing it with its mirror image.<sup>19</sup> Make the experiment! Look at the natural landscape in a mirror. You will see it reproduced with all its charms, all its colors and its forms; but hold that image in your mind, compare it with the impression produced by a perfect work of landscape painting, and what do you observe?

In terms of truth, of course, the painting is infinitely inferior; the charm of beautiful natural forms, the luminosity of the colors, is not even half captured; but at the same time you feel that the genuine work of art is a coherent whole, a world in miniature (a microcosm) in its own right. The mirror image, by contrast, will appear to you only as a fragment: some portion of infinite nature, severed from its organic context and unnaturally confined within bounding lines. The work of art is the self-contained creation of a mental force akin to our own, one that lies within our grasp. The mirror image is a single note extracted from an immeasurable harmony; it cries out for more and yet more to be added; it can never offer the inner calm that springs either from a free and unconstrained surrender to nature itself or from the contemplation of a true work of art.

From this it clearly follows that in a landscape painting truth as such cannot satisfy us. In this or any work of art, as I pointed out in my first letter, it must additionally be possible for us to sense that the work owes its existence to the creative power of a human mind; that it is the product of a unity and must itself therefore be a self-contained and, as it were, organic whole. This being so, and since the mind that devised a particular work of art cannot be imagined except in some specific state or tendency, it follows that the work itself must express a state of mind. In landscape painting, this can be so only where the natural landscape is apprehended and depicted from an aspect that coincides exactly with the inner mood in question. Furthermore, since this meaning is conveyed solely through the depiction of objects, its articulation depends on the right choice of object (of which more anon). We can therefore refine our definition of the principal task of landscape painting as follows:

The representation of a certain mood of mental life (meaning) through reproduction of a corresponding mood of natural life (truth).<sup>20</sup>

In order to enter into more detail on the way in which this task is performed, we must: (1) summarize the correspondences between the emotions

of the mind and the states of nature; (2) review the individual objects that are reproduced in terms of the effects that they create; (3) consider in what way, in this reproduction of natural life, the idea of beauty is attained.

I am sending you my views on these matters in brief essays, which I enclose with this letter; please let me know your views on all of this before I go on to formulate the further ideas that I have in mind on allied subjects.

Yours,  
ALBERTUS

ENCLOSURE I

## On the Correspondences between Mental Moods and Natural States

When man's classifying mind looks into its own depths and explores the various motions of the soul, the first distinction that it is able to draw is that between notion and feeling [*Empfindung*].\* These relate to each other as form to substance, language to music, or individuality to totality. They arise, respectively, when man appears to himself as a unity (when he becomes able to form a notion of the relationship between individual external objects and himself) and when he perceives himself to be part of a greater, indeed infinite whole (when he becomes aware of the relationship between his own self and the totality of external nature). The latter, because it relates to the *infinite*, is itself unbounded (hence the depth, the inexpressibility of the feeling); the former, as a reaction to the *finite*, is bounded (hence the possibility of a clear, precise notion). Our ability to feel and our ability to form notions are thus the elements within which our whole mental life operates. They are inseparable, just as man cannot survive either as an individual in isolation or as a being devoid of individuality within the whole; nevertheless, they take turns to predominate, and sometimes notions determine feelings, sometimes feelings determine the sequence of notions. When we look at nature or at a work of art we apprehend objects as notions in that we refer them to our own consciousness; and yet, at the same time, because in the process the ego is itself referred to a new aspect of the external world (that is, put into a different inner state), a feeling must also arise, which will be homogeneous with the mood that either manifests itself through individual phenomena in the life of nature or corresponds to the feeling from which, as from an inner unity, first the notion and then the physical form of the work of art arose.

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\* This word has many different connotations; here I use it in the sense of what is also called mood [*Stimmung*], the state of the feelings.

What, then, are the specific moods expressed in the countless metamorphoses of natural landscape?

All those metamorphoses are simply forms of natural life; therefore, the diverse moods expressed in them can be nothing other than states of life, stages in the life of nature. Now, life in its essence is infinite; but its forms are subject to ceaseless change, constantly emerging and receding; and so every individual life-form exists in *four phases*, which may be defined as evolution, maturity, decline, and extinction. Many other states arise from combinations of these four: as where evolution is pathologically curtailed; mature strength battles against impending extinction; or extinction yields up a new evolution. All are abundantly represented in those aspects of the life of nature that offer themselves to the landscape painter. Most obviously there is the constant succession of times of day and year. The four phases are exemplified by morning, noon, evening, and night, and by spring, summer, autumn, and winter. Their combinations appear in countless guises: when, for example, the early morning clouds over; trees in blossom are caught by a late frost; plants shrivel and die in the summer heat; a thunderstorm breaks at noon; the moon rises at night; or new shoots spring from a dead stock.

What of the mind itself and its successive moods?

Clearly, as with the rise and decline of individual life-forms in nature, individual manifestations of mental life will have their own *growth* and *decay* within the eternal life of the soul.

Here, the feeling of *aspiration*, *reassurance*, and *evolution*; the feeling of true *inner clarity* and *calm*; the feeling of *blight* and *despondency*; and the absence of feeling in *apathy* represent the four phases that are fundamental to the life of the mind in all its infinite variety. Here, as in nature, the archetypal states combine in countless ways: in a state of aspiration, the feeling of the impossibility of attainment may lead to melancholy; inner conflict may arise when the feeling of perfect strength is assailed by external, destructive forces; renewed courage may spring from apathy; and so forth.

Sound a string on an instrument, and the corresponding string in a higher or lower octave will vibrate in sympathy; similarly, kindred impulses respond to each other, both in nature and in the mind. Here, again, the human individual appears as part of a higher whole. The unpreoccupied mind draws encouragement and stimulus from the aspiring, vigorous life of nature, from pure morning light, and from a bright, spring scene; is cheered and calmed by the clear, blue air of summer and by the sheer abundance of forest leaves in calm air; turns melancholy as nature slows to a halt in the autumnal gloom; and is driven in on itself and bound fast by the shroud of winter darkness. The preoccupied mind, by contrast, being under the sway of some overwhelming emotion, tends to impose that emotion on the impressions that it receives from elsewhere, coloring them to a greater or lesser degree. The sick mind, indeed, may well be affected by everything in reverse: oppressed by a spring morning and perfectly at home, even cheered, amid extremes of hardship and

outward adversity; but this need not detract from our own observations, which are confined to the healthy and the natural.

Observe, finally, that the antithesis between feeling and notion (between totality and individuality) is there, in essence, within the very notions afforded to us by the natural landscape. Those notions may include an opposition between color and form: clearly, one and the same scene will differ in character and address different moods when it is clad in tender green or in lifeless yellow, brown, or gray.\* Notably, of all the notions prompted by natural landscapes, those that most directly appeal to our feelings are those connected with the weather. Indeed, it might well be said that the succession of different moods in the atmosphere (the weather) is to the life of nature precisely as the succession of different moods is to the life of the psyche.

## ENCLOSURE II

### On the Effect of Individual Landscape Objects on the Mind

The same must apply to these specific objects as to the meaning of natural life as a whole: they exert an effect in keeping with the *sense of life* that manifests itself in them. If this is unorganized, the effect will be chilling; if emergent, stimulating; if complete and perfect, calming.<sup>22</sup> Take, for instance, the bare rock masses of the earth's core in their rough form, offering no sustenance or security to higher forms of organic life: they make us feel strangely withdrawn and hard. But let the rock begin to weather, and the influences of air, water, light, and heat foster the first vestiges of vegetation in the shape of lichens and mosses; then our feelings become both milder and warmer, as we contemplate the emergence of new form. The same applies to the difference between bare sand and fertile soil. Again, a perfectly clear sky is the essence of air and light and the true image of infinity: and, as we have already observed that our own feelings are inherently founded on an aspiration toward the infinite, so the sky, as its image, profoundly and powerfully sets the mood of the whole landscape over which it arches, and indeed establishes itself as the most glorious, the most indispensable component of landscape itself. When our view of this infinity is narrowed down, constrained, and obscured by clouds or by tall accumulations of other objects, the mind is proportionately constrained and oppressed; but let the veil of cloud break into silvery cloudlets, or disperse in the steady glow of the rising moon or of the sun, and our inner gloom is dispelled; we are uplifted by the thought that the infinite has prevailed over

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\* The observation of natural landscape through glasses of different colors affords some important evidence in this regard.<sup>21</sup>



the finite idea of the victory of something infinite over something finite. Finally, water, the fourth basic element of natural life, from which all earth-life emerges, and which reflects the infinity of the sky (heaven on earth, indeed), exerts a twofold attraction on us: its lively turbulence excites and enlivens our feelings, and its still surface, whether light or dark, moves us to infinite longing.

Between water, earth, and sky, the plant world arises in all its unmeasured variety; and here, too, our feelings respond to the vital states and the meaning of the object. The dense vegetation that covers a valley floor evokes a sense of the luxuriant vitality of life; a mature tree in full leaf invites tranquil contemplation; and a yellowed or lifeless tree induces melancholy.

As for sentient creatures,<sup>23</sup> these of course form no part of the landscape as such and may thus be dispensed with; but they powerfully reinforce the effect of other objects by underlining their significance. The shy roe deer, a dweller in deep forest shades, will accentuate the effect of a dark cluster of trees; a skein of migrating birds will vividly illustrate the time of year; a hovering bird of prey animates a mountain scene; indeed, the same applies to human figures, and only this can justify their presence in a landscape. The figure of a hunter clambering over the rocks in the morning mist will concentrate the meaning of the landscape; a solitary figure rapt in contemplation of the tranquil scene will move the viewer to set himself in the figure's place; a pilgrim will remind us of the idea of distance, the immeasurable vastness of the earth's surface. In every case, however, the landscape will define the sentient figure, which must spring from it and must belong to it, so long as the landscape in question is meant to remain a landscape.

#### ENCLOSURE III

## On Rendering the Idea of Beauty in Natural Landscape

Before venturing to investigate in more detail the way in which the idea of beauty is conveyed through the expression of mental life in the life of nature, we must touch on a question that many consider unanswerable, though its answer may prove to lie closer at hand than some others. The question is this: What is beauty?

First, let us consider why so many previous attempts to answer this question have invariably proved misleading. The answer would seem to be that no one has viewed the idea of beauty in its true light, as something essentially limitless; instead, a mass of limitations have been applied in the attempt to capture the spirit in a single sonorous word—all for want of the ability to rise to the contemplation of the eternal and the divine. Much the same has

happened with attempts to define the concept of life: this, too, has been presented in realist terms as a specific, self-contained, discrete entity among other entities in nature: never divining that we must either treat it as the fountainhead of *all* natural phenomena, or we will be left embracing a cloud in place of Juno.

As to the definition of beauty, my answer is this. Beauty is what makes us feel the divine essence in nature (i.e., in the world of sensory phenomena); just as truth is the cognitive awareness of divine essence, and virtue the life of divine essence in this world. The direct surrender of nature to the supreme absolute, which is its fountainhead, is what we call religion (brotherly communion, unification).

The beautiful can be none other than the perfect interpenetration of reason and nature. Since supreme unity manifests itself only under the forms of nature and reason, it follows that, as soon as nature appears to us, imbued with and shaped by reason, the idea of divine essence will also appear to us. The ego then relates itself to this dawning infinity, and it becomes clear that our capacity for feeling, our emotional sensibility (founded, as shown above, on an attraction toward the infinite), is addressed as a sense of beauty: the sense in which this whole aspect of human nature attains its focal point, its goal (aesthetic gratification). The beautiful is thus the triad of God, nature, and man; and its essence can be contemplated only in the steadfast conviction (founded on the authentic consciousness that underlies all knowledge and feeling) of a supreme absolute. In the absence of a living connection between man and God, there can no more be a sense of beauty than there can be a sense of truth or justice; and, precisely because that connection never *can* be truly absent, this holy triad lives within every human breast, though veiled or even obscured to varying degrees.

Let us now consider the phenomenal manifestation of beauty. It follows from the above that we can call nothing beautiful if it is outside nature, not real, not present to the senses: for instance, a mathematical concept or an abstract concept of any kind. Indeed, who would ever describe the uncreated and infinitely sublime primordial essence as beautiful in and for itself? Beauty is implicit in that essence; but only the phenomenal manifestation of that essence can be called beautiful.

Nothing, however, even among objects perceptible to the senses, could ever be beautiful in which the divine essence did not express itself as eternal reason and law.

Since nothing in nature *can* exist except in consequence of divine laws, it follows that in relation to the pure human mind nature is absolutely and entirely beautiful. It is because of the defects of human vision—barely adequate to detect the indwelling law in the objects closest to hand—that beauty appears less than universal, and perfect beauty (for want of a perfect and comprehensive view) is nowhere to be found. All in all, the same applies to goodness (the presence of evil in nature being an illusion) and to truth (error in nature being unthinkable). In any phenomenon in which nature prevails, suffi-

ciently undistorted, pure, free, and powerful to achieve its true significance within the great totality of nature — undisturbed by extraneous influences which, though always natural in origin, must inevitably introduce a type foreign to the essence of the phenomenon itself — in any such phenomenon, man himself profoundly senses the operation of eternal law: he recognizes *beauty*. He describes as unbeautiful, or ugly,\* those individual phenomena that present themselves to his view without ever having attained their full development or fulfilled their own true significance: phenomena that have been perverted into a type entirely foreign to their essence (have become unnatural).

To be yet more fully convinced, by examples, of the truth of these principles, we have only to compare the forms of the various natural objects around us, each and every one of which goes to confirm the principle. What can it be but the expression of imperfect evolution, of thwarted aspiration toward higher form, that makes us regard as ugly those animal forms that the science of zoonomy has shown to be transitional: mollusks, worms, spiders, lumpfish, flatfish, toads, and the rest? (A view that is gradually dispelled only in the mind of the naturalist, who in due course discovers the workings of a higher law, here as elsewhere.)

Is not this the only reason why we see even the shapes of human embryos, with their potbellies and large heads, as the acme of ugliness?

So clear does this seem that only the calamitous divorce between sound observation and pure speculation, which are apparently deemed eternally incompatible, can explain to us how the causes of beautiful form in general ever came to be discussed without reference to the *meaning* of forms as organic entities.

But let us press on!

Surely it is a sense of unnaturalness, of inherent law violated by some external foe, that causes us to regard any deformity in an animal or human body, such as crooked limbs, ill-proportioned facial features, and the like — or indeed a tree deformed by unskillful pruning or cramped location — as unbeautiful? As ugly?

Is not inner law the foundation of all beauty in architecture?

Finally, of all organic forms known to us, why is the human form the purest and most beautiful, if not because it contains the type of a perfect and complete organization, as demonstrated by zoonomy?

Why, if not because we have this perfection in mind, do we apply the epithet *beautiful* to those other organisms in which nature has attained some well-defined stage of evolution? Hence we delight in the structure of the eagle, or of the slender horse, in whose forms the very idea of strength and speed seems to have found its incarnation; we find beauty and nobility in the build of the mighty lion or bull, animals in which nature has brought a specific

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\* The application of this is very much the same as that of the term *lifeless*, or *dead*, which we apply to those individual entities that *as such* betray no signs of inner life, although they participate in the life of the totality of nature, in which absolute death is utterly impossible.

evolutionary sequence to its conclusion; we take pleasure in the glorious, leafy vault of a hundred-year-old oak tree, which is the expression of a free and endlessly varied evolution. Nor does this apply to physical beauty alone: wherever inner law and divinity shines through, in words, in music, or in the affirmation of will in action, the mind perceives beauty.

After these preliminary considerations, we shall have no difficulty in determining how the idea of beauty is to be attained in the depiction of landscape.

Nature as such is necessarily and entirely beautiful, and is recognized as beautiful in the degree to which its inwardness, the divinity of its essence, manifests itself; accept this, and it follows that the depiction of landscape in art will conform to the idea of beauty precisely insofar as it fulfills its allotted artistic function: to express the life of the mind by representing a moment in the collective life of nature on earth. Achieve *this*, and you *thereby* create beauty.

The relationship between the beauty of landscape in nature itself and in art is consequently defined as follows. In nature, our sense of the true and direct embodiment of divine essence elevates us; in art, our perception of the divinity of the human spirit, which expresses its feelings by depicting or rather re-creating divine forms in nature, binds us to itself with weaker and yet more intimate bonds.

*Natural beauty is more divine; artistic beauty is more human.* And this explains why the feeling for nature truly emerges only through art. It is as if the infinite wealth of nature were written in a language that man needed to learn, and as if he could learn it only by receiving some of the words of that language translated into his mother tongue, whether through inspiration from a higher spirit or through the agency of a kindred spirit. This is how art prepares and promotes the cognitive awareness of nature, which is natural science.

Anyone can readily trace, in his own development, the process whereby increasing familiarity with the purposes of art—if, that is, his chosen art was one that pursued a true and consequently noble tendency—taught him to recognize the power and beauty of nature. [Salomon] Gessner bears witness to this in his letter on landscape painting.<sup>24</sup> [Friedrich] Schiller expresses himself in more general terms, but powerfully and magnificently (perhaps more so than in his essays on aesthetics), in his poem “Die Künstler” [The artists], in which he addresses artists thus:

Eh' ihr das Gleichmaß in die Welt gebracht,  
 Dem alle Wesen freudig dienen—  
 Ein unermessner Bau im schwarzen Flor der Nacht,  
 Nächst um ihn her, mit mattem Stral beschienen,  
 Ein streitendes Gestaltenheer,  
 Die seinen Sinn in Sklavenketten hielten,  
 Und, ungesellig, rauh wie er,  
 Mit tausend Kräften auf ihn zielten,  
 So stand die Schöpfung vor dem Wilden.

Durch der Begierde blinde Fessel nur  
An die Erscheinungen gebunden,  
Entfloh ihm ungenossen, unempfunden  
Die schöne Seele der Natur.  
[Before you first brought measure to the world,  
Measure, which every being serves with joy —  
An edifice immense, veiled in black night  
With all around, lit by faint, glimmering beams,  
A multitude of faint contending figures,  
Holding its meaning chained in servitude;  
All rough and uncouth as the thing itself,  
Pitting their puny strengths against it — thus  
Creation to the savage first appeared.  
Tied to phenomena by nothing more  
Than chains of blind desire, he never felt  
Nor yet enjoyed the beauteous soul  
Of nature, which still passed him by.]

And yet:

Jetzt wand sich vo[n de]m Sinnenschlafe  
Die freie, schöne Seele los,  
Durch euch entfesselt, sprang der Sklave  
Der Sorge in der Freude Schoos.  
Jetzt fiel der Thierheit dumpfe Schranke,  
Und Menschheit trat auf die entwölkte Stirn,  
Und der erhabne Fremdling, der Gedanke,  
Sprang aus dem staunenden Gehirn.<sup>25</sup>  
[Now from the sleep of sense the soul awoke  
To perfect beauty and to liberty;  
By you set free, the erstwhile slave now sprang  
From Care's embrace into the lap of Joy.  
The shackles of brute life now fell away;  
Humanity upon the unclouded brow  
Appeared; and the exalted stranger, Thought,  
Sprang forth from the astonished brain.]

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## Letter IV

Autumn is now still further advanced. The chill, damp, misty air, and the bare branches, on which only an occasional brownish yellow leaf still hangs, send me home earlier than usual from my walk today. True, man should ascribe no troubling influence to the tranquil, regular cycle of nature, even when it confronts him with its darker side; but for today I find this beyond my powers.

So let me recover, in an exchange of thoughts with you, my old and well-tried friend, the inner equanimity and tranquillity that you and I have always believed to be the only true source of happiness.

And so I turn once again to the reflections on which we embarked before. I now have it in mind to take the general principles and apply them to actual works of art that either exist or might exist in reality.

First, however, I shall try to set out for you my views on a subject to which I have given much thought, that of the different kinds of style, character, and execution in landscape painting.<sup>26</sup> This will ensure that we do not go on to consider works of art as such without clearly defining our terms; we must, in fact, settle in advance the language in which we shall describe their qualities.

By *style* I mean the way in which the chosen idea, the *meaning* of the work of art, is translated into practical *reality*. From this I distinguish the *character* of the work of art, which denotes the category of idea expressed, and its *execution*, which refers solely to the artistic presentation, the technique. One might say that character corresponds to the mind, execution to the body, and style to the union of mind and body, which is life itself. Different kinds of style can and inevitably will arise from different combinations of its two constituent elements. Reality may represent meaning in such a way that the idea predominates, so that the real representation, the object, is suggested by its most general, though authentic, properties: and that is the style of the *sketch*. Or the objective, faithful apprehension of reality predominates, without being infused with and governed by an inner mental life: and that is the style of *common naturalism*. Or, again, the idea may predominate in such a way as to divert the truth of objective representation from its natural course by forcibly and arbitrarily altering the type of the objects depicted: this is the *fantastic style*. Or objectivity prevails, not by virtue of inherent truth to nature but through a technique that has become second nature to the artist; and this is the *mannered style*.

In the ultimate case, idea and truth appear in equal force and concentration; and when both are felt in their true essence—the idea in divine purity, the representation in tranquil obedience to law and perfect clarity—this yields the only true, *pure*, or *perfect style*. By contrast, where both the idea and its expression appear equally weak, hesitant, and unclear, the result is yet another aberrant form, the *nebulist style*.

As for execution, here too we may distinguish a number of very different kinds of drawing, of shading, and of coloring, which may be combined in countless ways. Where drawing is concerned, the execution may be *exaggerated*, *violent*, and *coarse*; or else *noble*; or else *petty*, *timid*, and *effete*. (The second of these three options may also be described as *correct*, the others as *incorrect*.)

In the execution of shading we find the *dark*, the *somber*, the *clear*, the *light*, and the *flat*. Finally, in coloring we distinguish a *bright* coloring in *pure tones* from a *dull* or *impure* coloring.

Always, however, the right and true course is a happy medium, and all other choices are false trails.

Some may possibly suppose that to limit all style and all execution to a single *authentic* category is to limit the artist's freedom; they fear the imposition of universal monotony. It should be borne in mind, however, that—just as the one, eternally valid process of refraction and color formation does not limit the multiplicity of colors; and just as the law of reason does not limit the freedom of the human soul—it is not at all limiting to the human genius to represent its innate, divine ideas through one and the same natural or sensory manifestation. In the fine arts this plain and simple principle has not been so well observed as it ought to be; whereas in poetry, for example, it has long been acknowledged that a uniform and perfect obedience to the laws of philology and scansion denotes not the peril of monotony but the seal of excellence. Nor does anyone suppose that the rules of counterpoint could ever impair the beauty and diversity of musical creation.

The truth is that this law holds good for the visual arts no less than for any other, and I am glad to find that [Carl Ludwig] von Fernow has said of sculpture precisely what I find to be true of landscape painting: namely, that there can be only one pure style and truly correct execution; that in this respect individuality must be subsumed within the work; and that a true sign of excellence in a work of art is that we forget the hand and remember only the mind.<sup>27</sup> This is why we find that all the noblest productions of ancient sculpture appear to be the work of a single artist. It may be said of them, as of the works of nature, that some are more beautiful than others, but that they are all veritably *there*: that they are alive within one and the same reality.

I do not mean to infer that the artist whom some God-given idiosyncrasy prevents from ascending to the pure and luminous heights of noble truth, and who is thus compelled to express himself from time to time in a fantastic, sketchy, commonplace, or nebulist style, must necessarily produce unworthy works of art. Undeniably, in all of these anomalous forms a powerful mind



can often accomplish something that compels our admiration. Nevertheless, set this alongside any work of pure style and correct execution, and it is liable to appear unfinished, or else as an aberration of genius.

Where, then, if not in style and execution, are we to find the expression of the artist's individuality, on which, after all, his own existence and that of his works are founded? The question immediately leads us to consider how works of art may differ in *character*. A moment's reflection will show that, since like must be understood and expressed by like, the only true manifestation of the character of the artist must be in the character of the work. For example: Salvator Rosa<sup>28</sup> expresses the energy of his mind through beetling crags, huge and jagged tree stumps, storm clouds, and strong, directional flashes of light; but this would have been none the worse if the representation itself had been more rounded and truer to life, the aerial perspective more accurate, and the color (while still appropriate to the artist's chosen subjects) as natural and as pure as in those gracious landscapes that reflect the clear and gentle mind of Claude [Lorrain].<sup>29</sup> It is entirely understandable, even excusable, that the artist's individual character should reveal itself both in style and in execution, so that an effervescence of mental power often leads to a sketchy, even fantastic style and a wild, abrupt execution, while a less productive talent tends to manifest itself in a commonplace or mannered style and in petty, timid execution; but that is not to say that such a thing is to be commended. I deplore Rosa's harsh, perfunctory, untrue representation of individual forms as much as I admire the grandeur and energy of the conception of his work as a whole. If this appears paradoxical, we had best turn to the other arts for confirmation of these principles, which are still very inadequately recognized in reference to landscape painting.

Look, then, at the colossus of Phidias:<sup>30</sup> inspect, or rather palpate, the torso of Hercules.<sup>31</sup> This, if nothing else, will persuade you that the supreme power of noblest heroism is perfectly compatible with true perfection of form: that is, with the pure and only true style and execution. Indeed, only such an execution can truly express it. Need I remind you of the works of Raphael: the wrathful Archangel who thrusts the insurgent Lucifer down to hell; or the image of Jehovah in all his might and splendor, reposing upon the three mystic beasts, surrounded by angels?<sup>32</sup> All are in the same perfection of style and execution that delights us in the transfigured Madonna.

Shall I recall to you the works of Greek or of Germanic architecture: ideally immortal, and created in temporal reality as if for eternity: works that combine supreme grandeur and power with inexpressible fidelity and love, whether this be in the freest, noblest temple building or in some heavenward-aspiring cathedral?

Here as elsewhere, whatever may be the ideal *tendency* of a work of art, the *realization* of that idea, the intimate combination and interpenetration of reason and nature, can and must be the same in every case.

And so I fear no excessive monotony, since the pure style that we have in mind here is an ideal: it is, as it were, the center of a measureless circumference

from which we can strike an infinity of radii without ever quite reaching the center. Every artist travels along one of these radii toward that ideal center; no artist will ever reach it as a finite being; no artist is entirely like any other, both because he is an individual and because he is moving along a different radius, close though those radii may sometimes be. One thing is certain: the most elevated, most excellent, *purely beautiful achievements will always be the closest to each other*. Conversely, the more blatant the artist's individuality, the farther his achievement will fall short of the ideal.

The fear of monotony, as the consequence of a single, uniform style, is nowhere so groundless as it is in the art of landscape. Here, if anywhere, the artist has before him the infinity of the universe. All around him, nature operates with a seeming lack of constraint, even of law; and yet it obeys laws that are unalterable and eternal. There is no hard-and-fast linear scale, such as exists for the depiction of the human form; nevertheless, every particularity has its defining causes, enshrined in a law that prevails forever.

Let life in all its inner purity be apprehended by the artist's individual mind with clarity and therefore with originality; let him reproduce life's forms with fidelity and truth; and we shall always be given an original and purely beautiful representation.

So much for definitions, for the time being at least.

Yours,  
ALBERTUS

# Letter V

I have been looking at a number of works of landscape painting, and today this prompts some further thoughts on the artistic representation of nature, on which I would like to have your views.

First of all, I must say that it struck me as surprising that the ancients, although richly talented in so many arts and sciences, have left us no landscape painting and indeed never mention any such thing; that this art emerged in the early seventeenth century, intact, without ancient prototypes, like Minerva from the head of Jove.<sup>33</sup>

How can it be, thought I, that the Greeks, whose sculpture, architecture, and poetry are so free, pure, and magnificent in feeling and in execution, felt no inclination toward landscape painting? And might it be possible to find reasons why such an inclination on their part was an impossibility?

The answer long continued to elude me, but in the end an understanding began to dawn on me, as follows.

In looking back on earlier epochs in the life of the human race, we commonly have recourse to the analogy of a human lifetime, which is all that we know from direct experience. Applying this analogy to the point at issue here, we cannot but observe that early youth invariably concerns itself with the perception of *man*: heaven and earth, plants and animals, interest us at first only in relation to human states. Man feels his own active strength; he beholds the whole of nature as an element to be shaped, and necessarily sees it, for the moment, purely as something to use for his own ends. Initially, neither his notions nor his aspirations extend beyond humanity and its successive states; and his lively imagination impels him to attach human individuality to things that are at one extreme lifeless and at the other extreme divine.

I detect an analogous impulse in the youth of nations; and this, it seems to me, furnishes the clearest explanation for the emergence of pagan religion, which I have always respected as a belief entirely necessary at a certain stage in the evolution of the human race. Here, man acknowledges something divine outside himself but can apprehend this only through its diverse effects. Since he cannot detach it from phenomena, it can never appear to him as a unity but always as a multiplicity. For him, the divine power that dwells in the currents of the sea becomes Poseidon; the moon is guided in its nocturnal course by Diana; the thrusting energy of the tree is a living Dryad; the storms are subject to Aeolus; and, when at last some faint intimation of a

future, finer understanding leads him to guess at the existence of a single divine being, he expresses this to his own satisfaction by erecting above the celestial vault a kingly throne from which the Thunderer holds sway over the other gods.

At this stage of human existence, man thus sees the external world solely as the element that serves his own needs, and therefore not as a fit subject for visual art (thus, he appreciates a rock, say, as material for a temple; but it is unlikely to occur to him that it is so beautiful in itself as to be worthy of artistic representation). Again, if he ever acknowledges an indwelling, transcendental presence in such an element, he reveres and represents not the outward appearance of the thing but its deity, not in the guise of a tree, wave, mountain, or cloud but in human form, the noblest that he knows.

This seems to me to explain why the Greeks desired to depict nature only by deifying and simultaneously humanizing it; and how they came to fashion images of nymphs, oreads, naiads, and the rest. However, to attain perfect clarity on this subject, we must go on to consider the materials that they chose for those images.

In the individual, the evolution of the senses begins with that of touch, and the finer senses of hearing and sight emerge only as the organism attains its perfection. In much the same way, man starts out as a sculptor: he wants to shape something that will stand before him, massive, spatial, and tangible. Painting, like the higher forms of music, is always the product of later ages.

Sculpture is inevitably the earlier art,<sup>34</sup> not for this reason alone but because it is the art of the heroic age.

By its nature, sculpture must principally confine itself to the rendering of the human form. Sculptures of animals, even, encroach on alien territory; and, when more general ideas intervene, such as the cycle of generations in Goethe's beautiful interpretation in "Myrons Kuh,"<sup>35</sup> the sculpture becomes, in a sense, romantic, because it addresses us through symbols. The true goal of sculpture is, as was said, the glorification of the human figure, principally in its physical strength and beauty. By nature, sculpture is therefore entirely realistic: it seeks the figure as such, not the expression thereof. It is disqualified for any other purpose by its inability to express the true mirror of the soul, the look of the eye, or the alternation of colors on the surface of the body. Once raise man above a state of nature, and he is inevitably drawn to admire either the mighty strength of the hero or the perfection of physical beauty; these are transient phenomena, which sculpture is best qualified to fix in our thoughts. Was it not inevitable that sculpture would flourish as the art of the heroic age? And that it would decline as soon as the Christian religion turned its attention to the supernatural and came to respect the body only as the instrument of the soul; so that painting, as the more ideal art of the two, supplanted sculpture?

As for the art of landscape in itself, it evidently demands a degree of superior education and experience. There is an element of abstraction and abnegation involved in treating the external world no longer simply as the element in

which we live and act but as something with a beauty and sublimity of its own. It requires philosophical training to see or even to guess that the whole of phenomenal nature is the revelation of one infinitely exalted deity who is not only impossible to individualize in human terms but altogether inaccessible to the senses; and accordingly to acknowledge the supreme beauty of the universe as a whole, and of the parts of it perceptible to us, and choose them as the specific objects of artistic representation. For this, man must cease to relate the whole of nature selfishly to himself and must internalize a pure vision of the beauty of the universe. Whether as a clear awareness or as a dim surmise, this idea had first to be present in the artist before there could be such a thing as an art of landscape. Man had first to recognize the divinity of nature as the true bodily revelation or—in human terms—language of God; he had first to learn that language, and *develop a sensibility in keeping with nature* (for a lifeless simulacrum of it would not do, as the example of the mirror image shows),<sup>36</sup> before he could ever become able to proclaim to men, *in that same language* (just as poets are aptly said to speak with the tongues of angels), the secular gospel of art.

The origins of the art of landscape are thus not to be found in the painted views of cities and the like, mentioned by several ancient authors. Work of *that* kind is by definition done to serve human ends: its prime purpose is to supply an identifiable image of some place of historical or political importance. This can become a true and significant work of art only if the artist is so steeped in the spirit and character expressed in the given landscape that he can, as it were, create its forms anew.<sup>37</sup> Hence, it is often observed that the character of a scene is best represented by those paintings in which the artist is not following a drawing made on the spot but reproducing freely and faithfully, from his own mind, the scene of natural life that filled his soul.

The painting of prospects is thus very like the painting of portraits. The world is awash with common family portraits, works that aim simply to make one person recognizable; their interest dies with the sitter, and the same goes for the painted prospect. Both portrait and prospect pay the penalty for their neglect of the higher truths of nature. By contrast, a painting of La Fornarina by Raphael, or of a Sicilian seashore by Claude,<sup>38</sup> will give delight for as long as it continues to exist, with no need for the viewer to know *the identity of the prototype* from which the artist worked. For this reason we remain unsatisfied by any work that sacrifices or depreciates inner truth to nature for the sake of a poetic idea, an expression of feeling, however beautiful and pure the feeling may be in itself. This is the case with those works that we are inclined to call sentimental: works in which nature is valued only as a symbol or hieroglyph, and the artist is content to make his objects just recognizable enough to convey their symbolic significance. Take, for example, the landscape described by [Ludwig] Tieck in *Sternbalds Wanderungen*,<sup>39</sup> in which a pilgrim is seen making his way along a narrow valley toward the heights, where the cross atop a church can be seen shining in the moonlight. This is the expression of a Christian and moral idea to which, in itself, we cannot deny our

whole-hearted assent; but for the *painting* itself to be worthy of praise, this message is not enough; nor are neat and skillful rendering and arrangement enough. The whole must be couched in terms of such innocence and such pure naturalness that we might disregard the idea and still take delight in the *specific* scene of natural life faithfully expressed therein; that even a total stranger to Christian ideas would be enabled to feel with pleasure the coolness of the valley, the mysterious clarity of the moonlight, the truth of the path winding its way up to the heights. Here, after all, the observer is required to be in the same situation as in viewing nature, which can look quite different to different people at different times, and remains beautiful in every guise: no other person's individual vision must be imposed on him, and his individual freedom of vision must be left entirely unimpaired. When a poodle circles around Faust and Wagner on their walk, Faust senses something demonic in it; to Wagner it is just a dog. On his own terms, each is right.<sup>40</sup>

But it is ideas like this that are liable to tempt the artist to sacrifice truth and to show less respect for nature itself. He paints just enough, according to the rules of painting, to make valley, moonlight, and church adequately recognizable, and then he supposes that he has completed the bridge that will carry the beholder across into the land of ideas—never pausing to reflect that closer scrutiny might reveal it as a mere bridge of laths and himself as an unskillful architect.

Such would be the inadequacy of the artistic treatment that I would call sentimental landscape. And this brings us back to the principle that, just as only a healthy soul in a healthy body makes a true human being, and just as the universe consists only in the equal mutual penetration of reason and nature, the true art of landscape resides only in true harmony: that is, a *perfect union of meaning and truth*.

After all these general reflections, let us consider some genuine achievements in the art of landscape. As I told you, I was moved to write this letter by looking at a number of paintings by the fathers of true landscape painting, Claude and Ruysdael,<sup>41</sup> now held in the Galerie in Dresden. You know those two magnificent paintings by Claude, before which you and I could never stand without involuntarily drawing a deep breath, filled with the sense of a cheerful, warmer, southern air; but you also remember the waters, both rushing and still, and the grave beech and oak trees, which Ruysdael presents to us with such infinite freedom and truth that our beloved native landscape seems almost to speak to us directly. Here we may say that the artist's inner meaning has assumed objective form; both artists' work convinces us that they had absorbed the life of nature into themselves, in all its beauty and grandeur, and that it pulsed through their veins and sinews, enabling them to speak to us in nature's language, and to reflect its forms in all their pristine beauty. Hence the feeling of freedom and well-being that overcomes us when we stand before these paintings: we are aware of a beautiful, human individuality that allows us to contemplate its inner essence reflected in the mirror of the true divine word—that is to say, in the truth of nature—and does so freely and

calmly, making no attempt to direct us toward any particular view, but at ease in its own blissful contentment; thereby moving us to lay aside all our petty, one-sided concerns and to join the artist in the peace of his life in God.

For in this temporal life everyone is to some extent one-sided, with views of his own that no one else can fully share; because, after all, everyone is different and wants—rightly, as far as temporal life goes—to assert his uniqueness. We must not expect any man to be a perfect saint; but we must expect him, when faced with a moment of decision, to take himself in hand and act in perfect accordance with virtue and divine will. The expectation, likewise, is that for the exalted purposes of art and science man shall free himself from all that is contingent and less than fully human in his nature: all that is merely *his* opinion or inclination. In art and in science, the work that is *perfect* and *classic* is the work that reveals, not one human view or another, but the fully human.

We have so many works of science and learning that are ingenious and praiseworthy in many respects but pervaded by a partial view, a personal opinion: “system” is the word that immediately springs to mind. We conclude that the work is good in itself, but that in one or other of his views the author remains trapped within his own system.

Those who share that view find the work very much to their taste, and indeed consider it excellent; they warmly defend their own opinion against those who think otherwise; adherents are recruited; a school emerges, and endures until a new system displaces the old. A truly classic work, by contrast, is like the universe itself, its truth calmly evident for all to see. Its power to delight every reader is timeless; and (since there is some truth in every one-sided view) it leaves that reader at liberty to find in it his own cherished view, the way the world looks to *him*; just as all Christian sects have invariably found evidence in the Bible to prove their own particular opinions.

All of this is no less applicable to the work of art. The work that is a *pure* manifestation of the primal idea of beauty, the utterance not of one individual but of man, as he was from the beginning and ever more shall be, is the work that is true and classic for all times.

It is impossible to imagine that any true human being can fail to be delighted and uplifted by the works of the Greek sculptors. In just the same way, though not perhaps to the same degree, the paintings of a Claude remain true and magnificent for all ages and for all persons who have schooled themselves to revere the beauty of natural landscape, in general, and of the landscape that the artist saw, in particular.

You will not make the mistake of assuming that I want all landscape paintings to look like those of Claude: far from it! But this concentration on the archetypal truth of nature itself, with all preconceptions subordinated to the pure, *innocent* rendering of nature, in keeping with its presence before us as a divine revelation (whether the artist has been thinking of something specific, a particular idea or the character of a certain locality, as apparent only to a like-minded person or to one with local knowledge; or whether he freely and

purely depicts for us the clarity of his own mind as mirrored in nature): this, as I tried to explain at greater length in my last letter, is what we may and must expect to find in the classic, perfect landscape.

I am well aware that this is an immensely difficult requirement to fulfill. It has, in fact, very seldom been adequately done: a truth that you will, I hope, bear in mind as I proceed to consider ways and means of attaining so exalted an aim.

It is noteworthy, first of all, that in landscape painting, as in so many other arts, those artists who are the first of their nation to discover the art in question are those who achieve the most. Homer and Ossian, the inventors of the epic poem, remain the unequalled bards of the heroic age; and Claude and Ruysdael, the earliest painters in whose work true landscape appeared, are still also the best. In reflecting on the causes of this, we find ourselves led back to the idea that the arts evolve organically within humanity as a whole; so that any capability based on the senses, like an individual organism, has its finest, unrepeatable flowering at the precise moment when it has just attained its perfect development. The freshly blown flower pleases us best; and the alert and supple strength of youth is never recaptured. The moment when any art first spreads its wings is necessarily the moment when it shines with its freshest, most enchanted radiance. On closer consideration, the principle is still further confirmed.

The idea of the divine is profoundly ingrained within man's breast. When he is filled with love for the revelation of that idea in external nature; when, holding to his own chosen path, undistracted by outworn concepts or by the derivative work of other artists, he confides himself purely to the bosom of nature; when he has truly and faithfully absorbed the message of nature and mastered the working of his material: must he not be capable of the most glorious achievements in the rendering of a spiritualized nature?

In history painting we observe the earliest great masters, still grappling with their subject matter, but convinced of the sublimity of their goal, ascending toward that goal in the absence of precedents and in all true innocence. Art appears to be a pious, earnest child until, with Raphael, it appears in all the joyous youth and splendor of its prime. Has art ever risen so high since then? Or has not art been increasingly engulfed by its own material, since artists first erred by dividing their allegiance between nature and the precedents set by the ancients or by Raphael himself?

An analogous process has taken place in landscape painting. The beauty of landscape forms was first glimpsed by a number of history painters, and hinted at in the works of Titian<sup>42</sup> and Raphael; then P[aul] Bril<sup>43</sup> made his first childlike essays in the depiction of landscape; finally, the art burst forth, in all the beauty of its youth, like clear moonlight from behind dark clouds.

Just as an idea is often observed to stir in several minds at once, when humanity grows ripe to receive it, the talent for this art emerged simultaneously in a number of temperaments, so that we encounter a true sense of landscape in the works of the seventeenth-century painters Claude, Ruysdael,



[Anthonie] Waterloo,<sup>44</sup> and to some extent (though with a bias toward history painting) Salvator Rosa and Nicolas Poussin.<sup>45</sup> As for the succeeding generation, led astray by these near-contemporary models, it retreated from the heights that they had reached, taking refuge in the derivative mannerisms of [Herman van] Swanefeldt, C. Poussin, [Frederic de] Moucheron, [Nicolaes] Berghem,<sup>46</sup> and others, in which the technique of painting progresses, but the art is lost.

In this connection, it is worth inquiring into the methods used by Claude in his paintings; for in them all the technical skill that we praise in many other painters, the power and precision of brushwork and of execution in general, is almost entirely absent. Consider, for example, the treatment of individual objects, such as trees and rocks, in the painting of the Sicilian coast mentioned above. This is so curiously inert, almost clumsy, that we might be looking at a child's drawing. Seen individually, the cloud forms in both paintings are strange, heavy, and almost unpleasant; Claude's sea seems, as painted, to be laboriously assembled from innumerable tiny brushstrokes. But look again at the painting as a whole, and it displays such a cheerful aspect, such an intimate sense of natural beauty! The most delicate mist links the mountains and the woods; the gentle swell of the sea is magnificently rendered; and the clouds hang freely and lightly above the warmer levels of air. We have a clear and certain feeling that these images were distinctly present, thus and not otherwise, in the mind's eye; and that they unflinchingly transferred themselves thus to the canvas, inept though the painter's hand might have been in itself. The old saying that the Lord is mighty in the weak seems to be confirmed; mind has itself created a capability through which to impart form. The hand is nothing; it is all the work of the mind, which has created magnificence despite its clumsy tools: a truth that speaks directly to our innermost selves. This being so, it at once becomes clear that any imitation of the so-called Claudian style—of its letter, rather than its spirit—must be hollow and empty: which explains the strangely irksome feeling that we receive from the paintings of [Richard] Wilson<sup>47</sup> and his like. Goethe's blunt words are entirely apposite here:

Ja, sitzt nur immer! Leimt zusammen!  
 Braut ein Ragout aus Andrer Schmaus  
 Und blast die kümmerlichen Flammen  
 Aus eurem Aschenhäufchen raus!  
 Bewunderung von Kindern und Affen,  
 Wenn euch danach der Gaumen steht!—  
 Doch werdet ihr nie Herz zu Herzen schaffen,  
 Wenn es euch nicht von Herzen geht.<sup>48</sup>  
 [Yes, there you sit, and cut and paste,  
 Cook up a stew from others' feasts,  
 And fan the guttering flames to life  
 From your poor little pile of ash!

Be admired by babes and apes,  
If so be that you're thus inclined —  
But heart to heart you'll never speak,  
Unless it comes straight from the heart.]

Very much the same can be said of Ruysdael as of Claude, except that in Ruysdael we find not childishness and technical incompetence, but sketchiness. Seen in isolation, his handling often seems crude: he dashes brushstrokes onto the canvas to stand for masses of earth here, grass there, foliage there; in his celebrated *Churchyard*, for example, the clouds are wild and disproportionately dark in execution; and in lieu of a rainbow we are left with two massive, arching brushstrokes. But in all this there is great truth and spirit. Our cup runneth over; nothing is to be taken too literally. We feel, in short, that the innermost feelings of a fine and accomplished human being have been expressed in the true language of nature.

One gratifying conclusion that emerges from all this is that a school is not indispensable for high attainment in art. Once the idea of divinity has taken shape in the mental life of a man, and once he has absorbed nature into himself, purely and without distortion the nature, through which he intends to express his own state of mind, then the capability to express it will present itself. Schooling is no more than the echo and aftermath of the works of genius; and an artificial training of the capability in advance of the mind, which the school aims at, can often be a disadvantage.

Another consequence seems to be that the age of naïveté, which directly follows the infancy of art, and in which man follows the innocent aspirations of his inner self, without recourse to artistic models, is the authentic period for the production of true works of art. For at every subsequent stage he is bound to be misled to some degree by the influence of existing work; and the latter-day artist, whatever he does, can no more revert to former innocence than the adult can recapture the mentality, the inclinations, and the other qualities of the child.

Given this progressive dulling of vision, will the future afford our posterity any hope of true salvation? And, if so, where might such a hope be found? Let us continue our exchange of thoughts on this matter in days to come.

Yours,  
ALBERTUS

# Letter VI

**M**y dear Ernst, for years on end I hesitated to write again, because I felt the weight of the responsibility that I assumed in promising to give you in a further letter my ideas on how a significant work of landscape painting might be produced, now and in the future, despite the multitude of artistic precedents that constantly mislead us and seek to draw us into their own ambit. One thing was clear from the outset: here, as elsewhere, we must keep in mind Schiller's momentous words:

Gleich sei keiner dem andern, doch gleich sei jeder dem Höchsten;  
Wie das zu machen? — es sei jeder vollendet in sich.<sup>49</sup>  
[None must resemble another, but all must resemble the Highest.  
How is that to be done? Perfect be each in itself.]

How this might be done, amid a multitude of distractions, in such a way as to achieve that inner perfection without being caught up in the wake of some brilliant prior achievement; how to capture the pure and innocent perceptions of childhood in this Age of Reason: I sensed within me the first inklings of an answer but found myself unable to view it clearly or to formulate it in words. I was in a state that reminds me of those cloudy nights at full moon, when the moon's orb is nowhere to be seen, and yet its gentle light suffuses the cloud and illuminates the earth on every side without ever casting a shadow; what we perceive is not the source of the light but the light itself. We may guess at the existence of a law, and draw benefit from it, without for the moment being able to see it directly.

Often when we harbor such an idea in its beclouded form some external stimulus then makes it spring forth like Minerva from the head of Jove. Indeed, the ancients no doubt had this kind of sudden revelation in mind when they first conceived the myth.

I believe that something of this kind happened to me, and my ideas on landscape painting were set free, when I recently had the good fortune to read in the third fascicle of Goethe's papers on natural science his views on cloud formations, together with the beautiful poem that he appended to them ("Howard's Ehrengedächtnis").<sup>50</sup> If you ask what it was in this poem that so moved me, I can only answer approximately as follows.

In our active life we realize that perfect purity of action comes to us only in two states: the naive, original state, in which the obscure sense of an immanent

divinity within us points directly to what is true and right, with no need for further deliberation; and the state in which, after all life's vagaries, we clearly see our relationship with God and the universe, and our life embodies its own formerly unconscious purity in all clarity and consciousness. All of which goes to suggest that art may be thought of in terms of a similar duality of inner perfection.

In a number of earlier letters I have pursued lines of thought arising from the first of these polar opposites, that of naive and original perfection in art; but Goethe's poem has brought into my mind, with sudden clarity, the idea of a second kind of artistic beauty, one which rests on higher understanding. In his later life Goethe himself has given us a number of similar works, in which the perfect scientific understanding of certain vital processes has permeated the poet's soul before undergoing a higher, spiritual rebirth in the form of poetic vision and interpretation.

This poem on clouds could never have been written without long and hard prior study of the atmosphere; the poet had to observe, judge, distinguish, until he attained not only knowledge of the formation of clouds, as known from the evidence of the senses, but the insight that is the fruit of scientific investigation alone. After all this, the mind's eye brought into focus all the separate rays given off by the phenomenon and reflected the essence of the whole in an artistic apotheosis.

Seen in this light, art appears as the apex, the summit of science; by clearly envisioning the mysteries of science and by clothing them in beauty, art becomes mystic in the truest sense of the word: or, as Goethe has also called it, orphic.

"Now," I hear you say, "surely you don't intend to apply this to landscape painting? Surely you don't want mystic, orphic landscapes?"<sup>51</sup>

And why not?

Of course, I have no time for the petty, not to say superstitious, mysticism that attempts to smuggle into living art some symbol supplied by convention and tradition: by which I mean the kind of cross-and-rosary mysticism that belongs—if anywhere—to the ambit of religious faith from which it arose, and to which, alone, it remains intelligible. No, I mean the mysticism that is as eternal as nature itself, because it *is* nature, "*mysterious in the full light of day*," and because it seeks nothing beyond inward natural and divine communion and must therefore remain intelligible for all time and to all nations.

What does landscape painting depict, if not the earthly nature that surrounds us? And what is more sublime than to apprehend the mysterious life of that nature? Surely an artist steeped in the knowledge of the wonderful reciprocities of earth and fire and sea and air will speak more powerfully to us through his work; he will more purely and more freely unlock the viewer's soul, so that the viewer too may have some inkling of the mysteries of nature, and may understand that the motion of clouds and the forms of mountains,

the outlines of trees and the waves of the sea, are not random, chance events, but that all this has a higher, indwelling purpose and an eternal meaning. For these things are the handiwork of that spirit who says of himself:

So schaff' ich am sausenden Webstuhl der Zeit  
Und webe der Gottheit lebendiges Kleid.<sup>52</sup>  
[I ply the whirring Loom of Time,  
And weave the living robe of God.]

What landscapes can we not imagine with this in mind!

The earliest, naive landscape painters either kept close to the nature that surrounds us every day, unwittingly showing us much that was significant by dint of sheer faithful concentration on their own surroundings, or else sought to invest their paintings with a higher interest by alluding to human history and myth. But any painter who attains true knowledge of the life of nature must find the purest and most sublime subject matter on every side. With what eloquence and power the history of the mountains speaks to us; how sublimely it makes of man a thing divine, in direct relation to God, by sweeping away all the vanities of his transient, earthly existence; and how clearly that history speaks to us in certain stratified formations and mountain outlines: so clearly as to suggest even to the uninitiated that such a history exists! And is not the artist free to bring out such truths, and to show us landscapes that are, in a higher sense, historical?

The type of vegetation<sup>53</sup> is of the highest importance in establishing the character of the landscape. It would surely be a noble undertaking for art to present to us, clothed in beauty and intelligence, the history of the great formations of the vegetable kingdom; for there is a secret kinship among those silent living things, and a rich, poetic life lies concealed in their leaves and flowers.

Finally, how infinitely varied and delicate are atmospheric phenomena!

Whatever finds a resonance in the human breast; processes of lightening and darkening, evolving and dissolving, building and destroying: all this displays itself to our senses in the delicate forms of the clouds. Rightly apprehended, spiritualized by the artist's genius, all of this can wonderfully exhilarate even a mind unmoved by the reality of the same phenomena.

It would be too much to ask me to describe to you in detail how such a work of landscape art should be made, what specific objects to select, and what the execution should be like in form and color; to do this, I myself would have to be the artist whose coming I anticipate. But come he will; of that I am certain. One day, there will be landscapes of a loftier, more meaningful beauty than those of Claude and Ruysdael. They will be unadulterated images of nature; and yet in them nature will appear in its higher truth, as it is seen in the mind's eye; and progress toward technical perfection will lend them a luster that earlier works could never have possessed.

Carus

This ideal of landscape painting is still far in the future; yet I would not like you to suppose that these thoughts of mine have nothing of practical value to offer to the present-day study of landscape painting. On this matter I must give you my ideas shortly. Enough for today!

Yours,  
ALBERTUS

## Letter VII

**M**y dear Ernst, you are probably quite right to urge me to make myself clearer on the kind of landscape painting that I so fancifully described in my last letter—lest anyone misunderstand me so grievously as to suppose that I want landscape to have a didactic purpose. You ask for examples of such orphic landscapes, to remove all misunderstanding. This is all very well, if only it were not so confoundedly hard to give a full answer about things that are yet to come! Readers, help yourselves. As in Goethe's poem, when the artist asked for instructions that he could carry out directly, and the connoisseur loftily answered: "See to it!"<sup>54</sup>

All the same, let us see what we can do by way of clarification. To make matters easier, I think I may assume that we are all agreed on the major issue, and that you yourself will fill in any gaps: you will step in wherever I fall short and mentally complete what I must leave unfinished. After all, every book relies on the reader to meet it halfway, and to give assent, however temporarily, to the author's way of thinking; it is well known that without such a meeting of minds, and if the reader is totally unresponsive, there can be no understanding. And so I shall take courage and do what I can with this difficult material.

Georg Christoph Lichtenberg says somewhere that in education what matters is not so much that the teacher should teach the subject thoroughly and completely as that he should *possess* the subject thoroughly and completely.<sup>55</sup>

Who would deny that Lichtenberg is right? Who has not experienced how enlightening a few words can be when they come from a man who is perfectly at home in his subject? Grant this, and we may go one step further and remark that it suggests a degree of direct communication between minds, whereby even the slightest outward sign, or none at all, enables one person to divine what it is that occupies the mind of another. Herein lies a great mystery, and one that is of the utmost importance in the process of mutual education between human beings; but I can say no more of it here. The best of it, in any case, is not to be expressed in words.

To take the argument a step further: might not a work of art, too, exert a lasting effect in tune with the initial feelings of the artist? And if within the artist there were some deeper vision of vast movement and constant interaction within the earth, its atmosphere, its waters, and its living creatures, might not this endow a work of landscape painting with a special character, a new and distinctive effect on the mind of the viewer?

Surely we are of one mind in this, and you are convinced that this has nothing to do with didacticism in the vulgar sense: the effect is rather to shift the viewer directly to a higher view of the universe and of the earth. And this, I believe, brings us a step closer to a true understanding of my meaning.

If examples be required, let me take poetic descriptions of landscape. Poetry existed long before landscape painting and is more spiritual than painting can ever be; and so, here as elsewhere, poetry supplies the noblest prototypes.

Here we find our most notable models in the work of a poet who embodies within himself the destiny of the modern age: to be led by art to scientific knowledge, and from that knowledge to evolve superior artistic achievements.

Of whom could this be said with greater truth than of Goethe? In his later works in particular we find not poetic evocations of landscape so much as a profound poetic vision of specific aspects of the vast, mysterious life of the earth. In addition to the poem on clouds, which presents atmospheric phenomena to the inner eye in terms of their higher significance, there are the scenes of elemental force and power described by the archangels in the prologue to *Faust*, a work full of poetic vistas of earth-life. With great immediacy, these and other descriptions convey Goethe's intimate knowledge of *every* aspect of the phenomena in question. No one who had not profoundly known and truly felt the life of the waters and the meaning of colors could have given us this unparalleled description of the surface of water:

Lockt dich der *tiefe Himmel* nicht,  
 Das *feuchtverklärte Blau*,  
 Lockt nicht dein eigen Angesicht  
 Nicht her in *ew'gen Thau*?<sup>56</sup>  
 [Does not the deep sky lure you on,  
 The moist-transfigured blue?  
 Does not your own face lure you on,  
 Here into eternal dew?]

A poet's works, if their source lies deep, always allow us to sense the whole of his mental life.

To take another instance: who does not immediately feel when Humboldt sets before us in words his prairie landscapes and his vistas of America's vast waterfalls<sup>57</sup> that this is a narrator who is steeped in an immense variety of direct experience?\*

Having supplied these examples I believe that I have plainly set out my mental ideal of a latter-day art of landscape; but I must add something con-

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\* I think it desirable to include firm evidence of what I have said here, and so I enclose with this letter an extract from *Das System der Pilze und Schwämme* [The system of mushrooms and other fungi] by the excellent [Christian Gottfried Daniel] Nees von Esenbeck.<sup>58</sup> Read what he says of autumnal vegetation, and you will find that pure knowledge of nature, artistically formed, turns of its own accord into the noblest poetry.



cerning the name of the art itself. Seen from our present viewpoint the name itself, “landscape,” begins to appear trivial and inadequate. There is something artisan-like about it that revolts my entire being. Another term must be found and introduced, and for this I propose *Erdlebenbild*, *Erdlebenbildkunst* [earth-life painting, or earth-life art].

At any rate, more of the ideal that I have attempted to establish is contained in this term than in the word *landscape*.

In reading over what I have written I see that there might be room for a misunderstanding of a different kind; and this I must deal with straightaway. My remarks on earth-life art might be taken to mean that artists must now depict nothing but gigantic scenes on the largest scale; that pictures of earth-life must henceforth show nothing but Alpine scenery, storms at sea, great forests at high altitudes, volcanoes, and waterfalls.

I mean no such thing. Rightly treated such scenes would of course represent the earth-life art at its most sublime; but even the quietest and simplest aspect of earth-life — if only its true meaning, the divine idea concealed within it, be rightly perceived — is a worthy and beautiful subject of art.

What Goethe says of human life, we might apply to earth life:

Greift nur hinein ins volle Menschenleben,  
 Ein jeder lebt's, nicht vielen ist's bekannt;  
 Und wo ihr's packt, da ist's interessant.<sup>59</sup>  
 [Dip into the full flood of human life,  
 The life that all do live, but few do know;  
 'Tis interesting, grasp it where you will.]

The quietest forest nook, with its diverse, thrusting vegetation, or the simplest grassy knoll, with its delicate plants, viewed against a blue haze of distance and overarched by a fragrant blue sky, will afford the most beautiful picture of earth life. Let the scale of execution be small or large; if the work has soul in it, it will never be found wanting.

This is not to say that the painting of earth-life must show only nature pristine and intact, with no traces of human life: after all, the earth's most beautiful production is man, and the earth without man is no more perfect than man without the earth could be perfectly human. Earth life and its representation in art are incomplete without the traces of human life; and a true painting of earth life can therefore perfectly well include human beings and their works; except that earth life as such must predominate, as required by the principle of unity: a work of art can never perform more than one task at a time. For this reason, human beings and their works must be seen in subjection to the natural laws of earth. Empirically, it has long been understood that, to avoid an inner contradiction, a landscape painting should not contain a newly built, sharply angular, freshly painted building; and that in such settings human figures expressive of life in the midst of nature (such as hunters or shepherds) are more appropriate than Homeric heroes and the like: all of

which naturally ensues from the premises outlined above. I hope that this has clearly set forth my own ideal view of the future of landscape, or rather of earth-life painting. The consequences for the study of that art must now wait for a future letter.

Yours,  
ALBERTUS

ENCLOSURE WITH LETTER VII

## From Nees von Esenbeck, *Das System der Pilze und Schwämme*

### *Spring and Autumn Vegetation*

All vegetative processes are embraced within the cycle of *vernatio* and *defoliation*. The archetype of germination (*vernatio*) is the generation of algae.

In mushrooms, autumn pursues its decline; the leaves fall. The plant world dreams of its coming spring.

What I have just said is neither a poetic image nor a simile. The dedicated observer of nature will seek to interpret, through observation, the dream over which autumn spreads its mantle of mists.

It would be desirable that experienced observers should take exact eudiometric readings of the composition of the atmosphere in the layers closest to the earth's surface at different seasons, and in summer and autumn especially. The results would undoubtedly bear a relevance to the theory of the origin of fungi. What has been said here of the development of such vegetation is not to be subjected to any strict annual chronology: here, as everywhere in nature, formative activity is universal and omnipresent; mushrooms and other fungi, as well as algae, develop at all times. But the formative process is most evident in autumn, the season that unites all the visible outward requisites for that process: just as the spring predominantly favors confervae.

In spring, the atmospheric tension that launches vegetative growth is balanced by the quietude of plant life. Water is predominant, dissolving and liberating the elements of defunct organisms, and the sun moves into the rejuvenated opposition that brings forth life. What now emerges seems to spring from a new Creation, in a freedom that no established tendency among extant organisms can override or obstruct. This formative process is thus of a primary nature, and science can classify both subsisting and cyclically returning forms according to first principles.

But by autumn the atmosphere has emerged from its conflict with the vital vegetative process and is in a process of regression toward the opposite of its present state. For an action is never one-sided but always reciprocal; and so, if

vegetative growth produces a chemical effect in the plant, it must also produce an equal and opposite effect in the atmosphere with which the organisms in question come into contact—though our chemistry can as yet give no account of the difference that this makes. Concerning the chemistry of vegetative growth, [Henrich] Steffens (see [Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph von] Schelling and [Adalbert Friedrich] Markus, [eds.], *Jahrbücher d[er] M[edicin als Wissenschaft]* 3, no. 2) has drawn some remarkable conclusions from available data. Of late, chemistry has taken powerful strides forward, and the way will soon be open for a future proportional theory of plant elements. [Lorenz] Oken and Schelwer have touched on the significance of vegetative growth from the more exalted viewpoint of philosophy. To obviate misunderstanding, I need only refer the reader to their definitions before proceeding to describe the process of tension and resolution in terms borrowed from chemistry. The earth is refined to purest (living) carbon; and oxygen, suppressed in the process of organic development, proportionately strives for discharge and for combustion.

*So the autumn begins. Falling leaves gradually cover the earth; mists and the strangely clinging moisture of the rains penetrate the dead matter that has lain undeveloped through the dry summer months. The higher vegetation is but newly spent, and on every twig, on every leaf, and on the ruin of their own kin, its emerging, primordial elements find a humus of their own, which adheres to them even while the vegetative process still continues within it, and while the violent conflict in the atmosphere organically both defines and ends its existence.*

*Note. In autumn how often have I rested in tranquil woods and surrendered to the influences of the natural life around me, just as I have done in the corresponding period of spring! The accompanying sensations I need hardly describe, as they will be familiar to many readers. In spring the damp ground beneath us generates warmth; the skin tautens; the sun attracts; we seem to feel movements impinging on us from all sides; and we ourselves feel heavier and weightier on the darker-hued earth. Memory, though no less clear than ever, shifts into the remote distance, and the ear hears all sounds less distinct from each other.*

*How different in autumn, though the temperature is the same! Even dry ground feels damp as one lies on it, and damp ground strikes a chill. One feels supple, more slender, more agile. The sun strikes mildly through a thin veil of cloud; but when we are at rest its direct rays penetrate and torment us with heat, so that movement is a relief; in spring, by contrast, movement becomes wearisome and requires a conscious decision. All is quiet; falling leaves mark the passage of time; every sound is discrete and distinct, as if heard at a specific range. The field of view is narrower, whether through bright light or blurring. Sight is clear at close quarters and coincides with memory. Even enfeebled, the eye actively, almost longingly, searches in nature for the little things whose time has come. Overnight, beneath the canopy of foliage, where moisture always lingers for a moment longer, there appears—constantly*

*changing, like a scattered shower of blossom—the generation of molds and mushrooms: a twilight people. On dying tree trunks, Hysterium and the Sphaeriaceae extend and open; in the humus, wherever any vegetative capacity persists, the last little fungi germinate. Who does not know the distinctive autumnal smell, like carbonized hydrogen, allied to the olfactory effect of a resin electrophorus, and the urgent, admonitory, warning message that it sends into the still, dark recesses of our sense of self? Now is the time when the last stirring of spring falls silent.*

In the season of the declining sun, the earth's surface is absorbed in the formation of humus. This is heralded by a process analogous to that of infusion: namely, a progressive release of materials from organic combination, in the earlier stages of which (for just so long as the organism that is to be dissolved retains its defining organization) formations emerge that can hold their own against the outside world and, for a longer or shorter time, sustain life. To us, these materials are the essential elements of plant organization: carbon and oxygen. But they enter the new conflict not in this universal significance or in their generalized terrestrial role but in a vegetative capacity, as pure plant substance or vegetative product, and as the element of unquenchable formative force in which the cyclic life of the plant disperses. I prefer to use the terms "vegetative earth" and "vegetative gas," respectively, to embody the matter and spirit of pistil and filament.

The autumnal infusion is subject to the prevalent influence of the air; in it, therefore, the earth and the gas are physically divorced and renew the opposition between earth and air in carbon and water.

The vegetative tension still prevails, and the fluid, as an unpolarized medium, recedes; and so that the elements released must evolve under the law of vegetative processes, and can neither achieve the spontaneous generation of life in infusorial motion, nor attain that saturation in which the joint product, inwardly spiritualized and nourished, turns outward in alternating evolution and metamorphosis.

**Note.** This is not to deny that, in the course of the desegregation of vegetable constituents, infusoria may arise from these, too, as from the separation of the vegetative elements in animal bodies, and complete their natural life cycles in the fluid element, which is all they require. Pick up a handful of leaves from the earth, dip them in water, and you will find infusoria. But these infusoria are few and far between by comparison with the teeming multitudes that dwell in the drop-forming infusion; and their relationship to the fungi most closely related to them, such as the various kinds of mildew, is wholly distinct from the affinity between infusoria and algae. The infusorial fungi are of plant origin, since they derive from blossoms, pollen, and seeds reduced to elemental form.

## Letter VIII

Landscape painting has often been likened to music,<sup>60</sup> and today I would add one more to the many parallels that indeed exist between the two: a little-noticed analogy that is nevertheless striking, not to say humbling; namely, that both have been equally profaned. When we reflect on the sublime significance of music, its supreme grandeur and nobility when worthily represented, then it is acutely painful to witness the myriad desecrations and humiliations that have been visited upon it, demeaning it to the vilest, most worthless uses.

Landscape painting has fared no better. If we seriously consider its lofty significance as the art of earth life, and cast an eye on the myriad daubs that circulate under the guise of landscape; if we reflect that every fumbler on whom God has bestowed neither the eyesight nor the skill to learn drawing nonetheless confidently tries his hand at landscape; how, indeed, every lady who lacks the inclination to trouble herself with disciplined drawing nevertheless deems herself talented enough to embroider a landscape or scrawl one on an album leaf: then well may our gall rise.

I have been looking through a number of these travesties of landscape, and you must therefore make allowances for the state of rage in which I begin this letter. Such an opening may not, after all, be inappropriate: it is time to consider the future study of landscape painting, a topic that affords much room for melancholic reflection, since we can hardly speak of its future without reflecting on its dismal present.

Of late the academies have been much condemned as prime causes of the decline of the true art of painting. This may well be quite right in general terms, but it is safe to say that they have done little damage to landscape painting. And why not? They have taken no notice of it.

The truth is that the academies have always treated this branch of art very much as a poor relation. They have supposed either that a landscape painter had not much to learn; or that mistakes in landscape drawing would never be noticed (just as the gravedigger in *Hamlet* says that the mad Prince has been sent to England because “it would not be seen there, as there the men are as mad as he”);<sup>61</sup> or that a landscape painter could not really go wrong. Or else they never gave it a thought, but merely followed tradition, as often seems to be the case in academies, and not only there.

And so, if a man wanted to learn landscape painting, he was largely cast

back on chance and his own genius. Most often he was speedily ruined by copying bad and mannered drawings: a pair of eyeglasses was set on his nose, through which to see and to paint nature, and in most cases he was only too proud to keep them on and make a successful career out of them. If ever he went so far as to look at nature for himself (probably in the teeth of his teachers' disapproval), he was likely to lose the best years of his life before he gained any true and inward understanding of the spirit of nature; far from arriving at the nub of the matter, he would never master the outward shell. A few were gifted with a stronger inward light that conducted them to the true fountainhead of life; often enough their achievements remained unacknowledged and ignored, simply because they departed from the handy cursive script that had been devised to represent cloud forms, "foliage," ocean waves, or mountain slopes.

In short, what is wrong with the contemporary study of landscape painting is, first, the early inculcation of mannerisms through constant copying of other artists' landscape drawings and paintings, and, second, a faulty and inadequate observation and apprehension of nature. The former has given us feeble imitations of earlier work, which relate to their prototypes as bedizened dolls to living human beings, and which seem to be engendered not from sound and spiritual minds, fertilized by the spirit of nature, but from unnatural intercourse between a human soul and the form of a given work of art. This seems to be a principal source of the evils of modern landscape painting; for it gives rise to thousands of paintings that remind us only of paintings and never of nature itself.

The second factor is closely related to the first. Nature will never show itself in her true guise to anyone who makes a habit of observing her through other men's glasses;<sup>62</sup> least of all will she lift her veil and admit him to her mysteries. She remains mysterious in the full light of day. As everyone surely knows, it is no easy task to apprehend her truly: this has, indeed, always been the prerogative of genius. Who could fail to see, therefore, that now and forevermore the best of this cannot be taught?

And yet, if teaching and study have any part to play in the perception of nature, there is one path on which even the lesser talent, the individual who is less than supremely productive, but who is nonetheless filled with a heartfelt love of nature and a longing to take hold of it as an artist, is able to ascend to its wellsprings: and that path is none other than science. And that word, my dear Ernst, strikes the keynote of all my further thoughts on how best to direct the study of earth-life painting.

In all this I shall constantly bear in mind *what it is that can be taught*; what conduces to a purer public taste for the right and the true in art; what promotes the development of genius itself; and what may lead even a person of inferior natural gifts to produce a faithful and competent representation of natural landscape.

Outwardly all visual art is governed by two organs, the eye and the hand; but inwardly it draws its true life from the birth of divine ideas in a pure

mind. And so all instruction, all teaching of the outward practice of art, can aspire no further than to develop the organs of eye and hand. To purify and ennoble the innermost life of the soul, which will uplift and ennoble the actions of the whole man and the essence of his art, is the business of some other endeavor than artistic instruction.

This topic, that of the education of the whole man in inward reverence and moral and intellectual beauty, is both too exalted and too vast to be discussed merely in passing. To me, at least, it calls for silent meditation rather than for lengthy written exegesis. Let us together look more closely at the external part of the subject, the part that directly governs the making of art through eye and hand; for in art this alone can form the object of instruction and teaching.

The eye must be opened to the true and wondrous life of nature, and the hand must be trained to do the soul's bidding quickly, easily, and beautifully. This alone can be the aim of instruction in any of the pictorial arts. Let us consider, therefore, how this ultimate aim may be most surely and perfectly attained.

First and foremost, we must train the eye to perceive nature in its divine, essential life and in its forms; for wherever the eye perceives clearly and purely the hand cannot help but follow and develop in skill.

There are two ways in which the eye must rightly apprehend the objects of nature. It must learn, first, to apprehend the *shapes of natural objects* not as arbitrary, undefined, lawless, and consequently meaningless but as defined by primordial divine life, eternally law-abiding, and meaningful. Second, it must discern the *diversity of substance in natural objects*, observe the difference in the appearance of one and the same form embodied in different substances, and detect the connection, the affinity, between specific differences of substance and particular forms.

Neither is easily attained: to both, the mind grows receptive only by stages. The gradual intensification of that awareness is the work of a lifetime.

To the untutored mind, much of nature appears to be arbitrary, fortuitous, and lawless; for such a mind still stands outside the law, and is therefore unqualified to judge. To such a mind, it is immaterial whether a mountain range has this or that outline; whether a cloud moves this way or that, or a wave adopts this or that configuration, or whether a tree grows this way or that; such a mind will barely register the differences of outline between different species of trees. These crude perceptions will no doubt remain with the artist all his life, unless a strong and aspiring soul saves him, or science intervenes to awaken him. Hence the indifference, not to say the unscrupulousness, shown by so many landscape painters in their work; they have no idea that their treatment of nature is impious and unworthy, because it has never occurred to them that there is divine life in nature. Allied with long practice and a vigorous temperament, such neglect may lead to the sheerest effrontery; and many of the worst offenders in this respect are artists of high reputation. How else are we to describe those works in which, say, Caspar Poussin shows us a smiling prospect, with the sea stretching away to the horizon, and, in the

foreground, rivers that form waterfalls in such a way that the water cascades down from sea level — as if the sea were overflowing into the rivers and plunging into who knows what abyss; or other painters deck out the sky in all the colors that it displays *after* sunset, while bathing the foreground in bright sunshine; or yet others depict real landscapes while so altering the outlines of mountain ranges that almost nothing remains of their true and distinctive forms? And all this, not for any higher artistic purpose (for the human spirit is perfectly free to imbue a fairytale with inner necessity and transform it into a superior artistic truth) but out of sheer carelessness and contempt for all meaning and consistency in nature.

Nothing can better protect the youthful mind against such barbarity than the intelligent and lively teaching of the laws that govern nature in its outward forms. Lead the young landscape painter on, to see the necessary connection between the outward forms of mountain ranges and the inner structure of their masses, and the necessity with which that inner structure follows from the history of those mountains; the inevitability of specific plant growth in specific places; the entirely regular and law-abiding inner structure of a plant; the conditions that modify the growth of a plant, tree, or bush, now in one way and now in another; and the differences in the nature and movement of different bodies of water. Instruct him in the specific laws of atmospheric phenomena, the variations in the nature of clouds, their formation and dissolution, and also their motion. Once he has gained some familiarity with the deeper elements of earth, water, and air, as foundations of all the diverse phenomena of terrestrial life, explain to him in particular the vital effects of the fourth and most spiritual element, that of fire and light, which alone enables him to see and to create; show him something of the laws of vision, the various refractions and reflections of light, the origins and the mysterious contrasts and affinities of color. Although his chosen calling precludes any deeper exploration of these mysteries, make him aware at least that there is a meaning in those aspects of earth life that he undertakes to depict, in order that he may do so joyously, but with some sense of reverence, even of religious awe.

Ernst, there is no doubt in my mind that, if an artist draws thus, he cannot draw badly. I have seen the most striking examples of this. I have held in my hands drawings of mountain ranges made by geologists, who, without in any way being artists, had felt the necessity of recording a certain remarkable mountain formation; and in those drawings there was so much inner life, so much character, that one entirely overlooked such technical shortcomings as were present. One could not but prefer these, by far, to other and similar drawings made by experienced artists who failed to understand the true nature of the object represented. Indeed, the discriminating observer was as likely to take one of these latter drawings for an image of a mushroom as of a mountain range. The same may be said of any drawing of a plant or animal that is made by one who *knows*.

Among artists, too, I know that there have always been some pious and faithful souls to whom, by their very nature, every object is so important and



so sacred that nothing must be omitted and nothing treated in a careless or unnatural way. To them, such teaching may not be so necessary but will always be of use, for the best of intentions are often not enough. There must be knowledge and experience; and we shall always feel the benefit of sound researches and long experience, since the task before us is one that has no end.

Here I have one remark to add concerning the delivery of such instruction—though I need hardly mention this to you, since you already understand what I meant when I said, just now, that it must be intelligent and lively. For there is such a thing as dead knowledge, knowledge of the letter and not of the spirit: and this afflicts the artistic temperament like mildew. Spare us this, at all costs! In all freedom, and in the presence of nature, may the young artist be led to the steps of the sanctuary of Isis, there to pass tranquil and unclouded hours in receiving enlightenment from the initiate, the man of experience. Then such knowledge will bear the finest fruit.

It is truly curious that the need for a scientific element has been so completely overlooked in the teaching of landscape painting; especially since elsewhere in the fine arts scientific studies have been so readily accepted as indispensable. In figure drawing, for instance, it was soon recognized that the study of the articulation of the human form, the configuration of bone and muscle, and so forth, would greatly assist the artist in grasping and reproducing the pure type of the human form.

So much for my views as to the general ways in which the young artist's eye might be trained to perceive nature rightly. To this may I add two more observations, concerning, first, the education of the artist's sense of *beautiful* form and, second, the education of the population at large to recognize and understand true excellence in earth-life painting.

First, then, we have already agreed to recognize as *beautiful* anything that *purely* expresses the divine essence in natural phenomena; or, in other words, anything in which nature clearly reveals itself in keeping with its innermost essence. Now, just as the ancients were right to define a virtuous action as one performed by a virtuous person, we must say that a form or a line is *beautiful* when it is perceived as part of an entirely beautiful natural entity. Just as no action is virtuous in itself, no line can be beautiful in itself: it becomes so only through the body that it delineates (for which reason it is hard to imagine an idea more ill conceived than [William] Hogarth's belief that the undulating line is the sole "line of beauty").<sup>63</sup>

Once the artist learns to apprehend the beauty of nature in general, he cannot fail to perceive how such beauty is expressed in individual linear proportions and relative sizes. However, it will do no harm to give specific instruction on this matter, too, in the early stages.

Take the component objects of earth life, as they present themselves individually to us: we perceive that they all too often clash with each other, deviate from their true essence, and thus become unbeautiful. A subtle distinction must thus be drawn between those forms in which nature expresses its innermost will and essence, clear and plain and therefore beautiful, and those in

which it appears to be diverted from that essence, decrepit, disordered, unbeautiful. To draw this distinction is not so easy as it might at first appear; it demands a subtle awareness of just proportion, and is fully possible only to a mind that retains all of its native purity and tenderness: a mind steeped in the specificity of organic form, and in the beautiful equilibrium that permeates and sustains the whole of nature. To perceive such intrinsically and purely beautiful forms, and to distinguish them from those that are less beautiful (or even unbeautiful), naturally becomes more difficult and the whole that is to be apprehended becomes more composite and more stratified. The more limited the phenomenon under observation, the easier this becomes.

The surest way is to lead the youthful artist from the easy to the difficult. Take a single plant that has grown strong and free. Once he has become aware of the beauty of its outlines, the delicate balance in the spread of its stalks, the grace and delicacy of form in the tissue of veins and in the overall shape of its leaves, the obedience to law that is visible throughout, and the gracefully veiled rigor of its organization, let him exercise his eye in appreciating beauty of form in larger organisms, in bushes, in trees, in groups of trees; then in rocks, masses of earth, the courses of rivers, and so on. Then he will readily perceive the defining character and therefore the beauty that exists in the grandest views, in the outlines of great mountain ranges, in processions of clouds, in the waves of the sea, and in all other scenes expressive of earth life. He will have learned to distill with a sure eye and to reproduce the beauty thus revealed in all of nature.

This development of the eye will stand him in good stead, and not only when he sets out to imitate nature directly (though here such training will certainly bear good fruit, since there can be no *drawing* in the higher sense of the word without it). At the same time, the beautiful harmony evolved by nature in pursuit of its divine essence will become so much a part of his mind that, when he works freely and in response to an inner impulse, not only will his individual objects enshrine the living archetype of nature: the entire work—in its inner balance, in the harmonious regularity of its parts, in the pure and noble drawing of the whole—will inevitably reflect the archetype of a structure that springs from divine will and lives in the mind.

As for my second point, the education of the population at large to appreciate true landscape painting, you may well dismiss all that I can say on the subject as a flight of fancy; it is true that there seems at present to be very little hope of any such thing. But this will not be the only flight of fancy in these letters: you may set it alongside the others.

The truth is that this branch of art has been in a sad way of late, not only internally but externally: that is to say, people do not much appreciate it as a true art. Prospects, that is to say well-known views, brightly painted on little copper plates, worth no more and no less than workaday portraits, and addressed in the same way to the egotism of the crowd: such things find a welcome, but nobody will put himself out on behalf of anything else.

When we reflect on the reason for this low state of esteem, it soon becomes

apparent that people are strangers to the natural landscape itself. They look up at the sky just so much as is necessary to gauge the weather, in order to see whether it is fine enough for a drive or a journey; when they see a tree, they think of the shade that it will provide for a picnic; on seeing a meadow, they think that there will be a good crop of hay, or that a good, rich green strengthens the eyes. To them, in the vast majority of cases, the inner, physical life in all of these things, as related to human life—the poetic quality of these phenomena—is a book with seven seals.

Why is so little done to draw attention to this plenitude of natural life? In most cases, all that is needed is a stimulus; the obstacle in the way of such knowledge, as of so many good things, is sheer inertia. I have had this experience many times: once introduce people, who need only be in full possession of their faculties, to artists of talent, or to naturalists who can impart their knowledge in a lively and ingenious way, and their eyes are soon opened; they learn to distinguish the beauty in individual natural forms, and eventually, to their heartfelt delight, they discover the inner meaning of all these things.

Where are people in general to find such awareness and such encouragement? I know of few books that could lead to any such result; and in those few the author most often seeks to present one particular aspect of nature (as, for instance, in the excellent views of Humboldt).<sup>64</sup>

It would therefore be desirable to have a book that would present earth life to the reader in all of its many aspects, with a Grecian simplicity and in all pure humanity, unfettered by the schools. Walking hand in hand with science and art, with no overbearing didacticism from either side, but as if in conversation with two dear friends, he would be stimulated to look about him, as he passes along the highway that so many tread without lifting their eyes from the stones, like pack beasts to the mill. May there soon be such a book!

At the same time, the scientific training given to artists would have its own influence upon the people, for every artist would naturally exert an influence in his own walk of life. Spontaneously, almost imperceptibly, a knowledge of better things would spread by word of mouth; and, indeed, just as the artists would assist the public, they would themselves be assisted by a livelier public response. Clearly, however, the higher development of art is a matter for the artists themselves; just as artists are to blame for its decline, only they can improve it.

So much for ways and means of educating the eye toward a pure perception of natural landscape; as for the education of the hand, what I have to add may be said in a few words.

First, what I mean by educating the hand. I consider that the painter's hand is fully educated and firm when it can readily and securely satisfy the soul's wish for a representation of the object reflected in the outward or inward eye.

Now, for any organ that does not exist purely for its own and other organs' sake, the skill to work with perfect certainty in pursuit of an end chosen by the soul, and extrinsic to itself, can be acquired only in one way:

and that way is practice. For the hand, therefore, practice in forming lines and their relationships, practice in covering surfaces with shadow or color, will always come first. Through this practice the eye in turn will gain practice in measurement and comparison, and its proficiency will in turn promote and develop the effectiveness of the hand.

How all this is to be organized in detail, where to begin, and how to ascend from easy to difficult, are matters to which I have devoted some thought. However, it is not entirely possible to lay down universal principles, since individual differences of character and disposition must be taken into account; besides, it would be too much to expect you to bear with me through all the lengthy disquisitions that would be necessary. One thing I must emphasize, however: and that is my conviction that the first and most effective exercise for the hand—the logic of drawing, as it were—consists in the frequent, careful freehand copying and independent construction of basic geometric figures. I know of nothing that so sharpens the eye, or that so fortifies the hand against the temptations of carelessness, as working with these pure forms and ratios. The logic of this becomes evident if we reflect that these forms are the first principles of all organic forms: the closer any organism is to its first genesis, the more clearly it displays the simplest geometric configurations.

Once the hand has acquired some sureness in reproducing these rigorous forms, and once the student is sufficiently familiar with the modifications that apply to such figures according to the direction in which they *appear* (perspective), and also with the effects of lighting; in short, once he has grasped and practiced the means of achieving *the representation of solids on a plane*, then preliminary exercises are at an end, and the student may be led on to depict living things. The portrayer of the phenomena of earth life now finds before him an immensely wide field, in which he can progress only by constant practice. He must impress on himself the true types of a wide variety of forms, in order that the lineaments of just *those* forms may seem to impress themselves spontaneously on his work; that forms derived from his own imagination may nevertheless appear clad in the pure truth of nature; that he may be privileged to naturalize his own ideas as citizens of the real world.

The artist must therefore learn to speak the language of nature; and the place of such instruction can only be the natural landscape itself: the woods, the fields, and the sea; the mountain, the river, and the valley. All through his life, their forms and colors must be his constant study; here, learning and practice can have no end, and we may say, in the words of the Divan:

Daß Du nicht enden kannst,  
Das macht Dich groß!<sup>65</sup>  
[That you can never come to an end:  
This makes you great!]

When the soul is saturated with the inner meaning of all these different forms; when it has clear intimations of the mysterious, divine life of nature;

when the hand has taught itself to represent securely, and the eye to see and acutely; and when the artist's heart is purely and entirely a consecrated joyous vessel in which to receive the light from above: then there will in the future be earth-life paintings, of a new and higher kind, which will uplift the human soul into a higher contemplation of nature. These works will truly deserve the name of mystic and orphic; and earth-life painting will have attained its perfection.<sup>66</sup>

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## Letter IX

Once more the evenings are drawing in, and winter is upon us; once more the room is pleasantly warm, and the lamp is lit early, casting its tranquil light across my desk. I have been reflecting that it is now all of nine years since that first evening, so like the present one, on which I tried to give you, my dear Ernst, some account of my ideas on landscape painting. I feel as if these remarks of mine had run full circle, and as if this were the moment to conclude the series for the time being.

The truth is that we have now discussed almost all that was most urgently on my mind in connection with the purpose of this art, the many ways in which it can be practiced, and its past and future evolution.

Here, as everywhere, the human mind can and does continue forever; but, just as there are times when a period of one's life must be summed up and brought to a conclusion, for the sake of a fresh start, in the same way trains of thought and lines of inquiry must sometimes be broken off, not because they are finished or exhausted but to make room for a constant succession of new and therefore often also finer mental activity. However, one more consideration demands to be added to the present train of thought, since it is the living focus of the whole business: this is the artist's own life, his relationship with the world and his fellow men.

Many meetings with landscape painters, and much reflection on the inner mystery of earth-life painting, have inspired a variety of thoughts on the position of such an artist, his joys and sorrows, and the ways in which he is judged and misjudged. I have hitherto tended to regard all this as too fragmentary to be written down; but now that I intend to bring these reflections to at least a temporary close, I had better set out for you what seem to me the most convincing parts of it.

A disgruntled painter once said to me: "The world no longer needs us. Art as such is neither political, statistical, nor mercantile; it is not even *comfortable*. It demands devotion, seriousness, silent contemplation, before it yields up its depths; no one has time for that. The world regards us merely as the servants of luxury; and even for that purpose stage spectacles, elegant wallpapers, and copper engravings are making us superfluous. Our time is past!"

The man was quite right, in his own terms; and there is no denying that the artist who seriously means to absorb himself in contemplation of the great mysteries of earth life, and to embody that contemplation in art—such an

artist, like everyone else who concerns himself with matters beyond the grasp of the population at large, cuts himself off from the world. He must begin by renouncing all worldly advancement, honors, and rewards; and he himself will have to educate those few who will understand him and appreciate his sentiments. This is not to say that the age of true art and true artists is past, just because the world at large seems to ignore them: the time for true art can never be past, if only because it transcends time: it is *eternal*.

Wer wird von der Welt verlangen,  
Was sie selbst vermißt und träumet!  
Ihr Bemüh'n ist guter Wille,  
Hinket nach dem raschen Leben,  
Und das was Du heute brauchtest,  
Möchte sie dir morgen geben.<sup>67</sup>  
[Who can ask the world to offer  
What the world still lacks and dreams of!  
Its labor, its good will,  
Limps behind Life's flying heels;  
And the thing you need today  
It will offer you tomorrow.]

But one conclusion is incontrovertible: self-abnegation is the lot of any artist whose heart is in landscape painting, in the higher sense of the term; of one who, unconcerned by the wishes of the uneducated majority, pursues only the divine ideas to which his soul aspires; of the artist who is filled with love for this world in the guise of nature, but whose kingdom cannot be of this world.

“But in that case,” a well-wisher might anxiously inquire, “how is the poor wretch to live? How is he to get the means to procure shelter, food, clothing, leisure: all those things that allow the activity of the mind to flourish?” To our mind, a balance must be struck, as follows. First, the nobler his aspirations, the fewer worldly goods he will desire or need. He is:

Freigesinnt, sich selbst beschränkend,  
Immerfort das Nächste denkend,  
Thätig treu in seinem Kreise,  
Still beharrlich jeder Weise,  
Nicht vom Weg dem geraden weichend  
Und zuletzt das Ziel erreichend.<sup>68</sup>  
[Free in his mind, and self-restraining,  
Always thinking of what falls to hand,  
Faithfully working in his own domain,  
Quietly steadfast in every way,  
Keeping to his own straight path,  
He will reach his goal at last.]



Let him go his own free-spirited way, in all simplicity and austerity of life; let him be ahead of his time, for a while: he will not always lack for recognition. The best of his contemporaries will assuredly find him out; and they will ease his life in the ways in which ease depends on others.

Even so, this is by no means the only way to provide for the artist in his capacity as a citizen of this world. I must touch on another way: one that might well find a wide application, and not to art alone.

Jean Paul [Friedrich Richter], who is now beyond all earthly cares, has this to say in his last work: "It may be — and I do not mean to deny it, since my letters will appear in print when I am gone — that in them I have advised my juniors, and young poets generally, to learn a trade: just as by law the Great Sultan is obliged to practice some other craft besides statecraft, and just as Rousseau would have the scholar do likewise, let the youthful artist in prose and poetry practice not only literature but some science, such as astronomy, botany, geography, or the like."<sup>69</sup>

For our present purposes, this passage is important for two reasons. First, it tends to confirm our earlier observation that the art of today springs from science; second, it indicates that the flower need not be its own root: that the fruits of unconstrained mental activity on an elevated level need not also be the means whereby the artist puts a coat on his back or a roast on his table. The vulgar and the sublime can never unite; and, if they are ever forced to do so, it is not the vulgar that ascends but the sublime that is dragged down.

Rousseau copied music for a living, in order to pursue his higher concerns in independence of the vulgar necessities of life.

The artist aspires to a goal that the vulgar world ignores; why then should he not gain the ordinary necessities of life by some entirely ordinary activity? Indeed, I would say that even this struggle with ordinary life — in which it will be open and indeed natural to him to see the most ordinary things in a magnificent and noble light — will give him inner strength and complete his education as a human being; just as a healthy body appears truly healthy only if all its organs and faculties, both lower and higher, are active and vigorous.

Sad to say, I have watched all too many artists, and scholars too, treating their own art or science as a mere milk cow, and asking, like artisans, only "What pleases the crowd? What flatters the follies of the day?" As they became more and more embroiled in such concerns, their brief flush of youthful enthusiasm gave way to a philistine dullness in which the brush or pen was ruled no longer by the head and heart but by the stomach.

Here I would gladly embark on a lengthy jeremiad on the misuse of art and science as means of livelihood, on the fees paid by booksellers to writers and poets, on hiring art and hiring poetry, on the practice of paying poets for their good ideas by the page, and so forth; but *basta!* You yourself will have seen quite enough of such things, and have been disgusted by them, without my now reviving the disgust.

No, just as a church must be kept free and clean of kitchen odors and workshop clatter, so the artist, the true landscape painter, must keep his art

sacrosanct, his heart free of all that is base and bad, and his mind open to the wonders that the world lays out before him in such profusion. May he have always before him the words of Dante, most spiritual of poets:

Quello n'finito ed ineffabil bene,  
Che lassù è, così corre ad amore  
Com' a lucido corpo raggio viene,  
Tanto si dà, quanto truova d'ardore.<sup>70</sup>  
[...The highest good  
Unlimited, ineffable, doth so speed  
To love, as beam to lucid body darts,  
Giving as much of ardour as it finds.  
The sempiternal effluence streams abroad  
Spreading, wherever charity extends.]

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My dear Ernst, along with this letter you will receive a number of enclosures extracted from the papers of our friend C., which he has passed to me in the belief that here and there they may cast light on the matters discussed in our letters.

The first is an essay on the physiognomy of mountain ranges: a topic that would certainly merit close study in the scientific treatise that we wish to see published as an aid to the study of landscape painting. The second contains pages from a journal, begun but unfortunately not continued by our friend, in which he desired to record in a few words the pictures that offered themselves to him in the presence of nature, in the ever-inspiring environs of Dresden. However subjective their interest, these notes may serve, I think, as examples of the way in which a moment in nature may be instantly apprehended as a finished picture.

A single picture of the same kind, but at greater length, forms the third enclosure.

And so I greet you heartily and remain, in steadfast love,

Yours,  
ALBERTUS

#### ENCLOSURE I

### Notes toward a Physiognomy of Mountain Ranges

In the observation of nature, more than in any other endeavor, everyone must first settle upon the viewpoint most suitable for *himself*, but must then recognize that all other lines of investigation are no less valid. In all of my successive approaches to nature, I have tried to define the path best suited to my

own individual disposition; I soon became aware that in acquainting myself with any natural object I find it best to envisage it first as a whole, as distinctly and from as many angles as possible, but then to explore its parts and, still keeping the image of the whole present in my mind, to subdivide and investigate these in turn. I became aware, also, that this exactly corresponded to an innate tendency in me to depict objects by first tracing an outline and then eventually progressing to the complete form. As my skill improved, art became valuable to me not only for its effect on the mind but as another and more generalized form of nature study. Similarly, when in my work in zootomy I made drawings of internal organs as part of a methodical study of animals, and when in my study of landscape I recorded the form of a rock as a component of the earth's huge skeleton, I did so in the conviction that both were governed by archetypal, divine, formative laws. And when in drawing the rock I was compelled to reduce the original to a fraction of its size and thus to pass over many details, I had to remind myself that in a small area of skin or bone, which I had drawn in all the detail available to me, powerful microscopes would reveal an infinite multiplicity of structure that would never appear even in the most meticulous drawing.

In studying anatomy and physiology I found it of great assistance to draw the various forms of animal structure; and the same combination of art and science in pursuit of natural knowledge furthered my interest in the practice of landscape painting. In learning to see the outlines of mountain ranges and clouds as so many different states within the single organic whole that is the earth and its atmosphere, I could not but develop a profound reverence for every feature of the natural world around me. Everything I saw incited me to pursue a strict truthfulness: not one line in a mountain range, not one variation in the outline of a tree (unless artificially deformed), could ever seem to me accidental or undeserving of precise reproduction.

No doubt for this very reason, my artistic recreations often supplied material that I could exploit for scientific purposes. Before I saw Humboldt's *Ideen zu einer Physiognomik der Gewächse* [Ideas toward a physiognomy of plant growth],<sup>71</sup> I was already familiar with the physiognomies of the flowers and plants known to me, and was well aware that their overall outlines were no more devoid of significance as an indication of character than is a human physiognomy, or the build of an animal as an indication of inner structure.

My attention was likewise drawn to a number of specific atmospheric processes relative to cloud formation, refraction of color, and so on, of which I may one day attempt to give some account. This same path ultimately led me to the intimations that have prompted the present essay, concerning the undiscussed and indeed unnamed topic of the physiognomy of mountain ranges. In the investigation of all natural objects we are led to draw a distinction between the *exterior* and the *interior*: the exterior enabling us to form a mental image of the whole, and the interior showing us its parts. Only when these two combine do we gain a global idea of the nature of the object in itself. Botany and zoology deal with organisms that present themselves as

individuals within the totality of nature: that is, to some extent as self-contained wholes (though always dependent on a greater whole). The naturalist therefore describes a plant or an animal partly as seen from the outside and partly as dissected and internally explored. The mineralogist relates differently to his objects of study; he can consider only the parts of the earth's body, since the whole is beyond the capacity of our senses. Every specimen is no more than a piece, a fragment; only in crystals do such fragments show any affinity with the regular internal structures that we find as parts within organisms. Geology considers the earth's body as a whole, but only in respect of its *inward* form; it affords us some knowledge of the concentric shells that compose the planet, and has discovered some of the laws governing their stratification. The outward surface presents an additional, and for its human inhabitants a paramount, need for close investigation: a need that is partly satisfied by physical geography. Bear in mind, also, that individual components of the earth—the limbs, as it were, of its body—may perfectly well be considered in isolation; thus, in mountain ranges we may detect both an outward appearance and an inward structure. Both are accordingly included in descriptions of individual mountain ranges. The outward description most commonly limits itself to a statement of the height of the range, the situation and form of the valleys, and so on. In all of this, however, one thing cannot be captured in any description: the *total impression* conveyed by the form of a mountain range, the quality of the lines that shape its outlines, the gentleness or asperity of its profiles, and so on. Here drawing must come to our aid, just as it aids the zoologist or the botanist in conveying the general make or build of an animal or a plant. As we gain no idea of an animal's inherent character from a lifeless tracing of its outlines, but only through the lively apprehension of an artist's eye, it seems that the true type and individuality of a mountain range can be conveyed only by a genuinely artistic representation: a true *geognostic landscape*. Not much has ever been done in this line, presumably because—unlike history painters, who at least study anatomy—most landscape painters know too little of nature. Some, indeed, seem to have no idea that a sandstone crag differs in character from one composed of porphyry, and that this in turn differs from one composed of granite; indeed, they go so far as to confound all the specific forms of tree growth in an imaginary substance that they call “foliage.”

Only grasp the individual character within the outward appearance of a mountain formation, and it becomes possible to discover the consistent connection between this and the inner structure: in other words, to devise a *physiognomy of mountain ranges*. If intelligently applied, this, like all new insights into nature, will infallibly yield interesting results.

Remarkably enough, the physiognomy of mountain ranges has been studied in the mountains of the moon in advance of those that lie closer at hand here on earth; for only observation of the curious, conical peaks of the lunar mountains, and of the strange, circular ramparts around them—of their physiognomy, in other words—can account for the hypothesis of lunar volcanoes.

As for terrestrial mountains, an observer inadequately versed in mineralogy and geology, whose modest intention is simply to submit to the reader's judgment a view of nature that has occurred to him, cannot be expected to contribute significantly to the establishment of a discipline of physiognomy. But some contribution I shall attempt to make.

First of all, the physiognomy of Primary mountain ranges after weathering is distinctive and unmistakable.<sup>72</sup> These are broad ridges that combine powerful, gently swelling grandeur and height with an extreme beauty of delicate, undulating outline. As we trace, for instance, the glorious, broad, arching crest of the Riesengebirge, we liken its forms not to a choppy sea but to the gentle surge of a rolling swell. These vast and spacious heights are believed to correspond to a stable, crystalline formation that dates from the earliest times. The changes in its surface also suggest an antiquity beyond human reckoning: as a result of thousands of years of weathering, there is fertile ground for organized life almost everywhere; the rocks are covered with a layer of soil and clothed in a multitude of plants. The rugged, angular forms are softened; and we are tempted to liken a mountain range such as this to a shapely human body, in which the form of the skeleton is apparent only at a few isolated points, the whole being clad and rounded with flesh and skin. There is little exposed rock to be seen in the Riesengebirge; what there is, has either been stripped bare by the masses of water that hurl themselves down the mountainsides in the spring, as in the walls of snow clefts, the rock faces of the Aupengrund and Teufelsgrund, the Elbwände, and so on—in which case the detail of the rock is rugged and angular, proclaiming its solidity—or else forms the last vestiges of the primordial crags of the mountain crest, which have everywhere else been weathered and eroded out of existence. At such locations as the Růbezahlkanzel or the Dreisteine, great slabs of granite lie piled in their original strata, with the look of ruined towers and ramparts; in some places, the summits of these primordial crags have been eroded away, and their enormous fragments, rounded by weathering, have been tossed into piles like so many cobblestones (as on the Grosses Rad and Kleines Rad). All in all, this produces a distinctive mountain physiognomy, perfectly complemented by the native alpine vegetation that grows on the broad, humped back of the range, above the line where forest gives way to long, hedgelike rows of knee pine (*Pinus pumilio*).

The trachyte and Secondary mountains present a very different physiognomy; and I have observed this very contrast in the valley of Teplitz. On the north side are the Erzgebirge of Saxony, which present themselves to the eye as fine, grand, rounded masses; these are Primary mountains, very similar in form to the Sudeten, although not so high. On the south are the very different forms of the Mittelgebirge in Bohemia, essentially composed of clingstone and constituting part of the trachyte formation. Here we observe the traces of a more mobile configuration, conditioned by mechanical upheavals; the outlines of the mountains are more broken and made up of smaller formations; steeper and more acute, the peaks remain bare, with little or no soil cover but

only scree, the sign of incipient (not, as with the Primary ranges, advanced) erosion. Stark, rocky, island formations such as the Biliner Berg stand out at intervals. A close walking survey of this range would certainly reveal a still greater variety of external characteristics.

Nor can I fail to remark on the existence of a physiognomy peculiar to sandstone mountain ranges, since it is highly pronounced: clear stratification of the rock; traces of comparatively rapid erosion by recent watercourses, due to its relative softness and to the fissures left by past upward movements; abrupt rock faces, always weathered and rounded in detail; narrow, fissured ravines (think of the Ottowald and Rathen gorges, in so-called Saxon Switzerland); isolated rectangular masses (such as the Lilienstein and Königstein); gaps cut through the rocks (including the Prebischtor) and many other distinctive features.

Finally, of all the mountain formations known to me, none seems so strongly distinctive in its physiognomy as the basalt. Tall, steep, pointed, isolated peaks proclaim it from afar; as we approach, we observe the dark color of the stone, the rough, jagged surface of the rock faces, and, in the case of columnar basalt, the prominent stack formations, ranged like organ pipes and mostly leaning at an angle. I have observed these characteristics around Zittau, in particular, where there are many basalt outcrops. Near Waltersdorf, two hours' walk to the west of Zittau, a number of very fine basalt columns, some of them two or three feet in diameter, stand out in their intact, primitive state.

Analogous sets of characteristics might be identified in mountains composed of other rocks, such as limestone. However, although I have some knowledge of limestone mountains, as found notably in Thuringia, I no longer have them clearly enough in my mind to attempt an account of their physiognomy. I shall merely add a few comments on the Secondary mountains and the chalk and clay sedimentary hills along the Baltic coast.

Whereas the outlines of basalt mountains are abrupt and vertical, here all is broad and even. The island of Rügen, which is entirely composed of deposits of this kind, rises to a very modest height above the Baltic Sea; although the coast rises in steep cliffs on the north and east, the ascent from the interior is mostly gradual and almost imperceptible, until we find ourselves on the edge of a sheer drop, presumably created in earlier times by the force of the sea. This, too, is a strikingly individual physiognomy, though in the interior we stand on ordinary, flat, fertile terrain. The cliffs, which are three, four, or five hundred feet in height, clearly reveal their earthy consistency in the gullies created by rainwater; in occasional ridges, edges, and promontories, eroded on both sides; and in the accumulations of fallen earth or chalk at their feet, which often reach to almost half of their height. Even at a distance, therefore, these cannot be mistaken for true rocky crags. If we add the dazzling white color of the chalk, with its layers of countless large and small flints—some of which, washed out by rain or brought down by cliff falls, are strewn on the beach—this is an unmistakable physiognomy, further defined and completed by the large, erratic granite blocks, probably washed across from Sweden,

which appear all along the coast and are also found in places in the center of the island.

In conclusion I need add only that this essay has achieved its purpose if it has shown that, in the hands of careful and experienced geologists, the physiognomy of mountain ranges is potentially a topic of great interest.

*Postscript*

I completed this essay at a time when I had yet to see the Alps. Since then the sight of them has still further justified, in my eyes, the idea of such a physiognomy. There, Primary mountain ranges appear in their true, abrupt, and more crystalline guise; whereas the account of Primary ranges in this essay refers rather to their state subsequent to erosion.\*

ENCLOSURE II

## Fragments from a Painter's Journal

Ich sah die Welt mit liebevollen Blicken,  
Und Welt und ich, wir schwelgten in Entzücken,  
So duftig war, belebend, immer frisch,  
Wie Fels, wie Strom, so Bergwald und Gebüsch.<sup>74</sup>  
[I saw the world with eyes all full of love;  
And world and I were rapt in gladness still;  
Scented, exhilarating, ever fresh  
Were rock and river, bush and wooded hill.]

— Goethe

### December 1822, moon at first quarter

Evening in the Großer Garten [Great park]. Bitterly cold, but pure, hazy sky. Fresh snow decks the spruces and pines, standing out clearly, but in shadow it looks violet, contrasting with the flush of sunset in the air; even against the earth's shadow in the east,<sup>75</sup> the snow looks dark.

At the forest edge, by the Krahenhütte, a beautiful, snow-covered hill with a lone pine stands out brightly against gray cobalt air.

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At full first quarter, in the evening, after 4 o'clock, looking across the Brühl terrace and bridge toward the palace gardens.

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\* Later still, I became acquainted with the *volcanic* mountain ranges of southern Italy, and I have commented at length on their highly distinctive physiognomy in the first discourse of my *Analecta*, published in 1829.<sup>73</sup>

A fine picture at the Elbe Gate. Three arches of the bridge in hazy brown gray, with the snow-capped, triangular gables that surmount the piers; on the near side of this is the principal source of light, a wide expanse of snow; foreground interspersed with very dark stones. Beneath the arches, hazy undergrowth and distant view; above, gray cobalt sky shading to ochreous red, filled with cloudy vapor; the moon finally breaking through, not yet shining but ringed with a yellowish glow.

To one side the Frauenkirche, dark violet gray.

Also from the hill by the palace, view back toward the city, in fine gradations; foreground snow brilliant, trees now very dark; areas of light and dark fading with distance, but even the remotest snow-covered roofs bright against the hazy sky.

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### January 1823, last quarter

Evening walk to Großer Garten after 4 o'clock.

Outside the gate, biting cold, clear sky; in the west much reddish gray mist, sunset red above.

The bluish mist (light-filled, cloudy anticipation of darkness, therefore blue) shrouded the upper half of the trees in Antons Garten. Snow on the ground, this side of the trees, tending toward violet gray, always darker than the sky, in which the brightest objects were tiny, pinkish red, flocculent clouds, visible in the west through the upper and thinner portions of the mist.

There was a lovely vista through the woods to the east: snow bright against the encroaching twilight, which faded above to pure blue. The nearest trees ranged from violet to brown; a jutting branch, bearing ocher yellow leaves, was prettily highlighted with snow, as were all the other horizontal limbs. Further on, the violet turned more hazy, and one prominent tree, which spread its branches even wider, was swathed in a misty, bluish gray.

I had also walked through the Großer Garten a few days previously. At noon there had been signs of a thaw, but the frost set in again by nightfall. The sky was overcast; in the distance, especially in the east, dark, bluish clouds lowered above the white mantle of snow.

Just then, with the distant view obscured by a snowfall, and by those dark clouds, and with the earth receding from view in a perfect series of gradations, a postilion with two unsaddled black horses dashed past me and on into that hazy distance. A good picture. Also beautiful on that evening: the violet-brown of the fir woods against the gray mass of cloud.

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### January, full moon

Evening, between 4 and 5. The horizon shrouded in mists. 16° below. Glowing yellowish red, the moon rises out of the gray violet eastern mists. At the Belvedere, on the Brühl Terrace, the upper terrace with the iron balustrade afforded a good picture. Before me, on the right, the base of the Sphinx;



beyond the steps, the buildings on the Elbberg came into view through the wintry haze. Main source of light, the moon, though not yet brilliant. Shadows deepest on the pedestal of the Sphinx; the snow lighter than the haze on the horizon, especially on the terrace to the left, but darker than the sky, which was a lovely, muted blue above the moon.

Downstream of the bridge, the Elbe was still free of ice; on it, a cloud of white mist, in the shape of a perfect stratus, hung eighteen feet or so above water level.

Then, on the Zwinger rampart, the great pediment of the theater joined with the nearer, smaller, snow-covered roofs, the Catholic church, and the palace tower, to present an image full of character. Smoke from the theater, thick and whitish gray, ascended obliquely toward the right in a dense column that obscured the central portion of the palace tower. The hazy gray of the Catholic church and the winter mist that shrouded the lower part of the Frauenkirche were also lovely.

The snow-covered earthworks of the Bastion made a fine spectacle against the western sky. The lower part of the sky was shrouded in violet brown haze, shading above to red and eventually to a yellowish twilight glow. The snow, by contrast, was all blue and violet, and intensely bright against the crepuscular haze of the horizon, though still, even at its lightest, darker than the bright sky.

The shadows cast by the uneven surface of the snow were always darker even than the evening haze.

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### February, new moon

Evening, toward 5 o'clock, in the Großer Garten. There had been a thaw over the previous few days, but now the earth was hardened again by a new frost. Sky bright in parts; snow-bearing clouds; a good picture afforded by the corner of the moat toward Recknitz.

The sun had gone down; against the dull yellow sunset sky, a wide band of gray snow cloud, uniform in tone, extended down to the horizon; in the bluish sky above, scattered cumulus clouds still caught the light of the departed sun. The distant view was shrouded in brownish, greenish, and finally violet tones. Streaks of snow, lighter than the gray cloud but darker than the light sky, punctuated the dark surface of the ground.

In the foreground, on the edge of the moat, two massive, ancient willows stretched out their gaunt branches, nearly black; around their trunks the snow had thawed and then refrozen, so that, close to the strong dark tone of the tree trunks, a sparkling light reflected the bright sky; it was lighter than anything else in the foreground, for even the jagged ice on the frozen pool could be seen only in a subdued light.

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On the way home, the wind brought the snow cloud nearer, setting up an eerie roaring in the bare treetops and in the spruces, and a man walking in front of

me in a voluminous cloak and flat cap, with a black dog at his side, animated the scene in a way entirely appropriate to the somber mood of the landscape.

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**February, before full moon**

At evening, walking by moonlight toward the Frauenkirche, the hazy moonlight afforded me a magnificent view. I could not see the moon itself; scattered, hazy cloudlets hung in the dark sky, and the row of houses to my left was in shade and cast a strong shadow obliquely across the street; there was a fountain, also in shadow, and its ascending, dark mass produced a good effect against the distant haze. The houses to my right caught the moonlight; their roofs and gutters cast long shadows, and the roofs, although in the light, were dark against the buildings beyond. The hazy mass of the dome of the Frauenkirche loomed into the sky; in the row of houses to the left, still visible in outline, a lighted window gleamed through the mist. The principal source of light was on the square before the church and on the moonlit portion of the street.

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**February, full moon**

Beautiful moonrise on the Brühl Terrace. High in the sky, great nocturnal clouds, darker toward the moon; below them strips and flecks of cloud, prettily flushed with red just beneath the moon. Toward the moon itself, yellow, even ultimately greenish. The clouds and the visible areas of clear sky darken toward the moon.

The reflection in the surface of the Elbe, too, gentle and most lovely in color.

The muting of the light in the water makes the colors still more distinct from each other.

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**May, Ascension Day, Plauen, evening**

How pure and holy was the spring air in this churchyard! Birches and blossoming trees shed their gentle fragrance. Warm sunlight on the plants that grew vigorously among the gravestones and the new wooden crosses! How the sun lights up the window at the back corner of the sacristan's house, so that it can be seen through the front window, and how the little house is encompassed with flowering vegetation!

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Earlier, too, in the village, I took delight in the graceful grouping of a blossoming tree with the ancient, plastered gable of a farmhouse. Of course, the divinely cheerful spring air creates some, indeed most, of the effect.

In general, one could date, to a day, the moment this spring when the air and the clouds turned mild and summery.

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**May, the following evening**

On the dismantled bastion behind the Kreuzkirche; sun just down. Stormy sky; main tones cream, reddish, blue, violet! Swarms of whirring swallows! On the left, a bank of piled rubble; above this, the ruin of a spiral staircase, a stone spindle enclosed by towerlike walls. Then an old parapet with star-shaped embrasures; then old buildings and, looming above them, dark against a bright sky, the Kreuzkirche tower.

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Looking down from the Bastion, you could see a passageway behind the star-shaped embrasures. Old masonry inward, with wooden balustrades, and on top of all this a wretched little garden. Who would not be reminded of Götz in his little tower garden!<sup>76</sup>

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**October, after full moon**

There had been a long spell of clear, bright weather; most days began with mist, after which the air had a powerful elasticity that eventually dispelled all vapors. Finally, one evening, the vapors coalesced in the higher regions of the sky into long strands of cirrostratus; the earth was shrouded in a light mist, the sun dipped into the diaphanous veils that lined the horizon, and the most wondrous color effects became visible. I stood facing long rows of linden trees on the bank of the Elbe. Toward the west, horizontal strands of flocculent cloud, lying one behind the other like waves, spanned the vault of the sky. Their silvery strands were gilded by the intense orange of the setting sun, and these tones accorded beautifully with the azure blue of the strips of sky between the waves of cloud.

Farther to the north and east, the atmospheric veil on the horizon faded to a delicate rose red; in the magical light, this rose red reflected from the shadow side of every object. To the west, in front of me, was the magnificent array of ancient linden trees that line the enclosure, their leaves already autumnal. But how red was the glow that suffused the brown local tone of their foliage; how beautifully this interplay of violet and golden brown combined with the color triad of the sky, and contrasted with the intense but shadowed green of the pastures in the foreground; and, where the trees ended, how the gentle, reddish tone of the distant view peeped through between them!

One of the most delightful views that nature here has ever afforded me!

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**1824, August, after new moon**

One bright, sunny afternoon, on the bank of the Elbe between Pirna and Wehlen, a great diversity of pictures demonstrated to me the joys of living in a circumscribed space.

How beautiful was the little, round-topped house door, in a bright, white-

washed arch, at the top of the shady flight of steps in front of the house, flanked with a tangle of squashes and hops.

In the morning I was delighted by a view of the plain outside Pirna. A field of rape in flower, next to green flax fields that were past blooming; the willow-lined Elbe; the steel-blue mountains; silver cumulus clouds on the horizon!

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**November, first quarter**

In the evening, gray, overcast sky; isolated patches of bright yellow light breaking through in the west. On the Elbe, past the bridge, a ship lay alongside the bank with all sail slack. All dark; beyond the sail a flash of yellow.

Over toward the south, the Catholic church and palace, huge, dark, and precise in outline; beyond, a lighter, curiously animated patch of cloud.

ENCLOSURE III

## A Picture of the Breaking of the Ice on the River Elbe near Dresden

Early on the morning of 14 January 1821 a cannon shot announced the breakup of the ice on the Elbe.<sup>77</sup> The sky was a hazy gray, intermittently coalescing into clouds; the wind was a light easterly; the barometer was falling; and the thermometer showed +6° Reaumur. When the second gunshot was heard, at half past nine, I went out to the Brühl Terrace. The nearby river still had its complete covering of ice, on which wheeled traffic had been moving until a few days previously; but there was open water upstream, and the jagged floes displaced from there had been shoved up and crushed on the edge of the standing ice. The massive force of the descending current worked on, invisibly, in the depths; until finally, over toward the far bank, a gap appeared, forming a river-within-the-river that whirled huge floes of ice along, only to leave them massed at the point where it descended once more beneath the ice. In the end, the force of the current on the far side of the river shifted the masses of ice on the near side, and great floes majestically thrust their way up the Elbberg shore, like petrified ocean breakers. Then all quiet again.

To take a closer look at those masses of ice, I went out to the Elbberg. There I stood near the ice sheets that had recently come ashore. They were half a foot to a foot and a half thick; their color was yellowish in parts, and a translucent greenish blue elsewhere; they were four, six, and up to eight feet wide. Beyond lay the white, firm coating of ice, fissured in many places, with smaller floes and sometimes branches of trees caught in the gaps. Beyond, the river surged on its way, casting up a second mass of ice floes on the projecting bank opposite.

Around and beside me, the boatmen were alert and active. A number of big Elbe barges were firmly moored to posts set farther inland, and the men stood by to haul them closer inshore if they became endangered by the pressure of the ice.

Observing all of this, I wandered slowly along the bank, and finally, standing on a balk of timber behind an Elbe barge, I noticed a little swirl of water that was rising from an opening barely a foot wide in the ice floe closest to me. As I watched, the opening gradually enlarged; the water, which had been confined below by the weight of ice, burst out with increasing force, and soon formed a little stream of its own, ten to twelve feet wide, which tirelessly carried away the shore ice and floes, but remained unable to dislodge either the sheet ice that flanked it or the barrier of floes that massed behind its own source.

All this remained stable for some time. Then, suddenly, movement began to be visible behind the new current; jagged masses of ice rose and fell; a dull boom was heard within the ice barrier just upstream; the force of the water increased, and all at once the surface of the ice lifted. Carried by the impetus of the swollen river, long ice fields, with their borders of piled ice, began to float downstream on the ever-rising waters with the unhurried grandeur of a departing storm cloud.

Audible only in the rumble of the floes and the crackle of breaking ice along its edges, the grave and sedate motion of so vast and varied an expanse, and one that had so long appeared so firm and so enduring, could only be called magnificent and sublime. Repeated cannon fire announced to localities downstream the approach of the much-feared masses of ice.

Truly delighted and fortified by these newly observed stirrings of the spirit of nature, and giving thanks to the fate that had conducted me to the river bank at precisely the right moment, I turned back to the city.

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# Editorial Notes

1. Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Tag- und Jahreshefte*, last entry for 1822: “Dr. Carus gab einen sehr wohlgedachten und wohlgefühlten Aufsatz über Landschaftsmalerey in dem schönen Sinne seiner eigenen Productionen” (Dr. Carus gave a very well-reasoned and sensitive essay on landscape painting, in the beautiful vein of his own productions). Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Werke*, edited under the auspices of Großherzogin Sophie von Saxe-Weimar-Eisenach (Weimar: Hermann von Böhlau, 1887–1919; reprint, Munich: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 1987), pt. 1, 36:220, lines 20–23; and Goethe, *Sämtliche Werke, Briefe, Tagebücher und Gespräche*, ed. Hendrik Birus (Frankfurt am Main: Deutscher Klassiker Verlag, 1987–), 17:349, par. 1142.

2. Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Aus meinem Leben: Campagne in Frankreich 1792*, in idem, *Werke* (note 1), pt. 1, 33:188.

3. The writer of the letters signs himself Albertus, and the addressee’s name is Ernst. Carus is using the two given names of his eldest son, Ernst Albert (1812–16), who died of scarlet fever; see pp. 6 and 6 n. 25 of the introduction to this volume.

4. Carus is presumably referring to one of the following passages of *Hamlet*: “The very place puts toys of desperation / Without more motive, into every brain / That looks so many fathoms to the sea / And hears it roar beneath” (1.4.75–78); or: “He did comply with his dug, before he sucked it. Thus has he—and many more of the same bevy that I know the dressy age dotes on—only got the tune of the time and outward habit of encounter; a kind of yesty collection, which carries them through and through the most fond and winnowed opinions; and do but blow them to their trial, the bubbles are out” (5.2.184–91). For the corresponding passages in German, see William Shakespeare, *Hamlet, Prinz von Dänemark*, in idem, *Shakespeare’s dramatische Werke*, trans. August Wilhelm Schlegel and Ludwig Tieck, ed. Hermann Ulrici, 2d ed. (Berlin: Georg Reimer, 1877), 6:41: “Der Ort an sich bringt Grillen der Verzweiflung / Auch ohne weitem Grund in jedes Hirn / Das soviel Klaffer niederschaut zur See / Und hört sie unten brüllen”; and: “Er machte Umstände mit seiner Mutter Brust, ehe er daran sog. Auf diese Art hat er, und viele andere von demselben Schlage, in die das schale Zeitalter verliebt ist, nur den Ton der Mode und den äußerlichen Schein der Unterhaltung erhascht, eine Art von Schaumansammlung, die sie weiterträgt, und zwar durch die tiefsten und gesiebtesten Beurteilungen hindurch; aber man puste sie nur zu näherer Prüfung an, und die Blasen platzen.”

5. Cf. Caspar David Friedrich’s reaction to Ramdohr’s criticism of the Tetschen Altarpiece, in Friedrich, *Caspar David Friedrich in Briefen und Bekenntnissen*, ed.

Sigrid Hinz (Berlin: Henschelverlag Kunst & Gesellschaft, 1984), 156–58 (letter of 8 January 1809).

6. Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, “Vier Jahreszeiten, Herbst,” no. 56, in idem, *Werke* (note 1), pt. 1, 1:353, no. 55, lines 109–10 (in which the text reads “sind alle vernünft’gen Discurse”); also in Goethe, *Sämtliche Werke* (note 1), 2:244.

7. Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, “Grenzen der Menschheit,” 2d stanza, in idem, *Werke* (note 1), pt. 1, 2:81, lines 17–20 (in which the text reads “Nirgends haften dann”); also in Goethe, *Sämtliche Werke* (note 1), 2:302, lines 17–20.

8. On “total experience” (*Gesamteindruck*), cf. Carl Ludwig Fernow, *Römische Studien* (Zurich: H. Gessner, 1806–8), 2:22, “Totaleindrücke auf das Gemüth” (total impression upon the mind); and Alexander von Humboldt, “Ideen zu einer Physiognomik der Gewächse,” in idem, *Studienausgabe*, ed. Hanno Beck (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1987–97), 5:181: “Totaleindruck einer Gegend” (total impression of a scene).

9. Carl Gustav Carus, *Von den Anforderungen an eine künftige Bearbeitung der Naturwissenschaften: Eine Rede, gelesen zu Leipzig am 19.9.1822 in der ersten Zusammenkunft deutscher Naturforscher und Ärzte* (Leipzig: Ernst Fleischer, 1822); and Carl Gustav Carus, *Von den Ur-Theilen des Knochen- und Schalengerüstes* (Leipzig: Gerhard Fleischer, 1828).

10. Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Torquato Tasso*, act 2, scene 1, in idem, *Werke* (note 1), pt. 1, 10:149, line 1104; also in Goethe, *Sämtliche Werke* (note 1), 5:764, line 1104.

11. Johann Georg Sulzer, *Allgemeine Theorie der Schönen Künste in einzeln, nach alphabetischer Ordnung der Kunstwörter aufeinander folgenden Artikeln abgehandelt*, 2d ed., with bibliographical notes by Christian Friedrich von Blankenburg (Leipzig: Weidmannsche Buchhandlung, 1792–99; reprint, Hildesheim: Olms, 1967–70), s.v. “Baukunst,” 1:314–41, esp. 316.

12. The three realms of nature: mineral, vegetable, and animal. The three fundamental forms of thought: conception, judgment, and deduction. See Immanuel Kant, *Gesammelte Schriften* (Berlin: Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1900–83), pt. 1, vol. 9 (1923): *Logik*, esp. 89–136: “Allgemeine Elementarlehre: Von den Begriffen, Von den Urteilen, Von den Schlüssen.” Threefold inner organization: physiology (literally, the study of nature) was defined as the study of the genesis, structure, and operations of organic bodies; it concerned itself with movements, chemical processes, and mental processes. The yellow, red, and blue: cf. Philipp Otto Runge, *Briefe und Schriften*, ed. Peter Bethausen (Munich: C. H. Beck, 1982), 183 (letter to Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, 3 July 1806). The three fundamental notes: Carus is presumably referring to the major triad (keynote, third, fifth).

13. On physiological colors, see Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Farbenlehre*, esp. “Erste Abteilung: Physiologische Farben,” in idem, *Werke* (note 1), pt. 2, 64:1–56; and Goethe, *Sämtliche Werke* (note 1), 23/1: 31–69.

14. On the distinction between the two, see Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph von Schelling, *Über das Verhältnis der bildenden Künste zu der Natur* [1807], in idem, *Sämtliche Werke* (Stuttgart: J. G. Cotta’scher Verlag, 1856–61), 7:316–18.

15. Cf. Friedrich Schleiermacher, *Über die Religion: Reden an die Gebildeten unter ihren Verächtern*, 4th ed. (Stuttgart: Hausmann, 1834), 165–67, 173.



16. Cf. Fernow (note 8), 2:18–19.

17. Cf. Humboldt, “Ideen zu einer Physiognomik der Gewächse” (note 8), 5:181.

18. Cf. Fernow (note 8), 2:21: “A beautiful landscape, for its part, invites us by its loveliness to wander in its depths, to range through its delightful far-off vistas, to rest in its cool shade” (Eine schöne Landschaft dagegen ladet uns durch ihre Anmuth ein, selbst in ihren Gründen zu wandeln, durch ihre reizenden Fernen zu schweifen, in ihrem kühlen Schatten auszuruhen).

19. The Claude glass, a slightly convex pocket mirror of black glass, was used by artists to visualize a real landscape in pictorial terms. Invented in the sixteenth century, it was at the height of its popularity in the eighteenth.

20. Cf. Fernow (note 8), 1:29, on the purpose of landscape painting: “durch Darstellung idealischer Naturszenen eine ästhetische Stimmung zu bewirken” (to generate an aesthetic mood through the representation of idealistic scenes of nature).

21. Cf. Friedrich (note 5), 87, and p. 124 in this volume.

22. Cf. Heinrich Meyer, “Über die Gegenstände der bildenden Kunst,” *Pro-pyläen* 1, no. 2 (1798): 45.

23. Cf. Sulzer (note 11), s.v. “Landschaft,” 3:145–54; and Fernow (note 8), 2:32–33.

24. Salomon Gessner, letter to Johann Caspar Füssli on landscape painting, cited in Füssli, “Vorrede,” *Geschichte der besten Künstler in der Schweiz, nebst ihren Bildnissen* (Zurich: Orell, Gessner, Füssli & Comp., 1769–79), 3: v–lxiv; also in Gessner, *Schriften*, pt. 5 (Zurich: Orell, Gessner, Füssli & Cie., 1772), 229–73.

25. Friedrich Schiller, “Die Künstler,” in idem, *Werke*, ed. Julius Petersen and Lieselotte Blumenthal (Weimar: Hermann Böhlau, 1943–), 1:201–14, lines 103–15, 179–86 (in which the text reads: “die seinen Sinn in Sklavenbanden hielten”).

26. Cf. Fernow (note 8), 2:37–43.

27. Carl Ludwig Fernow, “Über den Bildhauer Canova und dessen Werke,” in *Römische Studien* (Zurich: H. Gessner, 1806–8), 1:1–248; 42: “In essence, so long as sculpture gives particular representation to the Ideal—which in pure terms is but One—its style can and must always be the same” (Der Stil der Plastik kan und mus also im Wesentlichen, d.i. insofern er das Ideal, das, in seiner Reinheit gedacht, nur Eines ist, im Besonderen darstellt, immer nothwendig einer und derselbe seyn).

28. Salvator Rosa (1615–73), active in Naples, Florence, and Rome as a painter of battle scenes and landscapes. Since 1745 the Gemäldegalerie in Dresden has possessed his *Landscape with Three Philosophers*. Angelo Walther, et al., *Gemäldegalerie Dresden, Alte Meister: Katalog der ausgestellten Werke*, exh. cat. (Dresden: E. A. Seemann, 1992), 326 (cat. no. 470).

29. Claude Lorrain or Claude Gellée (1600–82). Worked mainly in Rome, as a landscape painter. The Gemäldegalerie in Dresden has his *Landscape with the Flight into Egypt*, 1647, and *Coastal Scene with Acis and Galathea*, 1657; see Carus, *Betrachtungen und Gedanken vor auserwählten Bildern der Dresdener Galerie* (Dresden: H. Burdack, 1867), 74–82. On these, see Walther, et al., *Gemäldegalerie Dresden* (note 28), 253–54 (cat. nos. 730, 731). See also p. 107 in this volume.

30. The famous statue of Olympian Zeus by the Greek sculptor Phidias (active mainly 460–430 B.C.); cf. Pliny, *Natural History*, 10 vols., ed. H. Rackham (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1968), 34.49 and 36.18.

31. The famous torso by Apollonius in the Belvedere of the Vatican; cf. Johann Joachim Winckelmann, “Beschreibung des Torso im Belvedere zu Rom,” *Bibliothek der schönen Wissenschaften und der freyen Künste* 5, no. 1 (1759): 33–41.

32. Carus is referring to *Saint Michael Vanquishing Satan*, 1518 (Paris, Louvre), *The Vision of Ezekiel*, 1518 (Florence, Palazzo Pitti), and of course to the most famous painting in the Gemäldegalerie in Dresden, *The Sixtine Madonna*, 1512–13: see Carl Gustav Carus, *Betrachtungen und Gedanken* (note 29), 1–17. On this, see Walther, et al., *Gemäldegalerie Dresden* (note 28), 308–9 (cat. no. 93). Heinrich Meyer categorized *The Vision of Ezekiel* as a “mystic picture”: Meyer, “Über die Gegenstände der bildenden Kunst” (note 22), 55; see also p. 153 n. 51 in this volume.

33. Latin name of Athena, the warlike Greek goddess of wisdom and reason. She sprang, full-grown and fully armed, from the head of Zeus (Latin: Jove or Jupiter). See p.113 in this volume.

34. Cf. Schelling, *Über das Verhältnis der bildenden Künste zu der Natur* (note 14), 317–18: “the inevitable preponderance of sculpture in antiquity” (das nothwendige Vorherrschen der Plastik im Alterthum).

35. Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, “Myrons Kuh” (Myron’s cow), *Über Kunst und Alterthum*, vol. 2, no. 1 (1818): 9–26; cf. Goethe *Werke* (note 1), pt. 1, 49/II:3–15; and Goethe, *Sämtliche Werke* (note 1), 20:287–94. Myron was a Greek bronze sculptor of the fifth century B.C., from Boeotia.

36. See note 19 above.

37. “True and significant work of art” (Wahres bedeutungsvolles Kunstwerk): Carus is giving a substantially accurate paraphrase of Fernow (note 8), 2:53.

38. Raphael, *La Fornarina*, 1518–19, Rome, Galleria nazionale d’arte antica. Claude Lorrain, *Coastal Scene with Acis and Galathea*, 1657, Dresden, Gemäldegalerie; see p. 103 in this volume and note 29 above.

39. Ludwig Tieck, *Franz Sternbalds Wanderungen: Eine altdeutsche Geschichte* [1798], in idem, *Werke*, ed. Marianne Thalmann (Munich: Winkler, 1963), 1:679–985, esp. 893.

40. Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, “Vor dem Tor,” *Faust, der Tragödie erster Teil*, in idem, *Werke* (note 1), pt. 1, 14:58–59, lines 1147–73; and Goethe, *Sämtliche Werke* (note 1), 7:58–59, lines 1147–72.

41. Ruysdael: Jacob Isaackszoon van Ruisdael (1628 or 1629–1682), landscape painter; cf. Carus, *Betrachtungen und Gedanken* (note 29), 98–107. In the first half of the nineteenth century, there were thirteen paintings by Ruisdael in the Gemäldegalerie in Dresden. Goethe wrote descriptions of three of them (*The Waterfall under the Castle Hill*, circa 1670; *The Monastery*, circa 1653–55; and *The Jewish Graveyard near Ouderkerk*, 1653–55) in his essay “Ruisdael als Dichter,” *Morgenblatt für gebildete Stände*, no. 107, 3 May 1816, 425–27; also in Goethe, *Werke* (note 1), pt. 1, 48:162–68; and Goethe, *Sämtliche Werke* (note 1), 19:632–36.

42. Titian: Tiziano Vecellio (probably circa 1488/90–1576), active in Venice. After the mid-eighteenth century, the Gemäldegalerie in Dresden held the following paintings by this artist: *Virgin and Child with Four Saints*, circa 1516; *The Tribute Money*, circa 1516; *Portrait of a Lady in White*, circa 1555; *Portrait of the Artist’s Daughter Lavinia*, circa 1561; and *Portrait of a Painter with a Palm*, 1561. See Walther, et al., *Gemäldegalerie Dresden* (note 28), 384–86 (cat. nos. 168–72).

43. Paul Bril (1554–1626), Flemish landscape painter, active in Rome from circa 1575. His small painting *View of the Roman Forum*, 1600, has been in Dresden since 1642; see Walther, et al., *Gemäldegalerie Dresden* (note 28), 131 (cat. no. 858).

44. Anthonie Waterloo (circa 1610–90), Dutch landscape painter, active mainly in Amsterdam and Utrecht.

45. Nicolas Poussin (1594–1665), French history and landscape painter, active in Paris, and after 1624 in Rome. The Gemäldegalerie in Dresden has owned the following paintings by Poussin since the eighteenth century: *Adoration of the Magi*, 1633; *Pan and Syrinx*, 1637; *The Realm of Flora*, 1630–31; *Moses Exposed in the Bulrushes*, circa 1624; and *Reclining Venus with Cupid*, circa 1625; see Walther, et al., *Gemäldegalerie Dresden* (note 28), 303–6 (cat. nos. 717–21).

46. Herman van Swanevelt (circa 1600–55), Dutch landscape painter, active in Rome and Paris. C. Poussin: Gaspard Poussin, real name Gaspard Dughet (1615–75), landscape painter in Rome, pupil and brother-in-law to Nicolas Poussin. Frederic de Moucheron (1633–86), Dutch landscape painter, active mainly in Amsterdam, father of Isaac de Moucheron (1667–1744), landscape painter. Claes or Nicolaes Berghem (1620–83), Dutch landscape painter, active in Rome, Haarlem, and Amsterdam.

47. Richard Wilson (1714–82), English portrait and landscape painter, active in London and Italy, founding member of the Royal Academy in London (1768).

48. Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, “Nacht,” *Faust, der Tragödie erster Teil*, in idem, *Werke* (note 1), pt. 1, 14:34, lines 538–45 (in which the text reads: “Sitzt ihr nur immer”); also in Goethe, *Sämtliche Werke* (note 1), 7:39, lines 538–45.

49. Friedrich Schiller, “Aufgabe,” in idem, *Werke* (note 25), 1:298, “Tabula votiva 56” (in which the text reads: “Keiner sey gleich dem andern, doch gleich sey jeder dem höchsten, / Wie das zu machen? Es sey jeder vollendet in sich”).

50. Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, “Wolkengestalt nach Howard,” *Zur Naturwissenschaft überhaupt*, vol. 1, no. 3 (1820); vol. 1, no. 4 (1822); in Goethe, *Werke* (note 1), pt. 2, 12: 5–38; also in Goethe, *Sämtliche Werke* (note 1), 25:214–34. Luke Howard (1772–1864), “Essay on the Modification of Clouds,” *Tilloch’s Philosophical Magazine* 17, no. 65 (October 1803). A partial German translation appeared in 1815, in *Annalen der Physik* 21 (1815): 137–59; cf. Kurt Badt, *Wolkenbilder und Wolkengedichte der Romantik* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1960), 18–33.

51. “Mystic, Orphic” (*mystisch oder orphisch*): Meyer, “Über die Gegenstände der bildenden Kunst” (note 22), 50–55, categorizes “mystic pictures,” which present mysteries, opinions, and theories, among the “indifferent subjects” of art. Goethe, “Urworte Orphisch,” in *Zur Morphologie*, vol. 1, no. 2 (1820); cf. Goethe, *Werke* (note 1), pt. 1, 3:95–96, 88; and Goethe, *Sämtliche Werke* (note 1), 24:439–40; with explanations provided in the texts of the poems.

52. Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, “Nacht,” *Faust, der Tragödie erster Teil*, in idem, *Werke* (note 1), pt. 1, 14:32, lines 508–9 (in which the text reads “und wirke der Gottheit”); also in Goethe, *Sämtliche Werke* (note 1), 7:37, lines 508–9.

53. Cf. Humboldt, “Ideen zu einer Physiognomik der Gewächse” (note 8), 5:175–297.

54. Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, “Kenner und Künstler,” 4th stanza, in idem, *Werke* (note 1), pt. 1, 2:186, line 21; and Goethe, *Sämtliche Werke* (note 1), 2:362, line 21: “da sehen sie zu!”

55. Georg Christoph Lichtenberg, *Vermischte Schriften*, ed. Ludwig Christian Lichtenberg and Friedrich Kries (Göttingen: J. C. Dieterich, 1800–4), 2: 202. Carus is referring to the *Pädagogische Bemerkungen*.

56. Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, “Der Fischer,” 3d stanza, in idem, *Werke* (note 1), pt. 1, 1:169, lines 21–24; also in Goethe, *Sämtliche Werke* (note 1), 2:109, lines 21–24.

57. Alexander von Humboldt and A. Bonpland, *Reise in die Aequinoctial-Gegenden des neuen Continents in den Jahren 1799, 1800, 1801, 1802, 1803 und 1804*, 2 vols. (Stuttgart: Cotta, 1815).

58. Christian Gottfried Daniel Nees von Esenbeck, *Das System der Pilze und Schwämme: Ein Versuch*, 2d ed., 2 vols. (Würzburg: Stahelsche Buchhandlung, 1817), 4–7, pars. 14–22.

59. Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, “Vorspiel auf dem Theater,” *Faust, der Tragödie erster Teil*, in idem, *Werke* (note 1), pt. 1, 14:14, lines 167–69; also in Goethe, *Sämtliche Werke* (note 1), 7:19, lines 167–69.

60. On landscape painting and music, cf. Fernow (note 8), 2:22.

61. *Hamlet*, 5.1. 149–50; German translation by Schlegel and Tieck (note 4), 143.

62. Cf. Friedrich (note 5), 87, and p. 94 in this volume.

63. William Hogarth, *The Analysis of Beauty, Written with a View of Fixing the Fluctuating Ideas of Taste* (London: J. Reeves, 1753); German ed., *Zergliederung der Schönheit, die schwankenden Begriffe von dem Geschmack festzusetzen*, trans. C. Mylius (Berlin and Potsdam: Christian Friedrich Voss), 1754.

64. Alexander von Humboldt, *Ansichten der Natur* [1808], vol. 5 of Studienausgabe, ed. Hanno Beck (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1987–97).

65. Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, “West-östlicher Divan”: “Hafis Nameh/Buch Hafis: Unbegrenzt,” 1st stanza, in idem, *Werke* (note 1), pt. 1, 6:39, line 1; also in Goethe, *Sämtliche Werke* (note 1), 3/1:31, line 1.

66. Ironically, the conclusion of this letter repeats the words spoken to the young painter Berthold by the Maltese in E. T. A. Hoffmann’s “nocturne,” “Die Jesuiterkirche in G.” (1816): “Apprehension of nature in the deepest significance of the higher meaning that kindles all beings to higher life: this is the sacred purpose of all art. . . . Once you have penetrated into the deeper meaning of nature, its images will open even within yourself in lofty, radiant splendor” (Auffassung der Natur in der tiefsten Bedeutung des höhern Sinns, der alle Wesen zum höheren Leben entzündet, das ist der heilige Zweck aller Kunst. . . . Bist du eingedrungen in den tiefern Sinn der Natur, so werden selbst in deinem Innern ihre Bilder in hoher glänzender Pracht aufgehen). Cf. Ernst Theodor Amadeus Hoffmann, *Sämtliche Werke: Historisch-kritische Ausgabe mit Einleitungen, Anmerkungen und Lesarten*, ed. Carl Georg von Maassen (Munich: G. Müller, 1908–28), 3:124–25.

67. Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, “West-östlicher Divan”: “Rendsch Nameh: Buch des Unmuts,” in Goethe, *Werke* (note 1), pt. 1, 6:107, lines 1–8:

Wer wird von der Welt verlangen  
Was sie selbst vermißt und träumet,  
Rückwärts oder seitwärts blickend

Stets den Tag des Tags versäumet?  
Ihr Bemühn, ihr guter Wille,  
Hinkt nur nach dem raschen Leben,  
Und was du vor Jahren brauchtest,  
Möchte sie dir heute geben.  
[Who can ask the world to offer  
What the world still lacks and dreams of,  
Looking backwards or sideways  
Always missing the day of days?  
Its labor, its good will,  
Just limps behind Life's flying heels;  
And the thing you needed years ago,  
It will offer you today.]

Also in Goethe, *Sämtliche Werke* (note 1), 3/1:358, lines 1–8.

68. Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, “Die Feier,” in idem, *Werke* (note 1), pt. 1, 4:42, lines 13–18; also in Goethe, *Sämtliche Werke* (note 1), 1/2:603, lines 13–18.

69. Jean Paul (Jean Paul Friedrich Richter), *Kleine Nachschule zur ästhetischen Vorschule*, in Jean Paul, *Sämtliche Werke: Historisch-kritische Ausgabe* (Weimar: Hermann Böhlau Nachfolger), 16/1(1938):421, lines 5–12 (in which the text reads: “Es kann sein – denn ich wills nicht abläugnen, da doch nach meiner letzten Abfahrt meine Briefe in Druck erscheinen –, daß ich darin Jünglingen und Dichterlingen den Rath gegeben, etwas zu lernen; nämlich so gut nach den Gesetzen der Großsultan außer dem Regieren noch ein Handwerk (nach Rousseau auch der Gelehrte eines) treiben soll, so möge ein junger Schreib- und Dichtkünstler neben dem Dichten noch Wissenschaften treiben, z.B. Sternkunde, Pflanzenkunde, Erdkunde u.s.w.”).

70. Dante Alighieri, *Purgatorio*, vol. 3 of idem, *La Commedia: Secondo l'antica vulgata*, ed. Giorgio Petrocchi (Verona: Arnoldo Mondadori Editore, 1966), 253, 15.67–70 (in which the text reads: “infinito”; “raggio vene”). The English translation here is by Henry Francis Cary.

71. Alexander von Humboldt, *Ideen zu einer Physiognomik der Gewächse* (Tübingen: Cotta, 1806); cf. Humboldt “Ideen zu einer Physiognomik der Gewächse” (note 8) 5:175–92.

72. Carus's terms *Urbirge* (Primary) and *Flötzgebirge* (Secondary) in this passage, and *angeschwemmte Hügel* (sedimentary hills) on page 140 in this volume, derive from Johann Gottlob Lehmann, *Versuch einer Geschichte von Flötz-Gebürgen* (Berlin: Lange, 1756). Lehmann identified three distinct categories for assemblages of rocks: (1) Primary (*Urbirge*), composed mainly of crystalline rocks; (2) Secondary (*Flötzgebirge*), composed of layered or stratified rocks containing fossils; and (3) the final or successional youngest sequence of alluvial and related unconsolidated sediments (*Angeschwemmtgebirge*).

73. Carl Gustav Carus, *Analecten zur Naturwissenschaft und Heilkunde, gesammelt auf einer Reise durch Italien im Jahre 1828, mit einer Kupfertafel* (Dresden: P. G. Hilscher, 1829).

74. Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, “Zu meinen Handzeichnungen I: Einsamste

Wildnis,” in idem, *Werke* (note 1), pt. 1, 3:131; also in Goethe, *Sämtliche Werke* (note 1), 2:523, lines 1–4.

75. The German is *Gegendämmerung*, which is the earth’s shadow visible in the east after sunset, or in the west before sunrise, as a dark segment of a circle.

76. Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Götz von Berlichingen mit der eisernen Hand, ein Schauspiel* (1773), in idem, *Werke* (note 1), pt. 1, 8:1–169, esp. act 5, “Gärtchen am Thurm,” 167–69; and Goethe, *Sämtliche Werke* (note 1), 4: 279–389, esp. act 5, “Gärtgen am Turm,” 387–89.

77. Cf. Caspar David Friedrich’s oil sketches of ice floes, Hamburger Kunsthalle, Kupferstichkabinett, inv. no. 41084 (14 × 18 cm), inv. no. 41085 (15.2 × 20.6 cm), and inv. no. 41986 (17.2 × 16.5 cm), all 1820–21.

# Chronology

- 1789 Carl Gustav Carus born in Leipzig on 3 January, only son of August Gottlob Ehrenfried Carus (1763–1842) and Christiane Elisabeth, née Jäger (1763–1846). His father rents and runs a small dyehouse just outside the city. Despite its modest circumstances, this artisan family has an illustrious circle of friends, including the publishers Christoph Gottlob Breitkopf, Gottfried Christoph Härtel, and Georg Joachim Göschen; the choirmaster of the Thomaskirche, August Eberhard Müller; the naturalist Wilhelm Gottfried Tilesius; and the musical writer Friedrich Rochlitz.
- 1801 Hitherto privately educated, Carl Gustav enters the celebrated Thomasschule in Leipzig, which he attends as a day student until 1804. On walking expeditions in the surrounding countryside with his drawing teacher, Julius Dietz (1770–1843), he makes studies of rocks, plants, and trees.
- 1804 With Dietz, Carus travels on foot to Dresden to visit the city's celebrated art museum, the Gemäldegalerie. On 21 April, Carus enters Universität Leipzig as a student of chemistry, physics, and botany, to which he later adds zoology, geology, and mineralogy.
- 1806 He transfers to medicine, probably on the advice of his distant relative Friedrich August Carus, the Leipzig professor of philosophy, and in view of the need to choose a profession. He studies anatomy under Christian Rosenmüller (1771–1820), and physiology under Karl Friedrich Burdach (1776–1847), who encourages him to investigate the central nervous system. He attends the drawing academy conducted by Johann Friedrich August Tischbein (the "Leipzig" Tischbein, 1750–1812) and by Veit Hans Schnorr (1764–1841). He strikes up a friendship with Johann Gottlob Regis (1791–1854), the future translator of Rabelais, Shakespeare, and Swift. While a medical student, Carus encounters the nature philosophy of Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph Schelling (1775–1854) and of his follower, the philosopher and physician Lorenz Oken (1779–1851), author of the successful *Lehrbuch des Systems der Naturphilosophie* (Manual of the system of nature philosophy; 1809–11).
- 1809 Carus embarks on clinical training at the St. Jakob-Hospital in Leipzig under its director, J. Chr. L. Reinhold (1769–1809) and the surgeon J. Chr. A. Clarus (1774–1854). Then, J. Chr. G. Joerg (1779–1856), one of the founders of modern gynecology, invites him to join the maternity hospital in Leipzig.
- 1811 Carus graduates on 24 March as doctor of philosophy and master of liberal arts. In the same year he obtains his professorial qualification (*Habilitation*) in the faculty of philosophy and (on 11 October) a license to lecture (as *Magister legens*).

- He takes his doctorate in medicine on 20 December with a dissertation *De uteri rheumatismo* (On the rheumatic inflammation of the uterus). On 1 November Carus marries his father's stepsister, Caroline Carus (1784–1859). First essays in oil painting.
- 1812 Carus takes up teaching duties at the Universität Leipzig, giving classes in comparative anatomy.
- 1813 In charge of a French field hospital outside Leipzig during the “Battle of the Nations” Carus is horrified by the indifference of rulers to the slaughter of thousands. He catches typhus and fights for his life for three weeks. His physician and teacher Clarus gives him up for dead, but he recovers.
- 1814 Breitkopf und Härtel of Leipzig publish Carus's voluminous work *Versuch einer Darstellung des Nervensystems und insbesondere des Gehirns nach ihrer Bedeutung, Entwicklung und Vollendung im thierischen Organismus* (Essay on the nervous system, and the brain in particular, with reference to its importance, evolution, and maturation within the animal organism). He is offered a chair of physiology and anatomy at the German university in Dorpat (Estonia), and another at the Provisorische Lehranstalt für Medizin und Chirurgie (Provisional school of medicine and surgery) in Dresden, combined with the directorship of the maternity hospital there; he moves to Dresden in the winter of 1814 to 1815.
- 1815 Confirmed as professor at the Königlich-Sächsische Chirurgisch-Medicinische Akademie (Royal Saxon surgical and medical academy). Inaugural address at the official opening of the Akademie in August 1816. In Dresden, Carus visits the landscape painter and etcher Johann Christian Klengel (1751–1824), who encourages but also disappoints him. Begins to write the *Nine Letters on Landscape Painting* (this is the date given in the first edition; in the *Lebenserinnerungen* he gives the date as circa 1816: Carl Gustav Carus, *Lebenserinnerungen und Denkwürdigkeiten*, 3 vols. [Leipzig: Brockhaus, 1865–66], 1:181).
- 1816 Death of Carus's son Ernst Albert, of scarlet fever. First submission to the art exhibition of the Dresden Akademie: four paintings. Probably in 1816 or thereabouts, Carus has his first contact with Caspar David Friedrich (1774–1840), which leads to a close friendship lasting some ten years. Carus visits Abraham Gottlob Werner (1750–1817), inspector and instructor of mining and mineralogy in the Bergakademie (Mining academy) at Freiberg in the Erzgebirge.
- 1817–18 Carus visits Berlin for the first time.
- 1818 Carus publishes his *Lehrbuch der Zootomie* (Manual of zootomy) and sends a copy to Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749–1832). Goethe and Carus begin to correspond; both become members of the Kaiserlich-Leopoldinisch-Carolinische Deutsche Akademie der Naturforscher (Emperor Leopold-Carolingian German academy of naturalists) at Halle an der Saale, founded in 1652. The Norwegian landscape painter Johan Christian Clausen Dahl (1788–1857) arrives in Dresden to pursue his studies and makes the acquaintance of both Friedrich and Carus.
- 1819 Carus makes a journey to the Baltic coast (with Friedrich's example in mind) and visits Friedrich's brothers at Neubrandenburg and Greifswald; visits the island of Rügen and the chalk cliffs of the Königsstuhl. On this trip, Carus makes sixty-two drawings.



- 1820 Carus publishes the two-volume *Lehrbuch der Gynäkologie*, the first manual of gynecology ever published in Germany; the book makes Carus famous and goes into five editions. He visits Carlsbad, where he meets the philosopher Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph Schelling (1775–1854) before traveling on to Prague and Zittau. At Caspar David Friedrich’s suggestion, he hikes along the crest of the Riesengebirge. The celebrated Danish sculptor Berthel Thorvaldsen (1770–1844) visits Carus in Dresden on his way from Warsaw to Vienna.
- 1821 Carus meets with Goethe in person, for the only time in his life, in Weimar on 21 July. Carus is traveling to Switzerland on his way to visit Italy for the first time; the trip takes him as far as Genoa. On 12 September Carus climbs Mont Anvert, in the Massif du Mont-Blanc; he draws the mountain and later produces a painting based on his drawings. Carus meets the writer and translator of Shakespeare, Ludwig Tieck (1773–1853); from 1824 onward he will regularly take part in readings in Tieck’s home.
- 1822 In February Carus sends to Goethe all that he has so far written of *Letters on Landscape Painting*: letters I, II, III, and V, together with three illustrations or sketches for illustrations for his projected scientific treatise on primitive portions of the bone and shell skeleton. Receives royal appointments as a court counselor and medical counselor. Delivers a commemorative lecture at the Gesellschaft deutscher Naturforscher und Ärzte (Society of German naturalists and physicians), which he has founded jointly with Lorenz Oken (1779–1851): *Von den Anforderungen an eine künftige Bearbeitung der Naturwissenschaften* (On the requirements of the future practice of the natural sciences).
- 1823 Carus publishes an essay, “Grundzüge allgemeiner Naturbetrachtung” (General principles of the observation of nature), in volume 2 of Goethe’s periodical *Zur Naturwissenschaft überhaupt, besonders zur Morphologie* (On natural science in general and morphology in particular).
- 1824 In *Über Kunst und Altertum* (On art and antiquity) Goethe discusses the geognostic landscapes exhibited by Carus in Weimar in September. Carus completes *Letters on Landscape Painting* (letters VI through IX).
- 1825 In August, visits Berlin.
- 1826 Alexander von Humboldt (1769–1859) pays his first visit to Carus in Dresden. Henceforth, he will always stop over to see Carus when traveling in the suite of the king of Prussia, Friedrich Wilhelm III, to Bad Teplitz in Bohemia. Carus begins work on the *Zwölf Briefe über das Erdleben* (Twelve letters on earth life), published in 1841. In the *Kunst-Blatt*, edited by Ludwig Schorn, Carus publishes one of *Letters on Landscape Painting* (letter VIII).
- 1827 Death of King Friedrich August of Saxony. The new King Anton (1755–1836) appoints Carus “Hof- und Medicinalrath” (Court and medical counselor), and Carus joins the Collegium (council of government). He retires from teaching and from the directorship of the Leipzig maternity hospital. As court physician he enjoys greater financial independence and more free time; he intensifies his activity as a scientist and as a writer. Carus publishes his discovery of the circulation of the blood in insect larvae.
- 1828 Carus publishes *Von den Ur-Theilen des Knochen- und Schalengerüstes* (On the

- primitive portions of the bone and shell skeleton). He declines a professorial appointment in Berlin. Second visit to Italy (Florence, Rome, Naples, Paestum) in the company of Crown Prince Friedrich August. In Rome, he meets with Thorvaldsen and is introduced to the German artistic colony. His friendship with Friedrich is under a cloud, the consequence—according to Carus—of Friedrich’s “confused mental state.”
- 1831 First edition of *Nine Letters on Landscape Painting* published by Gerhard Fleischer, Leipzig.
- 1832 After Goethe’s death on 22 March 1832, Carus paints his *Goethe Memorial*; or, *In Memory of Goethe: Landscape Fantasy*, aiming to complete the painting by 28 August (Goethe’s birthday).
- 1833 Carus succeeds Johann Gottlieb von Quandt (1787–1859) as president of the Dresdner Kunstverein, remaining in office until 1842. In November Carus purchases Villa Cara, a large house with gardens in the eastern suburbs of Dresden (destroyed in 1945).
- 1834 The French sculptor Pierre-Jean David d’Angers (1788–1856) comes to Dresden to make a bust of Tieck. He also executes a profile relief of Carus. Carus takes him to see Friedrich. Deeply impressed, David d’Angers buys a number of paintings from Friedrich. Carus gives him a number of his own paintings, receiving in return a number of statuettes and a plaster cast of David’s bust of his own revered authority, the naturalist Georges de Cuvier (1769–1832).
- 1835 In August Carus travels via Koblenz, Mainz, and Metz to Paris, where he meets with Alexander von Humboldt. The second edition of *Letters on Landscape Painting*, with an additional, tenth letter, is published in Leipzig by Gerhard Fleischer. Under the same imprint, Carus brings out his *Reise durch Deutschland, Italien und die Schweiz im Jahre 1828* (Journey through Germany, Italy, and Switzerland in the year 1828).
- 1836 Death of King Anton. Friedrich August II ascends the throne. Carus publishes (again in Leipzig) his journal of a journey to the Rhine valley and to Paris. Alexander von Humboldt visits with Carus in Dresden; they discuss *Zwölf Briefe über das Erdleben* and Humboldt’s related undertaking, *Kosmos: Entwurf einer physischen Weltbeschreibung* (Cosmos: Notes for a physical description of the world).
- 1839 Carus attends the opening ceremony of the Leipzig-Dresden railroad.
- 1840 Death of Caspar David Friedrich, in depression and poverty. Carus publishes an obituary in *Kunst-Blatt*, followed by a commemorative essay in the following year.
- 1841 Third visit to Italy: Carus spends two months in Florence as personal physician at the court of the duke of Tuscany. *Zwölf Briefe über das Erdleben* published in Stuttgart.
- 1844 Tour of England and Scotland, including the Isle of Staffa (Inner Hebrides) and Fingal’s Cave. In the following year, Carus publishes an account of the trip, *England und Schottland im Jahre 1844*. He takes up the study of phrenology, or craniology, on which he subsequently publishes a number of works.
- 1845 The first volume of Alexander von Humboldt’s *Kosmos: Entwurf einer physischen Weltbeschreibung* appears, the last of the five volumes being published in 1862.

- 1846 Carus's *Psyche: Zur Entwicklungsgeschichte der Seele* (Psyche: On the developmental history of the soul) published in Pforzheim. Carus regards this as his most important work of psychology. In it, his own prophetic impulses and the "divinity of [man's] inmost being" lead him to the hypothesis of reincarnation on a higher plane. Carus embarks on his memoirs, *Lebenserinnerungen und Denkwürdigkeiten*, which occupy him until 1856 (published in three volumes by Brockhaus in Leipzig, 1865–66).
- 1853 Carus publishes *Die Symbolik der menschlichen Gestalt: Ein Handbuch zur Menschenkenntnis* (The symbolism of the human form: A manual of knowledge of humanity), in which he first defines the module (primordial measure or *Urmaß*) of one-third of the length of the spinal column.
- 1854 Follows this with *Die Proportionslehre der menschlichen Gestalt; zum ersten Male morphologisch und physiologisch begründet* (Theory of the proportions of the human form; now for the first time explained in morphological and physiological terms), in which he develops and modifies the theory of the module (*Urmaß*) put forward in Johann Gottfried Schadow's *Polyclet* (1834), with a view to providing artists with "a truly practical scale of measurement" (einen wirklich praktischen Maßstab).
- 1859 Deaths of Carus's wife, Caroline, and Alexander von Humboldt. Carus publishes an article in the *Nova acta Leopoldina* entitled "Über Begriff und Vorgang des Entstehens" (On the concept and process of emergence); simultaneously, Charles Darwin in London publishes his book *On the Origin of the Species by Means of Natural Selection*, which sweeps away all competing theories of evolution.
- 1861 Carus's magnum opus of nature philosophy, *Natur und Idee; oder, Das Werden und sein Gesetz* (Nature and idea; or, becoming and its law), is published in Vienna by Wilhelm Braumüller.
- 1862 Carus is elected president of the Kaiserlich-Leopoldinisch-Carolinische Deutsche Akademie der Naturforscher in Halle, where in 1864, to mark his fifty years as a professor, a Carus foundation is set up and a medal awarded (as it is to this day).
- 1863 Carus publishes the last of his many writings on Goethe: *Goethe, dessen Bedeutung für unsere und die kommende Zeit* (Goethe, his meaning for our time and for time to come).
- 1865 Carus's memoirs, *Lebenserinnerungen und Denkwürdigkeiten*, are published in 3 volumes, 1865–66.
- 1867 Carus retires from medical practice. In Dresden, he publishes his last book: *Betrachtungen und Gedanken vor auserwählten Bildern der Dresdner Galerie* (Observations and thoughts on selected paintings in the Dresden Gallery).
- 1868 Carus becomes honorary president of the Gesellschaft deutscher Naturforscher und Ärzte, founded by him and Lorenz Oken in 1822. In his speech he once more voices his opposition to positivist science.
- 1869 Death of Carl Gustav Carus on 28 July at his home, Villa Cara, in Dresden; he is buried on 31 July in the Trinitatisfriedhof, Dresden-Johannstadt.

# Works by Carl Gustav Carus

- Dissertatio de uteri rheumatismo.* Leipzig: Tauchnitz, 1811.
- Versuch einer Darstellung des Nervensystems und insbesondere des Gehirns nach ihrer Bedeutung, Entwicklung und Vollendung im thierischen Organismus.* Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1814.
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- “Bruchstück aus einer Reihe von Briefen über Landschaftsmalereyen.” *Kunst-Blatt*, nos. 52–54 (1826): 205–7, 211–12, 214–16.
- Erläuterungstafeln zur vergleichenden Anatomie.* Leipzig: Gerhard Fleischer, 1826.

- An introduction to the comparative anatomy of animals; comp. with constant reference to physiology, and elucidated by twenty copper-plates.* [Translation of *Lehrbuch der Zootomie*, 1818.] Trans. R. T. Gore. 2 vols. and atlas of 20 plates. London: Longman, Rees, Orme, Brown, & Green, 1827.
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- “Eine Reise nach Genua: Manuskript für einen Freund.” *Dresdner Morgenzeitung* (1827).
- “Über des Freiherrn Alexander von Humboldts Ansichten der Natur und Reise in die Aequinoctial-Gegenden des neuen Continents.” *Dresdner Morgenzeitung* 113–114 (16–17 July 1827): 897–903, 906–11.
- Entdeckung eines einfachen vom Herzen aus beschleunigten Blutkreislaufes in den Larven netzflüglicher Insecten.* Leipzig: Leopold Voss, 1827.
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- “Vorwort zur Ausstellung der von Rietschel für die Leipziger Aula komponirten Reliefs, Dresden 1839.” *Kunst-Blatt*, no. 89 (5 November 1839): 356.

- “Friedrich der Landschaftsmaler, mit Fragmenten aus nachgelassenen Papieren desselben.” *Kunst-Blatt*, no. 86 (27 October 1840): 357–58; no. 87 (29 October 1840): 362–63.
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Meindert Hobbema (Dutch, 1638–1709), *A Wooded Landscape*, 1667, oil on panel, 61 × 85.1 cm (24 × 33½ in.), inv. no. 84.PB.43

Leo von Klenze (German, 1784–1864), *Landscape with the Castle of Massa di Carrara*, 1827, oil on canvas, 76.8 × 101 cm (30¼ × 39¾ in.), inv. no. 86.PA.540

Philips Koninck (Dutch, 1619–88), *A Panoramic Landscape*, 1665, oil on canvas, 138.4 × 166.4 cm (54½ × 65½ in.), inv. no. 85.PA.32

Caspar David Friedrich (German, 1774–1840), *A Walk at Dusk*, ca. 1830–35, oil on canvas, 33.3 × 41.3 cm (13⅛ × 17⅜ in.), inv. no. 93.PA.14

Follower of Claude-Joseph Vernet (French, 1714–89), *Mediterranean Harbor Scene*, ca. 1760s, oil on canvas, 96.5 × 134.6 cm (38 × 53 in.), inv. no. 78.PA.209

Jacob van Ruisdael (Dutch, ca. 1628–82), *The Sluice*, ca. 1648–49, oil on panel, 39.4 × 55.9 cm (15½ × 22 in.), inv. no. 86.PB.597

Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot (French, 1796–1875), *Italian Landscape*, ca. 1835, oil on canvas, frame: 30.2 × 106.7 cm (11⅞ × 42 in.), inv. no. 84.PA.78

Nicolas Poussin (French, 1594–1655), *Landscape with a Calm*, 1650–51, oil on canvas, 134 × 99.1 cm (52¾ × 39 in.), inv. no. 97.PA.60

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Written in the Years 1815–1824;  
with a Letter from Goethe by Way of Introduction**  
Carl Gustav Carus  
Introduction by Oskar Bätschmann  
Translation by David Britt

Oskar Bätschmann is professor in the history of art at the Universität Bern, Switzerland, and the author of *Nicolas Poussin: Dialectics of Painting* (1990), *The Artist in the Modern World: The Conflict between Market and Self-Expression* (1997), and *Entfernung der Natur: Landschaftsmalerei, 1750–1920* (1989).

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