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Pride and Prejudice: Eighteenth-century Women Sculptors and their Material Practices

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The Graces smiling wait on her command,
And ease the labour of their mistress' hand.
From her skill'd touch, immortal gods improve,
And senseless blocks are starting into love.
The dullest clods of earth a soul acquire,
And frigid marble breathes celestial fire;
Her chisel wond'rous more than Orpheus lute,
Can soften rocks, and deify a brute.

'On the Sculpture of the Honourable Mrs. A. Damer' (1785)¹

Since the 1970s, women artists have been a central focus of art-historical research. Female sculptors, however, and especially those who are not American, remain almost as underrepresented in current scholarship as they do in the artists' dictionaries of their day. In 1830, for example, the only woman sculptor to be included in Allan Cunningham's *Lives of the Most Eminent British Painters and Sculptors* was Anne Damer (1748–1828) (Figure 19), just as some three centuries earlier, Properzia de' Rossi (c.1490–c.1530) appeared as the sole representative of her sex in Giorgio Vasari's *Vite* (1550–68). Nevertheless, Cunningham was dimly aware that Damer followed in the footsteps of a number of other (albeit, in his view, less illustrious) sculptresses as his inclusion of the following quotation from Horace Walpole demonstrates: 'Mrs Damer . . . has chosen a walk more difficult and far more uncommon than painting. The annals of statuary record few artists of the fair sex, and not one that I recollect of any celebrity.'²

Despite Walpole's claim, women were working in the three-dimensional arts in the period between the publication of Vasari's *Vite* and Cunningham's *Lives*.³ Throughout the eighteenth century their number grew significantly, although women probably never represented more than 1 per cent of the profession as a whole. Artists' dictionaries record a total of around 40 sculptresses active between 1660 and 1750, and about twice that number between 1750 and 1830.



Figure 19 Richard Cosway, *Anne Seymour Damer*, watercolor on ivory, 1785. London: National Portrait Gallery.

In reality, there were probably even more. 1748 might be seen as a symbolic turning point in this insufficiently documented, narrative of growth and expansion. It was then that Patience Wright-Lovell (1725–86), an American, married a Quaker, whose wealth enabled her to buy modelling materials. During the same year, the French sculptor Marie-Elisabeth Eduin (n.d.) was active in Paris and two of the most famous and productive early sculptresses were born: Anne Damer and the French woman Marie-Anne Collot (1748–1821). These four artists are representative of a small group of fascinating and ambitious women who devoted themselves to sculpture and the pursuit of public visibility in the art capitals of Europe. Several of these women won prestigious commissions and medals. Elizabeth Berkeley (1750–1828), margravine

of Anspach, Maria Denman (1776–1861) and Sybella Bullock (n.d.), for example, were awarded silver medals at the Society of Arts in 1806, 1807 and 1825 respectively. Others were successful in gaining royal commissions: Anna-Maria Pfründt (1642–1713) from the Viennese court; Marie-Anne Collot from Catherine the Great and the Dutch court; while, in Madrid, Luisa Roldán (1652–1706) was appointed Sculptor to the Bedchamber by Charles II and Sculptor to the King by Philip V.

This essay focuses on this small but significant first generation of sculptresses, who were active before women were admitted to the art academies at the end of the nineteenth century, in order to illustrate how they struggled with conventional understandings of their practice. As Walpole's comment on Damer's career indicates, by the eighteenth century sculpture had long been regarded as a male discipline, not least because of the strength and skill needed to work materials such as stone. Traditionally, the term 'sculpture' refers to two distinct working practices: the carving or hacking of hard materials such as stone and wood (*per via di levare*) and the modelling of soft materials, particularly clay and wax (*per via di porre*). These practices, the sculpting of stone and wood, versus the modelling of clay and wax, are respectively associated with the features hard, public, monumental versus soft, private, intimate. In turn they were and sometimes are still, demarcated along gender lines: being commonly associated with the masculine and the feminine. The cultural and physical obstacles faced by sculptresses were many and varied, but not insurmountable. As the lives and careers of the women discussed in this essay reveal, the gendered assumptions that governed sculpting practice in the period could be manipulated in diverse and significant ways.

The hard work of sculpting

In his description of work of the French sculptor Julie Charpentier (1770–1845) – the only woman commissioned to make bas-reliefs for the triumphal column at Place Vendôme in Paris and for the monumental elephant fountain commissioned by Napoleon Bonaparte and who exhibited in Paris from 1787 to 1824 – Tønnes Christian Bruun-Neergaard makes precisely this distinction between both sculpting modes and links these with gender:

They gave me the names of some other French and foreign women, but they all restricted themselves to modelling, never daring to put the chisel to hard marble to create a statue or a bas-relief. . . . I was quite interested to read the invitation to come and see a bas-relief executed in marble by a lady.⁴

Charpentier's distinctiveness as a sculptress is still more remarkable for Bruun-Neergaard because of the (daring) manner and (superior, hard) material with which she worked (Figure 20). Some 90 years later, Roscoe Mullins would view the paucity of women stone-carvers not as the result of a lack of

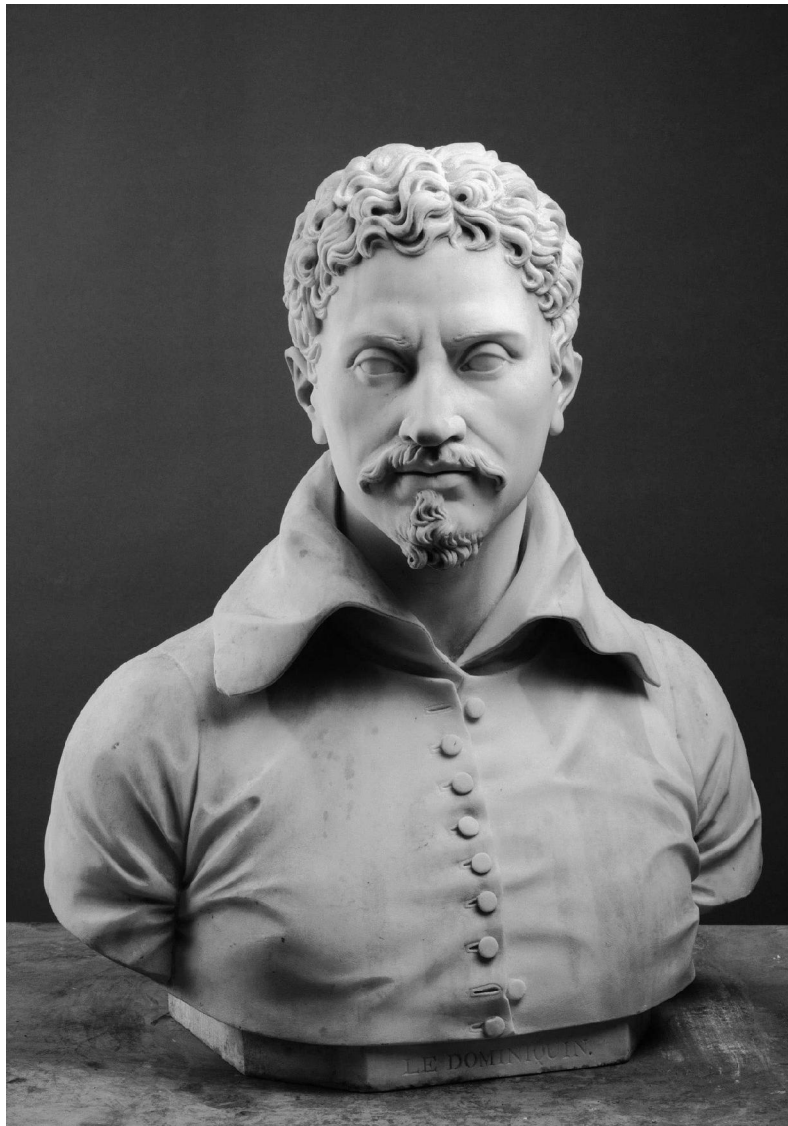


Figure 20 Julie Charpentier, *Le Dominiquin*, marble, 1816–18. Paris: Louvre.

daring, but rather as a problem of biology: women's 'slighter physique', he suggested, was simply inadequate to a discipline which 'require[d] a firm grip of the tool, and strength of arm and wrist, to ensure good execution'.⁵ As a solution, Mullins suggested that female sculptresses should 'get their marble work done for them', a practice not unreasonable, he added, given that male sculptors frequently left this most heavy aspect of their work to their assistants. Indeed, many famous sculptors – male and female – throughout history devoted their creative energies to the early stage (small-scale and malleable) of modelling, leaving to their assistants the task of realising their designs in stone or bronze, which would be finished and signed by the artist. This workshop practice attests not only to the perceived primacy of mind over

matter, or *inventio* over manual work, in contemporary sculpting practice, but also demonstrates that modelling was not necessarily considered to be of less creative value than carving. However, the response to assisted male and female sculptors differed greatly: whereas in the case of male sculptors assistance was viewed as a mark of success and prestige, with women, it was seen as a sign of their weakness and unsuitability for this artistic practice.

Although several women did cut stone themselves, whether to prove that they could or because they could not afford to employ assistants, some, especially those of higher status, contracted out carving. After all, cultural prejudice and educational convention debarred all but the most determined from stonework and from the studios of male sculptors, where the necessary training was given.⁶ Employing assistants certainly enabled women to become sculptors without losing respectability, but left them, much more so than their male counterparts, susceptible to accusations of plagiarism. Long before the public debate (c. 1862) over the authority of Harriet Hosmer's (1830–1908) monumental marble sculpture, *Zenobia in Chains*, Roldán, Collot, Damer and Marie d'Orléans (1813–1839) were all accused of attempting to pass themselves off as the authors of works that were not their own, on the grounds that their assistants helped with the most harsh aspects of the marble cutting.⁷ Cunningham clearly struggled with the issue of contracting out work in his account of Damer's career and cast doubt on the many marble and stone sculptures she authored during her career, including an 8-foot statue of George III: 'Of her own share in the execution of those works I cannot speak with certainty.' Painfully aware of such accusations, Damer 'resolved to prove in her latter days that she could carve as well as model';⁸ she appeared in several engravings with a hammer and chisel in her hands and made public her desire to be buried – and so linked forever – with her sculpting tools. Several of Damer's successors were subjected to similar criticism. D'Orléans, for example, author of a successful piece entitled *Joan of Arc* (1835–7) – first modelled in wax – was the satirical target of an anonymous four-act play published in *La Mode* (1838). The work, entitled 'L'atelier d'une princesse ou Une réputation de Cour', ridiculed d'Orléans by suggesting that she relied on an unacknowledged male sculptor not only to execute her work, but also to develop its style and subject matter.

Some women did establish careers in stonework, however, even though they were known to collaborate with others. Eleanor Coade (1733–1821), for example, began a flourishing 'manufactory' in Lambeth in 1769, which made an extremely durable artificial stone she first called Lithodipyra, and later 'Coade stone'.⁹ The 778 designs for sculptural decorations her manufactory offered to the public in 1784 had evidently not all been created by her. Although in the 1770s 'Mrs Eleanor Coade, sculptor' exhibited allegorical and mythological statues in artificial stone at the Society of Arts in her own name, she would later credit these statues as the creations of John Bacon and Thomas Banks in the showroom catalogue (1799). Among her many collaborator sculptor-designers

were also women: the catalogue's frontispiece shows a monumental group of six figures in Coade stone for the Pelican Insurance Office façade (London), which was designed by Diana Beauclerk (1734–1808), lady-in-waiting to Queen Charlotte.¹⁰

Other sculptresses preferred slightly softer, and consequently less durable, materials for their work *per via di levare*, such as sandstone, ivory, fruit stones or wood. Roldán won such acclaim for her sculptures in polychrome wood that a large family workshop was needed to produce all her commissions. Yet her reputation as an artist and her reputation as a woman were commonly perceived to be at odds. A number of Roldán's contemporaries struggled to reconcile the ideal of the female artist with her monumental wooden images and mastery of the male nude, finding her smaller terracotta works more appropriate to 'the delicacy of her gender'.¹¹ Damer faced even harsher accusations of inappropriateness, as 'The Damerian Apollo' (1789), a satirical print published by William Holland, demonstrates.¹² The wooden statue of Apollo which adorned the roof of London's Drury Lane Theatre, credited (still without certainty) to Damer, was described in some detail in an account of a fire that destroyed the theatre (built in 1794 by Henry Holland) on 24 February 1809: 'the flames burst out at the roof, and encircled the statue of Apollo. About a quarter before twelve, the statue, and part of the roof on which it stood, fell in with a terrible crash. This figure was made of wood, was seventeen feet high clear of the pedestal, and was strongly fortified with iron' (Figure 21).¹³ If the sculpture was indeed by Damer (and if not, at least the subject was under discussion), then it was probably the first public statue (even of a nude man) by a woman to be displayed in London, and maybe even in Europe or the western world. This ambitious entry of a woman into an urban, public space may explain the vehemence of the Holland image. As Alison Yarrington points out, the Damer depicted in the cartoon is destructive and threatening; passionately, but recklessly, wielding her hammer and chisel, she seems ready to emasculate (exactly where both diagonals meet) her own version of the Apollo Belvedere and so destroy the genius of Art itself.¹⁴ The other sculpted bodies depicted in the print lack or hide their genitals and a young lady is visibly upset by the monumental male nude or, perhaps, by its violent creator.¹⁵ The satire grotesquely contrasts the strenuousness of Damer's art to the weakness of her sex – she is pictured in feminine dress, with a slender waist and tiny feet and hands untouched by the hack-work and not capable of much destruction – to counter the threatening nature of her 'masculine' occupation and ambitions and emphasise the unfeminine nature of her work.

While most sculptors engaged in carving and modelling, on the whole more in modelling than in carving, the romantic image of the sculptor as a craftsman hacking away at marble or stone, resisting pain, dirt and cold, confined the profession to one technique, one material and one sex. The enduring image of Michelangelo Buonarroti liberating the imprisoned figure from within



Figure 21 Drury Lane Theatre with Apollo-statue (presumably by Anne Damer). Engraving published by Alexander Hogg in *The Gentleman's Pocket Magazine*, 1 April 1795, with text 'Drury Lane New Theatre in its present state'. V&A Images/Victoria and Albert Museum.

the marble by chipping away the superfluous stone exemplifies this persistent, restrictive and culturally determined construction of the sculptor. That this image was, in part, a fiction – Michelangelo also modelled in wax and clay – does not alter the fact that the link between sculpture and the carving of hard materials ensured that it continued to be viewed as masculine, despite the efforts of Damer, Collot, Coade and others.

The 'feminine' art of wax modelling

Priscilla Wakefield included statuary and modelling as possible activities for women in her *Reflections on the Present Condition of the Female Sex* (1798) and cited Damer as proof that women had 'only to apply their talents to it in order to excel'. Nevertheless, Wakefield, like Mullins and others, saw the hardness of some sculpting materials as a possible problem for female practitioners of the art: 'If the resistance of marble and hard substances be too powerful for them to subdue, wax and the other materials of a softer nature, will easily yield to their impressions.'¹⁶ Such views remained firmly entrenched for the next century. *The Art Journal* for 1871, for instance, stated that 'it is not strange that modelling in clay is tempting to their fair fingers' and, in the 1920s, the German art critic Karl Scheffler would associate day modelling

with the female sex. According to Scheffler, sculpture had been devalued as an art-form precisely because male sculptors were content to restrict themselves to what he called the 'feminine' practice of modelling rather than cutting stone.¹⁷

Women's close association with modelling, especially wax modelling, dates back at least to the Middle Ages, when nuns made candles, wax flowers and small statues of saints and the Virgin Mary for convents and private chapels. This tradition continued through the seventeenth century; Placida Lamm (d. 1692) and Johanna Nepomucena Asam (fl. c.1710), both German, are notable practitioners of this art-form, which is still alive in some convents throughout Europe today.¹⁸ Such work has always existed outside the art-historical canon, but it is precisely its status as low, rather than high, art that has allowed women to enter the field and redefine it from within. The early history of photography provides an instructive comparison. That the relatively high number of female photographers in the mid-nineteenth century failed to generate undue concern was linked to the medium's initial status as a 'low' art; the same might be said of wax modelling. Indeed, this ancient practice might be regarded as a precursor to photography, with which wax effigies share an aspiration to verisimilitude without idealisation. Such characteristics, which can demonstrate a failure, in artistic terms, to transform nature into culture pushed both media to the margins of artistic practice.¹⁹

Between 1660 and 1830, both male and female sculptors used soft materials as a preliminary medium in their work, but it is remarkable how many women restricted themselves almost exclusively to this medium.²⁰ At least 50 (predominantly British and German) sculptresses, approximately 40 per cent of the total documented for the period under discussion, modelled almost solely in wax, while several prominent figures principally noted for their work in other media, including Damer, also used the medium only sporadically.²¹ While it is difficult to locate precisely the origins of the association of wax modelling with femininity, interiority and inferiority, it is clear that this artistic practice was open to women in ways that other art-forms were not. Although wax is fragile, fairly difficult to obtain and more expensive than clay, it is clean to work with and malleable; easy to prepare and preserve, it allows for modifications and hardens quickly without firing and cracking. Women working with this medium did not, therefore, require specialist tools or training or the physical strength or space needed for monumental stonework. Indeed, their work could be carried out in the home. As such, wax modelling provided an appropriately feminine means through which women could enter the masculine world of sculpture, and the remarkable growth in the number of professional sculptresses from the seventeenth century onwards must have been a direct result of their activity in wax modelling: approximately 80 per cent of sculptresses active after 1660 and born before 1700 worked in wax, a total that is almost exactly equivalent to the number of all recorded sculptresses working before 1660.

In 1673, following the marriage of James II to Princess Mary of Modena, who is assumed to have introduced the craft to the seventeenth-century English court, two wax dolls arrived in England, and small-scale modelling in bread dough and wax became a popular pastime for gentlewomen. In his *Little Memoirs of the Eighteenth Century* (1901) George Paston wrote that 'to model well in clay is considered as strong minded and anti-feminine, but to model badly in wax or bread is quite a feminine occupation'.²² Coloured wax sheets for modelling projects were sold in London, and several women offered instruction to female pupils, among them Mary Salmon (1650–1740), manager of 'Mrs Salmon's Royal Wax-Works', whose handbill explained that she taught 'the full art'.²³ In 1731 the English-born Martha Gazley travelled to New York to set herself up as a modeller and instructor in the art of making 'the following curious Works, viz. Artificial Fruit and Flowers, and other Wax-Work, Nuns-Work' for 'young Gentlewomen, or others . . . inclined to learn any or all the above-mentioned curious Works'. In 1749 Gazley would again travel from London to New York to exhibit fourteen rare effigies, including those of the Royal family of England. She tried to entice visitors by claiming, as *The New York Gazette* reported in August, that her 'time in this town [would] be short'.²⁴

While Salmon's and Gazley's pupils may have been content to model 'Fruit and Flowers', several women would push the boundaries of the medium to a more professional level. In Utrecht, the scholar, poet and artist Anna Maria van Schurman's (1607–78) experiments led to the production of a number of small wax bas-relief portraits, including a self-portrait and representation of Martin Luther. Writing of this work in her autobiography *Eucleria* (1673), van Schurman noted that she 'had to invent lots of things that she could not learn from anyone'.²⁵ Some decades later in Bologna, Anna Manzolini-Morandi (1716–74) specialised in brilliant anatomical models which were used for medical research as an alternative to the illegal practice of dissection.²⁶ Such was her reputation that Pope Benedict XIV commissioned her to develop a complete museum collection and gave her an income for life. Elsewhere in Europe, especially in Britain, women were establishing themselves as pioneers in the art of manufacturing life-like and dressed figures in wax, which were displayed to the public in popular, often touring, waxwork shows. One of the earliest of these exhibits by a female sculptor was that of London-based Mrs Mills (active c.1695), referred to as 'the greatest artist in Europe' in *The Postman* for 6 February 1696. The advertisement for her show read:

Just finish'd and to be seen. The present Court of England in Wax, after (and as big as) Life . . . much exceeding that which was at the New Exchange tho' both made by the most deservedly famous Mrs. Mills, whom in that Art, all ingenuous Persons own, had never yet an Equal. . . . To be seen from 9 in the Morn, till 9 at Night.²⁷

That the show was a commercial undertaking is clear from the advertised admission prices (sixpence, four pence and two pence) and Mrs Mills' offer that 'persons may have their Effigies made, or their deceas'd Friends on reasonable Terms'.²⁸ But it was Mrs Salmon who was the most renowned of this first generation of female waxwork artists. Her huge waxwork exhibit, 'Mrs. Salmon's Royal Wax-Works', comprising some 140 life-size figures 'all made' by her own hands, was first staged in 1693. Over the next century it travelled widely and continued to appear under her name until 1831.²⁹

America's first wax modeller, and probably that country's first professional sculptor, was Patience Wright. Now known as the 'founding mother of American sculpture',³⁰ Wright established a waxworks exhibition in New York City in 1771 before moving to London in 1775 after the waxworks were destroyed by fire.³¹ Despite her success, Wright's career was affected by similar cultural prejudices to those that affected women like Damer, who worked within the still less acceptable realm of monumental or stone sculpture. An engraving entitled 'Mrs Wright Finishing a busto', published in the *London Magazine* in 1775, for example, found ample scope for satire in the artist's 'secretive' technique of fashioning wax heads in her lap, concealing them under her apron while engaging her subjects and visitors in conversation.³² This image of Wright as a sexualised figure speaks to the perceived lowness and inappropriateness of the sculptress's art. Attitudes in continental Europe were little different. When in 1779 Wright wrote to Benjamin Franklin, then resident in Paris, to enquire into the possibility of continuing her career in the French capital, she received the following reply:

As to the exercise of your Art here, I am in doubt whether it would answer your expectations. Here are two or three who profess it and make a Show of their Works on the Boulevards; but it is not the Taste of Persons of Fashion to sit to these Artists for their Portraits; and both House Rent and Living at Paris are very expensive.³³

Against Franklin's advice, Wright did travel to Paris, where she completed a bust of him in 1781, before returning to the United States.

Just four years before Wright's arrival in Paris, Marie Grosholtz (1761–1850) (later Mme Tussaud) made her first wax figure. Tussaud would, of course, become famous for her 'Chamber of Horrors' – based on her uncle Curtius's infamous 'Caverne des Grands Voleurs' – which was filled during the French Revolution with wax casts of the guillotined heads of the French nobility.³⁴ In 1802 the now married Tussaud moved to England with most of the collection and one of her sons. Before settling in London in 1835, she toured the country with her 'Grand European Cabinet of Figures', exhibiting topical, and therefore temporary, figures of eminent persons as well as *tableaux*, which, in a complex merging of popular art-forms and the conventions of history painting and stagecraft, recreated important historical episodes.

Tussaud's waxworks may well have inspired her friend Mme Genlis to invent another eighteenth-century artistic entertainment: *poses plastiques*, a sculptural variant to *tableaux vivants*.³⁵ In a reversal of the Pygmalion myth of the blank statue brought to life, this popular art-form used living motionless human bodies, powdered or painted entirely in white, to imitate marble statues.

Although Tussaud was popular and influential, and despite her best efforts to assert the intellectual and historical value of her work, her waxworks were never considered seriously as art. However, some female wax modellers could find the acclaim Tussaud sought in the more respectable and permanent field of funerary statuary, notably for Westminster Abbey. Women's involvement in the modelling of wax effigies commissioned for Westminster Abbey between 1686 and 1806 is impressive. Of the original fourteen figures, at least six were made by women – a testament to their fame and recognition of their expertise.³⁶ A commission to complete a figure of Frances 'la Belle' Stuart for the Abbey – Stuart had stipulated in her will that she wished to have her 'Effigie as well done in Wax as may bee' – was gladly taken up by Mrs Goldsmith (active 1695–1703), a woman praised by the *Daily Courant* as being 'Famous . . . for Waxwork' (Figure 22).³⁷ It is probable that she also made the effigies of William III and Mary II, which were purchased by the Abbey for £187 in 1725, but which may already have been displayed in 1695 in Goldsmith's showroom.³⁸ The last and one of the most lucrative of the Abbey's effigies to be made was Catherine Andras's (1776–1860) figure of Horatio Nelson. Andras, who had begun making wax dolls as a child for the toy-shop she and her three orphaned sisters kept in Bristol, was appointed 'modeller in wax to Queen Charlotte' in 1802. She was paid £104 14s for the Westminster Abbey effigy, which was commissioned, in part, to woo back crowds after the decision was made to house Nelson's tomb in St Paul's Cathedral. Andras's work, for which Nelson was supposed to have sat, and given some of his own clothes, was considered a more authentic representation than that which appeared on the marble tomb. No less an authority than Lady Emma Hamilton would speak of it as a 'most striking likeness'. Despite its popularity, however, no more effigies were to be commissioned by the Abbey, which increasingly faced opposition to its practice of exhibiting 'waxen puppets' for financial gain.³⁹ Especially those displaying 'the shoe-buckles worn by Lord Nelson, or a favourite "poll parrot" of the deceased lady', both made by women, were criticised.

The perceived incongruity between the Westminster statues and their setting was noted by the sculptor Joseph Nollekens (1737–1823):

I wonder you keep such stuff: why, at Antwerp, where my father was born, they put such things in silks outside in the streets. I don't mind going to Mrs Salmon's Wax-work in Fleet Street, where mother Shipton gives you a kick as you are going out. Oh dear! You should not have such rubbish in the Abbey: and then for you to take money for this foolish thing.⁴⁰



Figure 22 Mrs Goldsmith, *Frances Stuart, Duchess of Richmond and Lennox*, 1703. Westminster Abbey, The Undercroft Museum.

The immense popularity of waxwork exhibits, like Mrs Salmon's, whose shows included a booby-trapped mechanical figure of Old Mother Shipton and figures of notorious criminals, had a profound, but detrimental, effect on attitudes towards the Westminster effigies. By 1800, the currency of these effigies, once highly esteemed as the descendants of royal funeral effigies, had been severely devalued by its association in the public imagination with the low and vulgar (if popular) waxworks produced by the likes of Salmon

and Tussaud, and critiques explicitly referred to the female practitioners of the art. Thus, although the status of wax modelling as a low and unskilled craft presented aspiring women with opportunities to enter the sculpting profession, the instrumental role these women played in expanding and popularising the art-form would marginalise them and prevent them from achieving the success and acclaim they deserved.

Conclusions

Long with soft touch shall Damer's chissel charm,
With grace delight us, and with beauty warm;
Foster's fine form shall hearts unborn engage,
And Melbourne's smile enchant another age.⁴¹

The quotation that opens this essay and the above quotation from Erasmus Darwin's *Economy of Vegetation* (1791) contain a contradiction in terms, as they combine the hard work of chiselling and the softness of Damer's touch. This illustrates the unease over the rare but, in the eighteenth century, growing phenomenon of the woman sculptor. To resolve this contradiction, Darwin was forced to downplay the physicality of Damer's carving work, preferring to present the artist as a modeller rather than a sculptor, able to breathe life and appropriately 'feminine' warmth into the cold, obstinate marble.⁴² But if the Michelangelesque construct of the sculptor impeded women's access to this most masculine of art-forms, it did not exclude them entirely. Women could, as we have seen, exploit their longstanding association with wax modelling to gain a foothold in the profession; a remarkable number of eighteenth-century women were active in this field, developing this popular art-form in new and innovative ways. That women's connection with these supposedly vulgar forms of popular entertainment prevented them from continuing their work in this field by the beginning of the nineteenth century should not obscure the valuable contribution these women made. While the careers of women including Roldán, Damer, Collot and Charpentier provide evidence that we should reject a too easy association of women with softness, the private and the intimate, it is also clear that many women such as Salmon, Wright, Tussaud, Andras and Goldsmith, were keen to exploit these connections to further their careers as women artists and reshape the sculpting world from within.

Notes

- 1 *The Lady's Magazine; or Entertaining Companion for the Fair Sex*, XVI (London, 1785): 494. With thanks to Jennie Batchelor.
- 2 Allan Cunningham, *The Lives of the Most Eminent British Painters and Sculptors*, 5 vols. (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1854–6), III, p. 214.

- 3 Between the fifteenth and seventeenth centuries, sculptresses were mostly concentrated in Italy, Spain and what is now Belgium. These women include Maria Campo, Pellegrina Discalzi, Isabella Discalzi-Mazzoni, Properzia de' Rossi, Angelica Razzi, Damigella Ret(t)i, Mencia de la Oliva, Cecilia Sobrino-Morillas, Teresa del Nino, Anna de Coxie, Maria and Anna-Barbara Faydherbe.
- 4 Tønnes Christian Bruun-Neergaard, 'Extrait de la *Revue philosophique, littéraire et politique* sur un ouvrage de Mlle Julie Charpentier, artiste', in annex to the *Journal du dernier voyage du cen. Dolomieu dans les Alpes* (Paris: Solvet Desenne-Surosne, 1802): 'on m'a encore nommé plusieurs femmes françaises et étrangères, mais qui se sont seulement restreintes à modeler, n'osant jamais porter le ciseau sur le marbre dur, pour en créer une statue ou un bas-relief. . . . [J]e ne lus pas sans intérêt une annonce qui invite à voir un bas-relief exécuté en marbre, par une demoiselle' (pp. 1–4). Reprinted in *Le Petit Magasin des Dames* (Paris: Delaunay, Debray, Delance, 1807), pp. 147–54.
- 5 Roscoe E. Mullins, *A Primer of Sculpture* (London: Cassell and Co., 1889), p. 70.
- 6 Several early sculptresses, including the Spanish sisters Andrea and Claudia Mena y Bitoria, Luisa Roldán, Sarah Gahagan and Maria Bell-Hamilton, received their technical training in the family environment or workshop. Some, however, had famous male teachers: Maria de Dominici, Marie-Anne Collot, Clémence-Sophie Daudignac, Teresa Benincampi, Elise Hüssener, Adelgunde Emilie Vogt and Angelica Facius were pupils of Gian-Lorenzo Bernini, Etienne-Maurice Falconet, Joseph Chinard, Antonio Canova, Johann-Gottfried Schadow, Bertel Thorvaldsen and Christian-Daniel Rauch. Marie-Rose-Daguet Lechartier was a member of the French Academie de Saint-Luc in 1780 and Benincampi became a professor at the Art Academy in Florence around 1800.
- 7 On this debate, see Deborah Cherry, *Beyond the Frame: Feminism and Visual Culture, Britain 1850–1900* (London and New York: Routledge, 2000), pp. 101–41.
- 8 Cunningham, pp. 219–20. See also pp. 234–5.
- 9 Alison Kelly 'Mrs. Coade's Stone', *The Connoisseur* (January 1978): 14–25. See also her monograph of the same title (1990).
- 10 John Tavenor-Perry, 'An Episode in the History of English Terra-cotta', in *The Architectural Review*, xxxiii (June 1913): 120. The group is now in Horniman Gardens, London.
- 11 Quoted in Catherine Hall-Van Den Elsen, 'Louisa Roldán', in *Dictionary of Women Artists*, ed. Delia Gaze, 2 vols. (London and Chicago: Fitzroy Dearborn, 1997), p. 1194.
- 12 The print, held by the British Museum Prints and Drawings, is reproduced in Whitney Chadwick, *Women, Art and Society* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1994), p. 142. The print appeared before the Apollo statue was erected, which is explained, perhaps, by the fact that the engraver and architect, both named Holland, may have been related to one another.
- 13 Anon., *Authentic Account of the Fire which Reduced that Extensive Building of the Theatre-Royal, Drury Lane, To a Pile of Ruins, on the Evening of the 24th of February 1809* (London: W. Glendinning for T. Broom, 1809). According to other sources, the statue was only 10-foot high (perhaps without the pedestal). On the attribution of the statue to Damer, see Alison Yarrington, 'The Female Pygmalion: Anne Seymour Damer, Allan Cunningham and the Writing of a Woman Sculptor's Life', *The Sculpture Journal*, 1 (1997): 32–44. The London Theatre Museum Archives contain several unpublished textual and visual sources (S.17-1984, FE58, FE59, and others) which prove the statue's existence and its destruction by fire in 1809, but do not prove Damer's authorship. Some contemporary engravings of Drury

- Lane Theatre with a statue on top are reproduced in F. H. W. Sheppard, *Survey of London: The Theatre Royal Drury Lane and the Royal Opera House Covent Garden*, 35 (London, 1970).
- 14 An inversion of this scene appears in Goya's *Pygmalion y Galathea* (1820), in which a male sculptor aggressively hacks with his phallic chisel at the level of Galatea's genitals, as if raping the anguished maiden. See John J. Ciofalo, 'Unveiling Goya's Rape of Galatea', *Art History*, 18:4 (1995): 477–516; and Barbara Baert, 'Een huid van ivoor. Het nachleben van Pygmalion's geliefde in Ovidius "Metamorfosen"', *Bijdragen. International Journal in Philosophy and Theology*, 2 (2002): 171–99.
 - 15 On the subject of women viewing the male sculpted nude, in particular the *Apollo Belvedere*, around 1800, see Anon. (signed *Madame . . . témoin oculaire*), 'La Provençale devant l'Apollon du Belvédère, au Musée Napoléon', *Journal des dames et des modes*, 26 (10 May 1807): 207–8. Heather Belnap Jensen, 'The *Journal des dames et des modes*: Fashioning Women in the Arts, c. 1800–1815', *Nineteenth-Century Art Worldwide*, 5:1 (2006). In Henry Fuseli's drawing [untitled – *Woman before the Laocoön*] (c. 1802, Zurich, Kunsthau) the pose of the shocked girl in front of the nude Laocoön group is very comparable to that of the distressed girl in the Damerian Apollo print.
 - 16 Priscilla Wakefield, *Reflections on the Present Condition of the Female Sex; with Suggestions for its Improvement* (London: Joseph Johnson, 1798), p. 134.
 - 17 James Jackson Jarves, 'Progress of American Sculpture in Europe', *The Art Journal*, 10 (1871): 7; Anja Cherdron, *Prometheus war nicht ihr Ahne. Berliner Bildhauerinnen der Weimarer Republik*, Studien zur visuellen Kultur, 1 (Marburg: Jonas Verlag, 2000).
 - 18 The Poor Clares Convent in Turnhout, Belgium, for example.
 - 19 If anything, waxworks' uncanny creation of the illusion of real presence put wax modelling even more at the limits of art. Julius von Schlosser, *Histoire du portrait en cire*, trans. Édouard Pommier (Paris: Macula, 1997). Denis Canguilhem, 'Note de lecture – Julius von Schlosser, *Histoire du Portrait en cire*', *Etudes Photographiques*, 4 (May 1998); Heather H. Martienssen, 'Madame Tussaud and the Limits of Likeness', *British Journal of Aesthetics*, 20:2 (1980): 128–34.
 - 20 Edward J. Pyke's *Dictionary of Wax Modellers* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973) includes 32 women active as wax modellers between 1660 and 1830, as opposed to 466 men (plus 34 after 1830 and none before 1660). Thus according to Pyke's study, women represented around 7 per cent of the total number of people working in the field. The percentage of male sculptors specialising in wax in the same period is unknown. Ulrich Thieme and Felix Becker (*Gesamtregister: Künstlerische Berufe*, II, 3, München-Leipzig, 1997, pp. 2188–91) cite 22 female wax modellers active in this period. Reinhard Büll mentions only nine women modellers in *Das große Buch vom Wachs* (München: Verlag Georg D.W. Callwey, 1977), but explicitly remarks their 'excellent' and 'joyful' participation in this domain of the arts (p. 451).
 - 21 Walpole found Damer's first sculpture – in wax – 'clever, and much better than first attempts usually are', but warned her that 'it is much easier to model in wax than to carve in marble' (Cunningham, 1856, pp. 215–16). In a letter to Damer's father, Walpole wrote on 1 May 1763: 'Good-night to . . . the infanta, whose progress in waxen statuary I hope advances so fast, that by next winter she may rival Rackstrow's old man'. Mrs Paget Toynbee, *Letters of Horace Walpole*, 16 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1904), V, p. 317. Benjamin Rackstrow (d. 1772) was known for his 'Museum of anatomy and curiosities' in Fleet Street, near Mrs Salmon's Waxworks. Although both contained some duplicates, he liked to stress that he ran a museum and she just a waxworks. Wax portraits by Damer were in the Strawberry Hill sale of 1842.

- 22 Georges Paston, *Little Memoirs of the Eighteenth Century* (E. P. Dutton and Co., 1901), [p. unknown]; as cited in Whitney Chadwick, *Women, Art and Society* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1994), p. 35. In 1844 John and Horatio Mintorn, assisted by their sister, published for that purposes a pocketbook called *Handbook for Modelling Flowers in Wax*. Cf. Barbara Finney, 'Victorian Pastimes: The Lost Art of Wax Flowers and Fruit', in *Nineteenth Century*, 25(1) (Spring 2005): 24–8.
- 23 Quoted in Pyke, p. 126.
- 24 Quoted in Pyke, p. 52.
- 25 Quoted in Katlijne Van der Stighelen, *Anna Maria Van Schurman (1607–1678) of 'Hoe Hooge Dat Een Maeght Kan in de Konsten Stijgen* (Leuven: Universitaire Pers Leuven, 1987), p. 146.
- 26 See Mary Hillier, *The History of Wax Dolls* (Cumberland, MA: Hobby House Press, 1985), p. 18; Rebecca Messbarger, 'Waxing Poetic: Anna Morandi Manzolini's Anatomical Sculptures', in *Configurations*, 9:1 (2001): 65–97.
- 27 Quoted in Pyke, p. 92.
- 28 One of the first recorded commercial displays of waxworks was in Amsterdam in the 1630s. See Didier Besnainou and Robert Wenley, 'Wax', in *The Dictionary of Art*, ed. Jane Turner, 34 vols. (London: Macmillan Ltd. and Grove's Dictionaries, 1996), XXXIII, p. 3.
- 29 Uta Kornmeier, 'Kopierte Körper. "Waxworks" und "Panoptiken" vom 17. bis zum 20. Jahrhundert', in *Ebenbilder. Kopien von Körpern–Modelle des Menschen*, ed. Jan Gerchow (Ostfildern-Ruit: Hatje Cantz Verlag, 2002), p. 119 (copper engraving (1793) by Thomas Smith of Mrs Salmon's in Fleet Street, no. 189).
- 30 Charlotte Streifer Rubinstein, *American Women Sculptors* (Boston: G. K. Hall, 1990), p. 13.
- 31 Wright's move to London 'to make figures in wax' was documented by Walpole. Letter to the Countess of Upper Ossory, 11 February 1775. See Walpole, VIII, p. 237.
- 32 Reproduced in Charles Coleman Sellers, *Patience Wright: American Artist and Spy in George III's London* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1976), opposite p. 73. An anonymous portrait of Wright (Washington, DC, National Portrait Gallery, NPG.86.168) bears graphic testimony to that procedure. The sculptor Giuseppe Cerracchi portrayed Anne Damer too while modelling a small *Genius of the Thames* at the height of her lap, 'cradling her own work in maternal fashion' (Yarrington, p. 35).
- 33 Quoted in Sellers, p. 137.
- 34 In London, Mrs Sylvester (active 1780–94) displayed wax effigies of 'the unfortunate Royal Family of France'. On Grosholtz-Tussaud, see Pauline Chapman, *Madame Tussaud in England. Career Woman Extraordinary* (London: Quiller Press, 1992); Claudine Mitchell, 'Spectacular Fears and Popular Arts: A View from the Nineteenth Century', in *Reflections of Revolution: Images of Romanticism*, ed. Alison Yarrington and Kelvin Everest (London and New York: Routledge, 1993), pp. 159–81; Uta Kornmeier, 'Denkmal in Wachs. "Madame Tussaud's Exhibition" als Monument', *Kritische Berichte*, 2:27 (1999): 40–54; Pamela Pilbeam, *Madame Tussaud and the History of Waxworks* (London and New York: Hambledon, 2003).
- 35 Hillier, p. 94; Alison Yarrington, 'Under the Spell of Madame Tussaud: Aspects of "High" and "Low" in 19th-century Polychromed Sculpture', in *The Colour of Sculpture*, ed. Andreas Blühm (Amsterdam and Leeds: Zwolle, 1996), p. 89. In *The Volcano Lover* (1992), Susan Sontag recounts the 'Poses' Lady Hamilton performed.
- 36 Richard Mortimer, 'The History of the Collection', in *The Funeral Effigies of Westminster Abbey*, ed. Anthony Harvey and Richard Mortimer (Woodbridge: The Boydell

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Press, 1994), pp. 21–8; Maria Grazia Vaccari, ‘Wax’, in *The Encyclopedia of Sculpture*, ed. Antonia Boström (New York: Fitzroy Dearborn, 2004), pp. 1748–52. Six of the ten remaining statues are by women.

37 Quoted in Pyke, p. 55.

38 Either she or her rival Mrs Salmon modelled the seated Queen Anne (1714–15) in Westminster Abbey, while Patience Wright created the effigy of her patron, William Pitt for the same collection. L. E. Tanner and J. L. Nevinson, ‘On Some Later Funeral Effigies in Westminster Abbey’, *Archaeologica*, 85 (1936): 169–202.

39 John Thomas Smith, *Nollekens and his times* (London: Henry Colburn, 1949), pp. 184–5: ‘I sincerely hope . . . that a time will come, when Westminster Abbey, and all other buildings dedicated to sacred purposes, will be cleared of such mummery . . . , without being invited to pay for the exhibition of waxwork . . . To view the Abbey of Westminster, unencumbered of its waxen effigies, would be a gratification for many a morning’. The old Egyptian word ‘mum’ means ‘wax’. Early advertisements for Mme Tussaud’s learn that she also exhibited an Egyptian mummy.

40 Smith, pp. 85–6.

41 Erasmus Darwin, *The Economy of Vegetation* (London: J. Johnson, 1791), Canto II, ll. 111–12. The lines refer to Damer’s busts of Lady Elizabeth Foster and Lady Melbourne.

42 Yarrington, ‘The Female Pygmalion’, p. 37.