

The Discerning Eye



D Bella in et fecit

Avec privilege du Roy

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Cover

Stefano della Bella

*Tête de vieillard à demi chauve, avec grande
barbe* [Head of a Semi-bald Old Man with a
Large Beard], 1641

etching

Mackelvie Trust Collection

Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki

bequest of Dr Walter Auburn, 1982

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‘I am . . . in such serious trouble that it will prevent any further collecting. I have all of Callot but one print, which is not one of his best, but actually one of his worst; nevertheless, it would complete my Callot. I have been looking for it for twenty years, and, despairing of success, I find life very hard, indeed!’

– Jean de la Bruyère, *The Characters, or the Customs of this Century* (1688)

For Delight, Pleasure and Curiosity: The Popularity of Prints in 17th-century France

Emma Jameson

The popularity of prints flourished in 17th-century France as part of a wider appreciation of the arts. Whereas painters and sculptors had been regarded as merely mechanical 'craftsmen', by the middle of the century they began to acquire for themselves a higher status and level of appreciation. Marie de' Medici, who ascended to the French throne in 1610 was, like her illustrious ancestors and relatives in Italy, an ardent art collector and patron and she brought this same passion with her to France.¹ Influenced by Marie, French aristocrats and political figures began to collect art on a large scale. Paintings and sculptures were no longer viewed as being mere products of craftsmanship, but instead were employed to showcase the wealth, status and superior taste of the collector. Drawing and painting manuals such as *École de la miniature* [School of the Miniature] (1621), which sought to teach amateurs how to 'paint miniatures without a master' and were hitherto small in number, were published on an unprecedented scale after 1600.²

Prints were encompassed within this reappraisal of the arts. Although prints were collected from the 16th century onwards, print collecting reached unprecedented heights in the 17th century. Valued initially for their ability to disseminate knowledge and act as an 'encyclopaedia of the world', they were increasingly appreciated for their artistic qualities. Marie de' Medici herself was an experienced and accomplished printmaker and in 1660 her grandson King Louis XIV issued a decree that recognised engravings as works of fine art that:³

... depend upon the imagination of their authors and cannot be subject to any laws other than those of their genius; this art has nothing in common with the crafts and manufactures; none of its products being among the necessities which serve the subsistence of civil society, but only among those which minister to delight, or pleasure, and to curiosity.

1 Donald Posner, 'Concerning the "Mechanical" Parts of Painting and the Artistic Culture of Seventeenth-Century France', *The Art Bulletin*, vol 75, no 4, Dec 1993, p 587.

2 As above, p 593.

3 Quoted in William W Robinson, "This Passion for Prints": Collecting and Connoisseurship in Northern Europe during the Seventeenth Century', in Clifford Ackley (ed) *Printmaking in the Age of Rembrandt*, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, 1981, p xxvii.

This article will explore the print market in 17th-century Paris, looking specifically at how the printmakers Jacques Callot and Stefano della Bella harnessed the potentials of the market to bolster their careers. The second essay by Mathew Norman supplements this overview, providing a lively examination of the mechanics of print publishing and how traces of these can be seen in Callot and Della Bella's prints.



Figure 1

Jacques Callot
Varie Figure di Jacopo Callot (frontispiece),
 circa 1621–24
 etching
 Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki
 gift of the Estate of Max and Lois Pearl, 2016

‘Those which minister to delight . . . and to curiosity’: The Popularity of Prints in 17th-century Paris

Relatively affordable and transportable, prints were an increasingly popular commodity in the 16th century, and by the middle of the 17th century print collecting had become a widespread activity across France and Europe.⁴ Once purchased, prints were assembled and pasted into albums, organised either by subject or artist. By virtue of their small size, multiple prints could be pasted onto the same page, allowing for comparisons to be made between either subject matter or style. This zeal for comparative classification, together with the period's greater aesthetic appreciation of prints, fuelled a competitive and commercial market for prints.⁵ Collectors sought to acquire the newest and rarest prints, satisfying their curiosity, enriching their connoisseurial knowledge, and expanding the microscopic,

4 See Peter Parshall, 'Prints as Objects of Consumption in Early Modern Europe', *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies*, vol 28, no 1, Winter 1998, pp 29, 30.

5 As above, p 31.

fantasy worlds contained within their print albums.⁶ Prints could either be bought from booksellers, street stalls, directly from artists, or through print publishers who, in addition to printing impressions from their stock of plates, also sometimes acted as brokers, providing advice to especially keen collectors about which works they should buy and how they could best display or organise them.⁷ Abraham Bosse's *Sentiments sur la Distinction des diverses Manières de Peinture, Dessein et Gravure, et des Originaux d'avec leurs Copies* [Thoughts on the Distinction of the Various Manners of Painting, Drawing and Engraving, and Originals with their Copies] (1644), a handbook for connoisseurs of paintings, drawings and engravings, provided guidance for distinguishing a copy from an original print, advice that would have been avidly sought by the collectors who competitively vied with each other for the rarest prints or the most impressive complete oeuvre of an artist.⁸ The level of print acquisition by some collectors was staggering. Between 1644 and 1666 Michel de Marolles, Abbé de Villeloin (1600–1681), a French monk and translator, acquired 123,400 print impressions that were mounted in 400 large albums and 120 small albums. The most comprehensive print cabinet of the 17th century, Marolles' collection was eventually purchased by King Louis XIV in 1667.⁹

6 See Robinson, "'This Passion for Prints': Collecting and Connoisseurship in Northern Europe during the Seventeenth Century", p xxviii. It was not uncommon for print collectors to cut various figures, animals, or plants from prints and reassemble them into their own fantastical creations. For more on this subject, see Daphne E Wouts, 'Exploring the Thysiana Scrapbook', *Print Quarterly*, vol 3, no 4, Dec 2016, pp 391–406.

7 See Kristel Smentek, *Mariette and the Science of the Connoisseur in Eighteenth-Century Europe*, Ashgate Publishing, Surrey, 2014.

8 Robinson, "'This Passion for Prints': Collecting and Connoisseurship in Northern Europe during the Seventeenth Century", p xli.

9 As above, p xxxix.



Figure 2

Jacques Callot
The Grand Duchess Maria Maddalena and the Festival of the Dowry, 1615–19
 from: *The Life of Ferdinando I de' Medici*
 engraving
 Mackelvie Trust Collection,
 Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki
 bequest of Dr Walter Auburn, 1982

Collecting Callot and Della Bella: A Print-market Phenomenon

Marolles' print collection included 1468 works by Jacques Callot (1592–1635) and 824 by Stefano della Bella (1610–1664).¹⁰ These were by far the most prints by a particular artist that Marolles owned: by comparison, he had 224 works by Rembrandt in his collection.¹¹

Marolles' extensive collection of both artists demonstrates the magnitude of their print production and popularity in 17th-century France. Callot was a phenomenon in the history of European printmaking and was one of the first artists to focus exclusively on printmaking.¹² His innovative use of *échope*, a type of etching-needle with an oval-shaped tip, enabled him to vary the width of his etched lines, enriching his works with new variation in texture and tone. This technique served him well in his depictions of beggars, dwarfs and capricious figure studies, all of which were novel and unprecedented subjects for printmakers.

But it is the ground-breaking way that Callot worked within the print market that is of focus in this article. Callot's printmaking career was, from the outset, notable for its prestigious patronage. After moving to Florence in 1612 to study etching, Callot's skills soon attracted the attention of Cosimo II de' Medici, Duke of Florence, and he was employed as a court artist for the ducal

10 Robinson, "This Passion for Prints": Collecting and Connoisseurship in Northern Europe during the Seventeenth Century, p xxxix.

11 As above, p xxxix.

12 Antony Griffiths and Hugo Chapman, 'Israel Henriet, the Chatsworth Album and the Publication of the Work of Jacques Callot', *Print Quarterly*, vol XXX, no 3, Sep 2013, p 273.

Figure 3

Jacques Callot
The Palace and Gardens at Nancy, 1624
 etching
 Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki
 gift of Mr Wallace Alexander, 1940

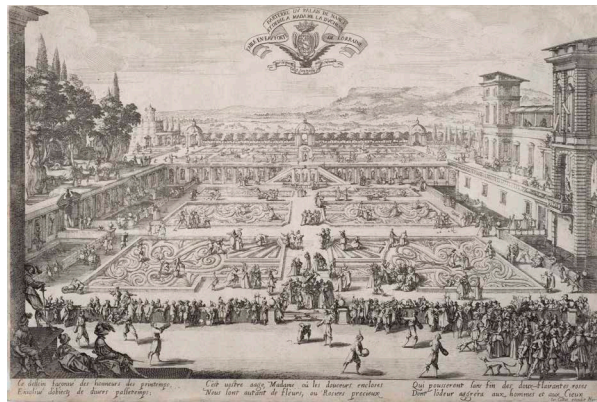


Figure 4

Jacques Callot
Portrait du Prince de Phalsbourg [Portrait of the
 Prince of Phalsbourg], 1623
 etching and burin
 Mackelvie Trust Collection
 Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki
 bequest of Dr Walter Auburn, 1982



family (fig 2). This illustrious recognition continued on his return to his hometown Nancy in 1621, where he was commissioned to produce etchings for the Court of Lorraine (fig 3). Documenting the wealth, deeds, and authority of both courts, Callot's etchings demonstrate how the print medium was harnessed by 17th-century aristocrats to bolster their claims to power. Callot's etching of the Prince of Phalsbourg is a striking example (fig 4). It was essential that Louis de Lorraine, Prince of Phalsbourg, legitimise his rank and power. The illegitimate son of the Cardinal of Guise, he was given the title 'Prince of Phalsbourg' only on the event of his marriage to Princess Henrietta, the niece of Duke Henri II of Lorraine. Callot's print depicts him as a powerful and authoritative leader. Louis was an important military commander and this print employs the iconography of ancient equestrian statues to align his military might with noble warriors from the past. His horse powerfully charges out of the print towards us, his striking presence commanding not only the armies behind him but also the viewer's attention.



Figure 5

Jacques Callot,
Officer with Large Plume, Front View,
circa. 1621–24
from: *Varie Figure* [Various Figures]
etching
Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki
gift of the Estate of Max and Lois Pearl, 2016

The commercial viability of Callot's prints was recognised by Israël Henriet (1590–1661), a publisher based in Paris. From 1621 Henriet worked first as an agent for Callot and then from 1629 as the exclusive publisher of Callot's prints.¹³ Henriet had previously worked as a painter and designer for King Louis XIII and had also been employed as a drawing instructor for members of the elite in Paris, among whom the king himself was a student.¹⁴ Needless to say, he was well-positioned to market and sell Callot's prints and most of his initial clients were in fact his aristocratic students. In addition, Callot could, through Henriet, certify that his prints were protected with French royal privileges (copyright), which safeguarded them from pirating and in turn maintained the duo's control over Callot's reputation, the production of his prints and their commercial desirability. Henriet's enterprise was primed to satisfy the curiosity of print enthusiasts. As the only distributor of Callot's prints, Henriet carried a complete stock of Callot's plates,¹⁵ and all etchings were displayed in small stitched booklets that collectors could peruse and then acquire either several series, or select individual prints.¹⁶ Unlike most other printmakers, many

13 As above, p 276.

14 As above, p 272.

15 Excepting those that had been specifically commissioned, which did not belong to the artist.

16 Griffiths and Chapman, 'Israel Henriet, the Chatsworth Album and the Publication of the Work of Jacques Callot', p 280.

Figure 6

Jacques Callot

Le gentilhomme au grand manteau, vu de face
(The gentleman in a large coat, seen from the front), 1621–22

from: *Capricci di Varie Figure* [Caprices of Various Figures], 1617

etching

Mackelvie Trust Collection

Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki

bequest of Dr Walter Auburn, 1982



of Callot's series were without a title page and the prints were not numbered; this meant that when flicking through the booklets each individual print became a 'Callot', as opposed to occupying a distinct, chronological position within a specific series.¹⁷

Henriet's selling strategies complemented the aesthetic qualities of Callot's prints. Their miniature scale, gestural experimentation and innovative subject matter appealed to the period's delight in aesthetic variation, technical skill and the encyclopaedic potential of prints, rendering them ripe for inclusion within Henriet's booklets and collectors' print albums. Callot's series *Capricci di Varie Figure* [Caprices of Various Figures] (1617) in particular demonstrates Callot's cognizance of how to appeal to the period's growing appreciation of and interest in print-making. Featuring pairs of miniscule figures in various outfits, poses and gestures, the series not only presented an opportunity to showcase Callot's design capabilities but also responded to the era's penchant for instructive, drawing and painting manuals: indeed the art commentators, Filippo Baldinucci (1686) and writer Charles Perrault (1696) described the series as a valuable drawing guide (see figs 5 and 6). A calculated statement about Callot's style and invention, the series was also a shrewd response to the shifting tastes of the period.¹⁸

Presented alongside each other, Callot's innovative prints offered a multitude of distinct fantastical worlds that could be synthesised in the mind of the viewer. It is no surprise, then, that the 'Callot collector' emerged before the middle of the century. This kind of collector, who sought to buy the entire works of a single artist, was completely novel in the print-making industry and arose out

¹⁷ As above, p 280.

¹⁸ See Veronica Maria White, 'The Capricci of Callot', *Italian Journal*, vol 20, no XII, 2015.

of the period's new appreciation for the artistic qualities of prints. Georges de Scudéry's *Cabinet* (1646), a series of poems addressed to imaginary works of art in his cabinet, features a poem entitled 'Toute l'oeuvre de Callot en estampe, à l'eau-forte' [All of Callot's Print Oeuvre, in Etching]. Forty years later, in his *Les Caractères de Théophraste, traduits du grec, avec les caractères ou les mœurs de ce siècle* [The Characters of Theophrastes, Translated from the Greek, with the Characters or Customs of this Century] (1688) Jean de La Bruyère wrote a satire about a collector called Démocède who despairs that:¹⁹

I am . . . in such serious trouble that it will prevent any further collecting. I have all of Callot but one print, which is not one of his best, but actually one of his worst; nevertheless, it would complete my Callot. I have been looking for it for twenty years, and, despairing of success, I find life hard, indeed!

Callot playfully acknowledges and appeals to the burgeoning print market and the commercial status of his prints in the frontispiece for *Varie Figure* [Various Figures] (1621–24) (fig 1). A print seller, seated to the left and wearing a hat, is surrounded by a group of interested bystanders, all of whom are of varying ages and social backgrounds. A sales transaction is taking place: the seller holds coins that have been presumably handed over by the man in the plumed hat to the right. On closer observation, the prints for sale on the table are no less than the figure studies (figs 5 and 6) in the series *Varie Figure*, creating a meta-narrative of consumption that not only testifies to Callot's cognisant participation within the 17th-century print market but also wryly invites potential collectors to join the depicted figures at the seller's table.

Callot and Henriët maximised the new potential of the 17th-century print market to firmly ensconce Callot within the canons of printmaking: Callot's prints were soon sought after across Western Europe and his style influenced a multitude of printmakers, including Rembrandt.

Della Bella too most likely modelled his career on Callot and there are strong affinities between the print careers of the two artists. After studying under Remigio Cantagallina, an Italian etcher who had also taught Callot in Florence, Della Bella then worked as an artist for the Medici family in Rome and Florence. In 1639 he travelled to Paris as part of the entourage of Baron Alessandro del Nero, who was the special ambassador of Grand Duke Ferdinando II de Medici to the court of King Louis XIII. Della Bella's arrival in Paris was timely: Callot had died just four years previously, leaving a significant opening in Paris's print market.

19 Jean de La Bruyère, quoted in Robinson, "This Passion for Prints": Collecting and Connoisseurship in Northern Europe during the Seventeenth Century, p xliii.

Figure 7

Stefano della Bella

Plan et vue de la ville d'Arras [Plan and View of the Town of Arras], 1641

etching

Mackelvie Trust Collection,
Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki
bequest of Dr Walter Auburn, 1982



Stylistically Della Bella's earlier prints certainly bore the influence of Callot and like Callot, his subjects included whimsical *capricci* and figure studies. He soon, however, forged a distinctive style of his own that would distinguish him from the shadow of his predecessor. In contrast to Callot's harder lines, miniscule scale and stylised figures, Della Bella employed a softer style in which shadows, rather than outlines, contour figures. As a result, his prints of the people, events and landscapes around him have the impression of immediacy. This surely would have appealed to 17th-century critics, who highly esteemed prints that emulated the textural richness and fluidity of paintings in their use of light and tone.²⁰ Like Callot, Della Bella showcased his technical aptitude in a series of figure studies entitled *Principi del disegno* [Principles of Drawing] (1649). Each study of ear, hand, head and face demonstrates Della Bella's extraordinary capabilities of capturing expression, light, shade and volume. Published in *Livre Pour Apprendre à Dessiner* [Book for Learning to Draw] (1649), the series was intended to educate and to impress his contemporaries.

Della Bella, like Callot, worked within the mechanisms of the print market to his advantage, and he was assisted by the legacy left by his predecessor; namely, the emergence of a 'Callot collector' intent on obtaining the entire collection of a single artist. Upon his arrival in Paris he established a business relationship with Henriët and over the next 10 years the two produced 18 sets of prints together.²¹ Unlike Callot, however, Henriët was not the exclusive

20 Robinson, "This Passion for Prints": Collecting and Connoisseurship in Northern Europe during the Seventeenth Century', p xlv.

21 Griffiths and Chapman, 'Israel Henriët, the Chatsworth Album and the Publication of the Work of Jacques Callot', p 282.

publisher of Della Bella's prints. Rather, Della Bella worked with two other publishers: Pierre Mariette I and François Langlois, who was one of the leading print merchants in Paris in the 17th century.²² While this arrangement could have been fraught and logistically difficult, it worked to Della Bella's advantage: although rivals, the three publishers cooperated with each other, exchanging or selling stock between themselves to meet demand.²³ Collectors could acquire Della Bella's entire works just as easily as Callot's.

Della Bella's arrival was, for the publishers, 'manna from heaven' as 'he was the nearest thing to Callot, and became his successor in public favour'.²⁴ He soon enjoyed royal attention. From 1638 onwards Cardinal Richelieu, the chief advisor to King Louis XIII, entrusted Della Bella with the honour of being the sole documenter of major French battles such as the sieges of Rochelle, Saint Omer, and Arras (fig 7) Then, in 1644, Della Bella was commissioned to make printed playing cards of famous kings and mythological figures to educate the King's son (the future King Louis XIV) (figs 8 and 9). Such royal commissions in turn encouraged aristocratic collectors to acquire Della Bella's works. The frontispiece of *L'entrée d'une forteresse* [Entrance to a fortress] (1638–43) (fig 10) published by Henriët, bears a dedicatory inscription to Cosme Savary de Brèves, marquis de Maulevrier and Master of the Wardrobe in the household of the Duc D'Orleans, the only surviving brother of King Louis XIII.²⁵ As discussed in this publication's second essay, this same print was also issued in its proof state, an innovative publishing strategy introduced by Henriët to entice interest from the most connoisseurial of collectors intent on acquiring the earliest possible impressions.

It is pertinent to conclude with a print by Della Bella of *Le Pont Neuf a Paris* (Pont Neuf in Paris) (1646) (fig 11) which in addition to being the centre of Parisian commercial activity was also a thriving communal entertainment space in the city. The bridge was replete with visual spectacles: booksellers vied with each other for customers, open-air performances took place, and engraved images of important personages and events were posted on the stone walls of the bridge.²⁶

22 Roger Armand Weigert, 'Stefano Della Bella et Trois de ses Editeurs Parisiens: Les Deux Pierre Mariette et François Langlois dit Ciartres', 1950, p 78; Griffiths and Chapman, 'Israel Henriët, the Chatsworth Album and the Publication of the Work of Jacques Callot', p 282.

23 Griffiths and Chapman, 'Israel Henriët, the Chatsworth Album and the Publication of the Work of Jacques Callot', p 282.

24 As above, p 282.

25 Mathew Norman, 'Della Bella', *Print Quarterly*, vol XXXI, no 2, Jun 2014, p 180.

26 See Peter Fuhling, Louis Marchesano, Rémi Mathis and Vanessa Selbach (eds), *A Kingdom of Images: French Prints in the Age of Louis XIV, 1660–1715*, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles, 2015, p 108.



Figure 8

Stefano della Bella
Charles huit.e (Charles VIII), 1644
 etching
 from: *Jeu des Rois de France* [Game of the Kings of France], a pack of 40 playing-cards depicting famous kings
 British Museum, 1871.0513.471
 © Creative Commons, 2018



Figure 9

Stefano della Bella
Europe, 1644
 etching
 from *Jeu de la Géographie* (Game of Geography), a pack of 52 geographical playing-cards.
 British Museum, 1871.0513.587
 © Creative Commons, 2018

Figure 10

Stefano della Bella
L'entrée d'une forteresse [The Entrance to a Fortress], 1638–43
 from: *Divers dessins tant pour la paix que pour la guerre* [Diverse Drawings for Peace and War]
 etching
 Mackelvie Trust Collection
 Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki
 bequest of Dr Walter Auburn, 1982

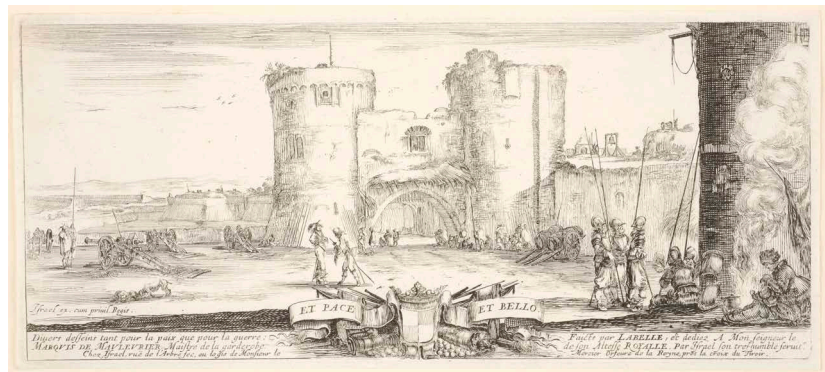


Figure 11

Stefano della Bella
Le Pont Neuf, a Paris [Pont Neuf, in Paris], 1646
 etching
 Mackelvie Trust Collection
 Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki
 bequest of Dr Walter Auburn, 1982



Della Bella's print captures the bustling dynamism of Paris's commercial activity and visual culture. Yet the print is not mere reportage. The inscription below the scene proudly invites the viewer to 'behold the most beautiful prospect in the whole world, than which none more varied, more extensive, or more pleasant, could be represented in a sketch, such that someone who was never in Paris would hardly believe that in one place at the same time so many outstanding things might be seen'.²⁷ Above, two angels carry the coat of arms of King Louis XIII, explicitly connecting the king to the glories of his kingdom and, in turn, enfolding Della Bella's print within these wonders. The print, then, is a celebration of the vibrant visual culture of 17th-century Paris, the generosity of royal patronage, the ennobled status of prints and printmakers within this environment and, in turn, Della Bella's illustrations skills and acclaim within this environment.

²⁷ Inscription translated from the Latin by Christopher J Martin, Professor at the University of Auckland.

Aspects of Printmaking in the Age of Callot and Della Bella

Mathew Norman

In the field of fine prints, the conventional abundance of textual information can reveal much about a work of art, ranging from its intellectual genesis to the commercial context in which it was produced. From the 16th century onwards, inscriptions forming a part of the printing matrix (the surface from which the image was printed) record the activities of not only the artist responsible for the work, but also those of mediating figures such as engravers and publishers. In the context of the Auckland Art Gallery exhibition, *The Discerning Eye: Collecting Della Bella and Callot* (18 February–18 June 2017), it will be useful to consider aspects of the history of printmaking as it relates to the production and publication of the works of Jacques Callot (circa 1592–1635) and Stefano della Bella (1610–1664).¹

In our digital age, it is necessary to stress the manual nature of the old printmaking industry. Setting aside developments such as lithography, before photography, almost all printed images were created by hand by cutting a design in reverse into a printing matrix: traditionally either blocks of wood, or thin, highly polished plates of copper.² This was done either with sharp tools (for woodcut and engraving, respectively), or with the use of acid (etching). Woodcut and engraving were precision tasks that many artists employed others to do for them. While etching was nominally easier – it is similar to drawing, although with markedly different results – it required a keen understanding of how the marks of the design would react when the plate was bathed in acid (the actual etching process). And while some artists doubtless experimented with printing, more often than not this was carried out by a specialist who knew how to maximise the life of a soft copper plate (from which early impressions are generally the best), and manage the messy business of re-inking the matrix for every print pulled from the plate.

1 As I write, an exhibition examining the history of European printmaking is showing at the British Museum: *The Business of Prints* (21 September 2017–28 January 2018). The exhibition, curated by Antony Griffiths, marks the publication of his recent book *The Print before Photography: An Introduction to European Printmaking 1550–1820*, The British Museum Press, London 2016. That book is an important survey of the history of printmaking and I refer to it throughout this short essay.

2 A late 18th-century invention, lithography relied on the mutual aversion of oil and water in order to print from a flat stone surface.

Figure 12

Albrecht Dürer
The Virgin and Child with a Monkey, circa 1498
engraving
Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki
purchased 2013



This division of labour is often revealed in the inscriptions found on many prints, either within the image itself or in the margin beneath it. These might acknowledge the artist responsible for the design, a printmaker responsible for cutting or etching the matrix (when this was not the artist), and the figure now commonly referred to as the 'publisher'. As both Callot and Della Bella were what is known as *peintres-graveurs*³ – a French term describing artists who cut or etched their original designs into the matrix – we are limited here to a small number of terms relating to the artist and the publisher.⁴

As a means of identifying themselves as the author of a work, artists' signatures had appeared on prints since the 15th century. Of these, the distinctive AD monogram of the German artist Albrecht Dürer (1471–1528) is among the most famous (fig 12), though it did not distinguish between the works which he engraved

³ Antony Griffiths, *Prints and Printmaking: An introduction to the History and Techniques* (2nd ed), The British Museum Press, London, 1996, p 10. The alternative is the 'reproductive' print which reproduces a work of art in another medium, such as painting.

⁴ By no means is this the full range of inscriptions to be found on prints from the period. For a summary of the various terms and their abbreviated forms, see Griffiths, 1996, p 134.



Figure 13

Stefano della Bella

Une mendiante marche vers la gauche en portant son enfant sur son dos et un autre dans ses bras; un troisieme enfant marche devant elle [A Beggar Walking to the Left Carrying Her Child on Her Back and Another in Her Arms; a Third Child Walking in Front of Her], circa 1647
from: *Diverse Capricci* [Various Capricci]
etching

Mackelvie Trust Collection
Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki
bequest of Dr Walter Auburn, 1982



Figure 14

Stefano della Bella

Tête de vieillard à demi chauve, avec grande barbe, vue de profil à gauche, les yeux levés au ciel [Head of an Old Man, Half Bald, with a Large Beard, Profile View of the Left, Eyes Raised to the Sky], 1641
from: *I principii del disegno* [The Principle of Design]
etching

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bequest of Dr Walter Auburn, 1982

Figure 15

Stefano della Bella,
Un homme enveloppé dans son manteau [A Man
enveloped in His Coat], circa 1647
etching
from: *Diverse Capricci* [Various Capricci]
Mackelvie Trust Collection
Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki
bequest of Dr Walter Auburn, 1982



himself and the woodcuts which were generally produced from his designs by professional cutters at his behest.⁵ As the market for prints grew more sophisticated, it became necessary to distinguish the roles individuals played. In the case of Callot the Latin term *fecit* (made it), found next to his surname on the frontispiece to his series *Varie Figure* (fig 1) leaves no room for conjecture: Callot alone was responsible for the plate from which the print was pulled.

While Della Bella also used *fecit* (fig 13), in his study of the head of an old man (fig 14) he signed the plate with *in[venit] et fecit* (invented it and made it). The use of the term *invenit* confirms that this print was his design. Such a distinction was necessary when an artist was only responsible for the painting or drawing reproduced. In such cases *pinxit* (painted it) and *delineavit* or *disegnavit* (drew it) – among others – were used to clarify just what role the artist had played, while another suite of terms, including *sculpsit* (carved it), identified an engraver.

With the development of specialist publishers in the 16th century, it became increasingly rare for artists to manage the production and distribution of prints from their plates.⁶ Publishers are referred to in three abbreviations of the same term found on plates by Callot and Della Bella in the exhibition: *ex*, *exc* and *excudit* are abbreviations of the Latin *excudit*, from a verb suggestive of the

⁵ As above, pp 13–18.

⁶ For a brief outline of the rise of the print publisher, see Griffiths, 2016, pp 216–22.



Figure 16

Stefano della Bella

Une batterie de canons tire contre une ville qu'on aperçoit dans le lointain, à droite. [A Battery of Cannons Firing against a Town in the Distance to the Right], 1641

from: *Varii Capricci Militari* [Various Military Caprices]

etching

Mackelvie Trust Collection

Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki

bequest of Dr Walter Auburn, 1982



Figure 17

Stefano della Bella

Conduite de canons [Passage of the Cannon], 1638–43

from: *Divers dessins tant pour la paix que pour la guerre* [Various Drawings for Peace and War]

etching

Mackelvie Trust Collection

Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki

bequest of Dr Walter Auburn, 1982

printing process. As Antony Griffiths has pointed out, the choice of term suggests that the role of the publisher was closely connected to the act of printing, though this might include financing the project and even ownership of the plate itself.⁷

In the case of Callot, the name of his Paris-based friend and publisher Israël Henriet (circa 1590–1661) appears on many of his prints from 1629 onwards. By contrast, Della Bella's Parisian activities were not limited to one publisher and so several names appear on his prints, including *Mariette excudit'* (Pierre Mariette I, circa 1603–57, fig 15), *Israel ex.* (Israel Henriet, circa 1590–1661) and *F.L.D. Ciartres excud.* (François Langlois, 1588–1647, known as 'il Ciartres', fig 16). Each of these men was instrumental in the financing, printing and distribution of artists' work.

⁷ As above, pp 84–86

But both artists and publishers laboured in the face of unscrupulous competition and pirated copies were a problem from early on. In 1505, Albrecht Dürer travelled from his home in Nuremberg to Venice where he took court proceedings against Marcantonio Raimondi (circa 1470/82–1527/34) for making copies of his series the *Life of the Virgin* (1503–5). But apart from prohibiting the copying of Dürer's monogram, the Venetian authorities afforded the German artist little satisfaction.⁸ However, only a few years earlier, in 1500, the German merchant and publisher Anton Kolb (fl 1500) had received a four-year privilege (a conventional form of legal protection within a territory) from the Venetian government for the monumental aerial view of Venice by the Italian artist Jacopo di'Barbari (circa 1460–1516) – the first recorded for a print.⁹

In the absence of any concept of copyright (that is, the protection of intellectual property), the perceived benefits of a privilege might be inferred from the fact that local forms were sought and received for prints in Antwerp in 1526 and Paris in 1545. In France, privileges might be granted by the crown, though as elsewhere, grants were not automatic, were restricted to a designated work and came in return for a fee.¹⁰ Prints which had received privileges were generally inscribed with a word, acronym or short phrase which warned potential pirates of the protected status of the design. Both artists or their publishers (both could apply) obtained French privileges for many of their works, including three which were clearly granted by the French crown: *Cum privilegio*; *Cum Privilegio Regis*; *Privilegio Regis*; *Avec privilege du Roy*. (fig 17)

Israel Henriot combined the legal protection of a royal privilege with novel publishing tactics and one print in the Auckland Art Gallery collection attests to the increasing sophistication of the print market, particularly the deployment of 'proof states'. A 'state' records the changes made to a printing matrix, and 'proof states' were impressions taken from a plate which was, at least nominally, unfinished. Stefano della Bella's *L'entree d'une forteresse* [The Entrance of a Fortress] (fig 18), the frontispiece to the series *Divers dessins tant pour la paix que pour la guerre* [Diverse Drawings for Peace and War] 1638–43, is a unique impression

8 See Koseph Koerner, 'Albrecht Dürer: A Sixteenth-Century Influenza', pp. 18–38, in Guilia Bartrum (ed.), *Albrecht Dürer and His Legacy*, The British Museum Press, 2002, pp 25, 135.

9 Elizabeth Wyckoff and Larry Silver, 'Size Does Matter', in Larry Silver and Elizabeth Wyckoff (eds), *Grand Scale: Monumental Prints in the Age of Dürer and Titian*, exh cat, Davis Museum and Cultural Centre, Wellesley MA, 2008, p 11.

10 Griffiths, 2016, pp 99–100. The granting of privileges has been connected with the centralising tendencies of the early modern state, including as a means to exercise censorship through the examination of material touching on the business of the state or public morality; see Peter Fuhring, 'The Print Privilege in Eighteenth-Century France-I', *Print Quarterly*, vol II, no 3, 1985, p 176.

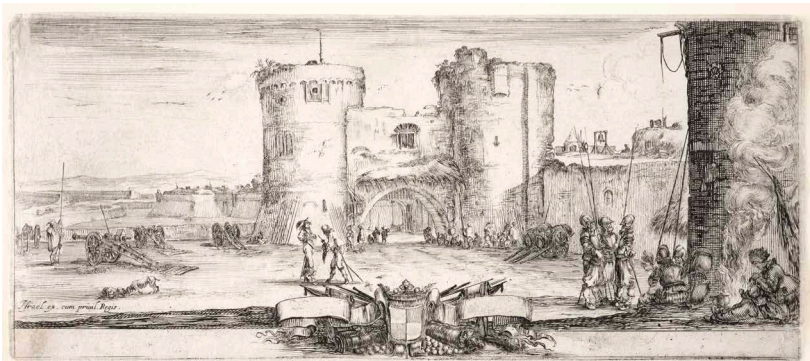


Figure 18

Stefano della Bella
 L'entrée d'une forteresse [The Entrance to a
 Fortress], circa 1639
 etching
 Mackelvie Trust Collection
 Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki
 bequest of Dr Walter Auburn, 1982

of a previously unknown first state of this print. It was pulled from the plate with an abbreviated form of Henriët's address (*Israel ex.*) and the royal privilege (*cum privil. Regis*), but before the balance of the inscriptions, including the dedication to Cosme Savary de Brèves, marquis de Maulevrier (whose coat of arms do appear), that appear in the second state.¹¹ (fig 18) Henriët's decision to issue at least one impression of this early state of the print – with the royal privilege as protection – continued his established commercial practice of issuing proof states before letters, beginning in 1633 with Callot's series *Misères et les malheurs de la guerre*.¹² As a proof was necessarily an early impression, and as the quality of impressions came to dominate the connoisseurial approach taken by serious collectors, Henriët's innovation helped augment an increasingly lucrative market.

Even this brief account of printmaking in the age of Callot and Della Bella should highlight the rich possibilities afforded the study of print history by a small number of objects. Valuable information concerning the nature of an artist's involvement with the trade and the practicalities of production can be gleaned from a handful of prints. Likewise, sales, distribution, inventive business practices and legislative protection become evident when the specialist lexicon is translated into everyday language. These are not arcane pursuits: while the technologies that were deployed are now largely redundant, historical research can reveal much about the origins of our own image-saturated culture. The careers of both Callot and Della Bella are associated with significant developments in an industry which, in the 18th century, would swell to industrial proportions (democratising previously elite interest in the visual arts), warranting the first copyright legislation,¹³ and fostering the cult of celebrity which remains with us to this day.¹⁴

11 Mathew Norman, 'Della Bella', *Print Quarterly*, vol XXXI, no 2, 2014, pp 180–81.

12 Antony Griffiths and Hugo Chapman, 'Israel Henriët, the Chatsworth Album and the Publication of the Work of Jacques Callot', *Print Quarterly*, vol XXX, no 3, 2013, pp 278, 280–81.

13 The first copyright was established in Britain in 1735, though it was not until French legislation of 1793 that inherent intellectual property was acknowledged in law. See Griffiths, 2016, p 99.

14 The 18th-century phenomenon of celebrity has been linked to the dissemination of images only made possible by the industrial print concerns of the period. See Tom Mole, *Byron's Romantic Celebrity: Industrial Culture and the Hermeneutic of Intimacy*, Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke, 2007.

