

Editorial

Factura

JOSEPH LEO KOERNER

This volume grew out of conversations with the sociologist of science Bruno Latour. Latour has written microhistories of individual scientific facts. By some accounts, Latour observed, facts already exist in the physical world, awaiting discovery; science's work, therefore, is the finding, not the making, of facts. Fabrication connotes fiction, as in the phrase "fabricated data." Against this observation, Latour sets how science's findings are materially and institutionally produced. He attends to a realm between the scientist and the world, the cascade of inscriptions and instruments. Once science consents to the facts made there, these mediators will be forgotten—even physically discarded. What remains is a purified scene of an inquiring mind and a reticent world.

Now it is true that art, and the histories we write about art, stages a similar scene. An artist observes the world and makes a picture virtually indistinguishable from the world. Note I said "virtually." For what we tend to value in a picture is not the thing duplicated but the inscription that duplicates: the artwork itself as made thing. Historical interpreters of art amplify that "madness" by gathering its residue. Preparatory sketchings are adduced, the finished work is cross-sectioned into successive layers, and the mediation of patronage is elaborated. To put it crudely, while we would be surprised to hear that germs date to 1857 and that they were made by Louis Pasteur, we understand paintings by learning when, how, and by whom they were made. Yet in *The Pasteurization of France*, Latour surprised us with a constructivist account of germs.¹ What struck me was how fragmented art history's constructivist regime has become. Art historians today tend to be divided between those who study what objects mean and those who study how objects are made. Partly, this reflects institutional differences between universities and museums. Partly, it is the old uncertainty whether art history is a science. In any case, the divide distorts both parties. On the one hand, self-

consciously cutting-edge art history emphasizes materiality but has small interest in what the materials are. It boasts of embracing material culture but still studies Cézanne rather than, say, spoons. Technical analysts, on the other hand, master materiality but have trouble communicating why materials matter culturally. To help dissolve these crystallized positions, I solicited essays on "madness" as a distinguishing feature of art objects.

1. Object of rapture

In the last weeks of 1945, twenty-five panels completed in 1432 by Jan van Eyck were returned from the salt mines above Altausee to their original home in the Cathedral of St. Bavo in Ghent (fig. 1).² At the time, it might have been cast as their odyssey. They had been hidden in the mines in 1944 for safekeeping, along with other priceless items of Nazi loot, only to be discovered by the U.S. Third Army during its sweep through Austria. Because of the destructive effects of the underground climate on paintings on wood, van Eyck's panels were inspected en route at Brussels, and in 1950–1951, they were returned to Brussels to undergo extensive testing and treatment at the Laboratoire central des musées de Belgique. To preserve them properly, it was decided, one had to determine what they were made of materially, within and beneath their enchanting surfaces, in their mixed condition of survival and decay, so that restorers would preserve van Eyck's work rather than the makings of earlier restorers or the effects of accident, vandalism, or time.

Study also ritualized homecoming. Whose paintings these really were was signalled by recognizing, in the "central" laboratory of post-war Belgium's capital city and through the resultant publications in French, what they were. Just sixteen years earlier, in 1934, a Flemish nationalist aimed a blow at Brussels's sovereignty in

1. Bruno Latour, *The Pasteurization of France* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1988).

2. Paul Coremans et al., *L'agneau mystique au laboratoire. Les Primitifs flamands 3. Contributions à l'étude des primitifs flamands* (Antwerp: de Sikkel, 1953).



Figure 1. Jan van Eyck, *Ghent Altarpiece*, 1432. Oil on panel, 11' 5 3/4" x 15' 1 1/2". Cathedral St. Bavo, Ghent, Belgium. Courtesy of Giraudon/Art Resource, New York.

Flanders by stealing and permanently entombing in some still-unidentified public space one of the altarpiece's twenty-six extant panels.

Brussels's interventions with the panels were conservative and invisible. Microsamples of van Eyck's paints were taken and analyzed; new radiographs were prepared of the panels and their supports; and a mosaic of infra-red reflectographs was assembled of the entire painted surface, revealing for the first time the artist's extensive underdrawings and, through them, the temporal process of the picture's making. One of the

most dramatic finds was discovered at the base of the long, vertical panel depicting Adam (fig. 2). Reflectography showed that the artist had originally outlined Adam's right foot in strict profile, with its sole flush with the bottom frame and with no hint of a left foot further back (fig. 3). A similar arrangement was retained in the finished panel of Eve, at the opposite side of the altarpiece. When completing Adam, however, the painter changed his mind, abandoning the symmetry of Eve and Adam in favor of a new, veristic effect. He established a dramatically shaded left leg set

back in space and so concealed by the lower framing edge as to signal that the plane on which Adam stands lies above the beholder's vantage point. And he intensified this illusion of things seen from below by swinging Adam's striding right foot around toward the viewer, so that its underside lies exposed and its big toe appears to pierce the picture plane.

This change, discerned by means of a technology aimed at proper restoration, was concerned not with merely one detail within the ensemble—it refigured the scenography of van Eyck's work as a self-contained whole. Very roughly speaking (for this is a work that defies simple statements of what it is about), the work visualizes "heaven" as an eternal and reciprocal vision of God by means of the materials of oil paint on wood. These were materials the handling of which van Eyck, famously, had pioneered for European painting. As outlined in the underdrawing, Adam's right foot rests firmly in its heavenly setting. As portrayed in paint, however, it strides forward, extending one member as if beyond that timeless totality into the real space and time of our world: an abject toe, the First Sinner's lowest extremity captured above ground in motion and observed *di sotto in su* from a yet-lower spot on earth.³

Someone ought to write a history of European painting based only on pentimenti. From the evidence of artists' revisions, of changes made to paintings during their original production, one might discern certain patterns of intention that differently complete a work—what an artist wanted to show as observed in the residue of what he or she deliberately hid. Even concealment's changing forms have historical eloquence, instancing, for example, culturally distinct ideals of surface, finish, or futurity. Comparing van Eyck's hidden changes of mind with, say, those often nakedly apparent in the work of Hieronymus Bosch underscores Bosch's painterly spontaneity, at the level both of manner (loose brushwork) and of subject (demonic fantasies); and this accords with an enterprise of painting not heaven but hell. Pentimenti open the black box of the completed object, allowing making to come to light again in the already made. Occasionally, they reveal labor in the form of pure concealment. In his famous canvas *Monk by the Sea* of 1809–1810, Caspar David Friedrich depicted ships on the horizon and then, to intensify



Figure 2. Jan van Eyck, *Ghent Altarpiece*, detail of Adam, 1432. Oil on panel. Cathedral St. Bavo, Ghent, Belgium. Courtesy of Giraudon/Art Resource, New York.

3. On the logic of this placement, see Paula Carabell's article in this volume of *RES*, pp. 166–185.



Figure 3. Reflectograph of Jan van Eyck, *Ghent Altarpiece*, showing underdrawing of Adam's foot. Photo: Copyright IRPA-KIK, Brussels.

solitude, painted them out with a sludge of paint that doubles as impenetrable fog. Evidencing an urge toward abstraction, the erasure fits this painter's status as a precocious modern.

The term *pentimento* locates the agency of making not in matter, though, but in a mind. Derived from the Italian word for "repentance," it refers alterations apparent in the object back to changes occurring in an artist's head. And through the moral coloring of "repentance," it styles that change as a turn from wrong to right taken within the struggle of absolutes that creation is imagined to be. To the art historian intent on making things into stories, *pentimenti*—whether discerned by technical means or natural means, through changes in the refractive index of oil paint as it ages—are especially appealing, because they make the object into the portrait of its own history. In the case of Adam's foot, the *pentimento* has occasioned several competing tales: for example, that the underdrawing was done by Hubert van Eyck, deceased in 1426 and celebrated in a famous quatrain on the altarpiece's frame, and that the more illusionistic final design was done by his younger brother Jan, who endeavored to shape a coherent whole from Hubert's unfinished labors. The first discoverers of the underdrawing, for their part, saw the *pentimento* as belonging to a spectacle of authenticity that they,

through their instruments, were able to reveal. In van Eyck's revisions, they celebrated the corporeality, spontaneity, and accidentality of painterly making as it occurred in real time.

Theirs was the rapture of the subject in the object, of van Eyck indexically present under his pictures' legendary finish. One author of the 1953 volume that published the Belgian team's findings, Paul Philippot, identified two different modes of "density" inherent in the paintings. On the one hand, there was the artist's compelling illusion of real and variegated materials, his masterful likeness of the thingliness of stuffs, which he effected in the painted surface and made available to the naked eye. On the other hand, there was an equally remarkable "*sédimentation géologique*" underlying that illusion and visible through laboratory instruments alone.⁴ The first, illusory density was dazzlingly material in that it constituted the image of heaven itself as an apotheosis of the quidity of things (hair, grass, leaves, feathers) and, most especially, of already-crafted things (cut gems, worked gold, woven fabrics). But this virtual quidity depended on the scientifically verified and therefore more real density of paint itself, in which one

4. Coremans (see note 2), pp. 95–97.

apparent surface is, in fact, a substantial layering of multiple surfaces, preparatory grounds, underdrawings, and translucent glazes successively applied. This second, reified density was made visible by means of imaging techniques that discovered, beyond the beautiful illusions and even the hidden evidence of prior manual and mental labor, a purified image of matter itself.

And to this image was attached a narrative of the known or discernable vicissitudes of that matter, what the research team termed its material history. Thus we learn that before the panels spent their time in the salt mines, the Nazis placed them in King Ludwig's dream confection, Neuschwanstein; after World War One (which they spent in Berlin), their return to Belgium was written into the Treaty of Versailles; in 1794 French troops carried them to Napoleon's new museum in Paris; and from 1566 to 1584, they were shuttled from place to place in Ghent to avoid destruction at the hands of Calvinist iconoclasts. And we read of material interventions along the way: a fire in 1822 that damaged the central panels; numerous old restorations, including one in 1550 by the famous painters Jan Scorel and Lancelot Blondeel, and another botched one, also in the sixteenth century, that destroyed the altarpiece's predella; and finally, the original fluid, self-revising work of the artist himself. It was, of course, the last labor that the team, in 1950, sought to identify and restore, but that their techniques discovered was itself a crystallized flux, a momentary stasis, a materialized change of mind, a spiritualized inertness, like Adam's *trompe l'oeil* toe. What a strange vicissitude, this last one! The quintessential painting of heaven, of the hosts assembled in eternal adoration round the true, because non-manufactured (*acheiropoietos*, in Greek), icon of God, is revealed, in truth, to be the contingency of its madeness, its *factura*.

2. *Factura*, *facture*, *faktura*

The Latin word *factura* comes from *facere*, "to make." It would be simplest to define it initially as a feature of the work, if only the noun "feature" were not itself derived from *factura*, and if only that which *factura* is called a feature of, namely, the "work," did not already indicate through its very name the fact of its being something made. At once an action and its result, *factura*, like "work," assimilates the cause to the effect in order to grasp a particular class of things, namely *made*

things and, most usually, things made by human beings. Of course, depending on one's perspective, things brought into existence by nature, machine, or miracle might equally be understood as having been made; and humanly made things, for their part, need not be as "thingly" as pots, pans, and paintings but could include ideas, equations, and software. Yet the tendency is to apply *factura* to cases where making is materially featured in the thing, indeed where production of a human kind *marks* the thing.

Since Aristotle, the feature or attribute of having been fabricated rather than, say, found, has above all delimited that class of things made specifically by means of an "art." To picture this loosely, while pots and paintings are both worked objects, what a pot *is*, its value as container, might equally well be satisfied by something hollow found in nature, whereas the value of a painting rests more exclusively in its crafting. Here, too, much depends on one's cultural perspectives, or better, on one's perspective on what is, or is not, cultural. Sometimes materials mean more than craft, even in painting, as in the late Middle Ages, when gold ground cost more, and better befitted the fabricated panel painting, than did a meticulously rendered landscape view.⁵ Sometimes natural materials are made to look like crafted artifacts, as in the aleatory treasures of the early modern curiosity cabinet, where slabs of agate were cut and embellished to resemble painted scenes, or where crystals, coconuts, and coral were glued together to resemble a carnival float. In other words, *factura* may be differently *marked* in gold-ground panels, figured marble, and the easel picture, but it is nonetheless marked in each. The differences of that marking constitute the primary material of a history of *factura*.

Again, madeness has long been understood to be one of the distinguishing attributes of a thing as "artwork." But it was not always the only defining feature. For centuries, it operated in combination with a shifting litany of other attributes, such as beauty, order, vivacity, originality, feeling, and experience. At a certain point, though, all these other criteria were perceived as relative values rather than ontological conditions; whereupon madeness alone remained definitive for art. Thus, for example, the Russian Formalist Viktor Shklovskii, writing

5. Michael Baxandall, *Painting and Experience in Fifteenth Century Italy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1972), pp. 15–17.

in 1920 in an avant-garde milieu, named *factura* as “the main distinguishing feature of that particular world of specifically constructed objects, the totality of which we [call] art.”⁶ Just about that time, artists working in that same milieu tested madeness itself at its absolute minimum. In the ready-made, making was stage-managed as finding. *Factura* then became less an attribute of than an aporia within the thing as art.

To bear down on the present context, *factura* would seem to be the defining feature of things treated in this journal. For two decades now, *RES* has published writing about the “thing” (in Latin, *res*)—not about things in general, but specifically about made things. Its purview over *all* made things—pots and pans as well as paintings—stands advertised in the subtitle “Anthropology and Aesthetics.” These discursive poles, however, are not meant to sort different instances of the made according to old oppositions of use against pleasure, applied against fine, craft against art, hand against head, them against us. Neither are they a leveling embrace, such as is signalled by the disciplinary label “material culture.” Rather, “anthropology” and “aesthetics” shed a raking light upon each other’s objects, as would, for example, an anthropology of the easel painting or an aesthetics of the chamber pot. They create a field of mutual irritation, in which the competing ideals of inclusiveness and the absolute, of the sciences of man and the pursuit of the beautiful, are both retained as possible perspectives on the thing. More to the point of this present issue of *RES*, anthropology and aesthetics stand in relation to the made thing somewhat like the word *factura* does in its dual definition as process and product. Their conjunction signals a focus on the practices to which objects are bound—and especially the specific practice that was their making—and on that condition of finished objecthood that is the ecstatic site of *aesthesis*.

Devoting an issue of *RES* to *factura*, then, engenders something of a tautology. Has not madeness been the perennial subtext of this journal, which after all takes its title from Heidegger’s 1950 essay “Das Ding,” in which the Latin *res* is claimed to derive from the specific conception of “things” as “objects of production

[Herstellen]”?⁷ In his famous essay, Heidegger went on to repudiate the understanding of the thing as *factura*. Again by way of the etymology of *res*, he resurrected what he cast as its original, communitarian valence as a “thing in question,” or simply “case,” as in such phrases as *res publica* and *res adversae*. Yet even as *factura*, the *res*, for Heidegger, is released from its distancing and specifically “scientific” definition as “object”—from the Latin *objectum* (thing presented or “thrown” [*jicere*] before the mind) and also, similarly, the German *gegenstand* (thing “stood” over against [*gegen*] the mind). For *factura* is more than a feature of the thing presented for understanding. It implies an original, material attachment to a subject, and as such, it is as well a recuperative optic and a nostalgic ideal.

In this current issue of this journal, *factura* chiefly describes what might be called an “approach” to the *res* that attends to it in its aspect as “something made.” This approach is rather circular, in that it both attends to the signs of madeness in a thing and analyzes the conditions of its own attention to madeness. Of course, to think of *factura* in this way, as an approach to, or perspective on, the thing, rather than as an objective feature of the thing, limits the vast semantic field in which the word *factura* can potentially operate. But as a sort of primal word embracing, by way of a proliferating etymology, both act and fact, and ultimately, both the made and the found, *factura* demands some bracketing, some *epoché*, in order for it to be operative at all. It might be best to call *factura* an aspect of the thing, where aspect denotes a way of looking, a particular part of a more complicated matter, and the side, or feature, of the thing that shows itself.

A more casual way of conceptual bracketing might have been to use instead the word *facture*, which has been current in English since at least the fifteenth century. *Facture*, however, is now only rarely used to name, in that general sense this journal strives for, the process of making a thing, or the result of that process. Instead, it belongs largely to the vocabulary specific to a particular set of things, namely, *paintings*. As some of the papers in this issue will make clear, for a certain period, roughly from van Eyck to Cézanne, the

6. Viktor Shklovskii, “O fature i kontrel’efakh” (1920), in *Gamburgskii schet* (Moscow: Sovetskii Pisatel’, 1990), p. 99, cited in Maria Cough’s article in this volume of *RES*, p. 34, n. 7.

7. Martin Heidegger, “Das Ding,” in *Vorträge und Aufsätze* (Pfullingen: Günther Neske, 1954), pp. 160, 167. Two decades ago, Heidegger’s essay gave Francesco Pellizzi the name for the journal *RES*, which he founded.

production featured in paintings, and specifically in oil paintings, did acquire a model character for the production of things in general. We, however, no longer inhabit a world in which the hand of the master, made visible in the impastedness of his brush strokes, adequately *represents* human making generally. No longer do Titian or Rembrandt stand for us in our highest productive capacities as does the sovereign stand for his subjects, or the priest, for his flock. The *factura* specific to painting functions now as a relative value within a wider field of making, though it remains, for reasons not entirely atavistic, disproportionately represented and representative still.

Let us therefore remind ourselves of the connotations and contexts of *facture* as an aesthetic value. It signals attention to making within a reduction of a reduction. First, the made thing is observed bracketed in that most mysterious of fabrications: the picture executed in oil, in which one thing, the material of color and canvas, is transformed by the mechanisms of art into the image of another thing. Second, what remains visibly and materially made about that thing, despite its sublation, as image, into something else, becomes further bracketed, as an attention precisely not to mimesis, or even to composition, color, or line, but to surface, and particularly to surface at its most reified, in the condition of impasto. Like the word *impasto* itself, *facture* belongs primarily to the language of connoisseurship, where what is endeavored to be “known” about the thing is its maker. Although observed by attending rigorously to the materiality of surface, *facture*, in discourse in which it chiefly circulates, indexes the maker’s hand, and through that, subject agency and inner depth. Indeed the *facture* exemplified in the thingliness of impasto is, paradoxically, also the most spiritualized of *factures*, because it most reveals the artist’s person. Rembrandt’s caked surfaces thus are understood as more telling of whether a thing is “a Rembrandt,” and of who Rembrandt really was, as mind attached to a working hand, than the concealed *factures* of lesser masters. Connoisseurship’s hunt, via attention to *facture*, for the real masterpiece gains momentum, becoming the recognition of the master. Masters are the ones who show themselves in what they do. They are magicians of what Latour terms attachment,⁸ of the ties, that is, between person and thing, thought and image,

mind and matter, which enlightened thought holds in contempt. Specifically, masters link person to thing by allowing *doing* to become visible in *done*.

Today we expect a less superstitious understanding of what the made thing is. Skeptical of the leap from trace to face, we make do, instead, with appreciating the inertness of the trace, competitively manufactured by abstract artists in the non-transcendence of paint *qua* paint. At about 1912 in Russia, this quintessentially modernist campaign for the pure mark, for a painterly instance cleansed of figures and spirits, was pursued under the rallying cry of “*faktura*.” In a dialectical process reconstructed by Gough in this volume, the attention to and instantiation of madeness as index of the artist was eradicated by madeness, or *faktura*, in the thing itself.

Modernists sought to make without making, installing found objects in the frame of the work, and replacing artistic agency with the inhuman energy of accident and physics. These aleatory art-making strategies, traced to their eighteenth- and nineteenth-century precedents by Dario Gamboni in this volume, self-consciously evoke and metabolize the changed conditions of making that had already occurred within the wider culture. Modernists responded to modernization. They styled their gestures of art-making variously to imitate, reject, parody, modify, or magnify the automated production underlying industrialization and its attendant economic, social, and political conditions. Let’s call this *faktura* with a *k*. It can stand as a suitable name for modernism’s specific *factura*, just as, for the preceding period, *facture* might stand for the madeness hypostatized in the easel painting. For that very reason, I have kept the word in Latin, spelled with a *c* and matching *res*. Spelling it with a *k* would ally us too narrowly with that specific and now-obsolete caesura within the longer history of European understandings of making. Anyway, to my eye, the foreign-looking *k* adds a curious coloring to the term itself. The guttural tenuis of its sound becomes somehow magnified, evoking, by way of so many Anglo-American filmic caricatures, the twin dystopias of a brutalist, techno-fetishistic modernity: Soviet Russia and Germany.

3. Inside the black box

Let us turn, though, to the likeness of a thing most decidedly “made in Germany,” Adolph Menzel’s famous study of the binoculars Field Marshall Helmut von

8. See Bruno Latour’s article in this volume of *RES*, pp. 20–31.



Figure 4. Adolph Menzel, *Study of the Binoculars of Helmut von Moltke*, 1871. Pencil and gouache on paper, 26 x 40 cm. Staatliche Museen zu Berlin.

Moltke carried with him into battle against the French (fig. 4).⁹ Executed in 1871 on the edge of a larger-than-life-size victory portrait of Moltke, this sheet has recently served to picture modernism retrospectively, from a distant posterity. In the opening sentence of *Farewell to an Idea*, T. J. Clark asks us to imagine Menzel's gouache "unearthed by some future archaeologist," as one among "a handful of disconnected pieces left over from a holocaust that had utterly wiped out the pieces' context—their history, the family of languages they belonged to, all traces of a built environment."¹⁰ The gouache works well for Clark's thought experiment,

9. Adolph Menzel 1815–1905: *Between Romanticism and Impressionism*, ed. C. Keisch and M. U. Riemann-Rehner (Washington, D.C.: National Gallery of Art, 1996) exh. cat., cat. no. 133.

10. T. J. Clark, *Farewell to an Idea: Episodes from a History of Modernism* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1999), p. 1.

because Menzel himself seems to have treated his object like some single surviving tessera from a lost mosaic. But what was the artist really doing in this sheet? What was the purpose of *factura* here, in this obsessively made and remade image of a certain manufactured thing?

Certainly, making has been made a way of knowing. Menzel portrays Moltke's binoculars from different angles, and in different graphic media and modes, in order to understand, in ways useful to a painter, how the binoculars look. One immediate purpose of this understanding may have been to record the binoculars in as complete a way possible so that, in including them in a finished likeness of Moltke, or in some history painting featuring Moltke, he would not be constrained by the contingencies of the one initially captured aspect. Above center on the sheet, Menzel shows the binoculars from an oblique angle, where their simple

geometry, carefully recorded to the right, appears subtly but globally transformed. At the lower right, by contrast, he seems more to train than to archive an inscription of such a transformation. That is, while the renderings above, along with the recorded measurements, register how the thing itself looked and how it was made, the not-quite ovals of the lenses viewed in perspective, which have been traced and retraced in pencil, are efforts to know, by way of hand-eye exercise, how to make a drawing of such a thing, or even how to draw. Drawing thus acquires its object through diligent practice, visible here as a redundancy of inscription, the simultaneity of knowing and know-how.

Throughout the sheet, however, such a spectacle of making as craft acquired through practice blends with curiosity about another *factura*: that of the binoculars themselves. This is best documented in the several outline sketches of the adjustment mechanism of the lenses. Meticulous details of a finely wrought mechanical detail, these drafts focus *on focus*, reminding us (as if we ever needed this reminder) that the thing we see depicted is the instrument of adjusted seeing, that it, too, is an image-maker.

In a forthcoming book on Menzel, Michael Fried treats the studies of the binoculars' focusing knob as instances of what he terms embodiment.¹¹ According to Fried, the visible, in Menzel, always carries with it the traces of the corporeality that brought it about—here, focus, cast as a labor of the thumb as well as of the eye. Menzel's diagrams of the knob, though, as well as his view and elevation of Moltke's metal field-glasses as a whole, have a ghostly quality to them, as if they were instruments seen prosthetically by way of other instruments. Embodiment, as the marked attachment (in Menzel) of vision to flesh, is far better observed in the gouache portraits of the binoculars' leather case. In his written annotation of the sheet, Menzel announces this peripheral inclusion in a stuttering parenthesis "Field-marshal Gr.: v. Moltke's binoculars (and: case) which he used in the war of 1870–1." The itemizing "(and: case)" suggests that the case will not necessarily be perceived as belonging to the binoculars, indeed that it might be hard to recognize as a case at all.

Like the studies of the binoculars themselves, these gouaches record visual information about the thing.

They study how the case looks opened and closed. They explore the organic shape of its leather body—subtly distinct from the regularity of the metal field glasses it encases—by sampling a series of aspects on it, all of which are oblique. These gouaches measure, furthermore, the suppleness of the leather straps, as indicated by the way they bend and curl; and they analyze (by representing) how these straps are linked to the case and to each other in knotty systems of attachment. Even the attachment of the container to its content is registered in the marks in the velvet lining impressed by the lenses' round casements.

Now to return for a moment to Heidegger, in his essay, he takes a jug as his example of the thing: "the thing is a jug." What a container, in truth, contains is not, as science pictures it, merely the one physical substance (say, wine) that has displaced another (air) within the positional matrix of an interior.¹² The container, in Heidegger's vocabulary, receives and gives, actively gathering itself (as thing) and its contents (as *its* thing) in that primal attachment called world. Despite its organic material, its humanizing signs of use, and its legible traces of what it holds, Menzel's *res* as "case" is worlds apart from Heidegger's rustic jug. And that case's contents—the binoculars, instruments of a technology of vision deployed here specifically in war—could not be further from the list of elemental things with which Heidegger concludes his philosophical pastoral: "jug and bench, bridge and plow . . . tree and pond, stream and mountain . . . heron and deer, horse and bull . . . mirror and buckle, picture and book, crown and cross."¹³ If anything, binoculars do precisely what Heidegger, the reactionary, repudiates in the modern age: the eclipse of distance as disappearance of the near; disappearance of the near as forgetfulness of being.

Although a refreshing antidote to Heidegger's blood-and-soil jug, Menzel's likeness of Moltke's binoculars is an ambivalent example of the apparatus it studies. The portraits of the case's twisted leather cord, playing around the border of the image like concretized ornamental flourishes, seem excessive for the task of knowing how this cord looks, as if the autopoietic energies of *factura* everywhere exceed the measured requirements of fact. One contemporary, observing

11. Michael Fried, "Menzel's Modernism: Art and Embodiment in 19th-Century Berlin," unpublished typescript.

12. Heidegger (see note 7), pp. 158, 162.

13. *Ibid.*, p. 175.

Menzel sketching Moltke from life just after the great battle, recalls his astonishment at this extra labor: "While we were on tenterhooks, Menzel squandered his time painting the decorative charms around Moltke in chocolate brown and yellow ochre."¹⁴ In his essay in this volume on Dürer's graphic style, Friedrich Teja Bach has analyzed the free play between the spontaneous forms born from the manual force of making and those forms' subsequent fulfillment as mimetic figures.¹⁵ Dürer (whose marginal sketches, known through lithographs by Strixner, captivated Menzel) draws lines before he draws things with line: *factura* always comes first. Menzel reifies the arabesque, that Romantic emblem of absolute fictionality; he makes it into a fact. But in so doing he pictures, by a reciprocal movement displayed in the final product, the attachment of facts to a prior, original fiction.

Menzel may have "squandered his time" in the manner of the fetishist who focuses on the marginal (the container), because it was the last thing he saw before the thing itself (the binoculars, Moltke). He may be more distracted than attentive, which is only appropriate for the knotted nature of the strap and for its pictorial ancestors, the calligraphic mazes of Dürer and Leonardo. In the residue of that detour, however, Menzel also pictures the *factura* prior to the ontologically centered, finished thing. As such, the study sheet serves as a fitting emblem for what Bruno Latour, in an essay presented in this volume, terms the factish—that ineluctable hybrid of fetishes and facts. At once enchanted and disenchanting, the work of art shows us what lies inside the fact's black box.

"Black-boxing" is the activity of rendering facts distinct from the circumstances of their *factura*. By way of the metaphor of a lightless apparatus, it designated that labor, central to what scientists do, by which items of knowledge, which will have been constituted in the cascade of instruments, their readouts, the literary inscriptions and re-inscriptions of those readouts, and the statements that will be (after their controversy settles) fed back into new such cascades, are suddenly

utilized as, and understood to be, entities directly available in the world. This was the labor studied by Latour and Steve Woolgar on the example of a certain fact, established by way of a massive effort by the Salk Institute over a period of eight years, that the hormone "TRF is Pyro-Glu-His-Pro-NH₂."¹⁶

Science, Latour's analysis reveals, black-boxes the process of making in order to make the made seem like the found. The work of art, in a contrast that is anything but simple or stable, displays its madeness as that which it most effectively is. In *Moltke's Binoculars*, Menzel displays his making in such elements as the squandered labor of the cord, the surplus spectacle of verism in the rendering of the case's magenta lining, and above all, the sheer fact of displaying as image the entirety of the process of *study* itself. But he does this, uncannily, in the image of an apparatus that itself makes images, that brings the far near, renders the enemy visible, and matches map and battle plan to landscape and event. However, whereas the binoculars will, as thing, disappear in the instant they are focussed, Menzel adjusts his eye to the binoculars themselves, painting not *their* content (the image seen through them) but their outwardness, indeed, their form as marked and doubled by the black box of their container. Perhaps that is why Menzel's sheet, despite its investment in the academicist values of illusionism and anecdote, seems so exemplarily modernist. It puts blinders on the machine-tooled instrument of cold facts in order to expose the brute facticity of overheated making. Or to put this another way, the sheet exposes why, for all the repugnance it felt for that art as it was traditionally practiced, modernism metabolized the modern chiefly by way of the medium of painting.

Even in the most veristic styles of painting—indeed in them above all—what is appreciated is not the object perfectly portrayed, but the perfection of that portrayal. Jan van Eyck's spectacle of paradise amazes because its crafting, rendered invisible by way of craft, will be everywhere and always visible. And in the turbulence imaged underneath, by means of their instruments of invisible light, the team in Brussels discerned *facture's* density, not its concealment. Making was never black-boxed in the painting, not even in its penitenti,

14. Paul Meyerheim, *Vossische Zeitung* 46 (28 January 1910); *Adolph Menzel* (see note 9), p. 350.

15. The example, here, of Menzel's *Moltke's Binoculars* was partly occasioned by a seminar Friedrich Teja Bach and I taught together at the University of Vienna in 1999. On Menzel and the arabesque, see Werner Busch, *Die notwendige Arabeske* (Berlin: Mann, 1995), pp. 278–280.

16. Bruno Latour and Steve Woolgar, *Laboratory Life: The Social Construction of Facts* (1979; reprint, Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1986), p. 146.

because they merely instance more labor to an audience that cannot get enough. Sometimes, underdrawings revealed by infra-red reflectography will be styled as the work's hidden key, as if the painting were a plastic demonstration model of the hermeneutics' object, where meaning is imagined as a hidden kernel inside a concealing casement. But these are the enthusiasms of a culture still under *factura's* spell, ecstasies of the pure mark as secret of art.

What a matchless archive of *factura*, the history of painting! Not only does it consist in the ostentation of its own making, its devotees also continue to magnify that display. Where the laboratory effectively buries its instruments and archives the moment it convinces scientific communities that its fact are in the world, the contents of the artist's studio, like the densely impastoed canvases that issue forth from the studio, are carefully sifted for all relics of making. That, after all, is the process by which Menzel's gouache first emerged from his studio into public view in 1895, in a transformation of the preparatory study, or practice sheet, into a independent work of art. Since the Renaissance, the phenomenon of artists' drawings as things worthy of being enjoyed on their own and collected, emerged as an artifact of the avid reception of *factura* in oil painting. The open-ended drawing, it was felt, could bring the master closer than could the finished canvas. Its naked marks indexed more directly his hand, its mobile lines memorialized more completely his freedom, its intimacy signalled more deeply his autonomy. Almost since the rise of the autonomous easel painting, with its artistry that conceals artistry, there has existed this parallel taste for the sketch, as well as for the rest of the indexical detritus of making that collectors, connoisseurs, and critics rescue from the artist's studio. To this we might add the academic art historian's recuperation of "contexts," that endless cascade of mediators, collectively termed "society," that can be discerned there in the making. But it was a certain way of painting that drew attention to *factura* at the start.

4. Attachments

What, though, can be gained by observing this archive in terms of the aspect *factura*? Does not the history of painting, whether as the old story of the development of a craft or as the newer tale of social and institutional conditions that make that craft, already observe its object from this perspective? In short, is what

we are calling *factura*, in fact, not just a fancy word for the history of art?

One might distinguish between instances of making and ideas about making—Dürer's graphic spontaneity, say, against his or his culture's ideal of human freedom. One might also, by means of the aspect *factura*, connect both the instances and ideals of art-making to examples and notions of fabrication more generally, thus reintegrating art into other production and consumption practices of the wider culture. This might result in a more formalist Marxist art history, or else a more materialist reception history along the lines envisioned by Michel de Certeau.¹⁷ In the latter case, beholding itself would be treated as a form of making, with a history running alongside that of the objects beholders attend to. Most telling would be the areas of overlap between the two, as in nineteenth-century amateurism, where the professional production of paintings assumed an audience including many hobbyist painters, who would have practiced beholding differently from viewers who see but don't do. To a dilettante watercolorist of rural views, beholding a Turner would have been partly a performative event, like a guitarist playing air guitar to Eric Clapton. The routine transcription of orchestra scores for four-hand piano, and the imperative, troublesome already to Beethoven, that solo music be challenging but performable by amateurs, indicates the degree to which those whom we think of as the "audience" were in fact the makers of "classical" music. On a larger historical scale, studies of making embedded in using would resurrect the old motif of the division of labor. *Factura's* changing visibility in art could then be mapped against its visibility in everyday spheres of production. I also note here that painting, drawing, and sculpture are meaningful today far less as things one beholds than as things one personally makes. Art classes, ubiquitous in institutions of person-making, from schools and prisons to retirement homes, frame current ideas of art more tellingly than do art museums.

Reading the essays that have, in fact, been occasioned by this current issue of *RES*, though, I have been struck by a different theme: the oil painting as model of *factura*. The idea that painting's exemplarity

17. Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, trans. Steven Rendall (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), pp. 29–42 and passim.

has a half-life; that we can date its beginning and observe its passing; that its "era" corresponds to that of the modern—this all enhances its eloquence as a model. It implies that painting, which was practiced long before its era of predominance, exemplifies something besides itself that shares this half-life. Yet there is also something about painting during its era that makes it seem, paradoxically, like the *natural* model for cultural making. Painting's model character derives from its capacity to appear both entirely fabricated and miraculously arisen. This is partly because of painting's classic scenography, as oil colors brushed onto a canvas support that is then surrounded at its edges by a sculpted frame. Separating work from world, the frame encourages us to view the painting aesthetically, which is to say, as representation, rather than as what it represents.¹⁸ As this peculiar material *thing*, though, painting is visually ambivalent, showing at one and the same time texture and mimesis, itself and something else. In his essay published here on European myths of painting's origins, Gerhard Wolf documents the drive, on the part of painting's post-medieval champions, to imagine the art arising automatically, outside the material and temporal conditions of *factura*. The legends of shadow-tracing, of Christ's miraculous likeness on Veronica's veil, and of Narcissus's reflection, propose the source of the original painting, and thus the mode of painting's origination, in a canon of images produced instantly and without manual intervention: *factura* without manufacture. These legends idealize in the sense both that they exalt painting and that they did so by making painting's ideal immaterial, like an *idea*. Why these stories of sublated *factura*?

Returning to van Eyck, his several frontal portraits of Christ (including that of the *Ghent Altarpiece*) evoke the legends of the *acheiropoetos*, the image "not made by human hands" (in Greek, *a* [without] + *cheir* [hand] + *poien* [to make]; in Latin, *non manufactum*), in order, among other things, to celebrate how well these paintings are made. Although they look miraculous, they are (no viewer has ever doubted this) *handmade*.¹⁹

That is their miracle, which means, from the start, the wonder is in the making, or reverts to the gifted maker. This fits pictures executed in van Eyck's distinctive style and medium. Through that density of oil colors described earlier, the artist conceals all evidence of making, particularly the visibility of the painterly mark, the individual stroke of paint.

Similarly, the metaphors of reflection, massively present in van Eyck, likens *factura* to the image-making property of mirrors. But as van Eyck declares in his famous signature below the convex looking glass in the *Arnolfini Portrait*, the artist "was here [*fuit hic*]" also in the crafted mirror. For Renaissance painters, moreover, the figure of the *non manufactum* confers praise, because manual production generally, and the hand-making of images specifically, were negatively charged. Not only did the Septuagint term pagan idols *cheiropoetos* (for example, "Their idols are silver and gold, the work of human hands" [Psalm 115: 14]).²⁰ Their manual, and hence servile, labor was, in ways akin to the vilified tanners and undertakers, materially dirtying to the hands. Philip Sohm, in his account in this volume of the early history of ideas of painterly style, cites the assurances of the noble Genovese painter Giovanni Poggi, that "to start with the staining of your hands, I say that it is not necessary to touch the paints with your hands."²¹ The restyling of painting as a "liberal art," so crucial to its economic flexibility and cultural prestige as meta-labor, was predicated on myths, as well as practice that argued it was headwork rather than handicraft.

And yet, painting would never have become the model of *factura* when it did were it not also, and in new ways during its era, visibly handicraft. Marco Boschini's story about Titian "paint[ing] more with his fingers than his brushes"²² does more than affirm that artist's distinctively painterly style, the free, gestural manner of the Venetian school and its imitators. Van Eyck's paintings are also ostentatiously made, as the painter himself signals in his novel practice of signing and dating his panels. Indeed, madeness staged as loose

18. Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Wahrheit und Methode*, 4th ed. (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1975), p. 129.

19. Witness the *Ghent Altarpiece's* survival through the 1566 iconoclastic campaign against idols. In general, it was on the materiality of sculpture—in shrines, embedded in architecture, or in the corpus and surrounds of altarpieces—that the hammer blows mostly struck.

20. Ernst von Dobschütz, *Christusbilder. Untersuchung zur christlichen Legende* (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1899), vol. 1, p. 38.

21. *Raccolta di lettere sulla pittura, scultura ed architetti* (Milan: G. Silvestri, 1825), vol. 6, p. 74, cited in Philip Sohm's article in this volume of *RES*, p. 107, n. 30.

22. Boschini, *La Carta del navegar pitoresco*, ed. A. Palluchini (Venice and Rome, 1966), p. 712, cited in Sohm (this volume), p. 107, n. 32.

brushwork, caked pigment, artful unfinish, and the contingency of the mark shares with the legends of *non manufactum* the desire to represent paintings as a hyperbolically *immediate* labor—in this case, as indexically linked to the painter's body. Painting without painting (the veil, the mirror) and painting as nothing but painting (Titian's brushwork) together constitute the model character of painting. Dialectical instances of attachment, they sublimate in order to recombine the divided terms of modern *factura*: head and hand, spirit and flesh, human and thing, producer and product, making and the made.²³

The more absolute *factura's* divisions, the purer painting's sublation. Toward the end of the nineteenth century, avant-garde modernism defined itself by way of its revulsion from the achieved hybridity of easel painting. It repudiated the products of the "academy" by claiming to expose the fraudulence of their attachments. Traditional painting, the modernists argued, purveyed illusions not only about the world, which it falsified by idealization and sentiment, but also (more grievously) about itself, which it materially dissembled. Such painting was mere ornament—that (in Adolf Loos's language) "criminal" fabrication that turned a thing into something it is not. Reform could come by way of a purified decor, as in Gottfried Semper's dream of reattaching ornamental devices to the worked materials from which they, in the fabrications of primitive craft, originated. Or, more cunningly, it could be instituted within painting itself, if painting could lose its illusions and show itself instead. This "autonomization of method vis-à-vis subject matter"²⁴ was observed already by Baudelaire. Impressionism's color spots overcame false decor by displaying the naked thingliness of their *factura*.²⁵ In "Cézanne's Unfinish" in this volume, Matthew Simms studies a seminal moment in this reduction: the patches of unprimed canvas left unpainted and (in this painter's understanding) unpaintable. Neither the painterly technique of the reserve nor the mark of unfinish as aesthetic value, these empty spots are the nothing out of which painting is raised.

To show, with paint, nothing but the madeness of the made, to establish *factura* as painting's only image, involves strategies of radical disruption occurring specifically on, or in, the planar surface of the easel picture. The Russian avant-garde use of the term "faktura" began as a discourse of painting's "nagging textures,"²⁶ its surfaces qualities as opposed to its mimesis. Reified, texture interrupts the image with what Voldemars Matvejs (Vladimir Markov, pseud.) termed noise (*shum*).²⁷ "Noise" expresses, in cybernetic terms, the conditions of the made thing outside of its attachment to a producing or consuming subject. Locally apparent in, for example, the mixed medium of Eastern Orthodox religious icons, noise was globally the state of being of the thing-in-itself. To make works into objects commensurate to this truth of their condition, abstract painters, from Malevich to the present day, exposed their painting's flatness, as textured surface or planar thing. Or they reestablished painting in empirical space, treating it like sculpture, or installing it in corners or forward from the wall. Or, more radically, they attempted to absent themselves from its making by allowing things to make things, as if by accident. Man Ray's meta-ready-made *Perpetual Motif*, analyzed in this volume by Pamela Lee, pictures the degree to which even the *factura* involved in viewing, in the performance of the work by the beholder, is contingent on the thing (here connecting time, marked by the metronome, with the gaze—the eye as weight). Modernism thus reverses Freud's gnomic dictum about the labor of becoming human. It replaces "where it was, there I should come into being" (*Wo es war, soll ich werden*) with a deathly "where I was, there it should come about."

The story of painting's *factura* ends with the abject, not the object.²⁸ Produced without agency, stripped of depth, and purged of subject and subjectivity, the painterly remains impure, just as it had been from the start. Toward the end of the seventeenth-century, during the nascence of connoisseurship's idealization of

23. See my analysis of the relationship between Dürer's cultivation of a personal style and the rise of mechanical reproduction. Joseph Leo Koerner, *The Moment of Self-Portraiture in German Renaissance Art* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), pp. 203–223.

24. Theodor Adorno, *Ästhetische Theorie* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1970), p. 313.

25. See Hermann Broch, "Holmannsthal und seine Zeit," in *Gesammelte Werke* (Zurich: Rhein, 1955), vol. 6, pp. 52–54.

26. Roman Jacobson, "A Futurian of Science," in *My Futurist Years*, ed. Bent Jangfeldt and Stephen Rudy, trans. Stephen Rudy (New York: Marsilio, 1997), p. 28; cited in Gough (this volume of *RES*), p. 37, n. 32.

27. Vladimir Markov (Voldemars Matvejs), *Printsipy tvochestva v plasticheskikh iskusstvakh: Faktura* (St. Petersburg: Soiuz Molodezhi, 1914), p. 2, cited in Gough (this volume of *RES*), p. 39, n. 47.

28. See my editorial "The Abject," *RES: Anthropology and Aesthetics* 31 (1997):5–8.

painting as index of the artist's living hand, the mark was likened to a cadaverous stain—in Filippo Baldinucci, the *macchia*, that "sign that liquids, colors and dirt leaves on the surface of things that they touch on top of which they fall. Latin *Macula*."²⁹ (It is no wonder that this ambivalent model of painting's materiality would change profoundly as a result of the photographic image. From the point of view of technics, during the period from the rise of linear perspective to the invention of photography, painting as surface rather than likeness was bound to be an eccentric value.)

This tenuous attachment, within painting's *factura*, of the human subject to the inanimate thing is perhaps best analyzed in the art of Rembrandt. On the one hand, Rembrandt exemplifies everything heroic about painting's madeness. The massively impastoed surface of his late works, which cost him his public but earned him immortality, seem to convey the pure spirit of the pictures' subjects, as well as of their maker, the painter Rembrandt. On the other hand, as Benjamin Binstock discusses in his essay in this volume, from the moment of their making, these caked surfaces were judged to be abject. One contemporary, Gerard de Lairese, complained of how Rembrandt's "paint runs down the work like dung."³⁰ And Jean Genet taught us to see the so-called *Jewish Bride* as, at base, a pile of dung. More recently, the materiality of "a Rembrandt" has doubled as a figure of this painter's materialism: his defilement by the market. Bruno Latour's concept of the *factish*, and his analysis of its mode of "attachment," explains why *factura* need be both these things, the high and the low, spirit and shit. There remains, however, a political question—which of *factura*'s attachments are exemplary: the recuperative "gathering" of subject and object in Heidegger's jug, or the modernist "leaning" on the materiality of urban detritus, as in the *Matvejs*?³¹ It is one of *RES*'s virtues to leave the question of *which* thing simultaneously open, in an anthropology of artifacts, and permanently at stake, in critical aesthetics.

5. Adam's toe, again

Van Eyck remade Adam's foot presumably to dramatize that Adam and Eve stand on a plane above the viewer (figs. 1–3). Certainly, the overall rendering of the figures indicates this elevation as well. Placed obliquely to the picture plane, Adam's shoulders, as well as the features of his face, form legible orthogonals that converge toward a vanishing point far below, signalling, by the rules of van Eyck's nascent linear perspective, that also the viewpoint from which this body is shown to be observed must lie somewhere underneath. Anyway, empirical beholders standing before the altar in St. Bavo's would necessarily have had the top row of van Eyck's images way above them. Perspective here merely allows what is represented in the image to seem to accord with the placement of the image as physical thing, so that painted space appears *attached to* the painting's space. And the revised foot merely highlights this attachment, affirming that even the base of these upper panels lies above eye-level.

Merely? Is it so natural to painting—even to these particular paintings—to show us where we are? Does not the labor of painting, as a sublation of substance, precisely place us both here and elsewhere, both before this *res* and in its paradise? Indeed in all the other panels that van Eyck's Adam and Eve flank, the painted world unfolds either across from or below us, no matter where we might actually stand. And well it should. For perspective is robust. It maintains its fixed viewpoint regardless of the location or movement of the seeing eye. Elsewhere in his altarpiece, van Eyck does subtly calibrate his paintings' constant point of view to their local position. Thus while in the upper register, the triune God, Mary, the Baptist, and the music-making angels are shown as if observed *vis-à-vis* the beholder, in the lower register, a vast landscape with the Eternal Mass at its center unfolds as if viewed from above. In picturing heaven, the logic goes, painting raises us there, allowing us to occupy that position *sub species aeternitatis* shared by the gathered hosts. Yet it is the heavens in heaven that unsettle Adam's footing in paradise. If, as the toes suggest, the ground from which they rise would, along with them, be seen from underneath (were it not for the frame), then the wonderful sky above paradise opens up under that ground, indeed is that ground's underside. And how, for that matter, do we reconcile the space of Adam and Eve's niches to that of the angels next door, where a tiled floor slopes upward from the frame?

29. Baldinucci, *Vocabolario Toscana dell'arte del disegno* (Florence: Santi Franchi, 1681), p. 86, cited in Sohm (this volume of *RES*), p. 121, n. 80.

30. Seymour Slive, *Rembrandt and His Critics 1630–1730*, 2d ed. (New York: Hacker, 1988), p. 163, cited in Benjamin Binstock's article in this volume of *RES*, p. 140, n. 4.

31. See Maria Gough's article in this volume of *RES*, pp. 32–59.

To understand these discrepancies, one need not spin theories of a belated assembly of differently intended parts. Adam and Eve appear different because they are different. Their sin, recollected here by Eve's apple and by the gestured shame of their nakedness, was their loss of paradise. Now after the Crucifixion, Christ embarked on a triumphant expedition to bring away the souls of the righteous, who had been held captive in hell since the beginning. First among these were Eve and Adam, whose release from sin augured our own. In van Eyck's altarpiece, they appear before God as our inheritance and our redemption: they are our origin, image, and surrogate. The sixteenth century, recognizing their thematic importance, referred to van Eyck's work as "the panel of Adam and Eve." That they alone signal our position on earth and place us in a visible attachment of real to ideal, fits the salvific structure of what Christians called "world."

The pentimento of Adam's foot resolves a question. How does painting's paradise *attach* to this world? Van Eyck fashions pictorial attachments through linear perspective, as well as through the *en face* Christ, who fixes us in his gaze. By way of these devices, he also pictures another attachment: the reunion of man and God, of earth and heaven, of made with maker, in sacrament. Christ, pictured in his true icon or *acheiropoetos*, flows downward and outward as miraculous presence through the Paschal Lamb in paradise, into a "fountain of life" further forward, and from there into our world along a curious little gully of jewel-strewn earth at the exact center of the lower framing edge. Reversing the tide of vision into depth, this figure of overflow concerns this painting's ritual placement and function, as backdrop to, and possibly as container for, the eucharistic sacrament. In the Mass, both as it is pictured in heaven and as it occurs in ordinary liturgy, Christ is held to be present (in Thomas Aquinas's terms) as the invisible but efficacious *substance* of the *accidents* of the bread and wine. This mystically instituted, ritually ever-present, and materially nonmanufactured "Real" had its place before, or even *in*—if the altarpiece's lost predella originally featured a Host tabernacle just beneath the mud gully now at the ensemble's base³²—the fabric of van Eyck's paintings.

In Adam's foot, van Eyck fashions a radically different figure of emanation. He makes—or remakes—a visible but wholly virtual presence, in which paintings' epochal illusion of substance (oil colors transformed like mud *into* jewels) seems at one tiny point materially to enter our space. Adam's raised big toe, seeming to pass just in front of a trompe l'oeil inner frame, appearing thus to pierce the picture plane. Although flamboyantly virtual, the toe interpellates a real presence in the world: the picture's viewer in his or her location on the ground. Attaching us to the earth, the toe, itself abject but raised, at once reifies painting's fabrications ("It's all really there!") and exposes their contingency ("It just looks like that from here"). Through it, the picture tells us exactly where we (still) stand vis-à-vis the paradise to which we think we have been raised.

When God cast Adam out of Eden, he condemned him to labor and death: "In the sweat of thy face thou shalt eat bread, till thou shalt return unto the ground; for out of it was thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return" (Gen. 3: 19). Labor and death, tilling and burial, are both of the earth. We are made, make things, and will be made of earth: it is our home, our matter, our mother. At the lower edge of his altarpiece, van Eyck pictures redemption on earth in the earthy gully from work to world. But in Adam, famously, the artist portrays man as *worker*. His tanned hands and face contrast visibly with his pale body as sign of his "sweat" and as relic, too, of his clothed, shamed condition. Yet in his forward stride, recollecting both his expulsion from and return to paradise, he also signals his dignity, as created being and as creator, free to fall but capable, too, of redemption.³³ It is under this corporealization of what *factura* is (Adam's, van Eyck's), in a cosmos gathered from beginning to end, that van Eyck places us on earth, as if in a grave below the altarpiece. We make and are made. *Factura* is our freedom, our curse.

33. I am grateful to Peter Sachs for this insight. Thanks also to Francesco Pellizzi, for reading an early draft of the text; to Anna Kim, for helping gather illustrations and prepare the manuscript; and to Friedrich Teja Bach, Michael Fried, Bruno Latour, Meg Koster, and Ron Spronk for their important inspiration.

32. See the proposal in Lotte Brand Philip, *The Ghent Altarpiece and the Art of Jan van Eyck* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1971), p. 75 and *passim*.

RES 36 autumn 1999

Factura



Res 36 Autumn 1999

Anthropology and aesthetics

Contents

Factura

- 5 EDITORIAL
JOSEPH LEO KOERNER
Factura
- 20 **BRUNO LATOUR**
Factures/fractures: from the concept of network to the concept of attachment
- 32 **MARIA GOUGH**
Faktura: the making of the Russian avant-garde
- 60 **GERHARD WOLF**
The origins of painting
- 79 **FRIEDRICH TEJA BACH**
Albrecht Dürer: figures of the marginal
- 100 **PHILIP SOHM**
Maniera and the absent hand: avoiding the etymology of style
- 125 **REBECCA ZORACH**
Everything swims with excess: gold and its fashioning in sixteenth-century France
- 138 **BENJAMIN BINSTOCK**
Rembrandt's paint
- 166 **PAULA CARABELL**
Framing and fiction in the work of Paolo Veronese: a study in the structure and meaning of the image *di sotto in su*
- 186 **T. A. ANSTEY**
Fictive harmonies: music and the Tempio Malatestiano
- 205 **DARIO GAMBONI**
"Fabrication of accidents": *factura* and chance in nineteenth-century art