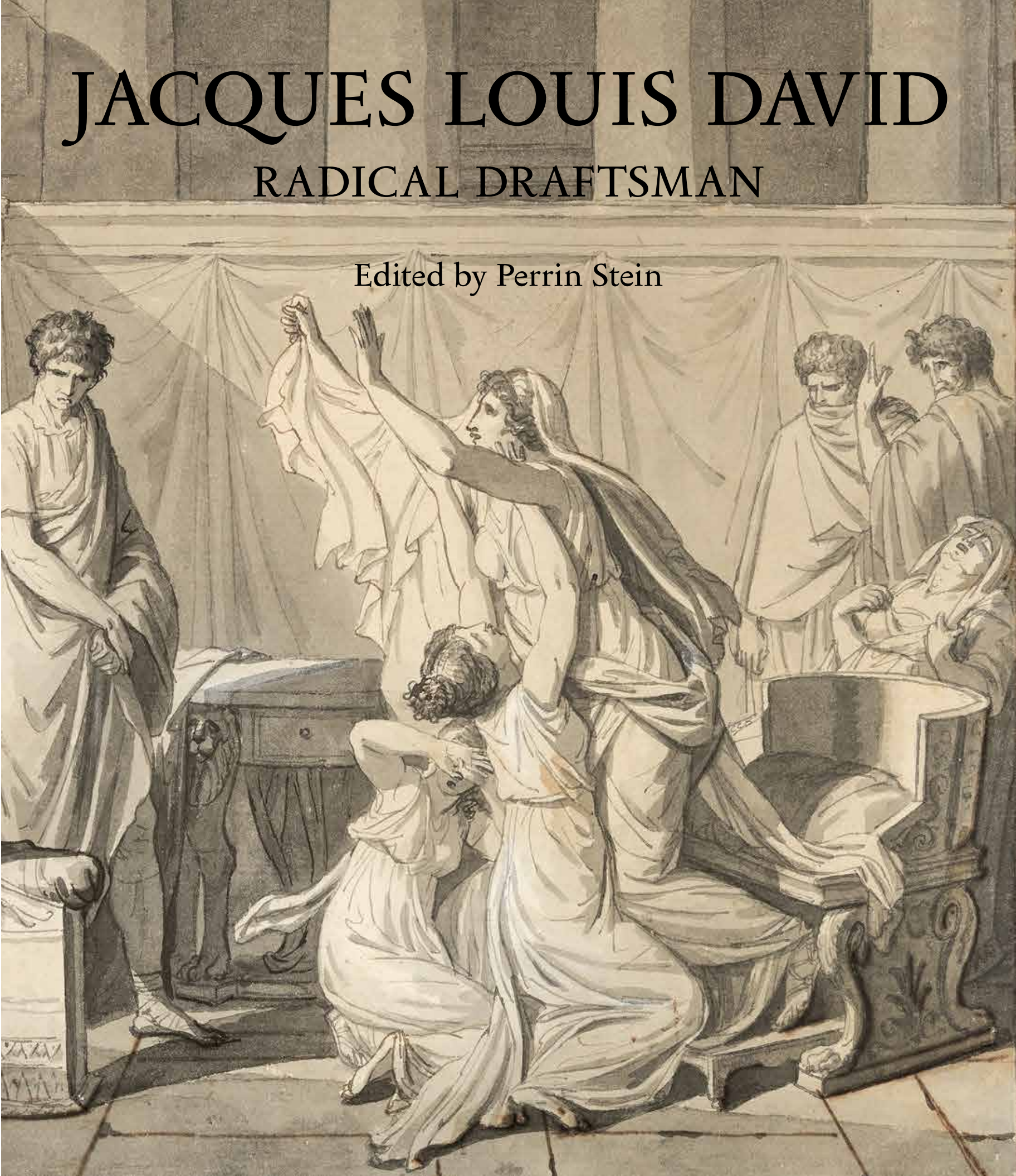




JACQUES LOUIS DAVID

RADICAL DRAFTSMAN

Edited by Perrin Stein



THE
MET

THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART, NEW YORK

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J. David.
1787.



Fig. 3. Jean Auguste Dominique Ingres (1780–1867), *The Oath of the Horatii*, after David, ca. 1797–1801. Pen and black ink, brush and gray wash, over graphite, heightened with white, 21 x 27³/₈ in. (53.4 x 69.5 cm). Musée du Louvre, Paris (RF 5272)

his death list numerous drawings by students, of which fourteen were described as “under glass,” including works by François Xavier Fabre (*“La Mort de Socrate”*),⁹ Jean Germain Drouais (*“Andromaque”*), and Jean Auguste Dominique Ingres (*“Bélisaire”* and *“des Horaces”*), as well as others by Albert Paul Bourgeois, Jean Broc, Louis Crignier, and Michel Ghislain Stapleaux; many of them apparently were made after or inspired by compositions or vignettes from David’s most famous paintings.¹⁰ Notably, they are represented neither in their own styles nor by their subsequent successes but, rather, caught like ants in amber, in emulation of their master.¹¹ Ingres’s large wash copy of *The Oath of the Horatii* (fig. 3) was presumably done as a model for a printmaker, as were the large-scale, precisely rendered studies of figures from David’s most famous history paintings, such as the *Study after Camilla* (fig. 4) by Jean-Baptiste Peytavin. Anne Louis Girodet signaled his admiration for



Fig. 4. Jean-Baptiste Peytavin (1767–1855), *Study after Camilla*, ca. 1800. Charcoal, stumped, white chalk, 19¹/₂ x 16⁷/₈ in. (49.5 x 43 cm). Cabinet d’Arts Graphiques des Musées d’Art et d’Histoire, Geneva (0-0999)

Fig. 5. Anne Louis Girodet (1767–1824), leaf 7 (ear studies) from his *Album de Principes de Dessin*, ca. 1789–90. Red chalk, over graphite, 11¹/₈ x 8¹/₂ in. (29.5 x 21.5 cm). Médiathèque de Montargis, on deposit at the Musée Girodet, Montargis (D. 77-1)

Fig. 6. Jean-Baptiste Debret (1768–1848), *Hands of Horatius*, ca. 1791–1802. Red chalk, 16³/₄ x 22⁵/₈ in. (42.5 x 57.5 cm). Present whereabouts unknown

the work of his master by featuring tiny details of David’s paintings, for instance, the ears of two of the Horatii brothers (fig. 5), alongside similar exemplars lifted from antique statues in a set of drawings, later engraved as part a pedagogical suite of prints, the *Cahier de principes* (1826).¹² Not all of these quotations of details were intended for the print market; works such as the recently discovered vignette copy *Hands of Horatius* (fig. 6) by Jean-Baptiste Debret, a young relative who was part of the entourage David took to Rome to support him as he completed *The Oath of the Horatii*, may simply have been intended as a graphic declaration of allegiance.¹³

FROM STUDIO TO AUCTION BLOCK

While David could control the destiny of his drawings during his lifetime, his death in 1825 and the subsequent dispersal of his works set into motion an effort to consolidate and burnish his legacy. Posthumous inventories list works spread between his wife’s apartment, his son Eugène’s apartment, and his former student Gros’s studio.¹⁴ Eugène traveled to Brussels to collect the contents of his father’s studio and was given his heart in a silver box, but the Belgian government would not release the body for burial in France.¹⁵ The sale of David’s estate took place over several days beginning on April 17, 1826. The author of the catalogue, Alexis Nicolas Pérignon, after describing the paintings, spoke of the drawings in terms of the insight they offered into the master’s working process:

it will be easy to follow step by step, in these studies, the progress of the one who raised the [French] school rather suddenly from a mannered and languid style to a rigor and a purity worthy of the great masters of Italy.¹⁶

In advance of the sale, Eugène and David’s other son, Jules, labored to organize and present the drawings. On every drawing, loose or framed, on over a thousand studies

Early Training, 1764–80

Jacques Louis David was born in Paris in 1748, the only child of Maurice David, a merchant of iron building materials, and Marie Geneviève Buron, whose extended family included many builders and architects, as well as François Boucher, first painter to the king. David was nine years old when his father was killed in a duel, according to family accounts. His mother left the capital for the town of Evreux, in Normandy, leaving her son in the care of two maternal uncles, the architects François Buron and Jacques François Desmaisons. They saw to it that he received a classical education, first at the Collège de Beauvais and then at the Collège des Quatre-Nations, but David resisted their plans for him to pursue a professional career in law, medicine, or architecture. About drawing, however, he was passionate, and his artistic aspirations would find support with another father figure, Michel Jean Sedaine, perpetual secretary to the Académie Royale d'Architecture and a dramatist known for his *opéras comiques*.

On the advice of Boucher, David entered the studio of Joseph Marie Vien in 1764, and by 1766 was officially listed as his student in the registers of the Académie Royale de Peinture et de Sculpture. Vien was a successful history painter influenced by the rise of antiquarianism in the second quarter of the eighteenth century, a trend spurred by recent excavations at Herculaneum (1737) and Pompeii (1748). Vien's work in the fashionable *goût grec*, or "Greek" style, which grafted classical themes and motifs onto a Rococo aesthetic, presaged later, more severe forms of Neoclassicism. His other students at the time included Pierre Peyron, Jean Joseph Taillasson, François André Vincent, and Jean-Baptiste Regnault.

Founded in 1648, the Académie Royale was the preeminent arts institution in France. With the support of royal patronage, it controlled the teaching of art, mounted biannual exhibitions (Salons) in the Louvre, and steered royal commissions to its members. The training of prospective painters followed a

well-established course of study centered on the practice of drawing. To master the depiction of the male nude, students first made copies after the work of their masters, then after plaster casts of antique sculptures, and, finally, after live models. Lessons in history, anatomy, and perspective rounded out the curriculum. Advanced students competed for the annual Grand Prix de Rome, which entailed painting first an oil sketch and then a finished canvas of a composition of one's own invention, based on an assigned subject from ancient history or mythology. Winners of the prize were granted several years of study at the Académie de France in Rome, where they would absorb the lessons of antiquity and of earlier masters in preparation, it was assumed, for brilliant careers back in Paris as members of the Académie Royale.

But this path did not unfold easily for David. His early efforts were fraught with disappointment and hardly foretold his future role as leader of the French school. He entered the competition for the Prix de Rome for the first time in 1771, against the advice of his teacher, who did not feel that he was ready. His submission, *The Combat between Minerva and Mars* (Musée du Louvre, Paris), was judged inferior to that of Joseph Benoît Suvée, and the following year his *Apollo and Diana Attacking the Children of Niobe* (Dallas Museum of Art) came in behind the entries of Pierre Charles Jombert (École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts, Paris) and Anicet Charles Gabriel Lemonnier (Musée des Beaux-Arts, Rouen). This second defeat led David to lock himself in his room, threatening suicide by starvation. Yet, by 1773 he was competing again. His *Death of Seneca* (Petit Palais, Paris) fell short of Pierre Peyron's submission (location unknown), but in 1774, on his fourth attempt, David finally succeeded with his *Antiochus and Stratonice* (fig. 52).

These early efforts contain few clues to his future artistic development, but they do provide clear evidence of David's independent streak. His first three attempts at



Fig. 52. Jacques Louis David, *Antiochus and Stratonice*, 1774. Oil on canvas, 47¼ × 61 in. (120 × 155 cm). École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts, Paris (PRP 18)

the Prix de Rome did not emulate the style of his master. They had more in common with the florid, neo-Baroque tenor of painters like Gabriel François Doyen, whose altarpiece the *Miracle of Saint Geneviève* hung opposite, and in stylistic contrast to, Vien's *Saint Denis Preaching in Gaul* in the church of Saint-Roch. David's fourth, winning entry was decidedly less operatic. In *Antiochus*, he hewed more closely to the example of Nicolas Poussin, the seventeenth-century painter most venerated by senior members of the arts establishment, opting for a more

planar composition, more stolid figures, and a more sober manner of evoking the ancient world. This experience of repeated failure at the hands of the powerful Académie Royale doubtless sowed the seeds of certain rivalries and resentments, but it must also have ingrained in the aspiring young painter a belief in the rewards of tenacity.

David finally left for Italy in October 1775 in the entourage of his teacher, who had just been appointed director of the Académie de France. They arrived in Rome about a month later and settled into the Palazzo



33. *Seated Old Man (Plato) with a Young Man Standing Behind*

Ca. 1786–87
Black chalk, stumped, heightened in white chalk, squared in black chalk
20¹³/₁₆ × 14³/₁₆ in. (52.9 × 37 cm)
Marks: lower right, paraph of Eugène David (Lugt 839)
Musée des Beaux-Arts, Tours (INV. 922-306-2)

PROVENANCE: Presumably David estate sale, Paris, April 17, 1826, and following days, probably as part of lot 97; Jean-Baptiste Auguste Vinchon (1786–1855); given by his daughter-in-law Aline Vinchon to the Musée des Beaux-Arts, Tours, 1922

REFERENCES: Arlette Sérullaz in Schnapper and Sérullaz 1989, cat. 77, pp. 180–81; Rosenberg and Prat 2002, vol. 1, no. 82, p. 98; *Jacques-Louis David* 2005, cat. 29, pp. 88–89; Danielle Oger in Bassani Pacht et al. 2013, cat. 16, pp. 58–60



34. *Crito*
Ca. 1786–87
Black chalk, stumped, heightened with white chalk, squared in black chalk
21¹/₈ × 16¹/₈ in. (53.6 × 41.4 cm)
Inscriptions: lower right, in graphite, in the artist's hand, "David à son ami chaudet"
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Rogers Fund, 1961 (61.161.1)

PROVENANCE: Antoine-Denis Chaudet (1763–1810); Wildenstein & Co., London; acquired by the Metropolitan Museum, 1961

REFERENCES: Bean 1986, no. 90, pp. 87–89; Perrin Stein in Stein and Holmes 1999, cat. 90, pp. 208–20; Rosenberg and Prat 2002, vol. 1, no. 84, p. 99; Prat 2011, p. 39, fig. 65



35. *The Death of Socrates*
1787
Oil on canvas
51 × 77¹/₄ in. (129.5 × 196.2 cm)
Inscriptions: lower left, dated "M D CC LXXXVII"; on the stool, "L D"; on the bench, "ΑΘΕΝΑΙΩΝ" (of the Athenians), and below it, "L. David."
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Catharine Lorillard Wolfe Collection, Wolfe Fund, 1931 (31.45)

PROVENANCE: Charles Louis Trudaine de Montigny (1764–1794), Paris; seized for the nation following Trudaine's imprisonment and execution in 1794, but later returned to the family; his sister-in-law, Louise Micault de Courbeton, Mme Trudaine de Montigny (d. 1802); her brother, Lubin Marie Vivant Micault de Courbeton (d. 1809); his cousin Armand Maximilien François Joseph Olivier de Saint-Georges, 5th

marquis de Vérac (d. 1858); his widow, Euphémie de Noailles, marquise de Vérac (d. 1870); her son-in-law, Adolphe, comte de Rougé (d. 1871); his estate sale, Hôtel Drouot, Paris, April 8, 1872, lot 1, to Bianchi; Marius Bianchi (d. 1904), Paris; Mathilde Jeanin, Mme Marius Bianchi (1904–1913 or after); their daughters, Renée, vicomtesse Fleury (1869–1948), Thérèse, comtesse Murat (1870–1940), and Solange, marquise de Ludre-Frolois (d. 1949), until 1931, when sold through Walter Pach to the Metropolitan Museum, 1931

REFERENCES: Antoine Schnapper in *French Painting 1774–1830* 1975, cat. 32, pp. 82, 367–68; Crow 2006, pp. 95–99, fig. 72; Philippe Bordes in Jackall et al. 2017, pp. 106–8, 110, 112, 118 nn. 29, 30, 36, 42, fig. 5; Baetjer 2019, pp. 31, 306–17 no. 106 (citing earlier literature and previous exhibitions), 379



77. *Cupid and Psyche*

1813

Pen and black ink, brush and gray wash, heightened with white gouache, over black chalk

6⁵/₁₆ × 8¹/₁₆ in. (16.7 × 22.4 cm)

Inscriptions: lower right, in pen and brown ink, signed and dated "L. David. 1813"

Cleveland Museum of Art, Andrew R. and Martha Holden Jennings Fund (2002.91)

PROVENANCE: Given by the artist to Louis Nicolas Philippe Auguste de Forbin (1777–1841);¹ private collection, France(?); sale, Hôtel Drouot, Paris, November 7, 1973, lot 107 (with incorrect attribution); art market; Heim Gallery, London; Arnoldi-Livie Gallery, Munich; David Carritt, London; Eugene V. Thaw, New York; Ed Hill, El Paso, Tex.; Elizabeth Eddy, Ohio; Richard L. Feigen & Co., New York, ca. 1980; Paul Weiss, New York; Richard L. Feigen & Co., New York, by 1994;² acquired by the Cleveland Museum of Art, 2002

REFERENCES: Rosenberg and Prat 2002, vol. 1, no. 319, p. 301; Bordes 2005b, cat. 30, pp. 220–24; Lampe 2007, pp. 108–21, fig. 43



Fig. 140. Jacques Louis David, *Cupid and Psyche*, 1817. Oil on canvas, 72¹/₂ × 95¹/₈ in. (184.2 × 241.6 cm). Cleveland Museum of Art (1962.37)

On April 23, 1813, Pierre Théodore Suau, a pupil in David's studio, wrote to his father that his master was planning a work depicting Cupid and Psyche,³ a fact confirmed by the date borne by the present composition study, acquired in 2002 by the Cleveland Museum of Art.⁴ The concept may have been set, but it would be four more years until the canvas was completed. Banished from his homeland in early 1816 following the restoration of the Bourbon monarchy, David brought with him to Brussels the sketched-in canvas, which he completed by the following August (fig. 140).⁵ The painting was sent back to Paris, where it was exhibited in the fall

of 1817 before entering the collection of Count Giovanni Battista Sommariva.⁶

The story of Cupid and Psyche was central to Apuleius's second-century novel *The Metamorphoses*. Psyche's beauty had aroused the jealousy of Venus, who directed her son, Cupid, to punish her rival. He instead fell in love, spiriting the mortal away to an isolated palace, where he visited her at night but stole away each morning before dawn to conceal his identity. After a series of ordeals, Psyche eventually gained immortality, and she and Cupid married. The myth offered many episodes attractive to artists.⁷ David himself had copied the Capitoline marble