
Delacroix, (Ferdinand-)Eugène(-Victor)

(b Charenton-Saint-Maurice, nr Paris, April 26, 1798; d Paris, Aug 13, 1863).

Colin Harrison

<https://doi.org/10.1093/gao/9781884446054.article.T021888>

Published online: 2003

French painter, draughtsman and lithographer. He was one of the greatest painters of the first half of the 19th century, the last history painter in Europe (see History painting, §II) and the embodiment of Romanticism in the visual arts. At the heart of Delacroix's career is the paradox between the revolutionary and the conventional: as the arch-enemy of Ingres, Jean-Auguste-Dominique and as the leading figure of the French Romantic movement, he was celebrated for undermining the tradition of painting established by David, Jacques-Louis, yet he nevertheless enjoyed official patronage from the beginning of the Restoration (1814–30) until the Second Empire (1852–70).

Delacroix disliked the 19th century, hated progress, was conservative in his tastes and manners, but—for Baudelaire, at least—was the most modern of artists, resembling the great painters of the First Republic (1792–1804) and the First Empire (1804–14) in his wish to rival the written word. His subjects, like those of David, were serious and historical, but he replaced the Stoic ideal with one equally grand and dramatic, yet lacking any kind of moral or political certainty. Nevertheless, he was the last representative of the Grand Manner. He lived long past the years of the Romantic movement, although a Romantic interest in suffering, insanity, death and violence is always present in his art, which is essentially literary and personal.

I. Life and work.

1. Early years, to 1821.

Eugène Delacroix's father, Charles Delacroix (d 1805), was briefly *Ministre des Affaires Etrangères* during the Directory (1795–9) and was later *Préfet de la Gironde*. At the time of Delacroix's birth, he was *Ministre Plénipotentiaire* at The Hague. Théophile Silvestre was the first to suggest, in his *Histoire des artistes vivants* (Paris, 1856), that the French statesman Charles-Maurice de Talleyrand was Delacroix's father, a persistent rumour for which there is no documentary evidence. The cultivated milieu in which Delacroix grew up, and where Talleyrand was a frequent visitor, was that of his mother, Victoire Oeben (d 1815), daughter of the cabinetmaker Jean-François Oeben. Delacroix's step-grandfather was the well-known cabinetmaker Jean-Henri Riesener, and his mother's half-brother was the painter Henri-François Riesener (1767–1828), who was a pupil of David, and who later took a warm interest in Delacroix's education. Delacroix was always conscious of his French origins but was one of the first artists of his generation to respond to the writings of Goethe and Schiller and to Shakespeare, Sir Walter Scott and Lord Byron; he first read Byron's *Childe Harold* (begun 1809) with the help of his aunt, Henri-François Riesener's wife. (Delacroix subsequently painted her portrait in 1835; see fig..) It is probable that during his youth he absorbed from this clever and cosmopolitan background a breadth of interest uncommon during the long isolation of French culture under successive Napoleonic regimes. He was not only one of the first 'Shakespeareans', as the writer Etienne-Jean Delécluze called the young Romantics, but was also devoted to the writings of Voltaire and was passionately fond of

Mozart's opera *The Marriage of Figaro*. Nevertheless, Delacroix's work is as inconceivable without the Romantic movement as Antoine-Jean Gros's would have been without Napoleon's battles and campaigns.

Between 1806 and 1815 Delacroix attended the Lycée Imperial (now Lycée Louis-le-Grand) in Paris, which was noted for its teaching of Classics. He won prizes in Classics and drawing and acquired a love of French literature that he retained the rest of his life. While still at school, he met Pierre Guérin, a friend of his uncle Henri-François Riesener, and, having decided to study painting, he entered Guérin's popular studio in October 1815. The studio came to be seen as a nursery of Romanticism: Géricault, seven years older than Delacroix, was one of his fellow students, as were Ary Scheffer and Léon Cogniet. Delécluze, commenting on Guérin's teaching methods, related that, like David, he was a liberal master. In 1816 Delacroix entered the Ecole des Beaux-Arts and from an early age he frequently visited the Musée du Louvre, where he was particularly attracted to the paintings of Raphael, Titian, Veronese and Rubens. During this time he met and admired the young English artist Richard Parkes Bonington, who was also making copies after Flemish paintings in the Louvre.

Delacroix's first commission, a *Virgin and Child* (1819; Orcemont, parish church), was painted in the tender and sentimental vein of early Romanticism. His notes for it contain studies after Leonardo, Raphael and Domenichino, although in appearance the painting is very nearly a pastiche of Raphael. In 1821 he executed a second religious painting, a *Madonna of the Sacred Heart* (Ajaccio Cathedral), originally commissioned from Géricault. It appears to have been based on Géricault's style: sweetness has been abandoned for a monumental strength, and, although rather clumsy in handling, it is impressive in its uncompromising solidity. Several drawings (Paris, Louvre) he made for it were starting-points for later compositions, and, in spite of its awkwardness, there is already some hint of the power, relief and eloquence of gesture that were later to characterize his art. During these years his interests—copying Old Masters in the Louvre, experimenting in lithography and drawings from coins, medals and Persian miniatures—found expression in a variety of ways. He dabbled in literature, played the harpsichord and violin and in 1821 painted four panels representing *The Seasons* (Paris, Mme F. Jouët-Pastré priv. col., see Johnson, 1981–9, nos 94–7) in Pompeian Revival style for the dining-room of the actor François-Joseph Talma.

2. Public recognition, 1822–31.

In 1822 Delacroix made his début at the Salon with Dante and Virgil (or the *Barque of Dante*; Paris, Louvre), which caused a sensation and immediately heralded him as a major figure of the French school. The theme of a fragile craft on a stormy sea was derived from Géricault's Raft of the Medusa (1819; Paris, Louvre), and the curious composition combined elements from the works of Michelangelo, Rubens and John Flaxman with swaying upright figures and with the horizontal naked bodies of the damned who cling to the boat. The pose of Dante in the painting was already part of Delacroix's invented repertory of pathetic gesture. The literary subject distinguishes it from the works of Géricault and Gros, its immediate models, while the palette, though sombre, is rich in hue, unlike the livid tones of Géricault's work. Moreover, as one critic remarked, Delacroix may have been constitutionally incapable of painting his own times, which were, in any case, so different from those of the Napoleonic era. Guérin had tried to discourage Delacroix from exhibiting the picture, but Gros admired it, and it was bought by the State and exhibited at the Musée du Luxembourg.



Eugène Delacroix: *Dante and Virgil* (or the *Barque of Dante*), oil on canvas, 1.89×2.46 m, 1822 (Paris, Musée du Louvre); photo credit: Erich Lessing/Art Resource, NY

For the Salon of 1824 Delacroix painted the *Massacres at Chios* (Paris, Louvre), a huge canvas inspired by contemporary life in the Near East. Oriental subjects had interested him since his youth: before having painted *Dante and Virgil* he had been considering a scene from the Greek War of Independence (1821–32), which was at that time attracting much interest in France. After his success at the Salon of 1822, he returned to the idea and in 1823 decided on the subject of Turkish massacres of the Greek population on the island of Chios, in which all but 900 of the 90,000 inhabitants were killed or abducted. Although this was a subject from contemporary life, Delacroix knew nothing about Greeks or Turks and based his scene on newspaper reports and eye-witness accounts, supplemented by a study of costumes and accessories in the collection of his friend, the amateur painter M. Auguste. The immediate pictorial source was probably Gros's *Bonaparte Visiting the Victims of the Plague at Jaffa, 11 March 1799* (1804; Paris, Louvre). As Delacroix worked on the painting, he returned to his reading of Dante, and notes in his *Journal* reveal a morbid and literary response: 'O smile of the dying ... embraces of despair'. The most pathetic motif, that of the child trying to feed from the breast of its murdered mother, occurred in Colonel Olivier Voutier's account, *Mémoires sur la guerre actuelle des Grecs* (1823), but was also used as a motif in earlier subjects dealing with plagues. The wicked Turk on his rearing horse appears to belong to the group of Oriental subjects in Byron's writings; at this time Delacroix was reading Byron's *Giaour* (pubd 1813), which he illustrated in 1826. The *Combat of the Giaour and Hassan* (oil on canvas; Chicago, IL, A. Inst.) shows the Giaour as a heroic figure, but the

ambiguity of the triumphant Turkish horseman in the painting is characteristic of Delacroix. The richly sombre coloration, very different from the contrasting hues of *Dante and Virgil*, probably owes something to Delacroix's study of Spanish art; the assistance of his friends, the watercolourists Charles Soulier (*fl* after 1774) and Thales Fielding, combined with the example of Constable, whose work he had known for some time, gave the surface of the picture an unfamiliar brilliance of effect, causing Delécluze to make the startling comparison with Watteau's *Pilgrimage to the Isle of Cythera* (1717; Paris, Louvre).



Eugène Delacroix: *Massacres at Chios*, oil on canvas, 4.19×3.54 m, 1824 (Paris, Musée du Louvre); Photo credit: Erich Lessing/Art Resource NY

The State's purchase of the *Massacres at Chios* enabled Delacroix to visit England, where he stayed from May to August 1825. His first impressions were unfavourable: he found London immense and 'lacking in all that we call architecture', and the people seemed savage and ill-bred. He was received by the painters David Wilkie, whose sketches he admired; William Etty, whose Rubensian nudes were rather like his own; and Sir Thomas Lawrence, 'the flower of politeness', who showed him his

incomparable collection of Old Master drawings. With Bonington, Delacroix visited the collection of armour (most London, Wallace) belonging to Dr (later Sir) Samuel Rush Meyrick and sketched various pieces. He was also able to improve his knowledge of contemporary British literature, notably Byron and Scott, and earlier literature, especially Shakespeare. He attended the theatre and saw Edmund Kean's performances in Shakespeare's *Richard III*, *Othello* and *The Merchant of Venice* and was struck by a musical version of Goethe's *Faust* at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, which he recalled many years later. The painting most obviously influenced by his stay in England was the portrait of *Louis-Auguste Schwiter* (1826; London, N.G.), rejected at the Salon of 1827. It is a bravura exercise in the manner of Lawrence, whose work inspired the pose, elegance and handling. In the same year Delacroix painted a subject taken from Byron, the *Execution of the Doge Marino Faliero* (London, Wallace), on which Bonington's Anglo-Venetian manner has left its mark. Byron's poems, which Delacroix probably read in Amédée Pichot's French translation, were to provide him with exactly the kind of subject to which he was drawn. *Greece on the Ruins of Missolonghi* (1826; Bordeaux, Mus. B.-A.), Delacroix's second subject from the Greek Wars, is perhaps in part a tribute to Byron, who had died at Missolonghi in April 1824. Indeed, Byron, Greece and the exhibition in aid of the Greek cause held in 1826 at the Galerie Lebrun in Paris (to which Delacroix sent *Marino Faliero*) all absorbed his attention at this time.

The *Death of Sardanapalus* (1827; Paris, Louvre) was shown at the Salon of 1827 (though after the opening, from Feb 1828) and became as important a manifesto for Romantic painting as Victor Hugo's *Préface de Cromwell* of the same year was for Romantic literature. It provoked more general hostility than any other painting by Delacroix, and Sosthène de la Rochefoucauld, the Surintendant des Beaux-Arts, warned the artist that, unless he changed his style, he could no longer expect to receive State commissions. Delacroix instantly became the leader of the Romantic school. In fact, the painting bears a slight resemblance to Horace Vernet's *Massacre of Mamelukes* (1812; Amiens, Mus. Picardie) and rather incongruously combines Byronic exoticism and melancholy with the cheerful sensuousness of Rubens, for which Delacroix's own copy of a *Nereid* (c. 1822; Basle, Kstmus.) from the Flemish artist's *Landing of Marie de' Medici at Marseille* (1622-5; Paris, Louvre) may have provided a model. The subject is ostensibly based on Byron's *Sardanapalus* (1821), although, unlike Delacroix's painting, Byron's play ends with the Assyrian king alone on a pyre set alight by Myrrha. The tangle of bodies and the friezelike foreground countering the extravagant recession make this a difficult picture. Delacroix remained attached to the painting, which stayed in his studio until 1846.



Eugène Delacroix: *Death of Sardanapalus*, oil on canvas, 3.95×4.95 m, 1827 (Paris, Musée du Louvre); Photo credit: Réunion des Musées Nationaux/Art Resource, NY

In 1828, in the course of a somewhat short-lived friendship with Victor Hugo, Delacroix made costume designs for the latter's play *Amy Robsart* (1828), based on Scott's novel *Kenilworth* (1821) and produced at the Théâtre de l'Odéon in Paris that year. In February of the same year, a set of 17 lithographs illustrating Goethe's *Faust* was published to accompany a new French translation by Albert Stapfer. As Delacroix later remembered, these were full of the grotesque and a 'sense of the mysterious'. The plate of *Faust and Mephistopheles on Walpurgisnacht* inspired at least one early imitation, Scheffer's *The Dead Go Quickly* (1829; Lille, Mus. B.-A.). In 1828, Delacroix received a government commission to depict the *Battle of Nancy* (Nancy, Mus. B.-A.), and the following year the Duchesse de Berry commissioned him to paint the *Battle of Poitiers* (Paris, Louvre). Both owe much to Gros's work but also to Delacroix's recognition of the picturesque possibilities inherent in medieval subjects, presented as moments of dramatic conflict. This is also the theme of the *Murder of the Bishop of Liège* (1829; Paris, Louvre), based on Scott's novel *Quentin Durward* (1823) and bought by Ferdinand-Philippe, Duc d'Orléans. These paintings show that Delacroix's palette darkened in these years, possibly owing to his use of bitumen, a pigment also favoured by English artists, but also, probably, to his dawning interest in Rembrandt, shared by such friends as Bonington and Hippolyte Poterlet (1803–35).

Delacroix's next important painting, *Liberty Leading the People* (1830; Paris, Louvre), shows the obvious influence of Gericault, which had been evident even in his early works. Like the *Raft of the Medusa*, *Liberty* combines fact with allegory and represents a scene witnessed by Delacroix near the Pont d'Arcole in Paris during the early, troubled days of the July Monarchy as a heroic emblem of the struggle for freedom from oppression. Despite the difficulties inherent in representing an ideal in the form of a realistic portrait of a young working-class woman, the painting was generally well received by both critics and the public, was bought by the State (though exhibited for only a few months) and earned Delacroix the Légion d'honneur.



Eugène Delacroix: *Liberty Leading the People*, oil on canvas, 2.60×3.25 m, 1830 (Paris, Musée du Louvre); Photo credit: Erich Lessing/Art Resource NY

3. North Africa and Spain, 1832.

During the late 1820s and early 1830s Delacroix had maintained his interest in the East and in the last years of the Restoration painted a number of Oriental genre scenes. Between January and July 1832, he accompanied the Comte de Mornay, Louis-Philippe's ambassador to the Sultan of Morocco, to Spain, Morocco and Algeria. The notes and sketches he made on this journey provided him with material for the rest of his life (see fig.; for further discussion see Orientalism). The most important result of the

journey was the discovery, as he saw it, of a living antiquity in the nobility of bearing and gesture that he saw around him. As he wrote to a friend, 'Imagine what it is to see, lying in the sun, walking in the streets, or mending shoes, men of consular type, each one a Cato or a Brutus'. The pages of his sketchbook from this journey are filled with written descriptions of a richly pictorial kind and finely composed vignettes drawn from life. From Meknes he wrote, 'At every step there are ready-made pictures', expressing an enthusiasm for the external reality of objects that was matched only by his interest in painting flowers during the 1840s. His visit to Spain, though brief, was equally intense, and in addition to admiring paintings by Murillo, he was reminded, by the bustle of life in the streets, of those of Goya. The Dominican monastery at Cádiz later provided the setting for *Christopher Columbus at the Monastery of La Rabida* (1838; Washington, DC, N.G.A.). In Algeria he was able to visit a harem, where he admired the tranquil domestic occupations of its inhabitants. While there he made notes that formed the basis for his first large painting based on his recollections, the *Women of Algiers in their Apartment* (1834; Paris, Louvre). Although this work seemed to herald a new mood of realism combined with a scientific use of colour, it is not, however, the fragment of observed life it appears. The pose of the figure on the left (of which there is a watercolour of 1832; Paris, Louvre) is close to one in a Persian miniature that Delacroix copied in 1817, and the tall figure seen from the back adopts the curious twisting pose of Ariadne in Titian's *Bacchus and Ariadne* (1522-3; London, N.G.). The colour, like the forms, is calculated and is a blend of observation and invention. The harmonious lines, the flatly drawn and decorative character of many of the elements and the occasionally exaggerated brilliance of the colours—particularly the reds, pinks and blues—later appealed to Matisse. A similarly artful use of colour intensified for decorative effect, while giving an appearance of documentary realism, is found in the painting of the *Comte de Mornay's Apartment* (1832-3; Paris, Louvre).



Eugène Delacroix: *Women of Algiers in their Apartment*, oil on canvas, 1834 (Paris, Musée du Louvre); Photo credit: Scala/Art Resource, NY



Eugène Delacroix: Saada, the Wife of Abraham Benchimol and Précjada, One of their Daughters, watercolour over graphite, 8-3/4 x 6-3/8 in. (22.2 x 16.2 cm), 1832 (New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, Bequest of Walter C. Baker, 1971, Accession ID:1972.118.210); photo © The Metropolitan Museum of Art <http://www.metmuseum.org/Collections/search-the-collections/90003027>

4. Literary and historical subjects and mural decorations, 1833–c 1850.

Although Arab subjects were to recur in the years following Delacroix's journey to North Africa, the general tenor of his work became increasingly literary. The death of his young nephew, Charles de Verninac, in New York in 1834 was a source of profound grief and almost certainly played a part in the increasingly sad character of his subject-matter during the 1830s. The *Prisoner of Chillon* (Paris, Louvre), painted for the Duc d'Orléans in 1834, depicts François Bonivard (c. 1496–1570) in prison for opposing the increasing power of Emanuel-Philibert, 10th Duke of Savoy, and watching helplessly as his two younger brothers die. It is at least possible that the tragic mood of the picture was intensified by the death of the young Verninac.

In 1834, while staying with his cousin Alexandre Bataille at the abbey of Valmont, Delacroix painted three subjects in fresco (*Anacreon and a Girl*, *Leda and the Swan* and *Bacchus and a Tiger; in situ*) as overdoors in a corridor of the abbey. All mythological, they are Delacroix's only known work in fresco, a technique that, unlike Ingres's pupils, he did not use for his decorative schemes. However, this

experiment marks an increasing interest in the technical problems of mural painting. The subjects, in a light-hearted antique idiom, as well as the decorations for the Salon du Roi at the Palais-Bourbon in Paris that were already in hand (see below), developed the classicism he had discovered in Morocco, which he then characteristically applied to literary subjects. At the same time, he moved closer to Titian and to Rubens, two artists whom he considered closest to the true spirit of antiquity. *St Sebastian Tended by the Holy Women* (1836; Nantua, St Michel) recalled Titian for some critics; others mentioned Pietro da Cortona and Carlo Maratti. The painting also contains references to the work of Michelangelo and, in the saint's pose, to Rubens's *Descent from the Cross* (1612-14; Antwerp Cathedral). While preparing drawings for this subject, Delacroix began to plan one of his most striking pictures, *Medea* (exh. Salon 1838; Lille, Mus. B.-A.). Indeed, this can be seen as the culmination of the various currents of the 1830s, combining the exoticism of the *Women of Algiers in their Apartment* and the frenzy of the *Fanatics of Tangiers* (1838; Minneapolis, MN, Inst. A.) with references to the Old Masters, specifically Leonardo's *Virgin of the Rocks* (1482-3), Raphael's *La Belle Jardinière* (1507) and especially Andrea del Sarto's *Charity* (1518; all Paris, Louvre). The result is a highly original example of Delacroix's own statuesque, allegorical figures.



During the 1830s Delacroix received two commissions for pictures to hang in Louis-Philippe's Musée de l'Histoire de France at the château of Versailles: in 1834 the *Battle of Taillebourg* for the Galerie des Batailles (1837; *in situ*) and in 1838 the *Entry of the Crusaders into Constantinople* (1840; Paris, Louvre) to be placed in the Salles des Croisades. The subject of the earlier painting was Louis IX's victory over the English in 1242 as they guarded the bridge over the River Charente at Taillebourg. Delacroix, who attended the opening of the gallery on 10 June 1837 before the *Battle of Taillebourg* was actually installed, found the galleries anything but historic and felt that the painting had no place there. Clearly indebted to Rubens, it also contains several archaizing elements that almost recall Uccello's panels of the *Rout of San Romano* (Florence, Uffizi; London, N.G.; Paris, Louvre): a restricted field of vision, an enlarged scale for the foreground figures and a central white horse of wooden solidity, in spite of its tossing head. The same imaginative fancy is brought to bear on the second commission, depicting the arrival in Constantinople of one of the leaders of the Fourth Crusade (1202–4), Baldwin VI of Flanders, who in 1204 became the first Latin emperor of Constantinople, together with a Venetian, Tommaso Massini, who became Patriarch, and Doge Dandolo, who thus added part of the eastern empire to his own possessions. Delacroix called the picture his 'third massacre', but it shows the invaders' procession through the streets rather than the actual assault on the city. The painting is a magnificent summation of Delacroix's mature style: Count Baldwin reins in his horse with a gesture appropriate to an Arab chief; the central group, enlarged, as in the *Battle of Taillebourg*, but without loss of reality, is united in a complex mass. A dreary sadness fills the picture, conveyed by a half-light that Delacroix found in Veronese's paintings (*see* §II below). As the new barbarians, the Christians arrive in the city, their pennons and winged helmets fluttering against the smoking sky, while the infidel, imploring at their feet, have all the beauty and pathos of the Greeks in the foreground of the Massacres at Chios. The *Entry of the Crusaders* was Delacroix's last medieval subject on a large scale.

The work of Delacroix's mature years was largely dominated by mural decoration. Through his friend Adolphe Thiers, who had become Ministre du Commerce et Travaux Publics, he received a commission in 1833 to decorate the Salon du Roi in the Palais-Bourbon (now Assemblée Nationale), Paris, and the library of the Chambre des Députés (begun 1838) in the same building. In 1840 he decorated the cupola and half-dome in the library of the Senate in the Palais du Luxembourg. Further commissions came in rapid succession: the paintings for the chapel of Saints-Anges in St Sulpice (1849; *see* §I, 5 below), the ceiling of the Galerie d'Apollon in the Musée du Louvre (1850) and the Salon de la Paix in the Hôtel de Ville (1851; destr. 1871), all in Paris.

As the Salon du Roi in the Palais-Bourbon was a dark room with many doors and windows, Delacroix realized that his paintings there would have to have a strong effect of relief. His decoration represents the components of the State—Industry, Agriculture, Justice and War—above friezes depicting related subjects. On the piers dividing the room he painted allegories of the rivers of France. For the five small cupolas of the library in the Chambre des Députés, painted in 1845–7, he chose subjects traditional for the divisions of a library: Philosophy, Natural History, Theology, Literature and Poetry. In the half-domes, his depiction of the dawning of civilization and its collapse—*Orpheus Bringing the Art of Peace to Primitive Greece* and *Attila and his Hordes Overrunning Italy and the Arts*—epitomizes the sense of a precarious balance between civilization and barbarism, which was so often the subject of his work

and which reached its apotheosis in the ceiling of the Galerie d'Apollon in the Louvre. In this case, it has been suggested that the scheme may be indebted to a cyclical concept of history held by Delacroix's friend the painter Paul Chenavard, which was an elaboration of a view first proposed by Giambattista Vico, whose *Scienza nuova* (Naples, 1725) had been translated from the Italian in 1827 by Jules Michelet.

The mural commission for the library of the Senate comprised paintings for a cupola, pendentives and a half-dome, prepared, as was Delacroix's habit, on canvas in the studio. The cupola decoration is loosely based on Canto 4 of Dante's *Inferno* and depicts great figures of antiquity, forming four groups symbolizing the achievements of the human spirit and all represented in a continuous landscape: Dante and Virgil; Orpheus; Socrates, Aspasia and Alcibiades; and a group of distinguished Romans that includes Marcus Aurelius, Portia, Trajan and Julius Caesar.

Delacroix's painting in the Galerie d'Apollon was part of the restoration of the room that had been begun just after the Revolution of 1848. After a fire in 1661, the gallery had been redecorated under the supervision of Charles Le Brun using the sun symbolism often chosen as a compliment to Louis XIV. The decorative scheme had never been completed, and the central panel of the ceiling remained empty. Delacroix, whose sympathies for Le Brun were limited, nonetheless chose to adopt the original scheme, a combat between Apollo and the serpent Python, after which Victory descends to crown Apollo, and Iris unfurls her scarf as a symbol of the triumph of Light over Darkness.



Eugène Delacroix George Sand's Garden at Nohant, oil on canvas, 17 7/8 x 21 3/4 in. (45.4 x 55.2 cm), ca. 1840s (New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, Purchase, Dikran G. Kelekian Gift, 1922, Accession ID: 22.27.4); photo © The Metropolitan Museum of Art <http://www.metmuseum.org/Collections/search-the-collections/110000617>

During the 1840s an increasing preoccupation with his health led Delacroix to nurse his strength and to spend more time in the country. He rented a house at Champrosay, near Fontainebleau, and also spent part of several summers at Nohant, Indres, with the composer Chopin and the writer George Sand (see fig.). In 1843 his set of lithographs illustrating Shakespeare's *Hamlet* appeared, and he completed the series from Goethe's play *Goetz von Berlichingen* (1771). Around this time he also painted several pathetic subjects from literature, including the familiar theme of the *Shipwreck of Don Juan* (1840; Paris, Louvre) from Byron's poem *Don Juan* (begun 1818), several subjects from Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* (*Romeo Bids Juliet Farewell*; priv. col.), *Macbeth* (*Macbeth and the Witches*, 1825; London, Wildenstein's; *Lady Macbeth Sleepwalking*, 1850; on dep. Ottawa, N.G.) and *Othello* (*Othello and Desdemona*, 1849; Ottawa, N.G.) and *The Abduction of Rebecca* (1846; New York, Met.) from Sir Walter Scott's *Ivanhoe*. In 1844 he depicted Marcus Aurelius, one of his moral heroes, in *Marcus Aurelius on his Deathbed* (Lyon, Mus. B.-A.). This gives a prominent place to his son Commodus, already a very unpromising young man, and sounds the ever-present note of pessimism as the spectator ponders the reign of tyranny that is to follow. Delacroix was not altogether pleased with the picture, a feeling apparently shared by the jury of the 1845 Salon. When the government wished to acquire it for the Musée des Augustins in Toulouse, Delacroix requested that the *Sultan of Morocco and his Retinue* (1845; Toulouse, Mus. Augustins) be sent in its place.

The stoic resignation of Marcus Aurelius and the spiritual isolation of the poet Torquato Tasso in *Tasso Imprisoned in the Madhouse at Ferrara*, the latter a subject painted by Delacroix in 1824 (Zurich, Stift. Samml. Bührle) and in 1839 (Winterthur, Samml. Oskar Reinhart), were qualities that he also found in certain religious subjects. For example, his first commission for a church mural, the *Pietà* (1844) in St Denys du St Sacrement, Paris, is a continuation of his own distinctive vein of pathos combined with formal qualities derived from Rosso Fiorentino. Throughout his later career he returned to religious themes of suffering and isolation, though not always in response to a commission.

5. Later years, c 1850–1863.

From his early years Delacroix, like Gericault, was attracted by the savagery of wild animals (see fig.); a note made in Morocco mentions a scene of fighting horses. Among the precedents for this kind of imagery was the antique group of a *Lion Attacking a Horse* (Rome, Mus. Conserv.), said to have been particularly admired by Michelangelo and copied in stone (1740; Rousham Park, Oxon) by Peter Scheemakers (ii). George Stubbs used the theme in a naturalistic setting in several paintings (e.g. *Horse Attacked by a Lion*, 1770; London, Tate) of which Gericault made at least one copy (1820/21; Paris, Louvre). In Delacroix's versions of the subject, he was able to synthesize the classical with the exotic, with his studies of Ecorché (Fr. flayed bodies), with the example of English art and with the work of Rubens, of whose paintings of hunts he owned engravings by Pieter Claesz Soutman. On 25 January 1847 he described two of them in detail, making clear how important to him were the formal values of movement, variety and unity. Of his three great lion hunts, there remain a fragment (1855; Bordeaux, Mus. B.-A.; see fig.) and two complete paintings (1858; Boston, MA, Mus. F.A.; 1861; Chicago, IL, A. Inst.). The one in Chicago is the most spacious and free in handling, and its circular, dancelike movement suggests a perpetual struggle, one of the underlying themes in which, however, form and content are inseparable.



Eugène Delacroix: Tiger Hunt, oil on canvas, 735×935 mm, 1854 (Paris, Musée d'Orsay); photo credit: Erich Lessing/Art Resource, NY

After Delacroix's brief interest in the events of 1848—Théophile Thoré, in his review of the Salon of 1848, implied that Delacroix had begun to paint a pendant to *Liberty Leading the People*, and he became joint president of the new Assemblée Générale des Artistes—he soon retreated to Champrosay, where he began his great series of flower paintings, of which two finally appeared at the Salon of 1849: *Basket of Fruit in a Flowergarden* (Philadelphia, PA, Mus. A.) and *Basket of Flowers Overturned in a Park* (New York, Met.). In 1850 he began work on sketches for his great commission to decorate the chapel of Saints-Ange in St Sulpice, Paris, which was to occupy him until 1861. The subjects for the walls were *Heliодorus Driven from the Temple* and *Jacob Wrestling with the Angel* and, for the ceiling, *St Michael Defeating the Devil*. *Heliодorus* derives, in theme and treatment, from the work of Raphael, a constant inspiration; *Jacob Wrestling* combines, as do the best of Delacroix's pictures, references to all that he had learnt from his study of nature and the Old Masters, resulting in a work that was to remain a touchstone for succeeding generations of artists.

II. Working methods and technique.

Although his critics were chiefly concerned by Delacroix's apparent indifference to technique, very much more than by the nature of his subject-matter, Delacroix himself was more consistently exercised by problems of technique than almost any other artist of the 19th century. An early *Nude Study* (c. 1820; priv. col., see Johnson, 1981–9, no. 4), for example, reveals a correctness in the handling of the transparent glazes, similar to that in David's paintings, with a revealing preference for softly dramatic effects of chiaroscuro. However, from an early age he preferred the works of Gros and Pierre-Paul Prud'hon to those of Guérin and Anne-Louis Girodet. While *Dante and Virgil*, his earliest Salon painting, is Neo-classical in the sculptural quality of the figures and their parallel relationship to the picture-plane, the handling is strikingly bold when compared with the refined finish of a painting by David or Ingres. Delacroix admired the emphatic handling of paint in the works of Gericault and Gros, in which shadows are so loaded that they become dense and dark. The drops of water on some of the foreground figures in *Dante and Virgil* appear to be pure pigment. It has been suggested, following Delacroix's pupil Pierre Andrieu (1821–92), that these originated from a study of prismatic colour and particularly from a study of the nereids in Rubens's *Landing of Marie de' Medici at Marseille*, one of which Delacroix had copied (see §I, 2 above). In the *Massacres at Chios* (1824), he seemed concerned to depart from the sculptural relief of the figures in *Dante and Virgil* and, according to his *Journal*, to be pursuing something like a synthesis of the techniques of Michelangelo and Velázquez. He even mentioned Ingres as a painter whose soft and melting impasto had some of the qualities he was seeking; these qualities he also found in the paintings of Raphael, whose contour was always a model for him. The influence of Delacroix's friends Charles Soulier (who had first taught him the techniques of watercolour) and Thales Fielding, his new knowledge of Constable's work and the example of Bonington combined to lead him in the direction of lighter tonality and liveliness of surface. A group of pastel studies (Paris, Louvre, Cab. Dessins) for the *Death of Sardanapalus* reveals the extent to which he was seeking a pale tonality combined with a startling variety of hue, to be achieved by a literal translation of the pastel technique into the handling of oil paint, something that was later practised by Jean-François Millet, Degas and van Gogh. In Delacroix's work this approach can be seen in the application of graphic techniques of coloration, most memorably in the still-life of hat and staff in the foreground of *Jacob Wrestling with the Angel* in St Sulpice, Paris. Bonington's brilliant work in watercolour and gouache seems to have had the effect of brightening Delacroix's palette, particularly for his smaller pictures: the use of bright impasto in the *Execution of the Doge Marino Faliero* is a good example. Many years later, when working on the decorations in the library of the Palais-Bourbon, Paris, Delacroix thought about the effect of white ground in watercolour, in which the transparency of the medium allows maximum luminosity. He attempted to achieve a similar luminosity (rather like the Pre-Raphaelites in Britain) by using a white oil ground, a practice that became commonplace with the Impressionists. In the course of his mural decorations he experimented, as did Ingres's pupils, with a number of mixtures, most commonly using a combination of oil and wax. The only time he used the fresco technique was at Valmont, yet the resulting pale luminous quality was one he valued and was able to achieve in other works by the increasing use of pale grounds and translucent pigment. Related to his work in pastel is the technique of *flochetage*, which implies a visible interweaving of brushstrokes. This is particularly associated with his later work; it is found in some landscapes of the 1850s (e.g. *Ovid among the Scythians*, 1859; London, N.G.) and is most noticeable in the murals in St Sulpice. Delacroix had used it earlier in his *Pietà* for St Denys du St Sacrement, Paris, and in the *Entry*

of the *Crusaders into Constantinople* (1840), in which the comparatively blond tonality was achieved, as at St Sulpice, by a mixture of wax and turpentine as well as by a thoughtful application of principles learnt from Veronese.

Repeatedly in his *Journal* Delacroix insisted on the necessity of applying scientific principles to the resolution of technical problems. For this reason, there is little doubt that he was aware of, if not influenced by, the theory of colour proposed by Michel-Eugène Chevreul. For the practising artist, the most significant of Chevreul's ideas was that a colour seen alone will appear to be surrounded by a faint ring of its complementary colour. One of Delacroix's North African sketchbooks contains a note on colour that may be derived from Chevreul (see Joubin), indicating that a half-tone should be made not by adding black but rather the complementary of the colour. Delacroix seems to have applied this principle while working on the *Entry of the Crusaders*, as a sheet of preparatory studies (Paris, Louvre, Cab. Dessins) shows a colour circle bearing notes on primary colours and their complementaries. However, a new clarity of light and atmosphere in the painting was due primarily to the influence of Veronese, who, as Delacroix noted in his *Journal*, was able to paint brightly without violent contrasts of value (Johnson, 1963). In fact, as Delacroix worked on his large decorative schemes, Veronese was often in his thoughts, precisely because the Venetian artist's work was a splendid example of luminosity and also because his mastery of large, simple forms was a way of achieving an essential clarity of composition in work intended to be seen from a great distance. Delacroix developed a range of brushstrokes partly, presumably, as a result of his interest in the technique of pastel and partly because of his general interest in Venetian art. Critics sometimes suggested the influence of Tintoretto, whose free brushwork and handling of highlights and folds are all comparable with Delacroix's own.

The chief sources of information about Delacroix's technique are the reminiscences of his assistants, Gustave Lassalle-Bordes (1814–68), Louis de Planet (1814–75) and Pierre Andrieu. He had few pupils in any conventional sense, although after receiving his first decorative commission in 1833 he opened a studio for assistants, whom he regarded as employees. His practice cannot be compared with a Renaissance workshop; although Planet's *St Theresa* (untraced) was warmly praised by Baudelaire at the Salon of 1846, none of the artists appears to have absorbed any influence from Delacroix's own practices, nor did they show any marked success in pursuing a career. However, Planet, in his memoirs, indicated that Delacroix was conscientious in teaching the preparatory techniques of mural decoration. Planet recorded in detail the transfer of drawing to canvas, the preparation in grisaille and the supervision of the work. Occasionally he assisted Delacroix in the preparation of such easel paintings as *Marcus Aurelius on his Deathbed*. The memoirs contain a detailed discussion of Delacroix's technique of drawing, one by which he sought to assert the masses first of all. Delacroix drew continually, copying engravings daily, almost as a musician practises scales. His working drawings, in pencil, black chalk or pen and ink, are generally loose, animated and exploratory. He constantly pursued 'relief', as he called it, which he found above all in Rubens's work, and thought this could best be obtained in drawing by using oval shapes he called *boules*. This was a long-established technique found in Leonardo's work, for example, or some of the pen-and-ink drawings of Raphael, and later used by Gros and Gericault. Delacroix's preoccupation with mass also extended to paint, and Planet explained how the drawing technique could also be applied to the grisaille preparation. Delacroix taught his pupils to attend to these and to use pure tones placed beside one another in a certain order. He stressed the importance of reflections and taught the composition and arrangement

of colours on a palette and how to arrange them on the canvas. The order was carefully prescribed: Planet's notes on his master's advice for painting flesh tones are based on observations from nature and are similar to the notes Delacroix occasionally made for himself.

In 1850 Lassalle-Bordes returned to his home in the south of France, and Planet, from Toulouse, a little later. Delacroix's principal assistant on later commissions was Andrieu, who also left an account of their working practices. He described, for example, the 'van Dyck palette' used during the decoration of the library in the Senate of the Palais du Luxembourg, a limited and traditional arrangement to which Delacroix added ultramarine and viridian green. Delacroix generally used a prepared palette on which the colours were in a fixed order, though they could be modified according to the requirements of the picture. It is evident from his work that he increasingly moved towards the use of bright, pure colour of a pale tonal range and in which, as in the work of the Impressionists, the contrasts are of hue rather than of tone. His use of a contour slightly separated from the coloured area it encloses is derived from the work of the Venetians, especially Veronese; this particular use of outline, not usually associated with Delacroix, was also found in the work of Millet and Degas. As the range of Delacroix's style and brushwork reveals, the technical experimentation was unceasing. However, it was his use of colour at the service of his imagination, rather than in pursuit of a documentary and scientific realism, that provided resources for artists of a younger generation, Odilon Redon and Gauguin being the keenest followers of his example.

III. Character and personality.

Delacroix's work had much to do with his character; this is the essence of his romanticism that, as Baudelaire argued, lay neither in subject-matter nor in style but in a way of feeling. Delacroix's first wish had been to write, and several short pieces survive from 1817: a novella set in the time of William the Conqueror and a sombre drama entitled *Victoria*. They perhaps owed their initial inspiration to the ruins at Valmont Abbey, where he first felt the lure of the past. His parents died when he was young, and all that he inherited was a lawsuit. Poor, proud and dispossessed, he nevertheless contrived, in a Parisian way, to live a rather grand social life. He was a frequent guest at François Gérard's salon, and there are numerous descriptions in his *Journal* of dinner parties, concerts and visits to the opera. He was deeply pessimistic; the range of his subjects makes clear his predilection for pathos, if not tragedy, and there are few exceptions to this in his work. He therefore found Shakespeare a particularly rich source of inspiration, especially subjects taken from *Hamlet*, with whose principal character he probably felt some affinity; an early Self-portrait (1829; Paris, Louvre) is sometimes thought to represent him as this character. His active social life was often a source of ironic and contemptuous comment, and as he grew older, he felt an increasing need for periods of solitude or to be in the company of his closest friends. One of the most valued was Chopin, 'a man of rare distinction, the truest artist I have ever met'. The two enjoyed discussing the principles of musical composition, and on one occasion Chopin explained the use of counterpoint in music. In spite of his acknowledged role as leader of the Romantic movement in painting, Delacroix maintained that even in that domain he was a pure 'classique', valuing balance, order and clarity above all. His tastes in music were largely for works by 18th-century composers, while in literature he liked Voltaire and admired Jean Racine but could spend days happily reading Alexandre Dumas *père*. His early interest in writing found expression in the consistently literary character of his work, but he also began to publish some of his writings on aspects of art, the first appearing in 1829. He published articles on Poussin, Gros, Raphael, Michelangelo and

Prud'hon but, like Joshua Reynolds, excluded some of his favourite artists from his essays. His thoughts on art, although occasionally theoretical—as in his consideration of the Paragone (the question of the relative qualities of the different arts)—were always discussed with some particular painterly problem in mind. He even began work on a dictionary of art, but this project was never completed.



Eugène Delacroix: *Self-portrait*, oil on canvas, 640×510 mm, 1829 (Paris, Musée du Louvre); photo credit: Réunion des Musées Nationaux/Art Resource, NY

In a mood of high spirits accompanying the favourable reception of *Dante and Virgil* and its purchase by the State, Delacroix began to keep a journal in 1822. His diaries break off in 1824, and when he resumed them in 1847, 23 years later, the tone is far more serious, with extended passages discussing such aesthetic issues as the relative qualities of Beethoven and Mozart, both of whom he found

'modern'. Nor was he afraid to describe his moods of melancholy. The journal, which conveys something of the range and spaciousness of his art, is written with transparent honesty and good sense.

In spite of his official success and his social position, he admitted to having a wish for *gloire*. He was, not surprisingly, sensitive to criticism, and it must have been painful to his dignity to have made so many fruitless visits to the Académie des Beaux-Arts when seeking election to its ranks; he was eventually successful, on the eighth attempt, in 1857. His election, which allowed him to teach at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, marked the point at which he began systematically to arrange his thoughts on the art and artists of the past. He frequently changed his choice of favourite artists, but his interests generally reflected problems of composition. The 'darkness' he found in Spanish art attracted him when he was working on the *Massacres at Chios*, while Veronese's 'splendid afternoon light' delighted him as he painted the *Entry of the Crusaders into Constantinople*.

In the course of painting the *Massacres at Chios*, Delacroix reflected on the 'Romantic' label that had been attached to his name: 'If by romanticism they mean the free manifestation of my personal impressions, my effort to get away from the types eternally copied in the schools, my dislike of academic recipes, then I admit that not only am I romantic but also that I have been one since I was fifteen.'

IV. Critical reception and posthumous reputation.

From the outset, the critics at the Salons found Delacroix's works challenging. His restless pursuit of forms and techniques appropriate to an art tied to his own imaginative response to literature could not fail, at times, to appear unorthodox. *Dante and Virgil*, in many ways a conventional painting, struck Delécluze, a former pupil of David, as 'a daub', when it was shown at the Salon of 1822, though he acknowledged its energy of form and colour. He felt that Delacroix and his friends were 'Shakespeareans', borrowing English techniques and dealing in extravagant and exotic subject-matter. Though he never denied Delacroix's gifts, he did not find them much to his taste, though he tried to judge them on their own terms. He was offended by what seemed a deliberate pursuit of ugliness in the *Massacres at Chios*: the cadaverous hues, so satisfactory to Delacroix, were unpleasing, and the suffering depicted seemed to exceed the limits of artistic propriety. Nonetheless, he conceded that the artist had vigour and a true sense of colour. Charles Paul Landon, who, like Delécluze, had received a traditional training, found that the *Massacres* turned ugliness into a system. Stendhal, who would have liked to have admired Delacroix, found that he could not, though he praised a sense of movement in which he thought he discerned the influence of Tintoretto. In short, an older generation of critics, who judged Delacroix's work by the standard of moderation, and of Nicolas Boileau's *L'Art poétique* (Paris, 1674), were affronted by what they saw as a cult of misery and ugliness. For Auguste Jal and Adolphe Thiers, on the other hand, occasional faults of execution did not conceal the evidence of a rich imagination, and both were touched by the beauty of the conception. Delacroix, not averse to having publicity surrounding his work, had deliberately chosen the subject of a massacre for its ability to arouse considerable interest. The scale and dramatic incident of his treatment, combined with such a subject, made public notice inevitable. It is clear from contemporary comments, and not only those that were hostile, that Delacroix was perceived as setting out to subvert Neo-classical practice. The artist Arnold Scheffer (1795–1858), not unsympathetic to the painting, wrote that it was, more than any other work, in opposition to tradition and that Delacroix was taking as much trouble not to arrange his

picture as David's pupils took to arrange theirs. Delacroix's position as an *enfant terrible* was established. The critics most sympathetic to Delacroix's work in the 1820s were Jal, a former naval officer, and Thiers, who later became a government minister in the July Monarchy. Thiers (sometimes thought to have been prompted by his friend Gérard) wrote in particularly glowing terms about *Dante and Virgil*, in which he recognized spiritual affinities with Michelangelo and Rubens, and he announced to his readers that Delacroix had 'received genius'.

Although neither the *Execution of the Doge Marino Faliero* nor the *Agony in the Garden* (1824-7; Paris, St-Paul-St-Louis) could be thought to have anything of the disturbing character of the *Massacres*, they both attracted strongly worded criticism. Writing for *Le Globe*, Louis Vitet, although a strong sympathizer with the Greek cause, seems to have had no particular sympathy for the new school and took Delacroix to task for an excessively literary treatment in *Marino Faliero*. In fact, as was often the case, the chief burden of his criticism fell on what he felt were faults of drawing and colour. Delécluze, too, complained of the treatment of the subject, the drawing and particularly the prominent position of the dazzling white staircase, finally dismissing the work as a 'brilliant sketch'. Once again Jal took for a virtue what Vitet had seen to be a fault; the design that Vitet found too mannered was for Jal charming in that it recalled medieval wood-engravings. Jal, with some prescience, added that Delacroix would not always retain the small-scale and mannered appearance of *Marino Faliero*, of which he had so many imitators. As for the *Agony in the Garden*, Jal found the figure of Christ too human, while Delécluze disliked Christ's stoic resignation. Almost all critics, however, found the angels appealing, Delécluze remarking that they looked like pretty English schoolgirls.

On the other hand, the *Death of Sardanapalus* stirred up a roar of indignation that, however, did not include Stendhal or Victor Hugo. On this occasion, Jal shared Delécluze's view that the picture lacked unity. However, he subsequently wrote of Delacroix's gifts in terms that anticipated Baudelaire, expressing his view that his execution was almost savage, that Dante would have understood him and that his palette was rich and terrible. *Liberty Leading the People*, shown at the Salon of 1831, was probably the most discussed of Delacroix's submissions. Delécluze and Landon were doubtful of its merits, the former admiring the concept but finding it exaggerated, the latter appreciating the composition but intensely disliking the figure of Liberty. The greatest enthusiasm was expressed by the young poet Heinrich Heine, who found in it 'the real appearance of the July days' (*Französische Maler: Gemäldeausstellung in Paris, 1831*; Hamburg, 1834). Victor Schoelcher, writing for the newly founded journal *L'Artiste*, whose editor Achille Ricourt was a friend of Delacroix's, mentioned the painter's 'transformation through the brush of the ugly into an object of beauty'. The young Gustave Planche objected to the alliance of fact and allegory but within two years was writing with approval about the painting for that very reason.

During the July Monarchy, reviews of Delacroix's work continued to be mixed, and Planche's sympathies moved away from Delacroix as he looked for a less purely Romantic artist. Jal and Thiers ceased to publish art criticism. However, Delacroix's cause was taken up by several young critics: Maurice-Alexandre Decamps (1804-52), brother of the painter, Alexandre-Gabriel Decamps; Théophile Thoré; Théophile Gautier; and Charles Baudelaire, the critic whose name, more than any other, is linked with Delacroix's. In his poem *Les Phares*, Baudelaire characterized the artist as 'a lake of blood haunted by wicked angels', an extreme example of his tendency to stress the molochism, as he termed it, of Delacroix's imagination. On 30 May 1856 Delacroix admitted in his *Journal* that Baudelaire was right to claim that he found enjoyment in the terrible but he was anxious to disclaim any affinity with Edgar Allan Poe, whose incoherence and obscurity of expression were not at all to his taste. The 35

canvases Delacroix exhibited in 1855 at the Exposition Universelle in Paris created a favourable impression. The Salon of 1859, on the other hand, was somewhat unsatisfactory, and Philippe Burty referred to it as the painter's Waterloo. Maxime Du Camp's criticism was particularly wounding and Delacroix never again showed at the Salon.

Delacroix's posthumous reputation began almost immediately after his death in 1863. The studio sale organized by Burty six months after his death brought in 360,000 francs against an estimate of 100,000. In the following year Théophile Silvestre published *Eugène Delacroix: Documents nouveaux*, Burty began to prepare an edition of Delacroix's letters and Alfred Robaut had already embarked on his catalogue raisonné. During the 1860s the dealers Hector Brame and Paul Durand-Ruel bought a series of Delacroix's major works and sold them at great profit. For new generations of artists, he was the great liberator. Henri Fantin-Latour's group portrait, *Homage to Delacroix* (1864; Paris, Mus. d'Orsay), was a summation of the debt owed to Delacroix by such young artists as Manet, Puvis de Chavannes, Théodore Chassériau and Paul Signac. By 1880 his status was unassailable with artists, collectors and the general public. In that year, Henry James wrote that 'he belongs to the family of the great masters of the past—he had the same large liberal way of understanding his business'. In the 20th century, substantial scholarship, both in England and France, has greatly increased the knowledge of his work, and the great retrospective held at the Louvre in 1963 on the centenary of his death confirmed his position as the only truly universal artist of the French school after Poussin.

Writings

P. Burty, ed.: *Lettres d'Eugène Delacroix* (Paris, 1878, rev., 2 vols, 1880)

E. Faure, ed.: *Eugène Delacroix: Oeuvres littéraires*, 2 vols (Paris, 1923)

A. Joubin, ed.: *Journal d'Eugène Delacroix*, 3 vols (Paris, 1932/R 1981; Eng. trans., ed. W. Pach, London, 1938)

A. Joubin, ed.: *Correspondance générale d'Eugène Delacroix*, 5 vols (Paris, 1935–8) [essentially supersedes Burty's edn]

A. Dupont, ed.: *Lettres intimes: Correspondance inédite* (Paris, 1954)

L. Johnson, ed.: *Eugène Delacroix: Further Correspondence, 1817–1863* (Oxford, 1991)

Bibliography

Early sources

T. Silvestre: *Eugène Delacroix: Documents nouveaux* (Paris, 1864)

A. Moreau: *E. Delacroix et son oeuvre* (Paris, 1873)

A. Robaut: *L'Oeuvre complet de Eugène Delacroix: Peintures, dessins, gravures, lithographies* (Paris, 1885/R New York, 1969) [cat. rais.]

M. Tourneux: *Eugène Delacroix devant ses contemporains: Ses écrits, ses biographes, ses critiques* (Paris, 1886)

P. Signac: *D'Eugène Delacroix au néo-impressionnisme* (Paris, 1899/R 1964)

L. Delteil: *Ingres et Delacroix* (1908), iii of *Le Peintre-graveur illustré (XIXe et XXe siècles)* (Paris, 1906-26/R New York, 1969)

L. de Planet: *Souvenirs de travaux de peinture avec M. Eugène Delacroix*, ed. A. Joubin (Paris, 1929)

General

T. Silvestre: *Histoire des artistes vivants: Etudes d'après nature* (Paris, 1856); expanded edns, 1878, 1926 as *Les Artistes français*

P. Andrieu: *Musée de Montpellier: La Galerie Bruyas* (Paris, 1876)

N. M. Athanassoglou-Kallymer: *French Images from the Greek War of Independence, 1821-1830* (New Haven and London, 1989)

Monographs and exhibition catalogues

E. Moreau-Nélaton: *Delacroix raconté par lui-même*, 2 vols (Paris, 1916)

R. Escholier: *Delacroix, peintre, graveur, écrivain*, 3 vols (Paris, 1926-9)

L. Johnson: *Delacroix* (London, 1963) [best short account; fundamental for colour theory]

Mémorial de l'exposition Eugène Delacroix organisée au Musée du Louvre à l'occasion du centenaire de la mort de l'artiste (exh. cat., ed. M. Sérullaz; Paris, Louvre, 1963)

R. Huyghe: *Delacroix ou le combat solitaire* (Paris, 1964; Eng. trans., London, 1963)

F. A. Trapp: *The Attainment of Delacroix* (Baltimore and London, 1971)

L. Rossi Bortolato: *L'opera pittorica completa di Delacroix* (Milan, 1972) [summary cat. of paintings]

De David à Delacroix: La Peinture française de 1774 à 1830 (exh. cat., ed. F. J. Cummings, R. Rosenblum and A. Schnapper; Paris, Grand Pal., 1974-5); Eng. edn as *David to Delacroix: French Painting, 1774-1830: The Age of Revolution* (Detroit, MI, Inst. A.; New York, Met., 1975), pp. 377-84 [important for context]

L. Johnson: *The Paintings of Eugène Delacroix: A Critical Catalogue*, 6 vols (Oxford, 1981-9) [supersedes all previous accounts; vols 5 and 6 deal with public decorations]

Eugène Delacroix, 1798-1863: Paintings, Drawings and Prints from North American Collections (exh. cat. by L. Johnson and others, New York, Met., 1991)

T. Wilson-Smith: *Delacroix: A Life* (London, 1992)

Copies créés de Turner à Picasso: 300 oeuvres inspirées par les maîtres du Louvre (exh. cat., ed. J.-P. Cuzin and M.-A. Dupuy; Paris, Louvre, 1993), pp. 234-71

Specialist studies

- L. Rudrauf: *Eugène Delacroix et le problème du romantisme artistique* (Paris, 1942)
- L. Horner: *Baudelaire, critique de Delacroix* (Geneva, 1956)
- L. Johnson: 'The Formal Sources of Delacroix's *Barque de Dante*', *Burlington Magazine*, 100 (1958), pp. 228–32
- M. Sérullaz: *Les Peintures murales de Delacroix* (Paris, 1963) [excellent plates, especially of details]
- G. P. Mras: *Eugène Delacroix's Theory of Art* (Princeton, 1966)
- J. J. Spector: *The Murals of Eugène Delacroix at Saint-Sulpice* (New York, 1967)
- H. Bessis: 'L'Inventaire après décès d'Eugène Delacroix', *Bull. Soc. Hist. A. Fr.* (1969), pp. 199–222
- J. J. Spector: *Delacroix: The Death of Sardanapalus* (London, 1974)
- G. Doy: 'Delacroix et Faust', *Nouv. Est.*, 21 (May–June 1975), pp. 18–23
- H. Toussaint: *La Liberté guidant le peuple de Delacroix*, Les Dossiers du département des peintures (Paris, 1982)
- F. Haskell: 'Chios, the Massacres and Delacroix', *Chios: A Conference at the Homereion in Chios, 1984*, pp. 335–58
- M. Sérullaz: *Dessins d'Eugène Delacroix*, 2 vols, Paris, Louvre, Cab. Dessins cat. (Paris, 1984)
- N. M. Athanassoglou-Kallymer: *Eugène Delacroix: Prints, Politics and Satire, 1814–1822* (New Haven and London, 1991)
- T. Wilson-Smith: *Delacroix: A Life* (London, 1992)
- E. Davies: *Portrait of Delacroix* (Edinburgh, 1994)

See also

- Algeria, §3: Painting, graphic arts and sculpture
- Classicism, §5: 18th century: Neo-classicism
- Classicism, §6: 19th century
- France, §XII, 5: Patronage: 19th and 20th centuries
- Haro
- Moorish style
- Paris, §III, 5: Art life and organization, 1815–69
- Propaganda, §2: c 1450–1900

External resources

Delacroix, Eugne: Self-Portrait, c. 1835, Stiftung Sammlung E. G. Bhrle (Zurich) [_<http://www.buehrle.ch/works_detail.php?lang=en&id_pic=12>](http://www.buehrle.ch/works_detail.php?lang=en&id_pic=12)

Delacroix, Eugne: Mounted Greek Warrior, National Gallery and Alexander Soutzos Museum (Athens) [_<http://www.culture.gr/2/21/214/21406m/e06m001.html>](http://www.culture.gr/2/21/214/21406m/e06m001.html)

Delacroix, Eugne: Juive d'Alger, University of Montana, Museum of Fine Arts (Missoula, MT) [_<http://www.umt.edu/montanamuseum/print/delecro1.htm>](http://www.umt.edu/montanamuseum/print/delecro1.htm)

Rubens, Peter Paul: Descent from the Cross, 1612-14, Antwerp Cathedral (Antwerp) [_<http://www.wga.hu/frames-e.html?html/r/rubens/11religi/07desce.html>](http://www.wga.hu/frames-e.html?html/r/rubens/11religi/07desce.html)

Rubens, Peter Paul: Landing of Marie de' Medici at Marseille, 1623-5, Muse du Louvre (Paris) [_<http://www.wga.hu/frames-e.html?html/r/rubens/40histor/01medici.html>](http://www.wga.hu/frames-e.html?html/r/rubens/40histor/01medici.html)

Raphael: Belle Jardinire (Virgin and Child with St John the Baptist), 1507, Muse du Louvre (Paris) [_<http://www.wga.hu/frames-e.html?html/r/raphael/2firenze/2/34ardin.html>](http://www.wga.hu/frames-e.html?html/r/raphael/2firenze/2/34ardin.html)

Watteau, Antoine: Pilgrimage to the Isle of Cythera, 1717, Muse du Louvre (Paris) [_<http://www.louvre.fr/llv/oeuvres/detail_notice.jsp?CONTENT%3C%3Ecnt_id=10134198673225149&CURRENT_LL_V_NOTICE%3C%3Ecnt_id=10134198673225149&CURRENT_LL_V_DEP%3C%3Efolder_id=1408474395181115&CURRENT_LL_V_DIV%3C%3Efolder_id=2534374302024406&FOLDER%3C%3Efolder_id=9852723696500815&fromDept=false&baseIndex=16&bmUID=1124365977838&bmLocale=en>](http://www.louvre.fr/llv/oeuvres/detail_notice.jsp?CONTENT%3C%3Ecnt_id=10134198673225149&CURRENT_LL_V_NOTICE%3C%3Ecnt_id=10134198673225149&CURRENT_LL_V_DEP%3C%3Efolder_id=1408474395181115&CURRENT_LL_V_DIV%3C%3Efolder_id=2534374302024406&FOLDER%3C%3Efolder_id=9852723696500815&fromDept=false&baseIndex=16&bmUID=1124365977838&bmLocale=en)

Géricault, Théodore: Raft of the Medusa, 1819, Muse du Louvre (Paris) [_<http://www.wga.hu/html/g/gericaul/1/105geric.html>](http://www.wga.hu/html/g/gericaul/1/105geric.html)

Delacroix, Eugne: Hamlet and his Mother, Metropolitan Museum of Art (New York) [_<http://www.metmuseum.org/Collections/search-the-collections/110000618>](http://www.metmuseum.org/Collections/search-the-collections/110000618)

Delacroix, Eugne: Christ Asleep During the Tempest, Metropolitan Museum of Art (New York) [_<http://www.metmuseum.org/Collections/search-the-collections/110000616>](http://www.metmuseum.org/Collections/search-the-collections/110000616)

Delacroix, Eugne: Tiger, c. 1830, National Gallery of Art (Washington, DC) [_<http://www.nga.gov/cgi-bin/pinfo?Object=6500+0+none>](http://www.nga.gov/cgi-bin/pinfo?Object=6500+0+none)

Delacroix, Eugne: Greece on the Ruins of Missolonghi, 1826, Muse des Beaux-Arts (Bordeaux) [_<http://www.culture.fr/cgi-bin/bordeaux_musee/bordeaux?artiste=delacroix&fichier=liste.txt>](http://www.culture.fr/cgi-bin/bordeaux_musee/bordeaux?artiste=delacroix&fichier=liste.txt)

Delacroix, Eugne: The Execution of Doge Marino Faliero, 1826, Wallace Collection (London) [_<http://www.wallacecollection.org/collections/gallery/artwork/103>](http://www.wallacecollection.org/collections/gallery/artwork/103)

Delacroix, Eugne: Faust and Mephistopheles, 1826-7, Wallace Collection (London) [_<http://www.wallacecollection.org/collections/gallery/artwork/104>](http://www.wallacecollection.org/collections/gallery/artwork/104)

Delacroix, Eugne: The Confession of the Giaour, 1825-40, National Gallery of Victoria (Melbourne) <http://www.ngv.vic.gov.au/col/work/3907>

Delacroix, Eugne: The Death of Lara, mid/late-1820s, J. Paul Getty Museum (Los Angeles, CA) <http://www.getty.edu/art/collections/objects/o436.html>

Delacroix, Eugne: Episode from "The Corsair" by Byron, c. 1831, J. Paul Getty Museum (Los Angeles, CA) <http://www.getty.edu/art/collections/objects/o112010.html>

Delacroix, Eugne: Louis-Auguste Schwiter, 1826-30, National Gallery (London) <http://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/cgi-bin/WebObjects.dll/CollectionPublisher.woa/wa/work?workNumber=NG3286>

Delacroix, Eugne: Abel Widmer, c. 1824, National Gallery (London) <http://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/cgi-bin/WebObjects.dll/CollectionPublisher.woa/wa/work?workNumber=NG3287>

Delacroix, Eugne: Royal Tiger, 1829, Minneapolis Institute of Arts (Minneapolis, MN) <http://collections.artsmia.org/art/9204>

Delacroix, Eugne: Royal Tiger, 1829, Minneapolis Institute of Arts (Minneapolis, MN) <http://collections.artsmia.org/art/8152>

Delacroix, Eugne: Faust, Tragdie de M. de Goethe, 1828, Minneapolis Institute of Arts (Minneapolis, MN) <http://collections.artsmia.org/art/8025>

Delacroix, Eugne: Armoured Figure on Horseback, c. 1828, Cleveland Museum of Art (Cleveland, OH) <http://www.clevelandart.org/art/1933.418.a>

Delacroix, Eugne: Liberty Leading the People (July 28, 1830), 1830, Muse du Louvre (Paris) <http://www.wga.hu/html/d/delacroix/2/208delac.html>

Delacroix, Eugne: Massacre at Chios, 1824, Muse du Louvre (Paris) <http://www.wga.hu/html/d/delacroix/1/107delac.html>

Delacroix, Eugne: Barque of Dante, 1822, Muse du Louvre (Paris) http://www.louvre.fr/llv/oeuvres/detail_notice.jsp?CONTENT%3C%3Ecnt_id=10134198673225128&CURRENT_LL_V_NOTICE%3C%3Ecnt_id=10134198673225128&CURRENT_LL_V_DEP%3C%3Efolder_id=1408474395181115&CURRENT_LL_V_DIV%3C%3Efolder_id=2534374302024406&FOLDER%3C%3Efolder_id=9852723696500815&fromDept=false&baseIndex=9&bmUID=1124365977807&bmLocale=en

Delacroix, Eugne: Quentin Durward et le Balafr, c. 1828-9, Muse des Beaux-Arts (Caen) <http://www.ville-caen.fr/mba/collections/xix/Delacroix.htm>

Delacroix, Eugne: Moroccans in the Countryside, 1832, Cleveland Museum of Art (Cleveland, OH) <http://www.clevelandart.org/art/1951.484>

Delacroix, Eugne: Strolling Players, 1833, Los Angeles County Museum of Art (Los Angeles, CA) <http://collections.lacma.org/node/250267>

Delacroix, Eugne: The Edge of a Wood at Nohant, c. 1842-3, National Gallery of Art (Washington, DC) <http://www.nga.gov/cgi-bin/pinfo?Object=64651+0+none>

Delacroix, Eugne: Columbus and his Son at La Rbida, 1838, National Gallery of Art (Washington, DC) [_<http://www.nga.gov/cgi-bin/pinfo?Object=46319+0+none>](http://www.nga.gov/cgi-bin/pinfo?Object=46319+0+none)

Delacroix, Eugne: Sultan Moulay Abd Al-Rhaman Surrounded by his Guards, Coming out of his Palace at Meknes, 1845, Muse des Augustins (Toulouse) [_<http://www.augustins.org/en/collections/bdd/fiche.asp?num=D+1845+1>](http://www.augustins.org/en/collections/bdd/fiche.asp?num=D+1845+1)

Delacroix, Eugne: The Abduction of Rebecca, 1846, Metropolitan Museum of Art (New York) [_<http://www.metmuseum.org/Works_Of_Art/viewHigh.asp?dep=11&viewmode=0&set=07>](http://www.metmuseum.org/Works_Of_Art/viewHigh.asp?dep=11&viewmode=0&set=07)

Delacroix, Eugne: Madame Henri Franois Riesener, 1835, Metropolitan Museum of Art (New York) [_<http://www.metmuseum.org/Collections/search-the-collections/110000619>](http://www.metmuseum.org/Collections/search-the-collections/110000619)

Delacroix, Eugne: George Sand's Garden at Nohant, c. 1840s, Metropolitan Museum of Art (New York) [_<http://www.metmuseum.org/Collections/search-the-collections/110000617>](http://www.metmuseum.org/Collections/search-the-collections/110000617)

Delacroix, Eugne: Basket of Flowers, 1848-9, Metropolitan Museum of Art (New York) [_<http://www.metmuseum.org/Collections/search-the-collections/110000615>](http://www.metmuseum.org/Collections/search-the-collections/110000615)

Delacroix, Eugne: Fanatics of Tangier, 1837-8, Minneapolis Institute of Arts (Minneapolis, MN) [_<http://collections.artsmia.org/art/1978>](http://collections.artsmia.org/art/1978)

Delacroix, Eugne: Mlle. Alexandrine-Julie de la Boutraye, c. 1832-4, Cleveland Museum of Art (Cleveland, OH) [_<http://www.clevelandart.org/art/1962.3>](http://www.clevelandart.org/art/1962.3)

Delacroix, Eugne: Dr Franois-Marie Desmaisons, c. 1832-3, Detroit Institute of Arts (Detroit, MI) [_<http://www.dia.org/the_collection/overview/viewobject.asp?objectid=93520>](http://www.dia.org/the_collection/overview/viewobject.asp?objectid=93520)

Delacroix, Eugne: The Entombment (after Rubens), 1836, Joslyn Art Museum (Omaha, NE) [_<http://www.joslyn.org/collections-and-exhibitions/permanent-collections/european/eugene-delacroix-the-entombment/>](http://www.joslyn.org/collections-and-exhibitions/permanent-collections/european/eugene-delacroix-the-entombment/)

Delacroix, Eugne: Selim and Zuleika (from Byron's The Bride of Abydos, 1857, Kimbell Art Museum (Fort Worth, TX) [_<https://www.kimbellart.org/collection-object/selim-and-zuleika>](https://www.kimbellart.org/collection-object/selim-and-zuleika)

Delacroix, Eugne: Lion Hunt in Morocco, 1854, Hermitage Museum (St Petersburg) [_<https://www.hermitagemuseum.org/wps/portal/hermitage/digital-collection/01.+Paintings/37102/?lng=en>](https://www.hermitagemuseum.org/wps/portal/hermitage/digital-collection/01.+Paintings/37102/?lng=en)

Delacroix, Eugne: Arabs Skirmishing in the Mountains, 1863, National Gallery of Art (Washington, DC) [_<http://www.nga.gov/cgi-bin/pinfo?Object=50404+0+none>](http://www.nga.gov/cgi-bin/pinfo?Object=50404+0+none)

Delacroix, Eugne: The Education of the Virgin, 1852, National Museum of Western Art (Tokyo) [_<http://collection.nmwa.go.jp/en/P.1970-0001.html>](http://collection.nmwa.go.jp/en/P.1970-0001.html)

Delacroix, Eugne: Spring (Death of Eurydice), 1856-63, Museu de Arte de So Paulo (So Paulo) [_<http://masp.uol.com.br/colecao/detalhesObra.php?cob=67>](http://masp.uol.com.br/colecao/detalhesObra.php?cob=67)

Delacroix, Eugne: Arab Saddling his Horse, 1855, Hermitage Museum (St Petersburg) [_<http://www.hermitagemuseum.org/fcgi-bin/db2www/descrPage.mac/descrPage?selLang=English&indexClass=PICTURE_EN&PID=GJ-3852&numView=1&ID_NUM=4&thumbFile=%2Ftmplobs%2FG_23WFUK2AD8L1ROI16.jpg&embViewVer=last&comeFrom=quick&sor>](http://www.hermitagemuseum.org/fcgi-bin/db2www/descrPage.mac/descrPage?selLang=English&indexClass=PICTURE_EN&PID=GJ-3852&numView=1&ID_NUM=4&thumbFile=%2Ftmplobs%2FG_23WFUK2AD8L1ROI16.jpg&embViewVer=last&comeFrom=quick&sor)

[ting=no&thumbId=6&numResults=4&tmCond=Delacroix&searchIndex=TAGFILEN&author=Delacroix%2C%26%2332%3BEugene>](#)

Delacroix, Eugne: Triumph of Apollo (Sketch of the Apollo Ceiling), 1851, Stiftung Sammlung E. G. Bhrle (Zurich) http://www.buehrle.ch/works_detail.php?lang=en&id_pic=13>

Delacroix, Eugne: Christ on the Sea of Galilee, 1853, Stiftung Sammlung E. G. Bhrle (Zurich) http://www.buehrle.ch/works_detail.php?lang=en&id_pic=15>

Delacroix, Eugne: Muley Abd-el-Rahman, 1862, Stiftung Sammlung E. G. Bhrle (Zurich) http://www.buehrle.ch/works_detail.php?lang=en&id_pic=18>

Delacroix, Eugne: Daniel in the Lions' Den, 1853, Stiftung Sammlung E. G. Bhrle (Zurich) http://www.buehrle.ch/works_detail.php?lang=en&id_pic=14>

Delacroix, Eugne: The Triumph of Bacchus, 1861, Stiftung Sammlung E. G. Bhrle (Zurich) http://www.buehrle.ch/works_detail.php?lang=en&id_pic=16>

Delacroix, Eugne: The Triumph of Amphitrite, 1861, Stiftung Sammlung E. G. Bhrle (Zurich) http://www.buehrle.ch/works_detail.php?lang=en&id_pic=17>

Delacroix, Eugne: The Education of Achilles, c. 1862, J. Paul Getty Museum (Los Angeles, CA) <http://www.getty.edu/art/collections/objects/o199.html>>

Delacroix, Eugne: Christ on the Cross, 1853, National Gallery (London) <http://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/cgi-bin/WebObjects.dll/CollectionPublisher.woa/wa/work?workNumber=NG6433>>

Delacroix, Eugne: Ovid among the Scythians, 1859, National Gallery (London) <http://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/cgi-bin/WebObjects.dll/CollectionPublisher.woa/wa/work?workNumber=NG6262>>

Delacroix, Eugne: View of Tangier from the Seashore, 1856-8, Minneapolis Institute of Arts (Minneapolis, MN) <http://collections.artsmia.org/art/799>>

Delacroix, Eugne: View of Tangier, 1852-3, Minneapolis Institute of Arts (Minneapolis, MN) <http://collections.artsmia.org/art/4578>>

Delacroix, Eugne: Christ on the Sea of Galilee, 1854, Walters Art Museum (Baltimore, MD) <http://art.thewalters.org/detail/40613/christ-on-the-sea-of-galilee/>>

Delacroix, Eugne: Tiger and Snake, 1862, Corcoran Gallery of Art (Washington, DC) http://www.corcoran.org/collection/highlights_main_results.asp?ID=45>

Delacroix, Eugne: Lion Hunt, 1858, Museum of Fine Arts (Boston, MA) <http://www.mfa.org/collections/object/lion-hunt-31063>>

Delacroix, Eugne: Lion Hunt, 1860-61, Art Institute of Chicago (Chicago, IL) <http://www.artic.edu/aic/collections/artwork/81505>>

Delacroix, Eugne: Forging a River in Morocco, 1858, Muse d'Orsay (Paris) http://www.musee-orsay.fr/en/collections/index-of-works/resultat-collection.html?no_cache=1&S=0&zoom=1&tx_damzoom_pi1%5Bzoom%5D=0&tx_damzoom_pi1%5BxmlId%5>

[D=001052&tx_damzoom_pi1%5Bback%5D=en%2Fcollections%2Findex-of-works%2Fresultat-collection.html%3Fno_cache%3D1%26S%3D0%26zsz%3D9](http://www.musee-orsay.fr/en/collections/index-of-works/resultat-collection.html?no_cache=1&S=0&zoom=1&tx_damzoom_pi1%5Bback%5D=en%2Fcollections%2Findex-of-works%2Fresultat-collection.html%3Fno_cache%3D1%26S%3D0%26zsz%3D9)

Delacroix, Eugne: Arab Horses Fighting in a Stable, 1860, Muse d'Orsay (Paris) http://www.musee-orsay.fr/en/collections/index-of-works/resultat-collection.html?no_cache=1&S=0&zoom=1&tx_damzoom_pi1%5Bzoom%5D=0&tx_damzoom_pi1%5BxmlId%5D=001038&tx_damzoom_pi1%5Bback%5D=en%2Fcollections%2Findex-of-works%2Fresultat-collection.html%3Fno_cache%3D1%26S%3D0%26zsz%3D9

Delacroix, Eugne: Amadis Delivers Olga from Galpan's Castle (Scene from the Romanace Amadis de Gaule), 1860, Virginia Museum of Fine Arts (Richmond, VA) http://www.vmfa.state.va.us/collections/57_1.html

Rubens, Peter Paul: Landing of Marie de' Medici at Marseille, 1623-5, Muse du Louvre (Paris) <http://www.wga.hu/frames-e.html?/html/r/rubens/40histor/01medici.html>