

DENIS DIDEROT

Encyclopédie | Music | Body | Repression

grand Amie et quelques bes jaloux.
piât à l'igle, et blelle les liboux.

grand Amie et quelques bes jaloux.
piât à l'igle, et blelle les liboux.

4-389

“An exuberant exploration of this endlessly fascinating writer—
we need our Diderots now more than ever.”

—SARAH BAKEWELL, *New York Times* bestselling author of *How to Live*

DIDEROT

AND THE ART OF
THINKING
FREELY

ANDREW S. CURRAN

DENIS DIDEROT

- A typical day for Diderot: “write on ancient Chinese and Greek music first thing in the morning, study the mechanics of a cotton mill until noon, help purchase paintings for Catherine the Great in the afternoon, and then return home and compose a play and a 20-page letter to his mistress in the evening.”
- “He criticized Louis XVI for income inequality. He said France was a powder keg that was going to blow up, nine years before the revolution. And he was also a great antislavery voice, around 1780. What’s remarkable is that he didn’t just say slavery is bad, he refuted all the racial stereotypes in a way no one else was doing at the time.”
- “So much of his existence was based on the idea of posterity. He made a huge bet, by putting these things aside, that people like us would ultimately read his unpublished works. One of the most revealing things he wrote was: ‘One only communicates with force from the bottom of the grave.’”



DENIS DIDEROT

.....

- 1713-1784
- Trained as a philosopher, disowned by his father, lived a bohemian life hanging out with the *philosophes*, especially Rousseau
- Co-founder and chief editor of the *Encyclopédie*
- Got nothing from the French, during his life or after (not accepted by the Académie Française, not buried in the Pantheon); Catherine the Great of Russia supported him instead; his library is in St. Petersburg
- Most literary works published after his death

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*Tantum series juncturaque pollet,
Tantum de medio sumptis accedit honoris!* HORAT.

TOME PREMIER.



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DURAND, rue Saint Jacques, à Saint Landry, & au Griffon.

M. DCC. LI.

AVEC APPROBATION ET PRIVILEGE DU ROY.

THE ENCYCLOPÉDIE

- From *enkyklios* + *paideia*, or general (circular) training, child-rearing, education
- full title: *Encyclopedia, or Reasoned Dictionary of the Sciences, Arts and Trades by a Society of Men of Letters.*
- Grew from a translation to an enormous project with many contributors: over 2,000 contributors; 75,000 articles, 28 volumes
- Had a dream: a total map of human knowledge, but equally important, one that would be available to the world at large (see *knowledge rationing*)

Fig. 1.

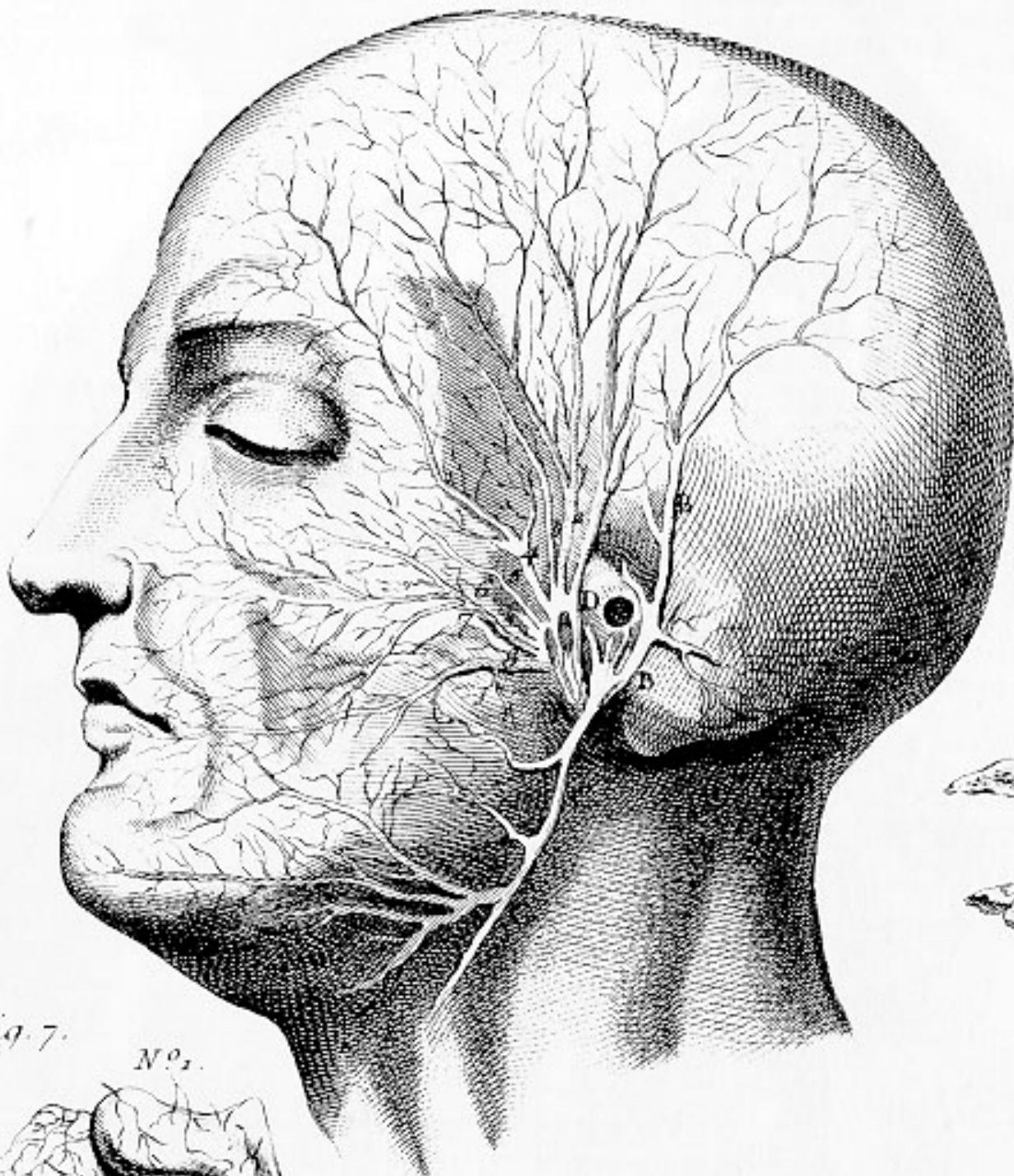


Fig. 2.

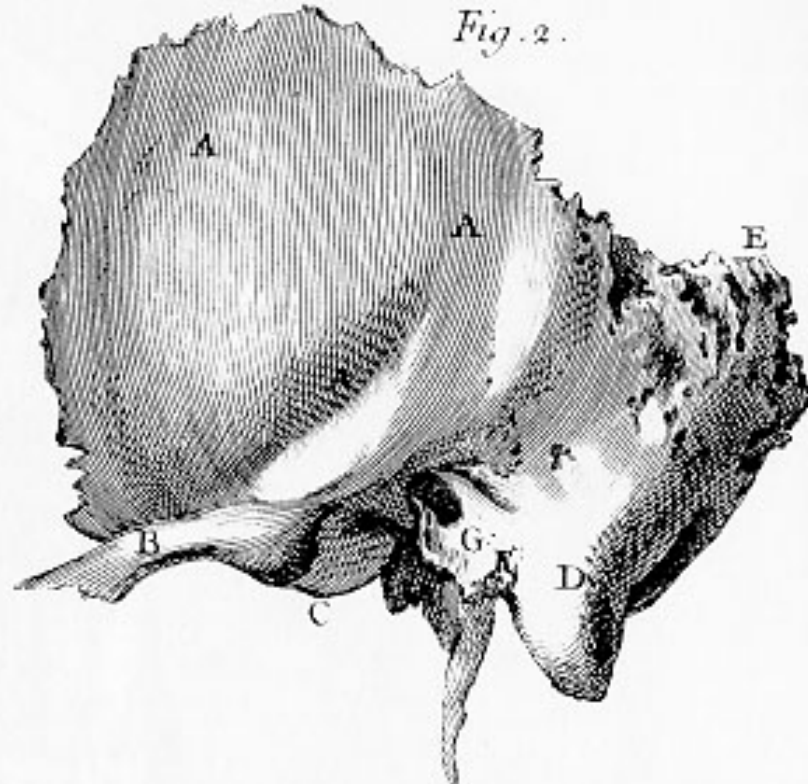


Fig. 3.



Fig. 5.

Fig. 4.

Fig. 7.

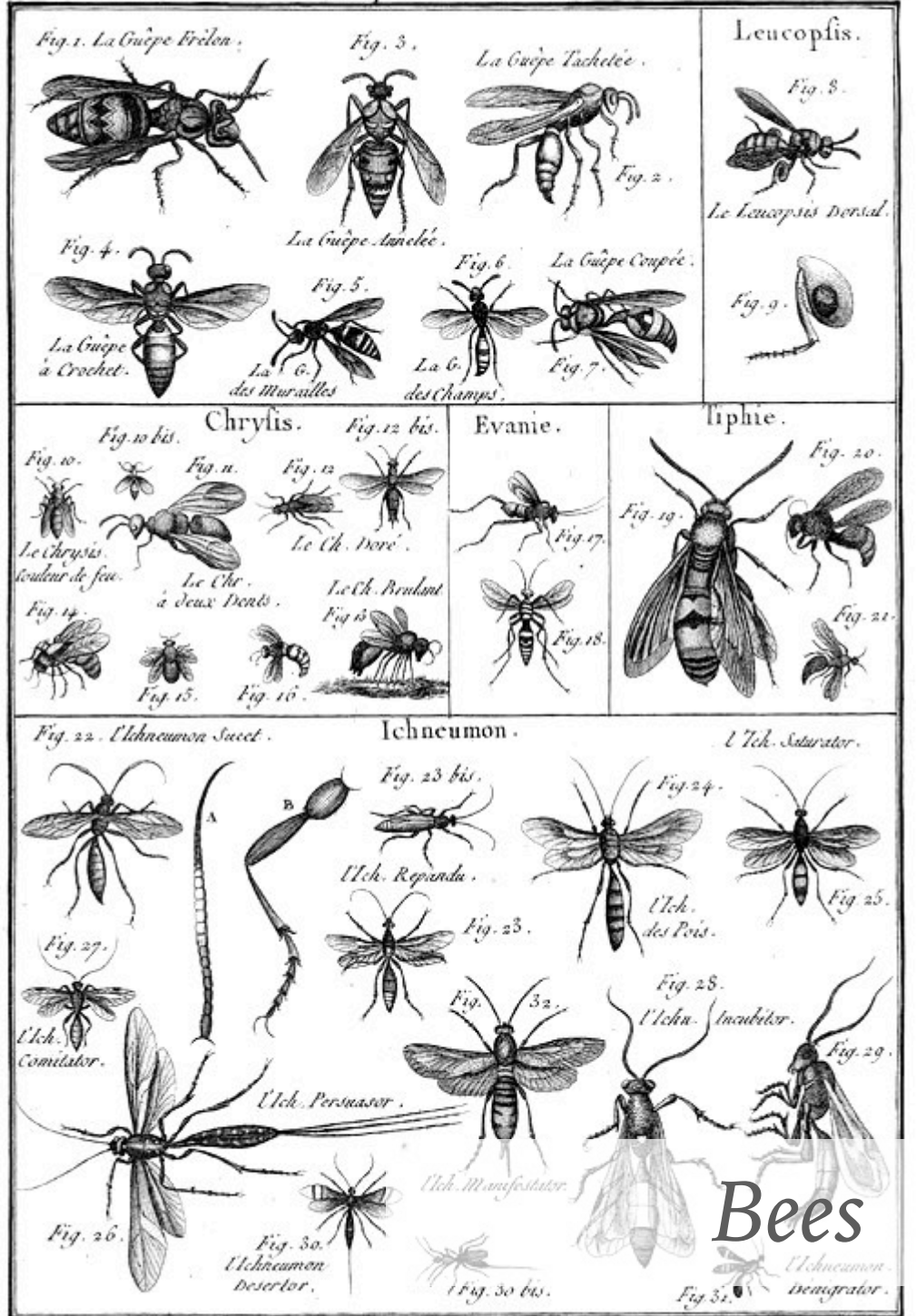
N^o 1.



Anatomy



Œconomie Rustique.
Mouches à Miel.



Chess

Fig. 10.

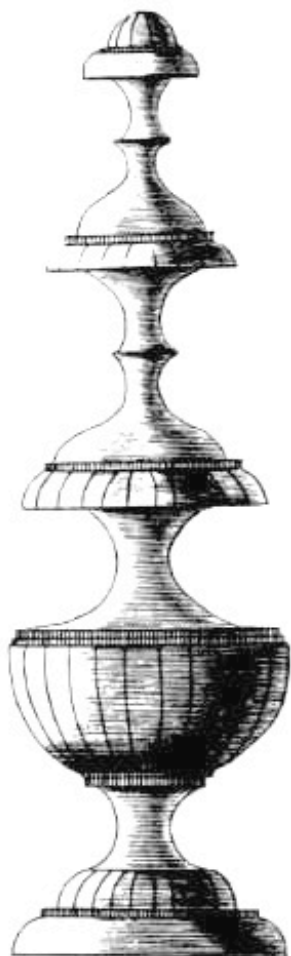


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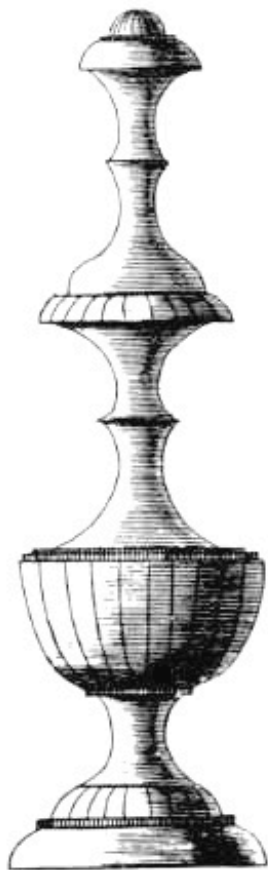


Fig. 14.



Fig. 16.



Fig. 18.

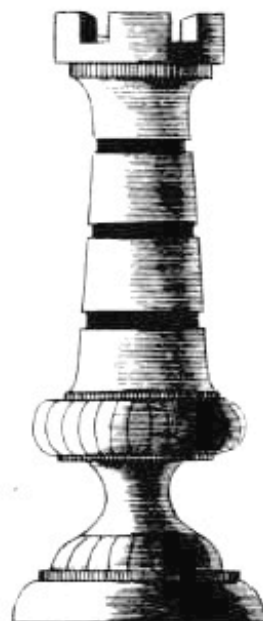


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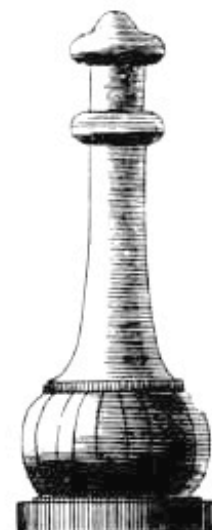


Fig. 11.



Fig. 13.



Fig. 15.



Fig. 17.

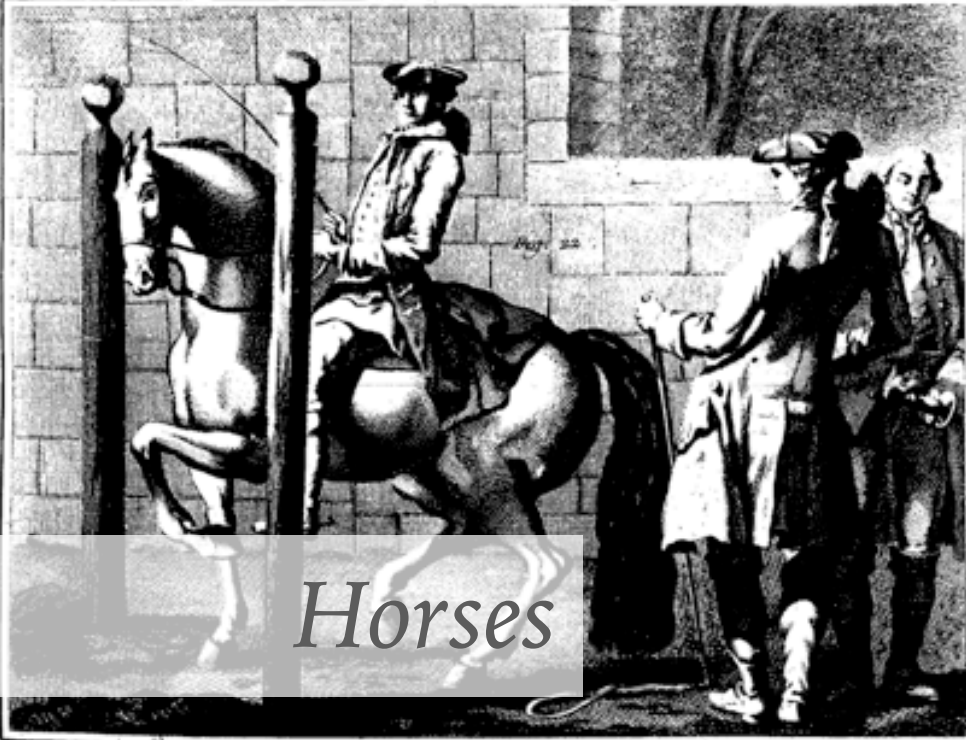
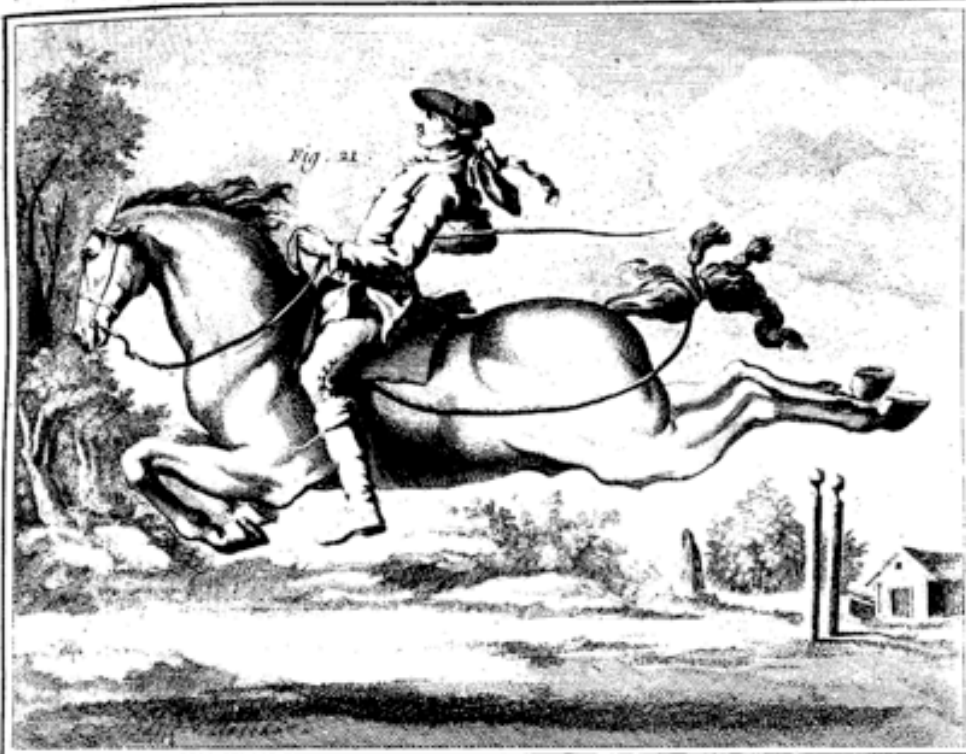


Fig. 19.

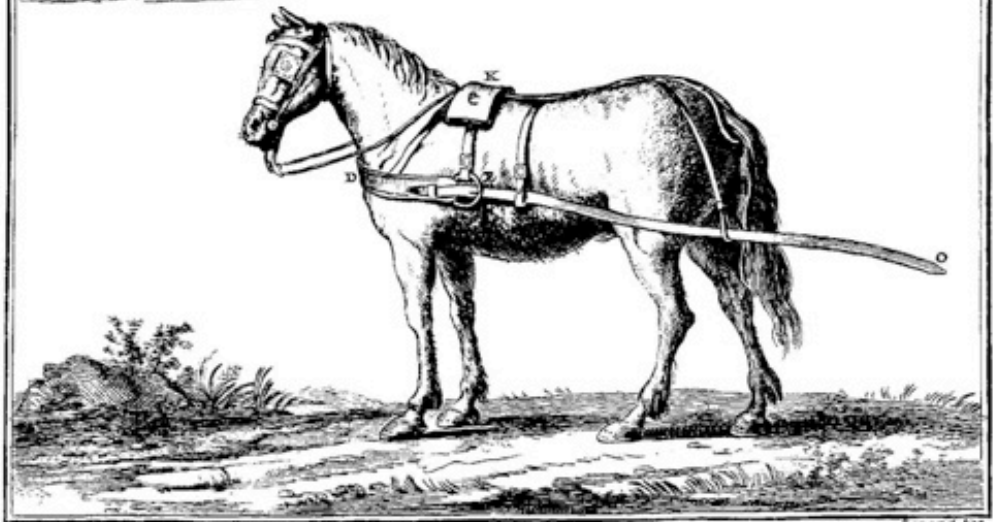
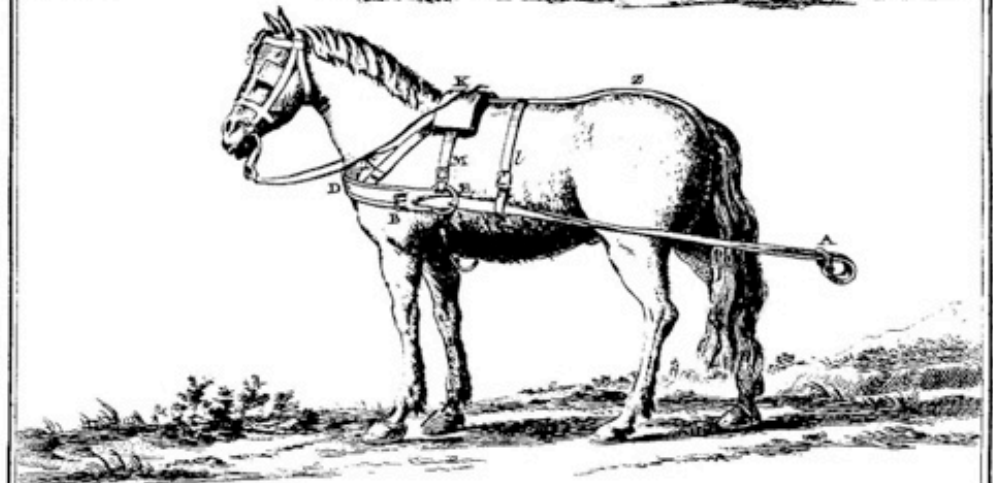
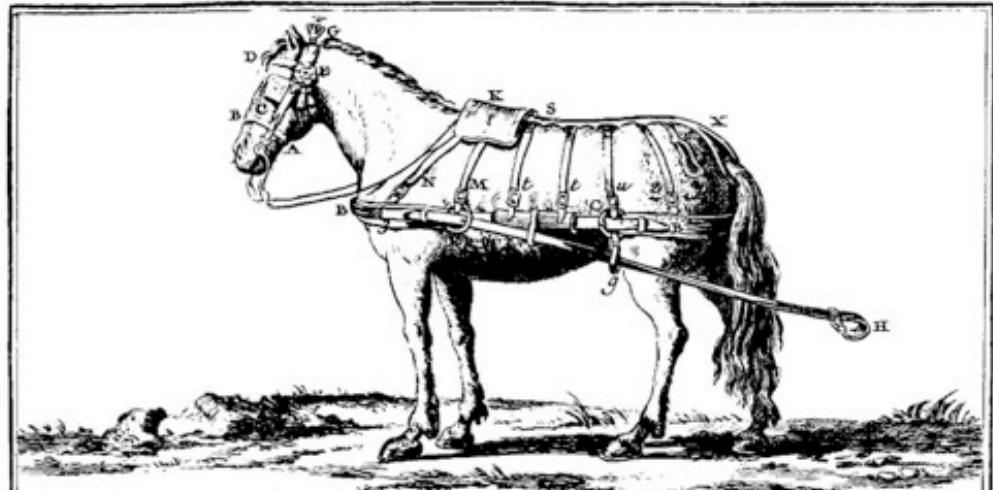


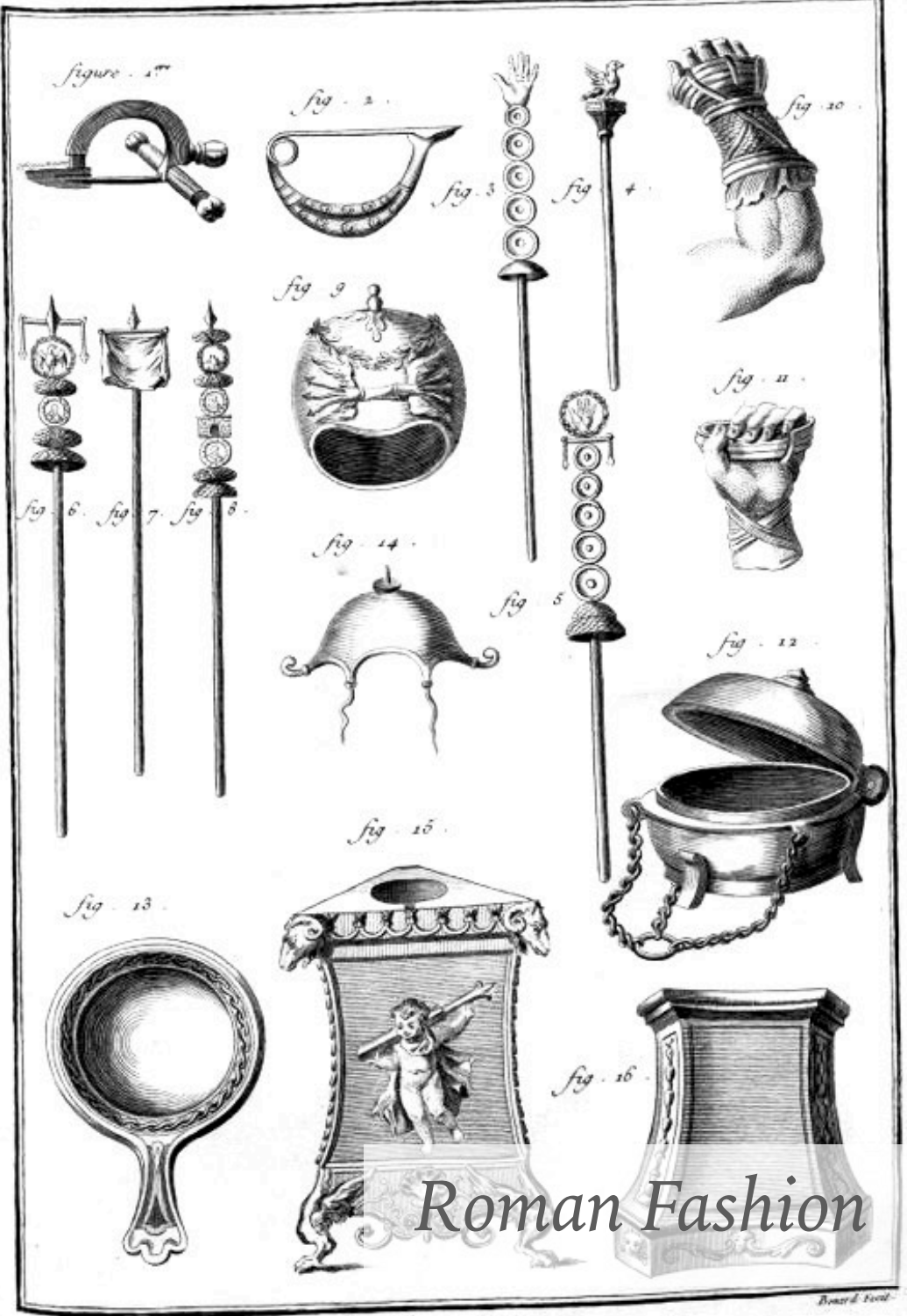
Fig. 21.





Horses





Roman Fashion

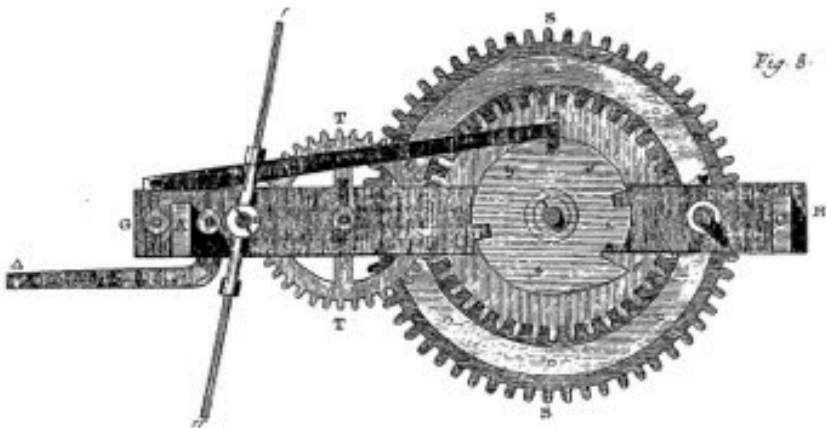


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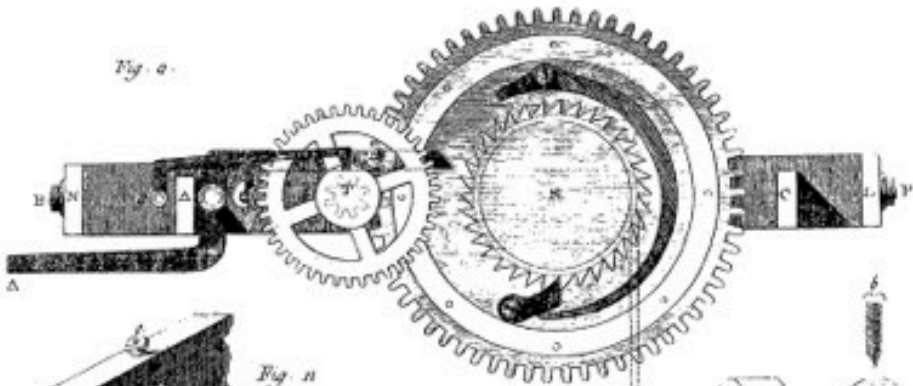


Fig. 9.

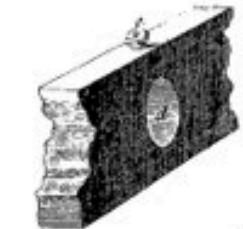


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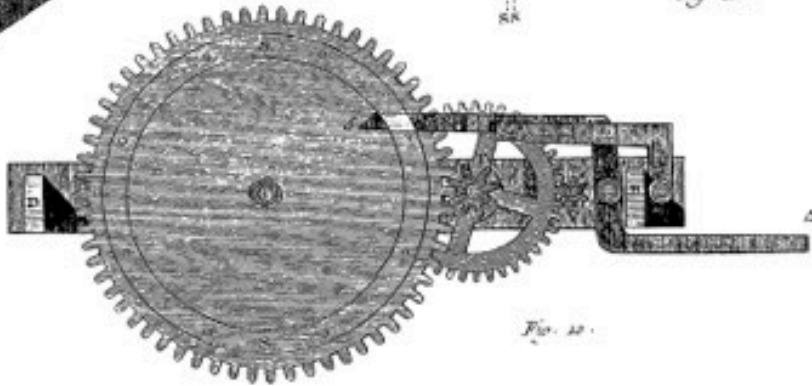


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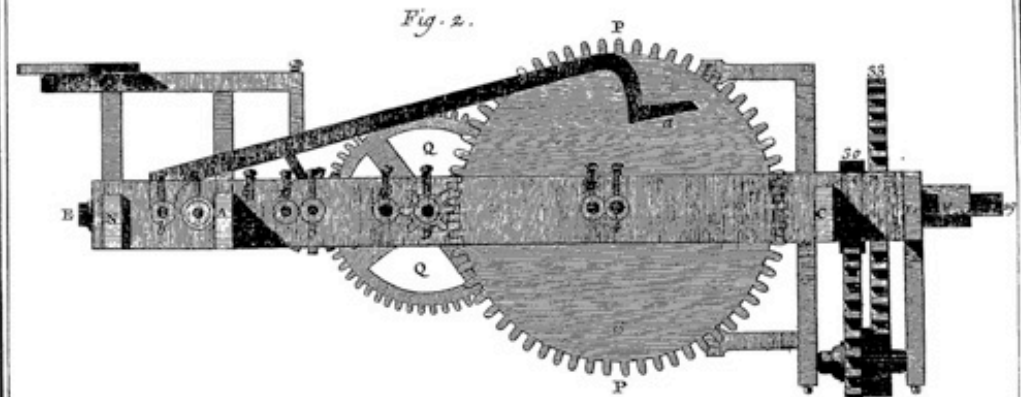


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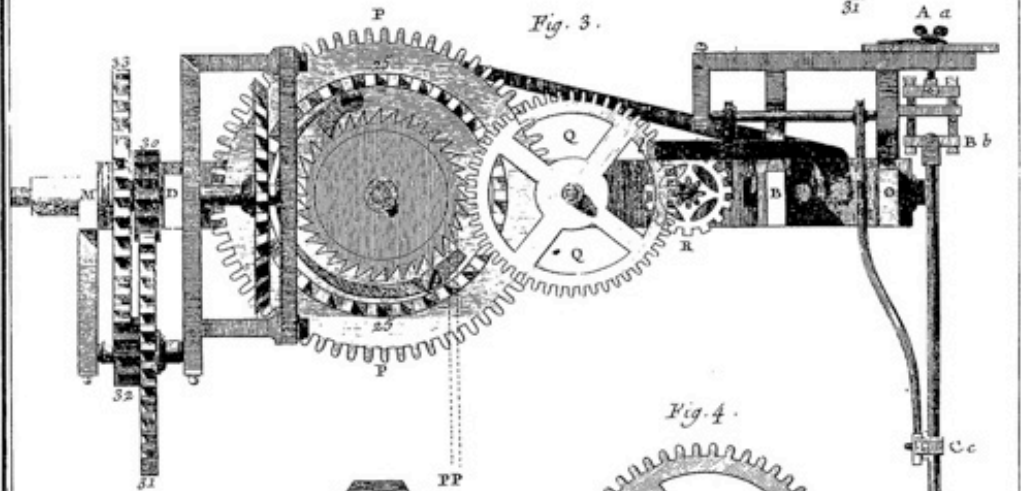


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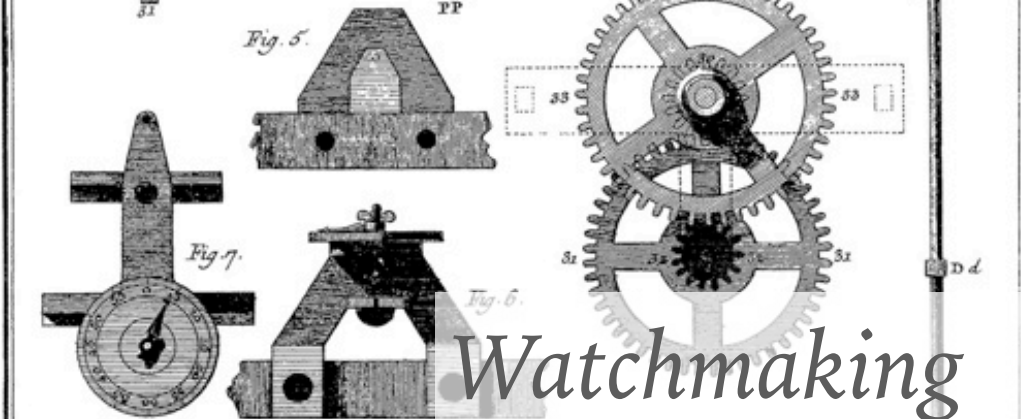


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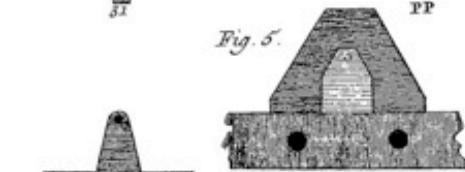


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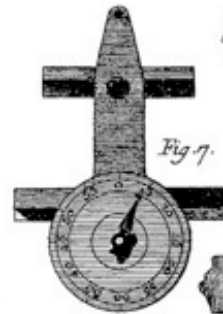
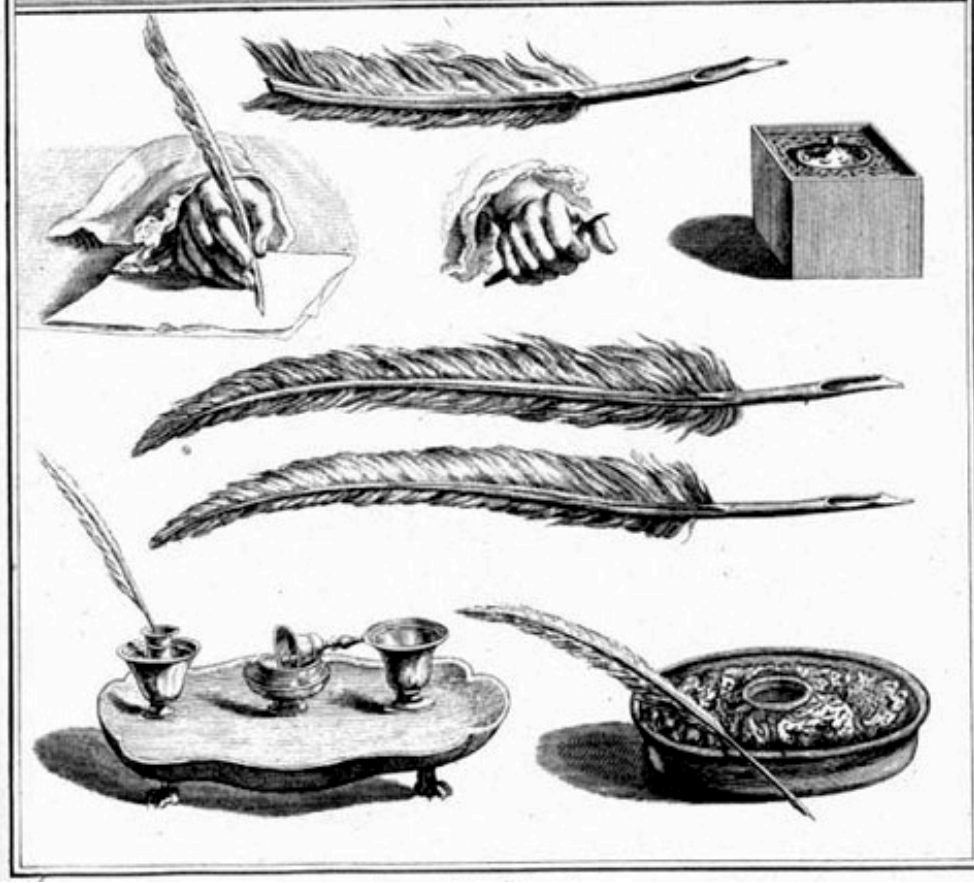


Fig. 7.



Fig. 6.

Watchmaking



ENCYCLOPÉDIE,

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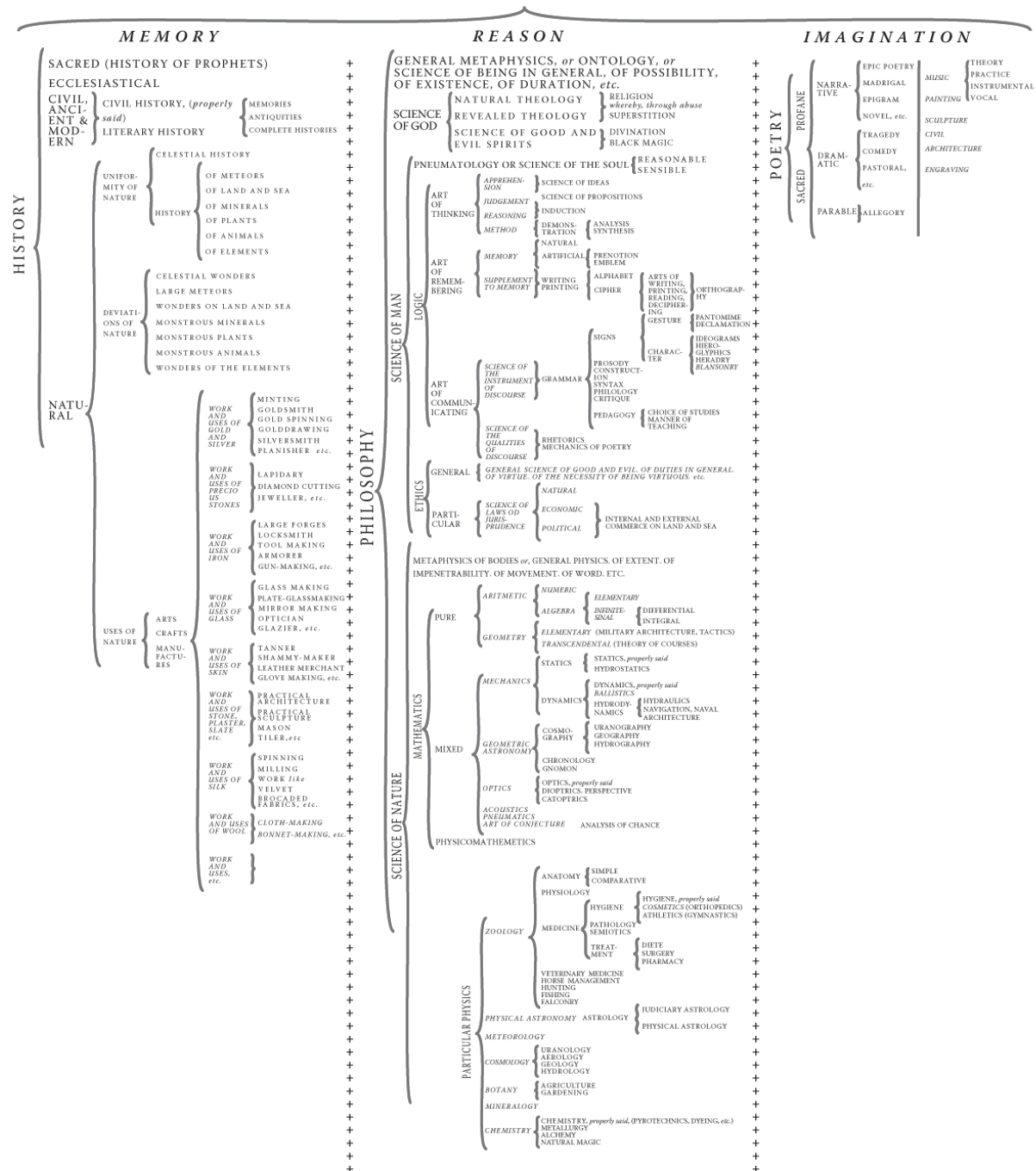
THE ENCYCLOPÉDIE

- Follows Descartes: rational (*raisonné*), analytic (breaks things into simple, elementary parts), progressive and wants to be complete
- Enlightened à la Jefferson: it aims to increase human knowledge, happiness and wealth
- Organized non-hierarchically: it is a dictionary, alphabetical
- *Public*, origin of all forms of public, distributed, egalitarian knowledge we have today (i.e., Wikipedia, a maximal form of the *Encyclopédie*)
- *In theory*, all forms of human knowledge are created equal

IN THEORY

MAP of the SYSTEM of HUMAN KNOWLEDGE

UNDERSTANDING



MAP of the SYSTEM of HUMAN KNOWLEDGE

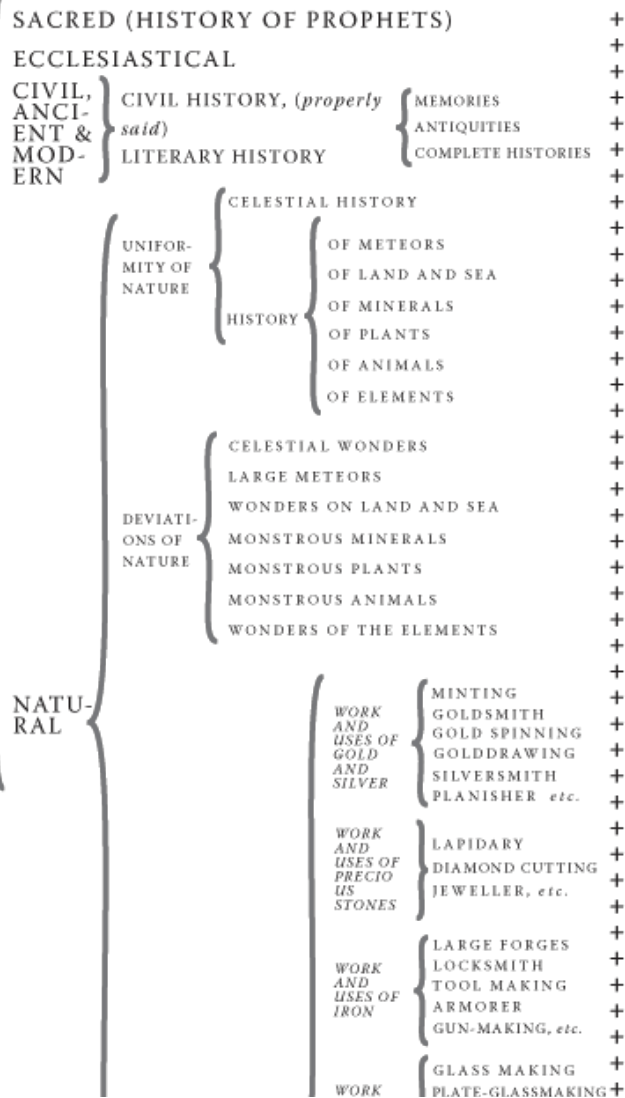
UNDERSTANDING

MEMORY

REASON

IMAGINATION

HISTORY



GENERAL METAPHYSICS, or ONTOLOGY, or SCIENCE OF BEING IN GENERAL, OF POSSIBILITY, OF EXISTENCE, OF DURATION, *etc.*

SCIENCE OF GOD

- NATURAL THEOLOGY
- REVEALED THEOLOGY
- SCIENCE OF GOOD AND EVIL SPIRITS
- RELIGION *whereby, through abuse*
- SUPERSTITION
- DIVINATION
- BLACK MAGIC

PNEUMATOLOGY OR SCIENCE OF THE SOUL

- REASONABLE
- SENSIBLE

ART OF THINKING

- APPREHENSION
- JUDGEMENT
- REASONING
- METHOD
- SCIENCE OF IDEAS
- SCIENCE OF PROPOSITIONS
- INDUCTION
- DEMONSTRATION
- NATURAL
- ARTIFICIAL
- PRENOTION EMBLEM
- ANALYSIS
- SYNTHESIS

ART OF REMEMBERING

- MEMORY
- SUPPLEMENT TO MEMORY
- WRITING
- PRINTING
- ALPHABET
- CIPHER

ART OF COMMUNICATING

- SCIENCE OF THE INSTRUMENT OF DISCOURSE
 - GRAMMAR
 - PROSODY
 - CONSTRUCTION
 - SYNTAX
 - PHILOLOGY
 - CRITIQUE
 - PEDAGOGY
 - CHOICE OF STUDIES
 - MANNER OF TEACHING
- SCIENCE OF THE QUALITIES OF DISCOURSE
 - RHETORICS
 - MECHANICS OF POETRY

GENERAL

- GENERAL SCIENCE OF GOOD AND EVIL. OF DUTIES IN GENERAL. OF VIRTUE. OF THE NECESSITY OF BEING VIRTUOUS. *etc.*

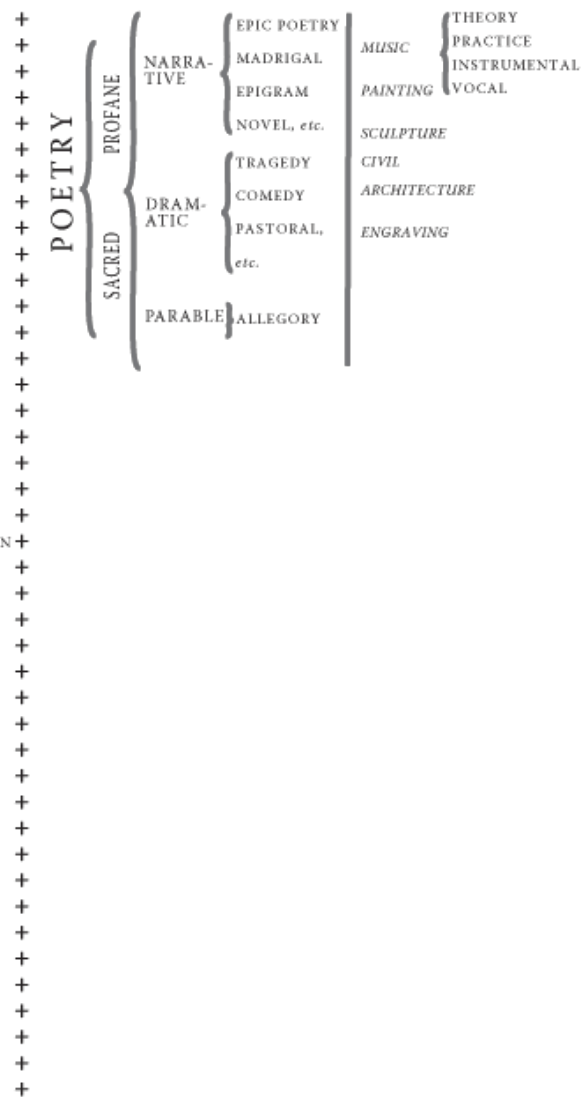
PARTICULAR

- SCIENCE OF LAWS OR JURISPRUDENCE
 - NATURAL
 - ECONOMIC
 - POLITICAL
- INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL COMMERCE ON LAND AND SEA

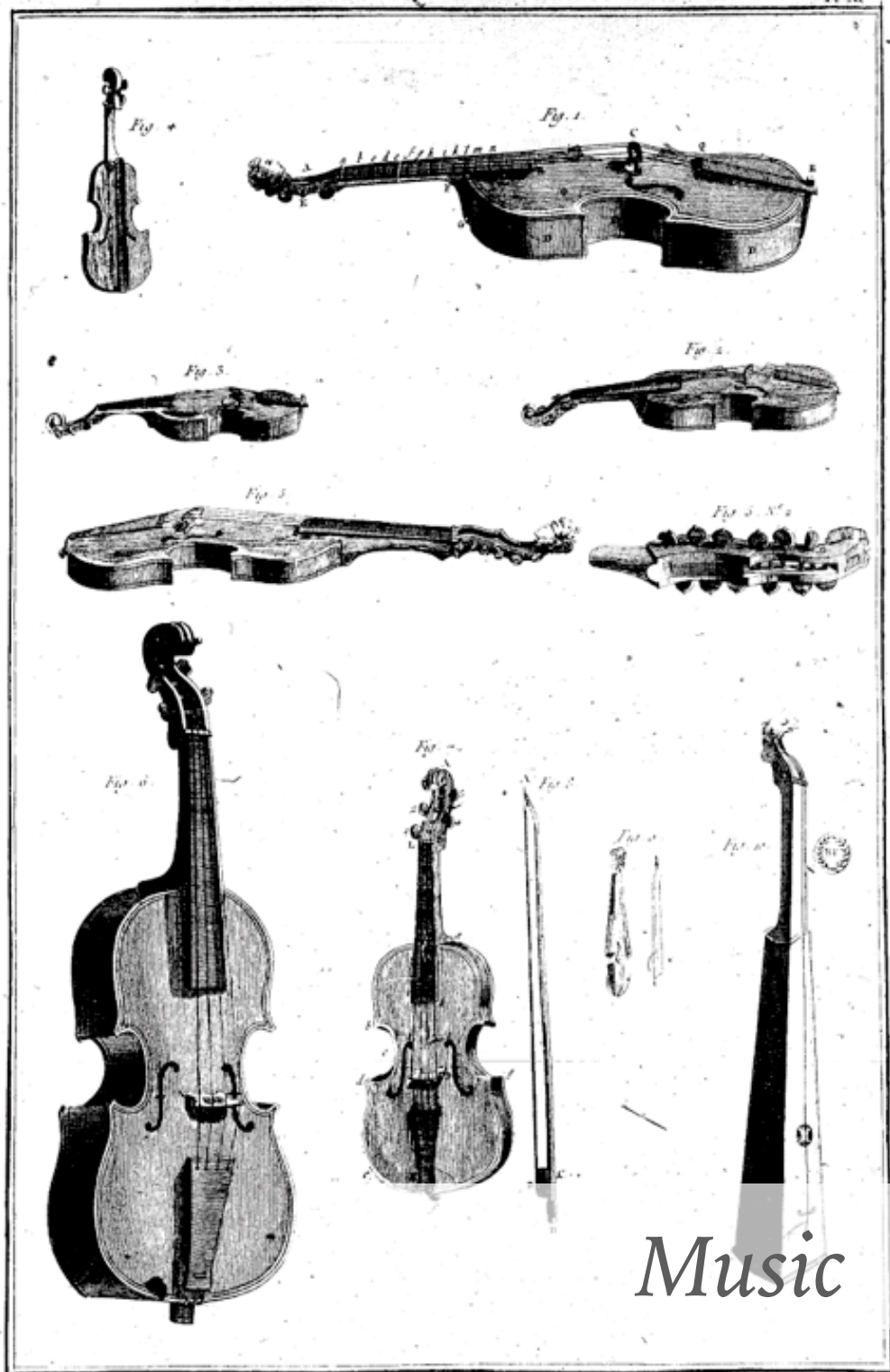
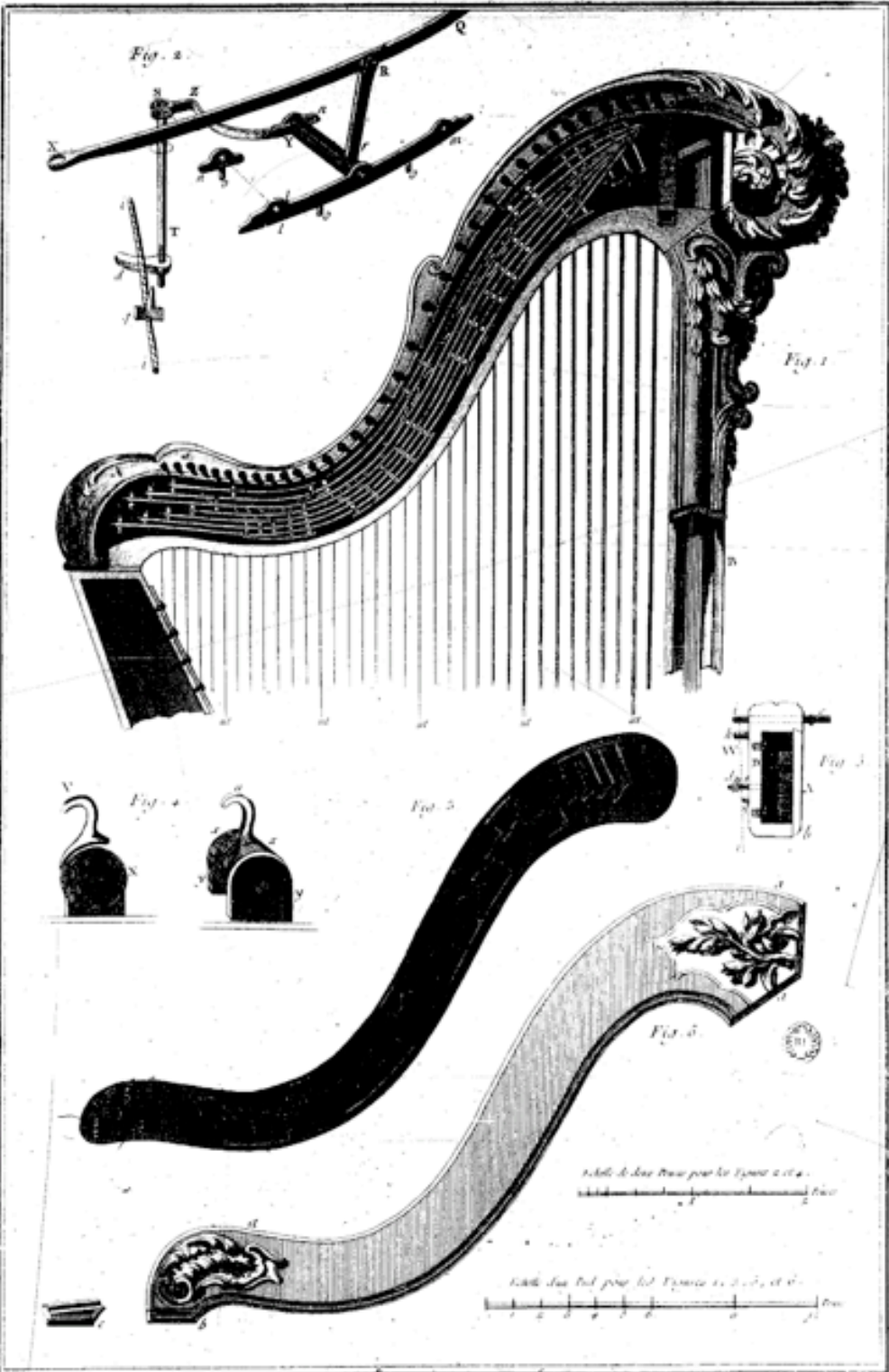
METAPHYSICS OF BODIES or, GENERAL PHYSICS. OF EXTENT. OF IMPENETRABILITY. OF MOVEMENT. OF WORD. ETC.

ARITHMETIC

- NUMERIC
- ELEMENTARY

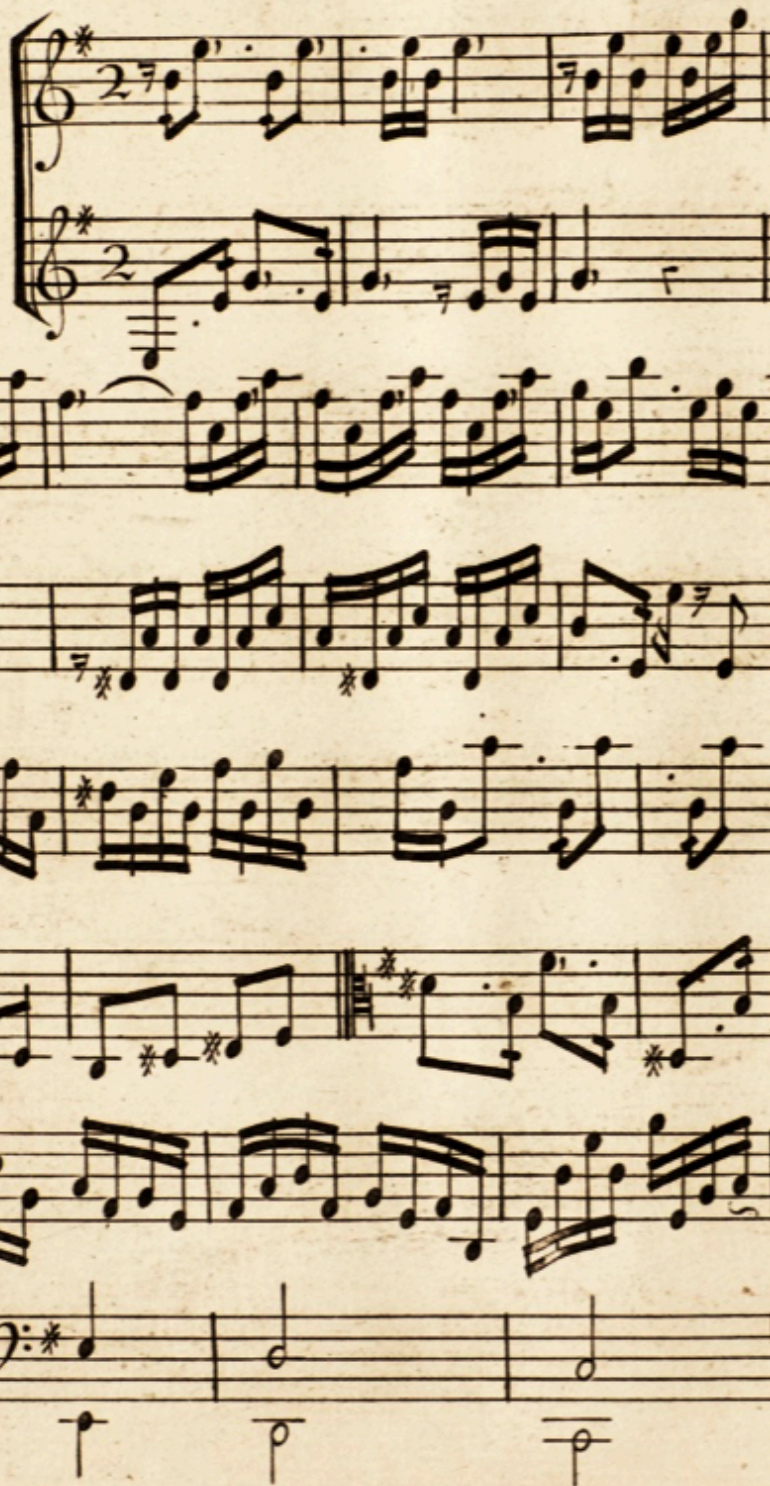


**THE FATAL FLAW:
THE ENCYCLOPEDIA
CONTAINED . . .**



Music

LE RAPPEL
des
Oiseaux



MUSIC

- ▶ Within the Encyclopedia's grand scheme of human knowledge, music is the literally most marginalized. Why?
 - ▶ It means *nothing*; it elicits feelings, not thoughts, words, narrative
 - ▶ It is fundamentally bodily, particularly the bass register (felt through the feet and the viscera more than the ear) and rhythm — see *entrainment*
 - ▶ It is, at least partially, based on disruption and transgression



What does music mean?

218,914 views

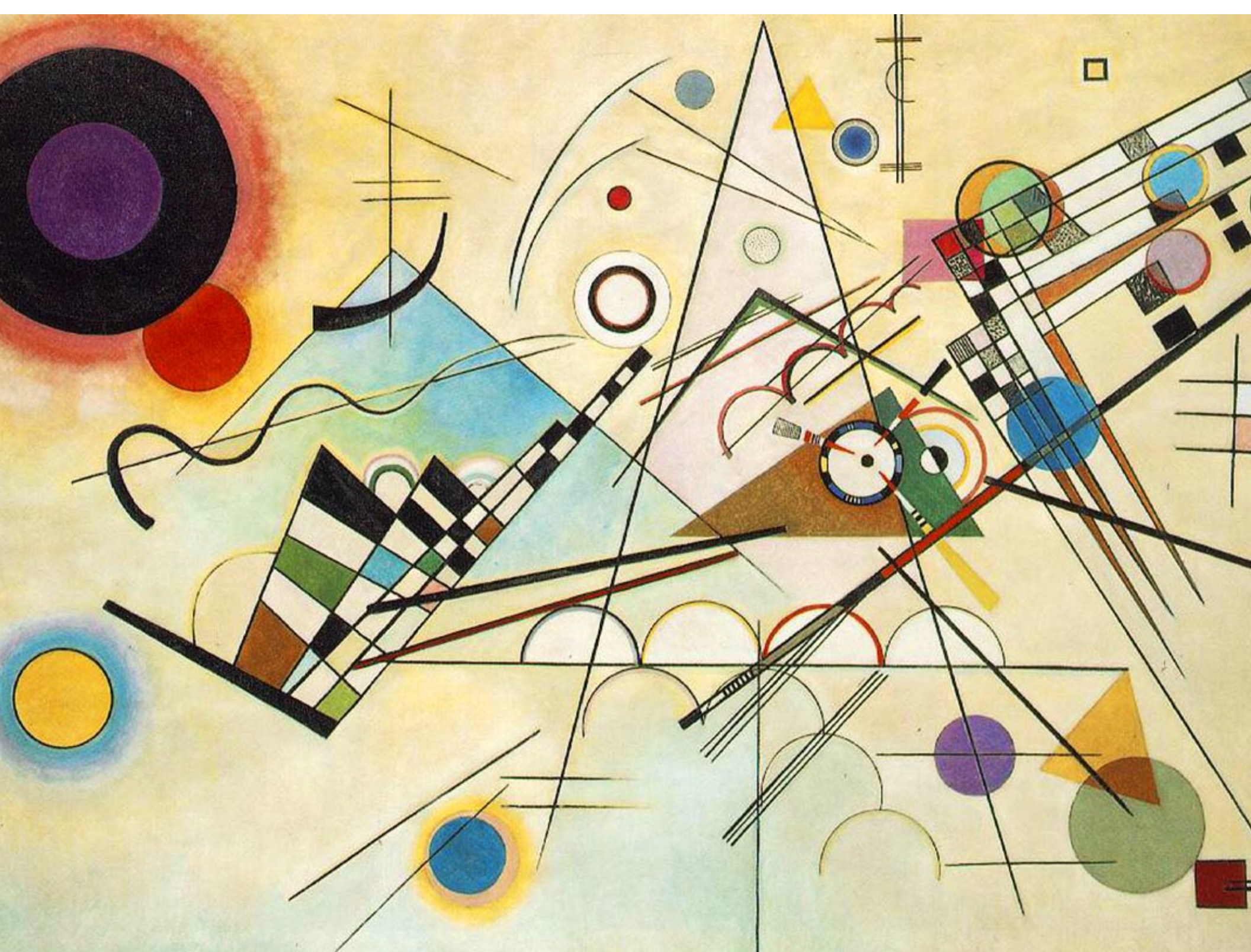
14K 129 SHARE SAVE



Adam Neely
Published on Apr 30, 2018

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Pythagoras, metaphors, Leonard Bernstein and solresol all tell us that music means nothing in the traditional sense of semantic meaning, but it does give us a vehicle for expression quite unlike any other. Music means nothing, but also everything.



“

Music represents simultaneously the immediate manifestation of impulse and the locus of its taming.

— *Theodor Adorno*



Snowball the Cockatoo, c. 2009

LE RAPPEL
des
Oiseaux



MUSIC

- Taming: practice, play scales and arpeggios, correct technique, body posture, care of nails, technical exercises, memorize your keys, cadence rules, no parallel fourths when harmonizing Baroque melody, etc.
- Impulse: interpretation, improvisation, collective emotional experience, singing, dancing — but also *transgression*, as when Rameau's nephew suggests that music is coming to terms with certain new possibilities, like the new “augmented fifth”

Vast, lonely, timeless $\text{♩} = 20 = 3 \text{ sec.}$

(act. sound)

mf
pizz. (rit.) (Pizz. sempre)

on key = ca. 4/7

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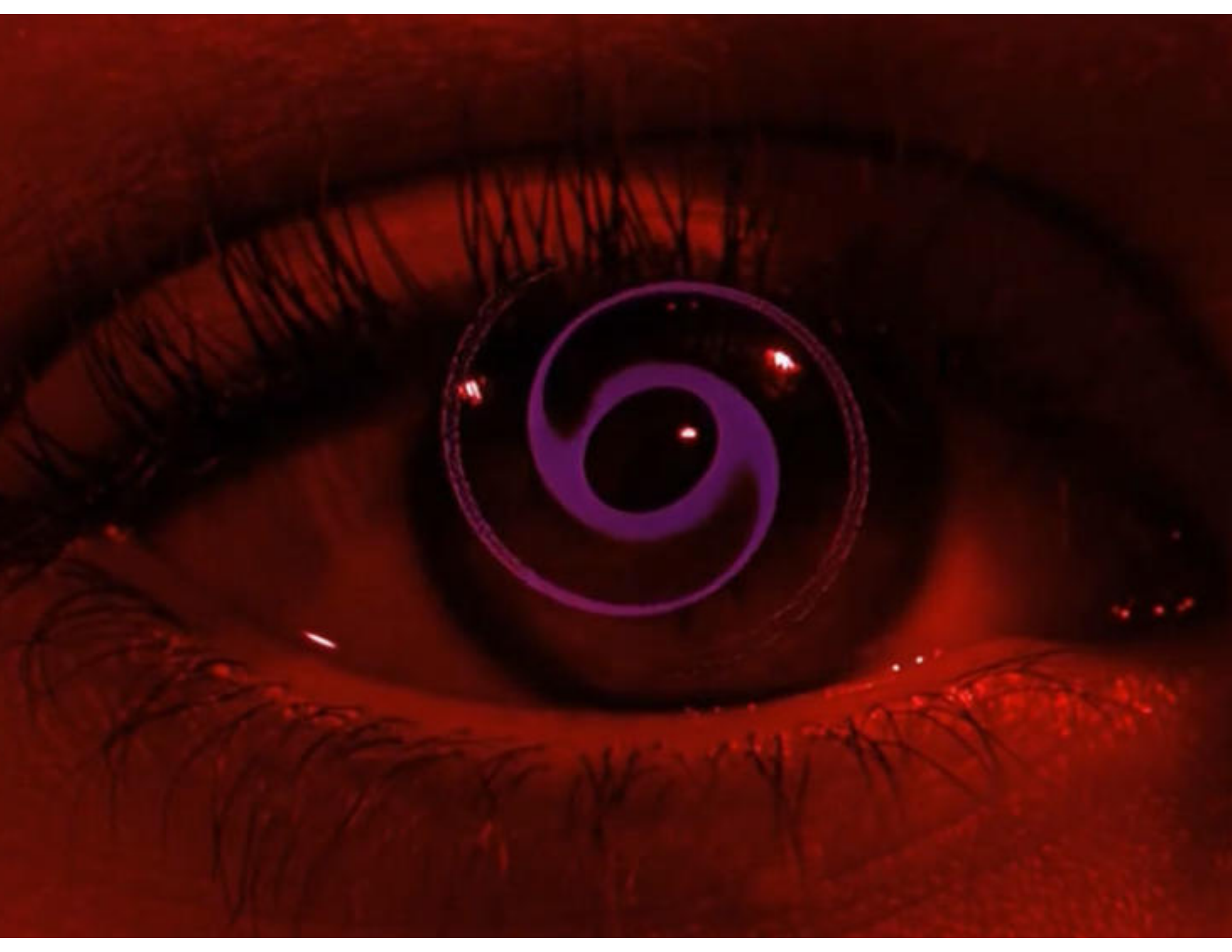
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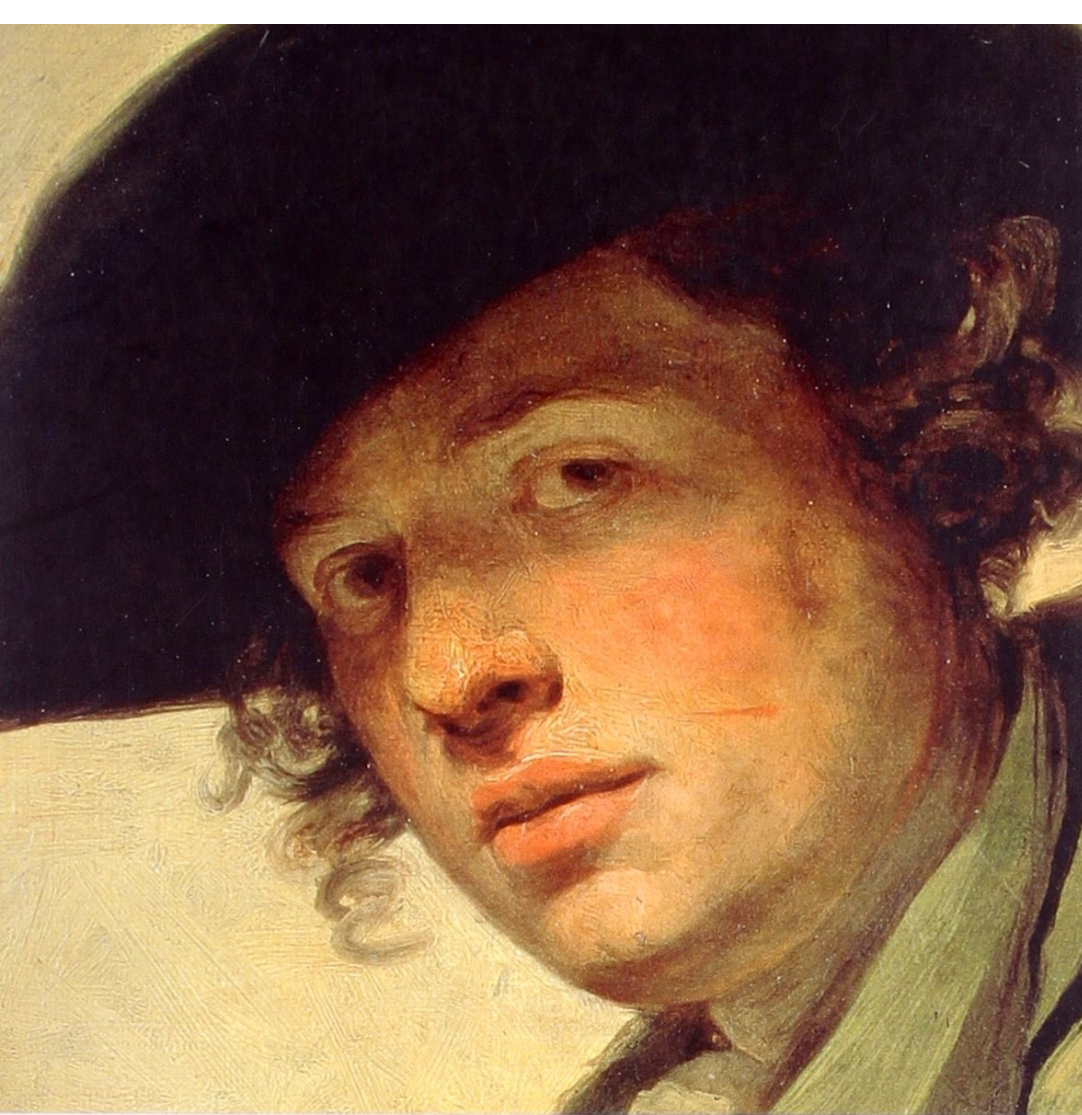
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A close-up, high-contrast image of a human eye, heavily tinted with a deep red color. The eye is looking slightly to the right. The word "VERTIGO" is superimposed in the center of the eye in a white, outlined, serif font. The background is a solid, dark red color.

VERTIGO

**SOMETHING IS
HAUNTING THE
ENLIGHTENMENT**



Denis Diderot

Rameau's Nephew *and* First Satire

A new translation by Margaret Mauldon

OXFORD WORLD'S CLASSICS

RAMEAU'S NEPHEW

.....

- ▶ Jean-Philippe Rameau (1683-1764): major 17th c. composer, rapidly going out of fashion when Diderot wrote it. His nephew, Jean-François, was evidently pretty weird
- ▶ Not published in his life; Diderot's own handwritten ms. found by a librarian in 1890, buried among music scores in a used bookstore
- ▶ Strangely, a copy in German had been published in 1805 — it had been sent from France to Russia and thence to Schiller in Germany; Goethe did the translation
- ▶ In other words, it is a musical book that only found its real life *after* the Enlightenment, with the early Romantics

Diderot

Le Neveu de Rameau

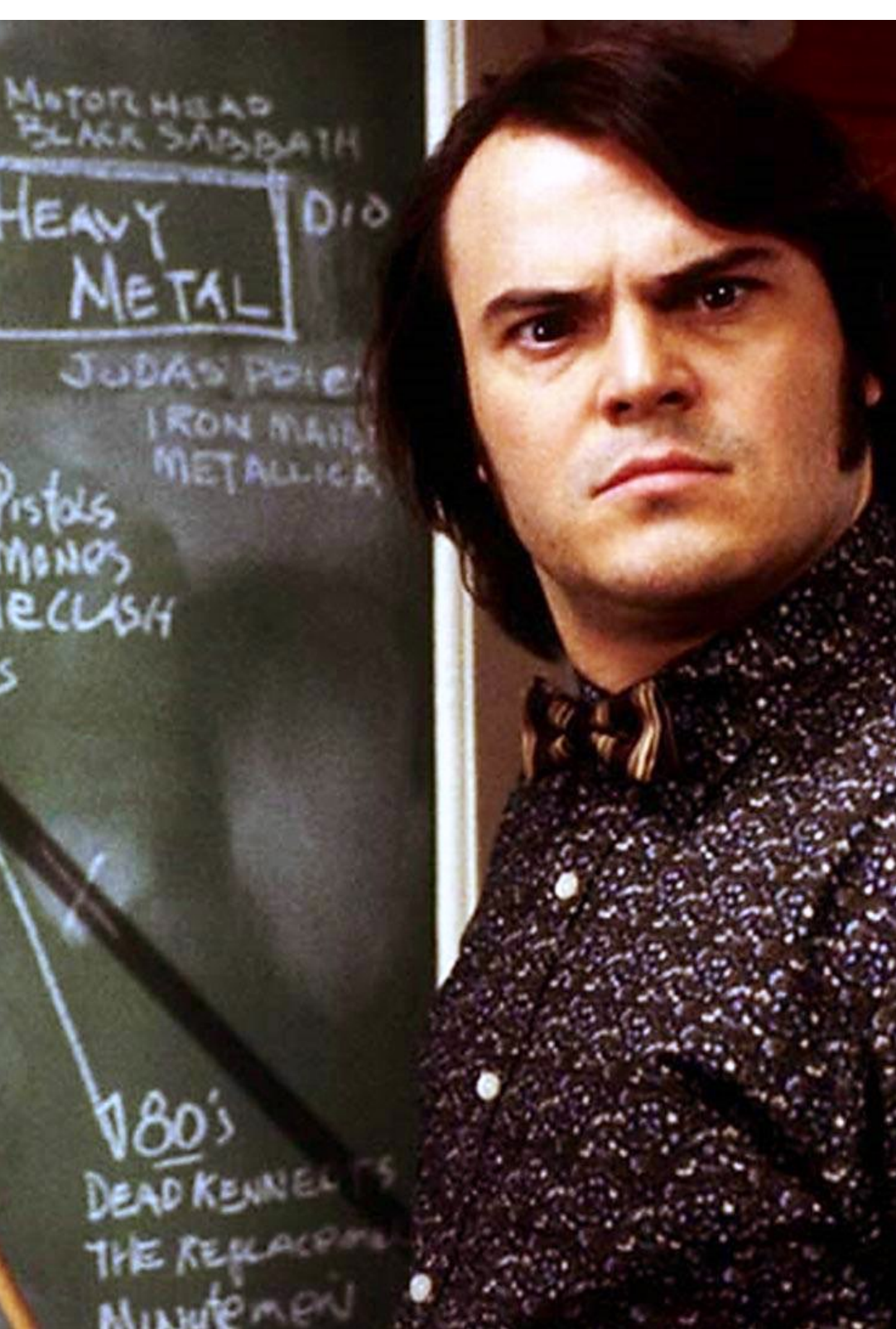
Édition de Michel Delon



RAMEAU'S NEPHEW

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RAMEAU'S NEPHEW

- A curious hybrid: monologue, dialogue or theatrical piece?
- Point of view is hard to establish: unusual for Enlightenment satire
- Anti-Enlightenment characteristics (and why Jack Black should be in the film version):
 - dramatic (“acting out”)
 - outrageous
 - musical/emotional
 - corporeal
 - perverse



dramatic (“acting out”)
outrageous
musical/emotional*
corporeal
perverse



“

The important point is to keep emptying one's bowels easily, freely, pleasurably, copiously every night. *O stercus pretiosum!* That's the grand result of life in all conditions. In the last analysis, everyone is equally rich.

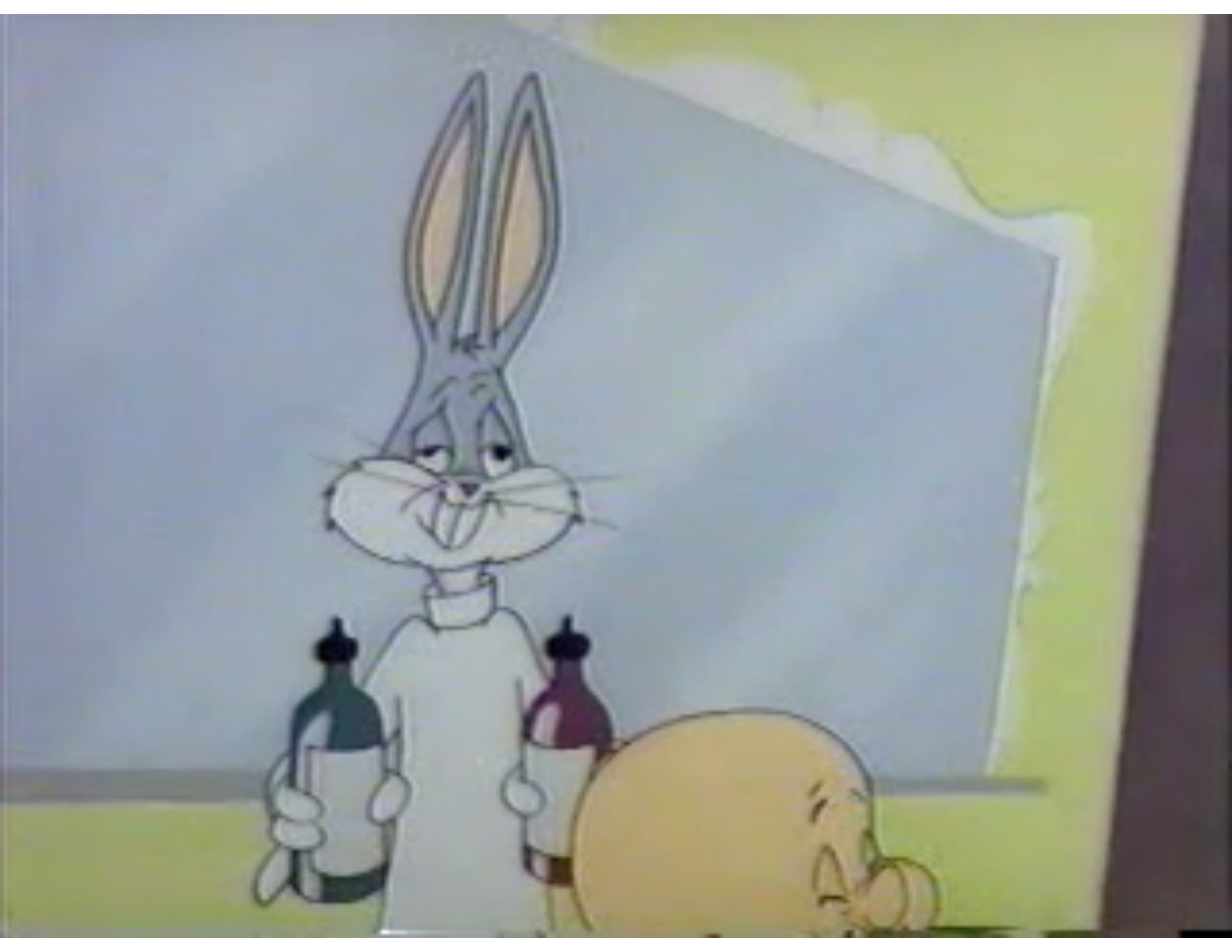
“ So there he was, seated at the keyboard, his legs bent, his head raised towards the ceiling where one would have said he was looking at a written musical score, singing, playing a prelude, working through a piece by Alberti or Galuppi. His voice went like the wind, and his fingers flew across the keys, sometimes abandoning the upper part to play the bass, sometimes abandoning the accompaniment to return to the upper register. A series of emotions went in succession across his face. You could see there tenderness, anger, pleasure, sadness. You could feel the soft notes and the loud ones.

“ I’m sure that someone more astute than myself would have recognized the piece from the movement and style, from his expressions, and from some snatches of melody coming out of him now and then. But what was really strange was that from time to time he groped around and started again, as if he had made a mistake and was upset at himself for not having the piece at his finger tips. Finally he straightened up, wiped the beads of sweat running down his cheeks.



You see that we also know how to play a tritone or an augmented fifth, and that we're familiar with transitions of dominants. Those enharmonic passages which my dear uncle has made such a fuss about, there's not all that much to it. We'll get a handle on it.

EXTRAS





RAMEAU'S NEPHEW
BY DIDEROT

(THANK TO DENNIS YOUNG)

BY
WILMA SCHOEN

by
MICHAEL SNOW