CHAPTER 1

Show-Offs
Women's Self-Portrait Prints c. 1700

Madeleine C. Viljoen

The self-portrait empowered early modern women artists to deliver distinctive statements about their creative identities.[1] Barred until the early nineteenth century from live-model drawing within the context of their academic training, women found other outlets for studying the body, regularly focusing their attention on figures to which they could devote close and unfettered observation, which is to say friends, family and self.[2] Focused on paintings and drawings, however, studies of the topic have largely omitted prints, neglecting to contemplate how consideration of this medium might nuance our understanding of women's contribution to the genre. From the time print workshops were established in the sixteenth century, women were regularly tasked with the reproduction of historical and allegorical subjects their male peers had invented, including narratives that featured the nude, the study of which the academy had long banned them. Conversely, even as male artists from the late fifteenth century

[1] Well-known works by Sofonisba Anguissola, Lavinia Fontana, Elisabetta Sirani, and others who take themselves as subjects for their own art lend substance to this argument. See, for example, M. D. Garrard, 'Here's Looking at Me: Sofonisba and the Problem of the Woman Artist', *Renaissance Quarterly*, 47 (1994): 556–622; S. Ffolliott, 'Early Modern Women Artists', in A. M. Poska , J. Couchman, and K. A. McIver, eds., *The Ashgate Research Companion to Women and Gender in Early Modern Europe* (London: Routledge, 2013), 429; F. Borzello, *Seeing Ourselves: Women's Self-Portraits* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1998), 17–101; C. King, 'Looking a Sight: Sixteenth-Century Portraits of Woman Artists', *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte*, 58:3 (1995): 381–406; and B. Bohn, 'Female Self-Portraiture in Early Modern Bologna', *Renaissance Studies*, 18:2 (2004): 239–86.

[2] The locus classicus for the argument that the careers of women artists suffered as a result of the academy's prohibition on their study of the live model is the ground-breaking article by L. Nochlin, 'Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists?' in V. Gornick and B. Morgan, eds., *Woman in Sexist Society: Studies in Power and Powerlessness* (New York: Basic, 1971), 480–510. For evidence that Nochlin's thesis, which has long held sway, deserves to be reexamined, see P. A. Spies-Gans, 'Why Do We Think There Have Been No Great Women Artists? Revisiting Linda Nochlin and the Archive', *Art Bulletin*, 104:2 (2022): 74–81. For Sofonisba's reliance on members of her family as subjects for her art, see M. W. Cole, *Sofonisba's Lesson* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2019), 86–89.

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enthusiastically embraced the self-portrait print as a site for broadcasting their distinctiveness as authors and inventors, female artists and creators were notably less eager to incorporate it into their practice.[3] Print travelled far and wide, enabling men who etched or engraved their self-portraits to flaunt their accomplishments and fulfil their aspirations of undying fame. Women's reliance on the same techniques for self-advancement was substantially more troubled, however. By showing themselves off, by literally exposing themselves to the public eye, they risked not covering themselves in glory but – like the widely shared medium in which the images were created – inviting comparison of themselves with the common street-walker.[4] These and other circumstances suggest that a rather different set of criteria was at stake when it came to how women approached making prints and especially what they understood to be suitable themes for their involvement with them. This chapter examines several self-portrait prints from the eighteenth century to explore some of the concerns that went into how women shaped their appearances with the knowledge that, by making themselves subjects for everyone to see and potentially own, they were walking a fine line between establishing their prominence and committing a potentially perilous offence for which they would be judged, often in terms that assailed their virtue and/or questioned their beauty. Loath to attract this sort of attention, eighteenth-century women, this chapter finds, either avoided using the medium for self-portrayal altogether or leaned heavily on male authority figures and veiled allusion to account for and justify their representations.

Two etchings by Maria de Wilde (1682–1729) from the very beginning of the eighteenth century bring this discussion into focus, pointing to the challenges female creators would face for the next 100 years and beyond. Without precedent – apart from etchings by Anna Maria van Schurman (1607–1678) – the works illustrate the care de Wilde put into crafting her image, mindful that the choice not just to pick up the etching needle but also to make herself the topic of print were hazardous undertakings. Riding on the reputation and social status of her father, Jacob de Wilde

[3] For early modern portrait prints, including self-portraits, largely by men, see V. S. Lobis, *Van Dyck, Rembrandt and the Portrait Print* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2016) and C. Harris, *Portraiture in Prints* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 1987).

[4] For a discussion of the connections between public speech/print and harlotry, see E. Beilin, *Redeeming Eve: Women Writers in the Renaissance* (Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1987) and A. R. Jones, *The Currency of Eros: Women's Love Lyric in Europe, 1540–1620* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1990).

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Figure 1.1 Maria de Wilde, *Self-Portrait*, c. 1700. Etching, 20.8 × 14.6 cm. Rijksprentenkabinet, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, RP-P-1910-1860.

(1645–1721), a high-ranking officer in the Amsterdam Admiralty, Maria de Wilde represents these acts as expressions not of fierce independence but of filial piety. In the first of these self-portraits (Figure 1.1), likely created around 1700 and possibly just shortly before the second, she renders herself bust-length, bordered by a fictive oval frame below which the words 'Maria de Wilde Jacobi Filia' [Maria de Wilde, daughter of Jacob] are prominently inscribed. The decision to include these words may in part have been motivated by the ways in which sixteenth- and seventeenth-century women printmakers signed their works. Many women in the early modern period acquired proficiency in the medium under the tutelage of their husbands, fathers, and other male relations in order that they might contribute to the activities of running the family

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workshop.[5] Such is the case, for example, with Barbara van den Broeck (born c. 1558/60), daughter of Crispin van den Broeck, and Susanna Maria von Sandrart (1658–1716), daughter of Jacob von Sandrart, who both signed a number of their works referring to themselves as 'filia', daughters of their prominent printmaker fathers. Unlike these, however, de Wilde was not the progeny of a well-known male engraver, and her images did not therefore function as advertisements for the products of a familial publishing enterprise. Instead, de Wilde was an amateur, a circumstance she spells out with a second Latin inscription, 'amatrix artium', or female lover of arts. Her etching thus belongs to a large body of work produced in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries by women who belonged to the moneyed, intellectual and leisure classes, many of whom dabbled in producing prints, primarily etchings.[6] Unconstrained by the pressures of working as an artist to make a living, amateurs like de Wilde had greater freedom to experiment and to overcome possible blunders. It can be no accident that the first full-page self-portrait prints were created not by established female painters or printmakers but by non-professionals, including what is very likely the first one of its kind executed by fellow countrywoman Anna Maria van Schurman, an accomplished scholar who made art on the side.[7] This circumstance, notwithstanding, de Wilde's allusion to being the 'filia' of Jacob communicates her sense of the need to account for her practice through reference to him.

What were some of the pitfalls for women of circulating their likenesses in print? To examine the question, it is helpful to return to the example of Anna Maria van Schurman, who in 1633 at age 26 produced a bust-length etching of herself (Rijksprentenkabinet, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, RP-P-OB-59.344), an image that sets out to navigate the highly gendered divisions between the public (male) and private (female) spheres that were a condition for working in the medium of print from the sixteenth century through the period this volume encompasses.[8] Modestly clothed, van

[5] E. A. Honig, 'The Art of Being "Artistic": Dutch Women's Creative Practices in the 17th Century', *Woman's Art Journal*, 22:2 (2001): 31–32; J. Brodsky, 'Some Notes on Women Printmakers', *Art Journal*, 35:4 (1976): 374–377.

[6] For more on the amateur, see C. Guichard, '*Amateurs* and the Culture of Etching', in *Artists and Amateurs: Etchings in 18th-Century France*, pub. in conjunction with Metropolitan Museum of Art (dist. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2014), 137–138.

[7] M. M. Peacock, *Heroines, Harpies and Housewives* (Leiden: Brill, 2020), 115–137. For more on Schurman's engravings on glass, see M. van Elk, 'Female Glass Engravers in the Early Modern Dutch Republic', *Renaissance Quarterly*, 73 (2020): 165–211.

[8] Juan Vives, in *The Instruction of a Christian Woman*, stated: 'It neither becommeth a woman . . . to live among men, or speake abroade. . . it were better to be at home within and unknowen to other

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Schurman arranged her appearance to avoid impropriety, hoping no doubt that this would permit her etching to enter into circulation without causing too much of a stir. She wears her chin length, tightly curled hair loose and is clothed in a heavily brocaded dress with a lace neckline that covers her décolleté and fastens firmly and chastely under the chin. In front of her, she had placed a large cartouche resembling a fictive scroll that partially obscures her torso from view. Made of a substance that is sizably thicker than paper, a solid, possibly stone-like material, the frame functions as a sort of impenetrable buttress or shield between van Schurman and the viewer, giving physical form to her need to find shelter, conscious that even as she attempts to take cover behind it, she was baring herself to a level of scrutiny that was incompatible with contemporary notions of comportment becoming to a woman.[9]

The following words appear on the cartouche: 'Neither my mind's arrogance, nor my physical beauty/Has urged me to engrave my portrait in ever-lasting bronze./ It was, rather, the impulse to not work on more powerful subjects on my first attempt,/ If perhaps this crude stylus (my novice as an artist) were forbidding better ones'.[10] Signalling her unwillingness to describe herself in overly complimentary terms, the inscription – in keeping with ideas of womanly humility and the sentiments commonly expressed by amateurs about their lack of expertise – reflects van Schurman's renunciation to claims either of beauty or skill, a statement that might lead one to conclude that she held little of her own handiwork. Shortly after etching the work, however, she gifted it to the leading Dutch intellectual Constantijn Huygens (1596–1687), likely in a bid to engage his interest in her scholarship. Taking the form of a poem, his intensely personal response offers insights into how van Schurman's printmaking venture was received by a leading male intellectual of her time. Written on 2 December 1634, Huygens's verse reads:

folks', quoted by W. Wall, 'Isabella Whitney and the Female Legacy', *ELH,* 53 (1991): 35. See also J. Weintraub, 'The Theory and Politics of the Public/Private Distinction', in J. Weintraub and K. Kumar, eds., *Public and Private in Thought and Practice* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1997), 1–39, and M. van Elk, *Early Modern Women's Writing: Domesticity, Privacy and the Public Sphere in England and the Dutch Republic* (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), 167–213.

[9] A. A. Sneller, '"If she had been a man. . ." Anna Maria van Schurman in the Social and Literary Life of Her Age', in M. de Baar, ed., *Choosing the Better Part* (Alphen aan den Rijn: Kluwer, 1996), 134: 'He [Constantijn] saw the cartouche as a shield for this woman who apparently wanted to live and die a virgin.' Schurman's cartouche bears comparison with the roundel Sofonisba included in her well-known self-portrait, which has been described as a 'shield'. See Cole, *Sofonisba's Lesson*, 39.

[10] The translation of the original Dutch inscription is taken from M. M. Peacock, 'Mirrors of Skill and Renown: Women and Self-Fashioning in Early-Modern Dutch Art', *Mediaevistik*, 28 (2015): 329.

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Why does the maid conceal those hands
Which never found their equal?
The copper turned this way and that
Has made her fingers black
And she is ashamed to show them thus
Reader, let us exonerate her from blame
'Tis the fault of the first cut,
That she ever made in all her days.[11]

An ekphrasis of the picture, Huygens speculates why van Schurman's etching failed to include her hands that have been sullied by ink. Slyly honing in on her desire to make herself the subject of a print as an initiative that transgressed the boundaries of feminine (read private or non-public) behaviour, Huygens identifies her role in authoring the image as a sort of crime, wilfully ignoring in the process van Schurman's best efforts to present herself with appropriate reserve. His poem instead aims to 'out' her by imagining that her project to make prints, like some original sin, has indelibly stained her hands and that she has inserted the cartouche in an effort not to thwart access to her body, but to conceal the evidence of her guilt. To make matters worse, he uses a sexual metaphor, 'the first cut', to describe her decision to pick up the stylus to score the plate, describing the act as a self-inflicted hurt that can never be undone. Van Schurman may be a virgin, but for Huygens her choice to incise her own image has forever spoiled her maidenhood: the girl is now a slut.[12]

Portrait paintings, drawings, miniatures and medals have long participated in elaborate rituals of gift-giving and receiving with the aim of currying favour and cementing renown.[13] Van Schurman's reliance on these very habits of exchange and her decision to present Huygens with a print is indicative of her understanding of the role the medium could play in managing her public persona, as it had done for men from the time a means to create repeatable images was invented. Remarks by Crispin de Passe in his *Les Vrais Pourtraits*

[11] The English translation is from de Baar, *Choosing the Better Part*, 22. For more on the poetry written to van Schurman by Constantijn, see K. van der Stighelen and J. de Landtsheer, 'Een suer-soete Maeghd voor Constantijn Huygens Anna Maria van Schurman (1607–1678), *De Zeventiende Eeuw: Cultuur in de Nederlanden*, 25:2 (2009): 149–202. The text provides translations into Dutch from the original Latin poems.

[12] C. Pal, *Republic of Women: Rethinking the Republic of Letters in the Seventeenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 207: 'For van Schurman, her status as "the virgin of Utrecht" made her unmarried state part of her scholarly identity from the beginning.' See also van Elk, *Early Modern Women's Writing*, 176–177.

[13] For more on this tradition, see among many others L. Silver, 'The Face is Familiar: German Renaissance Portrait Multiples in Prints and Medals', *Word and Image,* 19:1 (2003): 6–21; and T. A. Sowerbery, 'A Memorial and a Pledge of Faith': Portraiture and Early Modern Diplomatic Culture', *The English Historical Review*, 129 (2014): 296–331.

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De quelques unes des Plus Grandes Dames de la Chrestiente, desguisées en Bergères (*The True Portraits of several of the Greatest Women of Christianity, disguised as Shepherdesses*) of 1640, might have given her reason to reconsider the suitability of her choice of gift, however, especially the act of bestowing the etching on a man. By imbuing his female subjects – well-known ladies from the aristocracy and upper middle class – with pseudonyms and presenting them in pastorally inspired costumes, de Passe says he aimed to disguise the women's identities in order to deter men from declaring that they had the portraits of their 'beloveds' in their pockets.[14] A sartorial invention of the seventeenth century, the *pochettes* into which de Passe imagines these pictures would be slipped, communicates how prints lent themselves to being carried upon and even close to the body.[15] When van Schurman gave Huygens her etched self-portrait on paper, a thing that by its nature is tactile and designed to be touched, fondled, even pocketed, she also unwittingly handed him the means not just to regard but even to handle her in ways that we now see provided occasion to imagine her in disturbingly intimate terms. One can well imagine de Wilde's hopes to be sheltered from this sort of consideration when she referred to her kinship with Jacob. By conspicuously describing herself as 'Jacobi filia' she effectively inserted her father between herself and the male beholder, making it much more challenging for the user to treat her image in ways indicated by Huygens and de Passe.

Relying on conventions introduced to portraiture by Anthony van Dyck, de Wilde portrays herself against a swag of drapery and a sliver of landscape with the columns of a classical façade beyond. With bare décolleté and soft curls piled high on top of her head and tumbling over her shoulders, her modish, upper-class self-presentation is strikingly different from that of van Schurman. A series of stray etching marks in the margin of the frame and non-referential letters next to her inscription suggest that she conceived the etching as a trial proof and that the work was never intended for widespread circulation, a circumstance that may explain her somewhat voluptuous portrayal. Like van Schurman, however, de Wilde concentrates on her upper torso, omitting her arms and hands. With this in mind, it is striking that a pair of hands appears among the doodles that occupy the bottom of the sheet. Eerily disembodied, they hang suspended in mid-air just beneath the words 'amatrix artium', suggesting a possible link between them and her status as an amateur.

[14] The extract reads in the introduction addressed to the 'nymphs of the [River] Amstel': '... que meme les jeunes hommes ne se peuvent venter de porter les portraits de leur bien-aymées dans leur pochettes'.

[15] B. Burman and A. Fennetaux, *The Pocket: A Hidden History of Women's Lives, 1660–1900* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2020), 25–27.

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The one on the left with index and middle finger gently curled inward seems poised to hold a small delicate instrument, while the one on the right with all digits pointing towards the palm seems ready to grip or hold something larger and more substantial. Even though it is impossible to state with any certainty what the artist had in mind, the gestures are not incompatible with those of a hand holding an etching needle in one and a matrix or tablet in the other. If this is the case, then the artist, while omitting these details from her self-portrait, was pondering not only how to represent her activities as an etcher but also, more importantly, how to render them in a way that would not cause her embarrassment.

This brings us to the second of de Wilde's etchings, one that does show her in the process of working on a plate. A frontispiece to *Signa Antiqua e Museo Jacobi de Wilde* of 1700 (Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles), the print prefaces de Wilde's best-known publication, a set of sixty signed etchings that replicates Egyptian, Roman and Renaissance statuettes in her father's renowned cabinet or 'museo'.[16] By comparison with the former, this one shows her more plainly attired, wearing a dress that covers her chest, and strappy, Roman-style sandals in keeping with her project's antiquarian focus. Seated beneath a sculpture of Apollo, de Wilde renders herself in the act of drawing on a matrix. Occupying an elevated position on a pedestal carved with a Latin inscription referring to de Wilde's role in reproducing her father's collection, Apollo reaches down to hand her a statuette, bestowing on her the gift of art and the theme of her book.[17] To the right an impish looking Mercury similarly seems intent on presenting her with a double-headed Janus bust, with the head of a man on one side and that of a woman on the other. Following in the tradition of earlier professional female printmakers, the image expresses an understanding of printmaking as an activity in which women engaged with appropriate male oversight: de Wilde could reasonably expect her project to meet with approval because she conducted it under the auspices of her father and the paternalistic gaze of the gods. If de Wilde's first self-portrait conveys her anxiety about how to portray the act of producing etchings, her second finds a solution in the patronage of an array of male authority figures.[18]

[16] M. A. Wes, *Classics in Russia 170–1855* (Leiden: Brill, 1992), 14–15, and M. A. Francis, *Mixed Forms of Visual Culture: From the Cabinet of Curiosities to Digital Diversity* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2021), 47–48.

[17] The inscription reads: SIGNA ANTIQUA E MUSEO JACOBI DE WILDE PER MARIAM FILIAM AERI INSCRIPTA.

[18] It is noteworthy that male printmaker Pieter van den Berge's (1659–1737) portrait of Maria de Wilde, also included in the *Signa Antiqua* volume (Getty Research Center, Los Angeles), shows no comparable hesitation about including the female artist's hands, suggesting that the issue was one of concern to her (and other female artists), but not to men. Like Maria de Wilde, however, van den

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Figure 1.2 Angelika Kauffmann, *Self-Portrait*, c. 1764.[19] Etching, 15.5 × 11.8 cm. Graphic Art Collection, Albertina, Vienna, DG2017/3/1972.

The challenges and consequent hesitancy women felt about portraying themselves in print are epitomized by the skilled and highly successful painter Angelika Kauffmann (1741–1807), an artist who did not otherwise shy away from circulating her inventions in print and who is known for her drawn and painted self-portraits.[20] Scholars ascribe to her an etched self-portrait created around 1764, which survives in what may be a unique impression (Figure 1.2), likely an indication that the edition was small.[21] Modest in scale, it measures just 15.5 × 11.8 cm and shows the sitter

Berge draws attention to the sitter's role in documenting Jacob de Wilde's collection – Maria de Wilde carries in her hands a copy of the *Signa Antiqua*.

[19] We use the generally accepted spelling of her name – Angelika Kauffmann – in this volume.

[20] For more about Angelika's prints, see T. G. Natter, ed., *Angelica Kauffmann: A Woman of Immense Talent* (Berlin: Hatje Kantz, 2007), 234–247.

[21] A. Rosenthal, *Angelica Kauffmann: Art and Sensibility* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2006), 223.

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bust-length, clothed in a prim, high-necked, lace-trimmed dress. Her restrained choice of attire contrasts with the rather more flamboyant mode in which she presents herself in painting and drawing, underscoring Kauffmann's sense of the necessity to employ the medium judiciously and above all conservatively for purposes of self-presentation. This print is supplemented by instances of what Angela Rosenthal has called works that rely on a range of 'symbolic, allegorical and mythological masks' to expand what we understand by the act of self-portrayal.[22] Examples of these include *La Speranza* (Hope) of 1765 (London, British Museum (hereafter BM) 1852,0214.128) and *Woman Resting her Head on a Book* of 1770 (The New York Public Library, New York, 62758), etchings that feature turbaned sibyl-like figures leaning on volumes, whose role has been recognised as functioning to thematize broadly the young artist without resorting to slavish reproduction of her likeness.[23] A dreamy, melancholically inflected image, *La Speranza* reproduces the Raphaelesque reception piece Kauffmann designed for admission to the Accademia di San Luca in 1765, a work that seems in turn to have inspired *Woman Resting her Head on a Book*.[24] Even as *La Speranza* is usually accepted as a self-portrait, the female personification is so idealised as to function as an allegory of the young artist's aspirations for a successful career.[25] Together the etchings reflect Kauffmann's efforts to use print to reflect on her own creativity in ways that removed her mimetic likeness from becoming the subject of contention.

Kauffmann's reluctance to produce etchings of her own visage does not mean that prints of her were uncommon. To the contrary: engravings that captured her appearance enjoyed broad distribution.[26] Products of professional printmakers – including works by William Ridley (1764–1838), Ludwig Sommerau (1756–1786), Thomas Burke (1749–1815), and others – the pictures, which were not commissioned, amount to what we might term 'unauthorised' self-portrait prints. Portrait prints after

[22] Rosenthal, 234.

[23] G. Kraut, 'Weibliche Masken', in V. Schmidt-Linsenhoff, ed. *Sklavin oder Bürgerin*, exhibition catalogue (Hessen: Marburg, 1989), 344.

[24] Rosenthal, 252, and B. Baumgärtel, *Anmut und Aufklärung: Eine Sammlung von Druckgraphik nach Werken von Angelika Kauffmann* (Ruhpolding: Verlag Franz Philipp Rutzen, 2016), 60. The composition of *La Speranza* hews closely to Raphael's *Madonna della Sedia*, a work with which Angelika sought to be compared.

[25] M. Quilligan, *The Allegory of Female Authority* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1991), 108; Rosenthal, 248–249.

[26] Rosenthal, 232: 'Kauffmann's self-portraits were also reproduced, in large numbers, as engravings. These circulated widely throughout Europe and helped spread Kauffmann's fame.'

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painted self-portraits by Maria Cosway (1760–1838), Rosalba Carriera (1673–1757), Élisabeth Sophie Chéron (1648–1711), and Rhoda Astley (1725–1757), suggest, that the practice was by no means restricted to Kauffmann. 'Ipsa Pinxit' (Painted by herself) and 'J. Elias Haid sculps' (Engraved by Johann Elias Haid) are inscribed on a c. 1757–1767 mezzotint by Johann Elias Haid after a self-portrait pastel by Rosalba Carriera, a use of Latin print terminology that is duplicated in works by François Chéreau after Élisabeth Sophie Chéron (London, BM O,6.68) and by James McArdell after Rhoda Astley (Royal Academy of Art, London, 12/2323).[27] Together the images point to the role male printmakers played as self-appointed creators of the female self-portrait print.

A market clearly existed for portrait prints of accomplished women, but the terms under which they were created were to a large extent dictated not by their female makers, but by men. Two etchings, one by Joseph Wagner (1706–1786) after an image of herself by Rosalba Carriera (Rijksprentenkabinet, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, RP-P-2007-271) and another by Lavinia Spencer (1762–1831) after Richard Cosway (1742–1821) (London, BM 1857,0520.303), variously illuminate this point. Wagner's image was based on a composition Carriera presented to the influential art collector and British Consul to Venice, Joseph Smith, just before she turned blind around 1746. Among Carriera's most significant patrons, Smith likely received the pastel in recognition of his friendship and support of her art.[28] Clearly impressed both with the work and with her extraordinary gift to him, Smith hired Wagner, who had founded a flourishing printmaking enterprise in Venice, to copy the pastel, turning the intimate souvenir into an occasion to produce a public statement about both the skilled female artist and himself. The inscription below reads: 'Effigiem manu ipsius pictam; sibique dono datam. Joseph Smith Magnae Britanniae Cos. Aenea tabula propagari curavit' (A picture by her own hand; a gift given to him. Joseph Smith, British Consul, has arranged [for it] to be dispersed with this copperplate). The wording expresses a sense of the male personage with the power and influence to receive a gift of this magnitude and to commission a reproduction of it, ensuring not only that the work was widely disseminated but also that it received the sort of recognition to which the Consul knew he and its subject were entitled.

[27] The inscription on the mezzotint by François Chéreau after Élisabeth Sophie Chéron reads: 'Ipsa se pinxit anno aetatis suae 35' and 'F. Chéreau sculpsit', while the mezzotint by James McArdell states 'Ipsa pinxit' and 'J. McArdell fecit'.

[28] F. Vivian, *The Consul Smith Collection: Masterpieces of Italian Drawing from the Royal Library, Windsor Castle* (Munich: Hirmer, 1989), 12, 17, 18.

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An etching of herself by Lavinia Spencer similarly points to men's role in mediating the female self-portrait print. Undisputedly the hand of the amateur, the representation shows the artist full-length, seated at a desk on which a quill pen and ink stand.[29] Spencer's role in authoring the design is complicated, however, by an inscription on an impression at the British Museum (1857,0520.303), whose verso reads: 'Etched by Lavinia Spencer / her Ladyship's portrait after Cosway, touched by herself', suggesting that the work was based not on careful self-observation but on a sketch by Richard Cosway. A gifted portraitist and miniaturist, Cosway became the principal painter to the Prince of Wales and moved in the sorts of elite circles to which the Spencer family belonged, producing portraits of them at various stages in their lives.[30] It is quite possible, then, that he produced the sketch on which Lavinia based this print. Indeed, qualities of the work's hand-colouring, especially the young woman's rosy lips and rouged cheeks bear distinct similarity with the methods Cosway used to tint the faces of his delicately shaded miniatures, suggesting that she was emulating qualities of his style. Assuming an attitude of carefree contemplation, Spencer dressed in a frothy, feminine gown and with her index finger raised to her lip is presented regarding the pages before her, seemingly lost in a state of dreamy reflexion. Rendered not as a serious artist, however, Spencer surrenders herself to the light-hearted vision of the female imagination imposed on her by a fashionable male painter of her day.

The so-called *Oprecht Verhaal wegens het portraitteeren van Mejuffrouw Maria van der Wilp, door Marinkelle, portraiteur in miniatuur* (*Fair Account of the Portrait of Miss Maria van der Wilp by Marinkelle, Miniature Portraitist*) of 1772 reinforces the outsized role men played in arranging how women would appear in print. Not a self-portrait per se, the published text instead offers meaningful insights into the sorts of aesthetic considerations eighteenth-century women brought to bear on their printed self-likenesses as well as into the role men believed they should rightfully play in determining just how their female sitters should look. Authored by Joseph Marinkelle (1732–c.1776), the *Oprecht Verhaal* represents the miniaturist's defence of his portrayal of the poet Sara Maria van der Wilp (1716–1803). The text is the result of an acrimonious disagreement that arose after van der Wilp commissioned Marinkelle to draw her likeness in preparation for the professional engraver Jacobus Houbraken

[29] E. F. Ellet, *Women Artists in All Ages and Countries* (London: Richard Bentley, 1859), 162.

[30] Richard Cosway produced several miniatures of the Spencer Family as well as a drawing, now at The Met, New York, titled *Lavinia, Countess Spencer as Juno*, no. 48.149.21. For more on the miniatures, see G. Williamson, *Richard Cosway* (London: George Bell and Sons, 1905), 118–119.

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(1698–1780) to render it in print. According to the custom of the day, her portrait was to appear at the beginning of her first published volume of poetry.[31] Told from Marinkelle's point of view, the text informs us about van der Wilp's commission, stating:

> She [Sara Maria van der Wilp] asked me [Joseph Marinkelle] for the best way this [her portrait] should happen, and I advised her in the common modern way. This was not her choice, however. She found a great many portraits, surely known to her through the beautiful print collection once possessed by her father, to be very stiff: the hats changed almost every month; the clothes, the corsets etc. had no grace: in short, she preferred to be drawn in a loose style, or as she called it in antique dress, without hat, and with a bared bosom.[32]

In seeking a representation of herself in the 'antique' manner, van der Wilp was aiming, it seems, for an image that would transcend the specifics of time and place and endure as a monument to her talent and ability, a visual trope that had long established itself as viable for visualising male distinction. Recognising the risks to these aspirations, however, Marinkelle states that he sought to dissuade her by placing before her examples of works by Anthony van Dyck and Bartholomeus van der Helst.[33] He said he begged her not to deviate from the custom of presenting herself in a corset with a hat over her face, and neck and bosom covered, but that van der Wilp persisted, saying this was how she wished to appear.[34] Marinkelle rendered her accordingly, and with a few agreed-upon edits, the preparatory drawing was handed to the engraver to reproduce in print. Upon its release to the public, however, the miniaturist states that he was summoned to her house and told that 'everyone was screaming about the ugliness of the published work. They said that she looked like a fishwife, a Dragoon of a woman, that one would sooner choose to eat

[31] L. Van Deinsen and N. Geerdink, 'Cultural Branding in the Early Modern Period: The Literary Author', in Helleke van den Braber, Jeroen Dera, Jos Joosten, and Maarten Steenmeijer, *Branding Books Across the Ages: Strategies and Key Concepts in Literary Branding* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2021), 49–55.

[32] J. Marinkelle, *Oprecht Verhaal wegens het portraitteeren van mejuffrouw Sara Maria van der Wilp, door Marinkelle* (Haarlem, 1772), 3: 'Zy vroeg my naar de beste wyze waarop dit geschieden moest, en ik ried haar tot de gewoone moderne manier, dog dit was niet naar haare verkiezing; zy vond eene menigte Portraiten, haar zekerlyk door de fraaije Prentverzameling, welëer door haar Vader bezeeten, bekend, zeer styf: de Mutsen veranderde byna alle maanden; de Klederen, de Keursylven, enz. hadden geen bavalligheid; kortom zy verkoos getekend te worden in een losse, of zo al zy het noemde in eene antique kleeding, zonder Muts, en met een blooten Boezem.' I thank Sven Mourik for his assistance in translating the Dutch prose into English.

[33] *Oprecht Verhaal*, 3.

[34] *Oprecht Verhaal*, 4: 'op een geheel losse en ligtvaardige wyze in Prent te zien verschynen kon, dagt my, geene goede gevolgen hebben.' (Appearing in print in an entirely loose manner could to my mind have no good outcome.)

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than to fight and furthermore a shameless whore, with breasts like cow udders'.[35] Van der Wilp's wrongdoing for which Marinkelle partially bore the brunt, causing him to publish a rebuttal in the form of the *Oprecht Verhaal*, was to miscalculate her viewers' receptivity to her portrayal *all'antica*. If only she had listened to him, Marinkelle states, the matter would have turned out well – van der Wilp exemplifies the fate of women who either fail to heed the counsel of men or take the task of self-representation into their own hands. While the hateful (not to say ageist and misogynistic) comments directed at her seem out of proportion to her alleged fault, the accusations are in keeping with what we have already observed about print's propensity to attack women who fail to conform to normative ideas of appropriate female self-conduct. Van der Wilp's capitulation to convention is signalled by her decision to reissue her portrait, this time with her head and chest covered in accordance with what Marinkelle had all along advised her to do.

Today we are all too acquainted with the propensity for the 'selfie' to elicit derogatory and hostile comments on the internet and social media about women's physical attributes and their perceived attractiveness.[36] Huygens's censure of van Schurman and the outcry over van der Wilp's 'loose' portrayal thus have a surprisingly familiar ring. Over half a century ago, the arrival of the worldwide web provided an amplified version of the opportunities made possible by the invention of a means to create repeatable images; and there is a resonance in its characterisation as 'promiscuous', mirroring aspects of the early modern reception of print and its tendency to 'body shame' those bold or foolhardy enough to use the medium to circulate their own likenesses.[37] All of this is to say that women's activities in the public eye, not least the highly contentious representation of themselves, have long been a perilous undertaking. In the period this volume examines, it is clear that while the handful of women who explored the self-portrait print as a vehicle for celebrating their individuality and accomplishments were courageous, their success mostly hinged either on winning over or yielding to the approval of men. In hindsight, the project can at best be described as a mitigated success.

[35] *Oprecht Verhaal*, 7: 'dat men zeide, dat zy wel een Viswyf geleek, een dragonder van een Wyf, daar men eerder mede zoude verkiezen te eeten, dan te vegten; en daarenboven nog, een obschaamde Hoer, met Borsten als Koe-uiëren, enz.'

[36] N. Shah, 'The Selfie and the Slut: Bodies, Technology and Public Shame', *Economic and Political Weekly*, 50:17 (2015): 86–93.

[37] See, for example, the co-authored volume by K. Cmiel and J. D. Peters, *Promiscuous Knowledge: Information, Image and Other Truth Games in History* (Chicago, IL: Chicago University Press, 2020).

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