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Dōshin Satō
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Thomas W. Gaehtgens
and Louis Marchesano

This richly illustrated book examines the making of one of the earliest modern catalogues — La galerie électorale de Dusseldorff. Published in 1778, the revolutionary two-volume publication showcases one of the most important European painting collections of the eighteenth century, reflecting a pivotal moment in the history of art as well as the history of the art museum. In two essays, the authors analyze the process by which the catalogue was produced and shed light on the historical and cultural context that gave rise to an innovative and didactic way of displaying paintings—and, by extension, to art history as a discipline.

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Introduction by Dominique Poulot
Translation by Chris Miller and David Gilks

In the 1790s and early 1800s, the art world experienced two big events: first came the military confiscation of masterpieces from Italy and northern Europe in order to build a universal museum in Paris’s Louvre. Then famous marble sculptures were prised from the Parthenon and sent to London. These events provoked reactions ranging from enthusiastic applause to enraged condemnation. The French art critic, architectural theoretician, and political conservative Quatremère de Quincy was at the center of the European debates. In his pamphlet Letters to Miranda, he condemns the revolutionary hubris of putting “Rome in Paris” and urges the return of the works. In the Letters to Canova, however, Quatremère celebrates the British Museum for making the Parthenon sculptures accessible. Quatremère’s writing was highly controversial in its time. This book offers the first English translation of the two series of letters, as well as a new critical introduction.

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Edited by Erich S. Gruen

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