

The Lavoisiers by David: technical findings on portraiture at the brink of revolution

Recent technical examination of Jacques-Louis David's portrait of Antoine-Laurent and Marie-Anne Lavoisier in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, painted between 1787 and 1788, has revealed significant and previously unknown alterations that transform our understanding of this celebrated portrait, its author and its sitters.

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HONORÉ DE BALZAC'S NOVEL *La Recherche de l'Absolu* (1839) described the father of modern chemistry, Antoine-Laurent Lavoisier (1743–94), as a man 'who made himself known to the public more through the immense fortune of a tax-collector, than through discoveries in chemistry; only later did the great chemist obscure the little tax collector'.¹ Fiercely ambitious, by the 1780s Lavoisier had held a number of institutional offices through which he crafted an increasingly public image. Laboratory logbooks, kept by his wife and scientific collaborator, Marie-Anne Pierrette Paulze (1758–1836), record a life fastidiously juggled between identities: Sundays and from six to nine weekday mornings and seven until ten weekday evenings were reserved for work in his laboratory, adjacent to the couple's residence in the Petit Arsenal, Paris; remaining hours were occupied by myriad duties as a tax collector and director of the gunpowder and saltpetre administration.² Lavoisier's governmental roles funded his research, but also led to his arrest, trial and execution on 8th May 1794.³

In 1788 Jacques-Louis David completed a full-length double-portrait that consolidated the Lavoisiers' image with such success that it has come to epitomise a modern couple born of the Enlightenment and on the brink of the French Revolution: surrounded by trappings that attest to a life of seriousness and work rather than whim and fashion, they appear relaxed in relationship to one another (Fig.1). Conceived in a pared-down manner organised below the canvas's daringly ascetic, empty upper third, imposing in its scale, and innovative in its iconography, this

1. *Antoine-Laurent and Marie-Anne Pierrette Paulze Lavoisier*, by Jacques-Louis David. 1788. Oil on canvas, 259.7 by 194.8 cm. (Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York).

exceptional portrait attests to a corresponding ambition on the part of David, who surely envisioned that it would be exhibited at the Salon in 1789.

Recently conducted infra-red reflectography (IRR) and macro X-ray fluorescence (MA-XRF) analysis has revealed, however, that the composition, including all the scientific instruments visible today, were arrived at only after David had explored the more conventional signs of a fashionable, socially aspirant couple of the tax-collecting class, including an ornate ormolu-mounted desk and a towering, feathered hat (Figs.2 and 3).⁴ The precision of the Parisian fashion press makes it possible to posit that the work was begun by the late summer or autumn of 1787, while its completion is documented by a payment to David by the Lavoisiers on 18th December 1788. The sizeable price of 7,000 livres is perhaps accounted for by the work's complicated, extended genesis that David's astonishing technical facility has long concealed.⁵ These discoveries reveal the couple's shifting social identity and the way that the aspirations of both patrons and artist motivated putting the full-length format to new ends. David emerges as especially engaged with fashionable society portraiture in the late 1780s, notably that by women artists; but his experimentation with composition and iconography also attest to an evolution that transformed the low-ranking genre of portraiture into a major, public-facing artistic statement.

This project benefited from support across the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, notably the generosity of Katharine Baetjer, Federico Carò, Keith Christiansen, Michael Gallagher, Daniëlle Kisluk-Grosheide, Evan Read, Jessica Regan and Perrin Stein. We are also grateful to Colin B. Bailey, Joseph Baillo and Philippe Bordes for their incisive comments and advice.
1 'qui se recommandait alors plus à l'attention du public par l'immense fortune d'un fermier-général, que par ses découvertes en chimie; tandis que plus tard, le grand chimiste devait

faire oublier le petit fermier-général', H. de Balzac: *Balthazar Claës ou La recherche de l'absolu*, Paris 1839, p.36. All translations are the authors' own unless otherwise stated.
2 See É. Grimaux: *Lavoisier 1743–1794 d'après sa correspondance, ses manuscrits, ses papiers de famille et d'autres documents inédits*, Paris 1888, pp.44–45; J.-P. Poirier: *Lavoisier: Chemist, Biologist, Economist*, transl. R. Balinski, Philadelphia 1995, p.95; and C. Viel: 'Le salon et la laboratoire

de Lavoisier à l'Arsenal, cénacle ou s'élabora la nouvelle chimie', *Revue d'histoire de la pharmacie* 306 (1995), pp.255–66.

3 Jacques-Louis David has been described as among the signatories initiating the arrest; although his membership among the Comité de Sûreté Générale effectively condoned the process, his direct involvement is uncertain, see M. Vidal: 'David among the moderns: art, science and the Lavoisiers', *Journal of the History of Ideas* 56 (1995), p.611.

4 The complete results of the imaging

and analyses of this painting are presented in S.A. Centeno, D. Mahon, F. Carò and D. Pullins: 'Discovering the evolution of Jacques-Louis David's portrait of Antoine-Laurent and Marie-Anne Pierrette Paulze Lavoisier', *Heritage Science*, forthcoming, see doi.org/10.1186/s40494-021-00551-y.
5 Grimaux, *op. cit.* (note 2), p.365; and K. Baetjer: *French Paintings in The Metropolitan Museum of Art from the Early Eighteenth Century through the Revolution*, New Haven and London 2019, p.319.





Charles and Jayne Wrightsman purchased David's portrait of the Lavoisiers for the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, in 1977, but its pristine condition kept it out of the museum's conservation department until 2019, when, at the suggestion of curator emerita Katharine Baetjer, it arrived for the removal of a degraded synthetic varnish.⁶ The opportunity for technical study revealed far more than anticipated. Non-invasive IRR and MA-XRF were used to image and analyse the painting. Distribution of elements composing the paint mixtures revealed in MA-XRF provided detailed maps allowing for indications of underlying pigments.⁷ Most surprisingly, IRR images and MA-XRF maps demonstrate that all the scientific instruments and table cover were additions painted after David had made substantial progress depicting other props (Fig.4).⁸ A neoclassical *bureau plat* with an ormolu frieze of 'antique fleuri' interlacing trifoliate and rounded acanthus had been drawn in precisely and received an initial stage of colour that distinguished the gilt mounts from a mahogany structure.⁹ The legs were columnar with ormolu capitals and fluting. No extant

2. Infra-red reflectogram (IRR) of Fig.1. (Department of Paintings Conservation, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York).

3. Combined elemental distribution map for lead (white) and mercury (red) obtained by macro X-ray fluorescence (MA-XRF). (Department of Scientific Research, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York).

example of such a piece of furniture has been located, but an inventory of the Lavoisiers' possessions taken in 1794 and known through a 1796 transcription included: '5° A three-drawer wood veneered desk . . . covered in black leather, decorated with veneer, rings and borders of copper' valued at 150 livres.¹⁰

The inkwell, two quills and paper were there from the start; however, in an earlier iteration they were joined by three large sheets of paper that unfurled over the desk's edge. These attributes of high ranking bureaucrats or *fermiers généraux* resemble those in Elisabeth Vigée Le Brun's sumptuous *Charles-Alexandre de Calonne* (Fig.5), shown at the Salon of 1787. David balanced his still life with a large globe cropped along the right edge,

6 For further details and an extensive bibliography, see Baetjer, *op. cit.* (note 5), pp.317–24. The painting was cleaned by Paul Kiehart in 1974.

7 Infra-red reflectography was completed with an OSIRIS InGaAs near-infra-red camera with a 6-element, 150mm focal length, f/5.6 - f/45 lens; and a 900-1700nm spectral response. Macro-X-ray fluorescence (MA-XRF) was carried out using a Bruker M6 Jetstream instrument equipped with an X-ray tube operated at 50 kV and 0.5 mA. A selected area of

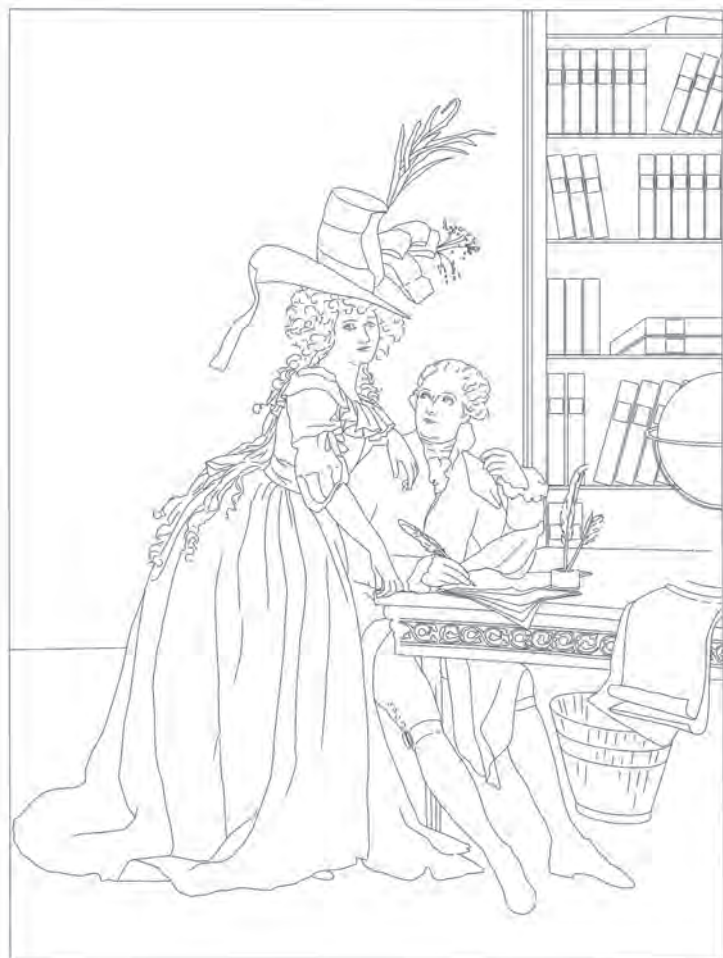
the painting was mapped in fifteen sections, each with a 580 µm spot size, a 700 µm step size, and a dwell time of 80 ms/pixel.

8 This includes the gasometer that is visible in the MA-XRF maps (Fig.3).
9 MA-XRF provided information about the elemental composition of the paints, and the analysis of sample cross sections by Raman spectroscopy and SEM-EDS gave detailed molecular information on the components. The SEM-EDS measurements were carried out by Federico Carò, Research

Scientist, Department of Scientific Research, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

10 '5° Un bureau de bois plaqué garnis de trois tiroirs [. . .] couverts de maroquin noir, garni de plaque, ann[e] aux et bordures de cuivre', Archives nationales, Paris, 'Inventaire après le décès du Cit. Antoine Lavoisier', MC/ET/XCIX/754 (hereafter *Inventaire*), dated 26 Prairial An IV (26th May 1796), fols.34r and 34v, digitised at www.siv.archives-nationales.culture.gouv.fr/siv/media/undefined/undefined/

FRAN_0159_20365_L, accessed 27th July 2021. This document, which was later paginated, was prepared by the notary Pierre Charles Gondouin in response to inheritance disputes but seems to be based in part on earlier materials following Lavoisier's death in 1794. The Lavoisiers' mahogany laboratory work table and a cylinder desk by Jean Caumont, also chosen by Vacquer (see *Inventaire*, fol.47r), survive in the Musée des Arts et Métiers, Paris. Marco Beretta has generously shared his transcription,



4. A line drawing, produced by tracing information obtained by IRR and XRF, suggesting the appearance of the portrait before J.-L. David made significant changes to the composition.

5. *Charles-Alexandre de Calonne*, by Elisabeth Vigée Le Brun. 1784. Oil on canvas, 155.5 by 130.3 cm. (Royal Collection Trust; © Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, 2021).

failure to complete Lavoisier's left leg may be a result of David's realisation that splitting limbs to either side of the table leg was visually awkward. This ungainly pose may have been suggested to David by engraved portraits of René Descartes that used a similar arrangement in order to allow the powerful extension of the proper right leg across the foreground.¹¹ A tablecover solved the troublesome relationship between body and furniture in most such images of Descartes and was also adopted for Lavoisier. In order to obscure the leg and desk implements, David's tablecover was built up with mixtures containing mainly opaque vermilion with some transparent red lake, followed by scumbling with lead white mixtures and glazing with red lake. Compositionally, the tablecover also rebalances the portrait, providing substantial weight to the lower right quadrant.

The most crucial decision was then to repopulate the desk and foreground with five, highly specific scientific instruments. This not only pivoted the portrait's iconography away from Lavoisier as a *fermier général*, but also announced his engagement in recent scientific innovations, thereby breaking with a tradition of representing chemistry as alchemy still being perpetuated in works such as Marie-Marc-Antoine Bilcoq's *A chemist in his laboratory*, shown at the Salon of 1789.¹² Although the instruments display David's bravura painterly skill – particularly in the depiction of glass, liquids and light – Marco Beretta has argued that these particular objects, all now in the Musée des Arts et Métiers, Paris, also plotted key moments in Lavoisier's career.¹³ The objects' specificity was certainly important, although technical analysis reveals that David was

the three-dimensionality of which is particularly evident in MA-XRF maps. A comparable object sits beside other, equally generalised scientific equipment in Jean-Michel Papillon's woodcut headpiece to Lavoisier's *Traité élémentaire de chimie* (1789). MA-XRF mapping reveals mercury, a sign of vermilion in the globe's supporting mount, the base of which is indicated by two circular brushstrokes visible in the IRR image. Red-painted supports were typical of printed paper globes with ebonised wooden stands, such as those signed by Charles-François Delamarche in the 1780s, and are represented in numerous contemporary paintings, including Louis Tessier's still lifes from the 1770s, Vigée Le Brun's *Prince de Nassau-Siegen* (1776; Indianapolis Museum of Art) and, to similar compositional and iconographic effect, Adélaïde Labille-Guiard's *Madame Élisabeth* (Fig.6).

Beneath the desk David took the complicated form of an open-work wicker wastepaper basket to a high degree of resolution and sketched in Lavoisier's proper left leg with confident, fluid strokes. Despite the fine underdrawing found outlining many of the two figures' forms, Lavoisier's proper left leg and both sitters' hands were shifted multiple times. The

based on another, more comprehensive version of the inventory (Rare Book and Manuscript Collection, Cornell University Library, 4712), forthcoming in *The Arsenal of Eighteenth-Century Chemistry: The Laboratories of Antoine Laurent Lavoisier (1743–1794)* that he is writing with Paolo Brenni. Also see Poirier, *op. cit.* (note 2), pp.389 and 462, note 10. The present authors thank the Rohan-Chabot family for discussion of this object.
¹¹ On Descartes's portrait, see M. Beretta: *Imagining a Career*

in Science: The Iconography of Antoine Laurent Lavoisier, Canton MA 2001, pp.40–41.
¹² *Explication des peintures, sculpture et autres ouvrages*, Paris 1789, no.155, pp.33–34. Jacques de Lajoüe's décor for Bonnier de La Mosson (1734) and related prints were particularly important in France.
¹³ Beretta, *op. cit.* (note 11), pp.30–42; and M. Beretta: 'Panopticon Lavoisier: base de données et histoire documentaire de la révolution chimique', *Nuncius* 15 (2000), pp.411–25.



Technical findings on David's portrait of the Lavoisiers

also testing how to integrate these instruments compositionally, and that this question ultimately proved the determining factor in what he chose to depict. In this regard, the specificity of the sitters' iconography intersected with the artist's sense of the most visually effective schema. The MA-XRF calcium distribution map reveals concentric circles as David tried different scales for the glass balloon in the foreground; more surprisingly, although difficult to make out, the MA-XRF calcium distribution map indicates that David may have tried to place a very large instrument with globular glass containers in the right background, behind the desk. It resembles instruments found in Madame Lavoisier's drawings of the laboratory and in her plates illustrating inventions used in conducting experiments in phlogiston for the *Traité élémentaire de chimie* (1789). Such an elaborate contraption would have signalled the Lavoisiers' latest methods and impressive laboratory, but would have been very distracting compared to the series of smaller instruments visible today.

David had already drawn in the dado and pilaster when he added the left background's armchair, portfolio and shawl; moreover, an inexplicable vertical line running from floor to ceiling approximately thirty-three centimetres from the painting's left edge suggests alternate, abandoned plans. Although the laying-in of architecture is not unusual – and, indeed, the full parquet floor was meticulously drawn in before the figures – it contrasts with the precisely rendered underdrawing of ormolu, still-life elements and even Madame Lavoisier's hemline. It therefore seems likely that just as the influx of scientific instruments steered her husband's image towards his professional identity, so too did the late addition of the armchair, shawl and portfolio further insist on Madame Lavoisier as an active participant in this shared scientific pursuit. It also clarified the exact nature of her role: her drawings and engravings were a key means by which their discoveries were publicly presented and circulated across Europe. Compositionally, her portfolio's green cover may have prompted the addition of the green leather document box to the desk, an otherwise superfluous object that helps chromatically to balance the left and right sides of the painting. In contrast with the scientific instruments, which David surely studied on site as they were too fragile and valuable to move to his studio, the generalised armchair could have been a studio prop or part of one of the suites of red-upholstered seat furniture in the Lavoisier inventory.¹⁴

The IRR image and MA-XRF iron distribution map indicate that David also completely rethought the right background even beyond his trial of the large scientific device. IRR imaging suggests rectangular shapes extending from the canvas's right edge nearly to Lavoisier's proper left wrist. MA-XRF maps reveal more clearly what appear to be tall shelves filled with bound books or *cartons* containing papers, each of similar width but animated by combining upright and leaning volumes. The bands running across each volume were most likely red, as indicated by the MA-XRF mercury distribution map; on each band, triple-digit numbers appear as representations of handwritten script rather than stamped leather. Like the ormolu mounts of the desk, this degree of detail indicates just how far David advanced the earlier, now hidden, version of the portrait before changing course. These objects are too idiosyncratic to have been intended as generalised, bureaucratic record-keeping and may have been based on Lavoisier's laboratory notebooks

14 'une bergere [sic], sept fauteuils et trois Chaises couverts de velour Cramois' (no.11), 'Deux fauteuils et quatre Chaises couverts en velours Cramois' (no.27) and 'le tout couvert de Satin Cramois' (no.37), 'Cinq fauteuils couvert velours Cramois' (no.80). *Inventaire*, fols.25r–27v and 31v.

15 On Lavoisier's library, consisting of

over one thousand books, see M. Beretta: *Bibliotheca Lavoisieriana: The Catalogue of the Library of Antoine Laurent Lavoisier*, Florence 1995.

16 Including 'quatre corps de bar de Bibliothèque en bois d'acajou de chacune sept pieds, et demi de long de seize pouces et deux de large' valued at 800 livres, requisitioned by Vacquier,



6. *Madame Élisabeth*, by Adélaïde Labille-Guiard. 1787. Oil on canvas, 146.7 by 155 cm. (Private collection).

(*registres de laboratoire*), manuscript notes for publications or the multi-volume minutes of the Académie des Sciences.¹⁵ Multiple entries in the Lavoisier inventory note large, highly valued mahogany bookcases, an extensive library and series of *cartons*.¹⁶ Both in compositional and symbolic terms, the choice to replace these with carefully observed chemical instruments allowed for a more precise scientific context, one that was immediately recognisable as rooted in experimentation.

The analysis of paint samples indicates that Lavoisier's coat and, most likely, his *culottes* were originally brown, and the MA-XRF iron distribution map shows that the coat had simple gold buttons that extended below the table top in a colour schema comparable to David's portrait of his father-in-law, Charles-Pierre Pécoul (1784; Musée du Louvre, Paris).¹⁷ The original jacket was also slightly longer than the one visible today. As Aileen Ribeiro has noted, prior to the revolution, black costumes such as the one eventually settled on for Lavoisier had a levelling effect across professions.¹⁸ Black fabrics had their own gradations, however, as suggested by the contrast between Lavoisier's unadorned, matt clothing and the rich satin in Vigée Le Brun's *Charles-Alexandre Calonne*. The most

Inventaire, fols.15r–19v, 37r and 46v.

17 The original brown colour was confirmed by examination and Raman and SEM-EDS analysis of a sample cross section. It was probably originally a darker brown than that in the portrait of Pécoul.

18 A. Ribeiro: *The Art of Dress: Fashion in England and France*

1750 to 1820, New Haven and London 1995, p.50.

19 'ses rubans, ses décorations, ses crachats &c. tout cela donne l'air de quelque chose', *La Béquille de Voltaire au Salon*, Paris 1791, p.2; and P. Bordes and R. Michel: exh. cat. *Aux armes & aux arts! Les Arts de la Révolution 1789–1799*, Vizille (Musée de la

surprising feature of Lavoisier's earlier dress, revealed by the MA-XRF mercury distribution map, was a red mantle that lay across his shoulders and wrapped around his proper left elbow before falling into his lap. David probably tried this aggrandising and *retardataire*, baroque accessory in order to suit the full-length format, one typically reserved for more highly ranked individuals. The development of Labille-Guiard's monumental *Charles-Roger Prince de Beauffremont* (1791; Châteaux de Versailles et de Trianon) suggests that she may have followed a similar series of revisions, specifically with regard to the mantle in such a large and formal portrait. A preparatory oil sketch (Fig.7) demonstrates that she originally planned a *bureau plat* with ormolu mounts and an ornate gilt Louis XVI chair; however, like David, in her final version she obscured the flashy desk with a green cloth and updated the chair to a mahogany example in the *goût étrusque*. Labille-Guiard's portrait nonetheless sparked negative comments at the Salon of 1791 about the sitter's 'ribbons, his decorations, his doodads etc., all that give him some sort of air'.¹⁹ When David painted out the mantle, he also significantly adjusted the underdrawing outlining the back of Lavoisier's proper left hand.

The majority of Madame Lavoisier's white dress, including the hemline and outer edges meeting the chair and her husband's body, were drawn in precisely from an early stage. This ensured that David could achieve such transparency and variation in the thinly glazed muslin via scumbling on top of the hot brown *frottis* and dark undermodelling. IRR and MA-XRF images suggest alterations at the bustle, however, perhaps evidence of a once larger bow. As indicated by the MA-XRF mercury distribution map, the belt and ribbon on the arm were originally vermilion. This colour connected her dress to her red and black hat with its large bow, artificial flowers and spiky plumes that extended far over her husband's head. If, proportionally, the instruments in the final version planted this portrait in science, this hat resoundingly placed the earlier version in high fashion, specifically that of 1787.

Madame Lavoisier's dress has been broadly tied to the '*chemise à la reine*', unveiled to the public at the Salon of 1783 in Vigée Le Brun's infamous *Portrait of Marie-Antoinette 'en gaulle'* (1783; Schloss Fasanerie, Eichenzell). Inspired by fashions '*à la paysanne*', the writings of Jean-Jacques Rousseau and ties to French colonial Saint-Domingue (Haiti), the loose, lightweight cotton dresses were especially popular among aristocrats portrayed by Vigée Le Brun.²⁰ By 1786 the form had evolved into a '*robe en chemise*' with greater flouncing at the neck and sleeves, as seen in Madame Lavoisier's garment. However, accessories and hair styles allowed for more dramatic fashion statements in real life, in print and in paint. Earlier depictions of the *chemise à la reine* often include straw hats and relatively muted colours, but by the mid-1780s the costumes in Pierre Beaumarchais's theatre productions had popularised two key features found in David's earlier version: a red, black and white colour scheme and large, feathered and beribboned hats. Both were nods to 'Spanish dress' and the *style troubadour* associated with Beaumarchais's *Barber of Seville* (1775) and *Marriage of Figaro* (1784).²¹ Vigée Le Brun used red, black and white 'Spanish' fashion in dialogue with styles *à la paysanne* for her *Self-portrait* (c.1782; Kimbell Museum of Art, Fort Worth), aristocratic sitters in such portraits as *Madame Elisabeth de France* (1782; Châteaux de Versailles et de Trianon) and to particular theatrical effect in *Baronne de Crussol Florensac* (Fig.8). Vigée Lebrun's *Marie-Antoinette and*

her children (Fig.11) and Labille-Guiard's *Louis-Elisabeth de France and her son* (Fig.12) took these fashions and melded them to the courtly tradition of the full-length portrait. The Lavoisiers were wealthy, but not aristocratic, let alone of royal blood, and they were by no means obvious candidates for a full-length double portrait. Their fortune came instead from successful legal and mercantile careers, their celebrity from scientific endeavours and, eventually, infamy in relation to the gunpowder and saltpetre administration. The exuberant hat that David had first used to fill out the upper third of his composition, not unlike Lavoisier's red mantle, possibly points to the awkward fit between his sitters' social standing and the grandeur of their commission. That the portrait's format allowed, in its final iteration, for a declaration of professional accomplishment in the sciences was fortuitous but, as we have seen, not immediately obvious.

Feathers, flowers and ribbons appeared abundantly in the costuming for the *Marriage of Figaro*, which premiered at the Comédie-Française in 1784. The impact on Parisian fashion was immediate, with Beaumarchais himself describing 'a hat, since called "à la Suzanne" by our merchants'.²² Madame Lavoisier's hat is very close to those published in late summer and autumn 1787. On the heels of Beaumarchais's exoticist opera *Tarare* in June 1787, the *Le Magasin des Modes Nouvelles* reported on 10th August that its staging had given birth to a hat known as a '*chapeau à la Tarare*' that included

7. *Sketch for Charles-Roger, Prince de Beauffremont*, by Adélaïde Labille-Guiard. 1789–91. Oil on canvas, 34 by 23 cm. (Musée Nissim de Camondo, Paris).



Révolution française) 1988, pp.31–32.
 20 Ribeiro, *op. cit.* (note 18), pp.70–72;
 K. Chrisman-Campbell: *Fashion Victims: Dress at the Court of Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette*, New Haven and London 2015, pp.172–99; and A. Rauser: *The Age of Undress: Art, Fashion, and the Classical Ideal in the 1790s*, New Haven and London

2020, pp.28–30 and 133–53.
 21 Ribeiro, *op. cit.* (note 18), pp.162–65; and Chrisman-Campbell, *op. cit.* (note 20), pp.200–15.
 22 'une toque appelée depuis par nos marchandes: à la Suzanne', P.A. de Beaumarchais: *La folle journée, ou, Le mariage de Figaro*, Paris 1785, pp.xliii–xlv.



a vertical row of bunched bows;²³ in September, a plate offered an alternate 'demi-bonnet à la Tarare' next to a 'chapeau à la Basile' inspired by a character from the *Barber of Seville* and *Marriage of Figaro* (Fig.9).²⁴ Such items could be procured at the 'Magasin de Mademoiselle Roussaud, Marchande de Modes, rue du Théâtre François', which advertised that its own proprietor had 'the advantage of uniting her taste with those of Actresses'.²⁵ Plates in October and November 1787 represented variations on the 'chapeau à la Tarare' replete with the alternating bands and the matching, red bows tied at the arms seen in the first iteration of David's original (Fig.10).²⁶ The MA-XRF mercury distribution map and magnified examination, moreover, indicate that the blue fabric tied at Madame Lavoisier's waist and arm was originally red, in keeping with the coordinated palettes seen in such prints.

The distance between fashionable clothing, the stage and Salon was often minute, as indicated by the pamphlets *Tarare au Salon de peinture* (1787) and *Lanlaire au Salon* (1787), the latter named after a parody of Beaumarchais's opera. The fast pace of sartorial expression in the Parisian fashion press was, in a sense, echoed by the quickly developing character of portraiture at the Salon, a space to which David was obviously carefully attuned. As technical

23 *Le Magasin des Modes Nouvelles*, Année 2, Cahier 27 (10th August 1787), pp.206–07.

24 *Le Magasin des Modes Nouvelles*, Année 2, Cahier 31 (20th September 1787), pp.247–48.

25 'elle a l'avantage de réunir à son goût celui des Actrices', *Le Magasin des Modes Nouvelles*, Année 2, Cahier 26 (30th July 1787), p.207.

26 Accompanying text acknowledges

the potential confusion of names given the proliferation of hats derived from the stage, see *Le Magasin des Modes Nouvelles*, Année 2, Cahier 33 (10th October 1787); Année 2, Cahier 36 (10th November 1787), pls.1 (armbands) and 2 (bodice).

27 The connection of David's portraiture to Vigée Le Brun has been noted in, among others, T. Crow: 'Ingres and David', *Apollo* 153 (June 2001), pp.11–

analysis has revealed, his break with more conventional, fashionable society portraiture was less immediately radical than has been assumed. Within the context of the Salons of 1787 and 1789 in particular, it is possible better to appreciate how David responded to, developed and – in the end – departed from existing trends in the genre, including those pioneered by women and lesser-known portraitists.²⁷ Since the Salon opened on 25th August every other year, this chronology can be understood as mapping onto that of the fashion press, beginning in the late summer of 1787 and terminating with the portrait's likely projected destination, the Salon of 1789.

From his first Salon in 1781, David exhibited portraits alongside history subjects and critics often read them together. *Count Stanislas Potocki* (1781; Wilanów Palace, Warsaw) prompted the response that 'A portrait painted by a great history painter is far superior to the productions of an artist devoted solely to this meticulous enterprise'.²⁸ As Udolpho van de Sandt proposed, David's decision to take on Potocki's portrait allowed him to change the terms of portraiture in order to serve his own ambition by undertaking a mode of engagement, also apparent in the Lavoisier portrait, that in its final iteration exceeded its immediate purpose of recording likeness in order to become a stand-alone, artistic statement.²⁹ At the Salon of 1783, David exhibited two more modest portraits of professionals, his architect uncle *Jacques-François Desmaisons* (1782; Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo) and the doctor *Alphonse Leroy* (Fig.14), wearing a *robe de chambre* and accompanied by a newly invented 'lampe à Quinquet' that anticipated the Lavoisier still-life.³⁰ At the Salon of 1785, David's break-out year of the *Oath of the Horatii* (1785; Louvre), he showed a single portrait, the aforementioned portrait of his father-in-law; perhaps due to stylistic dissonance with his history subject, however, David resisted exhibiting the pendant of Geneviève Jacqueline Pécoulet (1784; Louvre), aflutter with satin and lace.

8. *Baronne de Crussol Florensac*, by Elisabeth Vigée Le Brun. 1785. Oil on canvas, 113.8 by 84 cm. (Musée des Augustins, Toulouse).

9. *Chapeau à la Basile*, by A.-B. Duhamel Jean-Florent Defraine. 1787. Hand-coloured engraving, 18.2 by 10.2 cm. Detail of plate 3 from *La Magasin des Modes Nouvelles* 31 (20th September 1787). (Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam).

10. *Chapeau à la Tarare*, by A.-B. Duhamel Jean-Florent Defraine. 1787. Hand-coloured engraving, 17.9 by 19.9 cm. Detail of plate 2 from *La Magasin des Modes Nouvelles* 36 (10th November 1787). (Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam).





11. *Marie-Antoinette and her children*, by Elisabeth Vigée Le Brun. 1787. Oil on canvas, 275 by 216.5 cm. (Châteaux de Versailles et de Trianon, Versailles).

12. *Louis-Elisabeth de France and her son*, by Adélaïde Labille-Guiard. 1788. Oil on canvas, 275 by 160 cm. (Châteaux de Versailles et de Trianon, Versailles).

David showed no portraits at the Salon of 1787. As documented in Pietro Antonio Martini's engraving (Fig.13), his single submission, the *Death of Socrates* (1787; Metropolitan Museum of Art) hung prominently but was dwarfed by Labille-Guiard's *Madame Adélaïde de France* and Vigée Le Brun's *Marie-Antoinette and her children* (Fig.11). David allegedly advised Vigée Le Brun on the latter, suggesting that she employ the pyramidal stability of Renaissance Madonnas.³¹ Her painting was particularly charged due to its role in making amends for Adolf Ulrich Wertmüller's full-length portrait of Marie-Antoinette, which had been much criticised at the previous Salon for its informality of dress. At the Salon of 1787, the

key women painters' full-length portraits held a sizeable proportion of the walls, further expanded by Vigée Le Brun's radically informal, small portraits *Julie Le Brun looking in a mirror* (1787; Metropolitan Museum of Art) and *The Marquise de Pezay and the Marquise de Rougé with her sons Alexis and Adrien* (1787; National Gallery of Art, Washington). David was certainly aware of the pressing question of women painters in this moment, their simultaneous public rise to fame and general anxiety they caused within the royal administration. Vigée Le Brun and Labille-Guiard had been admitted (*reçues*) to the Académie the same year as David, 1783; the years through to 1787, meanwhile, marked a highpoint in David's training of women in his studio, despite attempts in 1785 by royal decree to curb their physical proximity to male students.³² Just before the Salon of 1787, on 21st July, the director of the Bâtiments du roi in fact reprimanded David for having made such allowances for Vigée Le Brun. David reported, 'I keep at home three young ladies, students of Mme Le Brun, who will take them back once her building work is completed. They are definitely far from

12; and J. Baillio et al., eds: exh. cat. *Elisabeth Louise Vigée Le Brun*, New York (Metropolitan Museum of Art), Ottawa (National Gallery of Canada) and Paris (Grand Palais) 2016, pp.28–29.
28 'Un portrait peint par un grand Peintre d'histoire, [sic] est bien supérieur aux productions d'un Artiste uniquement dévoué à ce minutieux emploi', *Mercure de France* (6th October 1781), p.38. See A. Ryszkiewicz:

'Portrait equestre de Stanislas Kostka Potocki par Jacques-Louis David', *Bulletin du Musée National de Varsovie* 4, no.3 (1963), pp.77–95; and A. Schnapper and A. Sérullaz: exh. cat. *Jacques-Louis David 1748–1825*, Paris (Musée du Louvre) and Versailles (Musée national du Château) 1989, pp.109–11.
29 Van de Sandt quotes David's statement to his teacher, Joseph-

Marie Vien, 'je ne choisis que ce qui Peut contribuer à mon avancement', U. Van de Sandt: 'David pour David: "Jamais on me fera rien faire au detriment de ma gloire"', in M. Michel, ed.: *David contre David*, Paris 1992, I, pp.119–21.
30 Allegedly created by Antoine Quinquet (1745–1803), who added a tubular glass chimney to a lamp devised in 1780 by Aimé Argand. See Schnapper and Sérullaz, *op. cit.*

(note 28), pp.154–55.

31 J. Baillio: 'Marie-Antoinette et ses enfants par Mme Vigée Le Brun: deuxième partie', *L'Œil* 310 (1981), pp.53–55.

32 M. Vidal: 'The "Other Atelier": Jacques-Louis David's female students', in M. Hyde and J. Milam, eds: *Women, Art and the Politics of Identity in Eighteenth-Century Europe*, Farnham 2003, pp.239–40.

Technical findings on David's portrait of the Lavoisiers

my students' atelier [. . .] Their virtue is irreproachable'.³³ That August, moreover, Vigée Le Brun noted that David frequently visited her studio and recounted his taunting her about her relationship with Calonne, her portrait of whom so closely anticipated David's Lavoisier.³⁴

Although the innovations of women portraitists are particularly evident in David's first version of the Lavoisiers, the painting's interlaced figures remain exceptionally informal for French portraiture, apart from images of mothers with children or of artists' families.³⁵ English portraiture has thus been advanced as an inspiration, but despite a peak in David's interest in England between 1787 and 1788 and the availability of English prints, no concrete connection has been identified.³⁶ Closer to home, as Philippe Bordes has observed, conversation-piece portraits flourished among artists unaffiliated with the Académie royale.³⁷ David's awareness of these models surely had an impact on the way he so innovatively melded grand, courtly formats with a new informality that traversed social strata. In light of David's earlier version of the Lavoisiers, however, a precise antecedent can be identified: Antoine Vestier's 1786 portrait of the Chabanel family (Fig.15), exhibited at the Salon of 1787, precisely at the beginning of the period, August through November, most associated with Madame Lavoisier's fashion in the painting's first iteration.³⁸ Perhaps influenced by his visit to England in 1776, Vestier's highly original composition depicts the *fermier général* seated at a *bureau plat*, his wife clasping his hand, her other arm resting on his shoulder as she faces out and he looks up at her; in the background, Vestier depicted Chabanel's sister and infant niece, who reaches up to a portrait of her grandfather. Madame Chabanel's pose – leaning right, torso pivoted to the picture plane, proper left arm supported and right arm suspended – is remarkably close to Madame Lavoisier's.

David did not simply copy Vestier verbatim, of course, and within the overall pose he was attentive to the impact of the smallest relationships of gesture. Multiple adjustments to Madame Lavoisier's proper left hand, evident in IRR imaging and found near the compositional centre, indicate David's particular concern with a balance between limpness and tension that sets the mood of the portrait.³⁹

David would have also known Vestier's portrait through its exhibition at the Salon and critical success. The *Journal de Paris* reported that 'The masses are happily distributed, the effect is well understood, the composition is beautiful [. . .] in the end, I think that one can place this artist in the first rank of portraitists', while *Lanlaire au Salon* claimed, 'this erudite, vigorous and tasteful work, rivals the best new history paintings [. . .] The path you take is that of glory'.⁴⁰ Surely such terms would have appealed to David's inclination to create portraits that aspired beyond their genre. Had David turned to Pietro Martini's depiction of the Salon of 1787, he would have discovered a surprising compositional change that further anticipated the Lavoisier portrait: in order to fit Vestier's horizontal portrait in at the left edge of the print, Martini invented a compressed vertical format.

Marguerite Gérard's smaller *Portrait of an architect and his family* (Fig.16) registers the critical success of Vestier's family group. Gérard and Vestier's compositions are reminders, however, that the Lavoisiers were childless. It is worth asking whether in the first iteration's fully *mondaine* guise, the absence of children and David's brilliantly interlaced figures may have made it difficult for him to instill the portrait with the propriety of familial bonds

13. Detail of *Salon of 1787*, by Pietro Antoni Martini. 1787. Etching with engraving, 35.6 by 50.2 cm. (Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York).





14. *Alphonse Leroy*, by Jacques-Louis David. 1783. Oil on canvas, 72 by 91 cm. (Musée Fabre, Montpellier).

15. *The Chabanel family*, by Antoine Vestier. 1786. Oil on canvas, 165.3 by 220.5 cm. (Private collection).

so clearly on display in the works by Vestier or Gérard. This was, perhaps, especially true for a French context in which conversation pieces were rare but erotic genre subjects plentiful. Indeed, the Lavoisiers' figures were rare compared to David's ancient lovers *Paris and Helen* (1788; Louvre), shown at the Salon of 1789.⁴¹ The kind of imagery that David and the Lavoisiers might have wished to guard against is illustrated less by ancient precedents, however, than by paintings that emerged out of a *tableaux de mode* tradition, such as Michel Garnier's *The poorly defended rose* (Fig.17), in which a towering, beribboned hat has been perched atop Jean-Michelle Pigalle's sculpture *Child with a birdcage* (1750) and a broken pitcher clearly evokes the amorous, rococo tropes of Jean-Frédéric Schall and Nicolas Lavreince. The success of Gérard's small-scale works of the 1780s often walked the fine line between genre painting and portraiture, flirting with the intersection of intimacy and eroticism. The about-face from fashion to science that has been discovered in David's portrait could have mitigated the risk of association with this imagery.

Such ambitious scale and careful calculation strongly suggest the Lavoisiers and David sought a public context for the portrait – presumably first at the Salon and, perhaps, eventually in a semi-public setting such as the Académie des Sciences. A quickly unfolding political situation, however,



determined that the portrait would not be publicly shown until well after their lifetimes, at the Exposition Universelle in 1889.⁴² On 10th August 1789, Jean-Baptiste-Pierre Cuvillier, an assistant to the director of the Bâtiments du roi, wrote to Joseph-Marie Vien, director of the Académie royale de peinture et de sculpture, advising that in light of recent events a certain 'prudence and circumspection' should be adopted for what was displayed at the Salon of 1789 so as not to 'awaken' visitors. 'It is easier to be cautious with portraiture because, generally, the sitters being known, it is possible to measure public opinion and not risk anything; I imagine that M. Lavoisier would be the first who would not wish it to be exhibited'.⁴³ Hostility to Lavoisier had accrued since his 1784 commission of a wall around Paris intended to enforce tax collection. In the summer of 1789, his circumstances became more pressing when on 5th August, three weeks after the fall of the Bastille, Lavoisier ordered that several hundred barrels of inferior gunpowder be removed from the Paris Arsenal so as to accommodate storage of superior musket powder. This prompted rumours that Lavoisier intended to make ammunition inaccessible to the populace and riots erupted. The date of the Lavoisiers' payment to David, 16th December 1788, clearly documents that the work had been completed well in advance of this expression of the authorities' concerns and, moreover, the mid-1787 fashion of the dress suggests that the work had its origins some two years prior.

It remains difficult to situate David's portrait within the Lavoisiers' still poorly understood interest in the fine arts, though what can be documented clearly underscores the significance of the second half of the 1780s and

33 'J'ai en dépôt chez moi trois demoiselles, élèves de Mme Le Brun, et qui doit les reprendre lorsque son bâtiment sera fini; elles sont absolument éloignées de l'atelier [sic] des mes élèves [...] leurs mœurs sont irréprochables', Schnapper and Sérullaz, *op. cit.* (note 28), p.572.

34 D. Wildenstein and G. Wildenstein: *Documents complémentaires au catalogue de l'œuvre de Louis David*, Paris 1973, p.24.

35 For a discussion of the format, see P. Bordes: 'Portraiture in the mode of genre: a social interpretation' in P. Conisbee, ed.: *French Genre Painting in the Eighteenth Century*, *Studies in the History of Art* 72, Washington 2007, pp.257-74; and E. Barker: "'No picture more charming": the family portrait in eighteenth-century France', *Art History* 40.3 (2017), pp.526-53. On the complicated but unconvincing relationship to

English portraiture and muse imagery, see E. Wind: 'The sources of David's "Horaces"', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 4 (1940-41), pp.136-38; J. Gaus: 'Ingenuum und ars – das Ehepaarbildnis Lavoisier von David und di ikonographie der Museninspiration', *Wallraf-Richartz-Jahrbuch* 36 (1974), pp.199-228; and Vidal, *op. cit.* (note 3), pp.595-623.

36 P. Bordes: 'Jacques-Louis David's anglophilia on the eve of the French Revolution', *THE BURLINGTON MAGAZINE* 134 (1992), pp.482-90.

37 *Ibid.*

38 Sitters' relationships (but not their given names) are found in the *Explication des tableaux*, Paris 1787, p.32; A.-M. Passez: *Antoine Vestier, 1740-1824*, Paris 1989, pp.156-58; and *The Arts of France from François Ier to Napoléon Ier: A Centennial Celebration of Wildenstein's Presence*

in New York, New York 2006, p.308.

39 Similar decisions are evident in the *Death of Socrates*, where they establish the charged relationship between hands and the chalice of hemlock. See C. Hale entry in Baetjer, *op. cit.* (note 5), p.316.

40 'Les masses y sont heureusement disposées, l'effet en est bien entendu, la composition en est belle [...] Je crois enfin, dit-il, que l'on peut placer cet artiste dans les premiers rangs dans le genre du portrait.' *Journal de Paris* (26th September 1787), p.1164; 'ce ouvrage savant, vigoureux et plein de goût rivalise avec les meilleurs nouveaux tableaux d'histoire', L. Bonnefoy de Boyon: *Lanlaire au Salon académique de peinture*, Paris 1787, p.31.

41 Wind, *op. cit.* (note 35), p.136; and Schnapper and Sérullaz, *op. cit.* (note 28), pp.184-91.

42 'Exposition centennale de l'art français (1789-1889)', Paris (Exposition

Internationale Universelle), no.234. As late as 1880, David's grandson, Jacques-Louis-Jules David, noted while compiling a catalogue raisonné of the artist's work, that 'cette toile est Presque inconnue des amateurs', letter from Jacques-Louis-Jules David to the comte Bernard de Chazelles, 23rd January 1880 (private collection). He was so unfamiliar with the painting that he inquired whether it was on canvas or panel. The present authors thank Philippe Bordes for this reference.

43 'L'article des portraits laisse plus de facilité à se mettre en garde, car en général les originaux étant connus, on est en état de mesurer l'opinion publique et de ne rien hasarder; j'imagine à ce sujet que M. Lavoisier sera le premier à ne pas désirer l'exposition de son portrait', M. Furcy-Raynaud: *Correspondance de M. d'Angiviller avec Pierre*, Paris 1907, pp.263-65.



16. *An architect and his family*, by Marguerite Gérard. c.1788-89. Oil on panel, 30.5 by 24.1 cm. (Baltimore Museum of Art).

17. *The poorly defended rose*, by Michel Garnier. 1789. Oil on canvas, 46.2 by 37.6. (Minneapolis Institute of Art).

particularly the period around 1787. Lavoisier visited the Salons of 1783 and 1785 and made pointed annotations in his 1785 Salon *livret*, the sophistication and detail of which have been under-appreciated: Anne Vallayer-Coster's *Mademoiselle de Saint-Huberty as Dido* (1785; National Museum of Women in the Arts, Washington) was described as 'the worst painting of the Salon', but historical subjects were generally praised, notably Vien's *Return of Priam with the body of Hector* (1785; Musée des Beaux-Arts, Angers), which he compared with the artist's submission to the previous Salon. Of David's *Oath of the Horatii*, Lavoisier offered the measured evaluation that 'The composition is very simple; the sentiment that animates the three sons is expressed forcefully [. . .] There is a fault in the perspective and drawing; one of the brothers' arms could not exist as it is here'.⁴⁴ Having known David's work at the Salon, the Lavoisiers could have encountered the artist himself through the elite circles in which David moved in the 1780s. In

44 'le plus mauvais tableau du Salon'; 'La composition est très simple; le sentiment qui anime ses trois fils est bien fortement exprimé [. . .] Il y a une faute de perspective et de dessin; le bras d'un des frères ne peut exister tel qu'il est', annotations transcribed in Grimaux, *op. cit.* (note 2), pp.378-80; see also Beretta, *op. cit.* (note 11), pp.69-71.

45 The most likely patron was Charles-Louis Trudaine de Montigny. See C.B. Bailey: "Les grands, les

cordons bleus": les clients de David avant la Révolution" in Michel, ed., *op. cit.* (note 29), I, p.145; Vidal, *op. cit.* (note 3), p.598; Baetjer, *op. cit.* (note 5), pp.314-19; and C.B. Bailey: Review of 'French Paintings in the Metropolitan Museum of Art', THE BURLINGTON MAGAZINE 163 (2021), pp.472-73. Our thanks to Colin B. Bailey for his pointing to the shared scientific interests between the Trudaines and Lavoisiers presented in S. Delorme: "Une famille de grands commis de l'état,



particular, the Trudaine family's commission of the *Death of Socrates* in 1787 would have provided a key moment of social overlap: Jean-Charles-Philibert Trudaine de Montigny was Lavoisier's colleague at the Académie des Sciences, witnessed the Lavoisiers' marriage contract in 1771 and was the dedicatee of Lavoisier's *Opuscules physiques et chimiques* (1774).⁴⁵

The key pieces of evidence for Madame Lavoisier's status as a draughtswoman, exemplified by her thirteen plates for the Lavoisiers' *Traité élémentaire de chimie* (1789), also date from the period around 1787. Tentative evidence of her possible training with David derives from two drawings dated March 1786 and in 1788 she sent Benjamin Franklin a copy of his portrait by Joseph Duplessis.⁴⁶ Most evocative of the Lavoisiers' engagement with issues of representation, however, is a letter to Madame Lavoisier from their scientific collaborator, Jean Henri Hassenfratz, dated 20th February 1788. He outlined three elaborate ideas for her execution of a frontispiece to a French edition of Richard Kirwin's *Essay on Phlogiston* (1787) in which allegorical representations of both Lavoisiers would appear.⁴⁷ Given Madame Lavoisier's central role in negotiating the couple's international, often heated, scientific correspondence and public image,

amis des sciences, au XVIIIe siècle: Les Trudaine', *Revue d'Histoire* 3 (April-June 1950), pp.101-09.

46 Provenance, inscription and date all associate these drawings with her, though they may be by another of David's pupils and given to her as models to copy. Vidal, *op. cit.* (note 3), pp.612-17; M. Pinault Sørensen: 'Madame Lavoisier, dessinatrice et peintre', *La Revue du Musée des Arts et Métiers* 6 (1994), pp.23-25; Baetjer, *op. cit.* (note 5), pp.320-21; and Beretta,

op. cit. (note 11), pp.29-30 and 43-52.

47 Discussed in depth in Beretta, *op. cit.* (note 11), pp.43-47. The assertion made in Schnapper and Sérullaz, *op. cit.* (note 28), p.192 that these options relate directly to David's portrait is less convincing.

48 Beretta, *op. cit.* (note 11), pp.27-30; and M. Roberts: *Sentimental Savants. Philosophical Families in Enlightenment France*, Chicago 2016, pp.35-38 and 45-53.

49 *Inventaire*, fols.26r and 37v.

50 'quelques tableaux ébaucher'



18. *Experiments in respiration*, by Marie-Anne Pierrette Paulze Lavoisier. c.1790. Graphite, pen and ink on paper. (Private collection).

her role as *femme savante* suggests that she would have been directly engaged with David's much-modified portrait.⁴⁸ Furthermore, her self-portrait in a drawing depicting experiments in respiration, dated around 1790, precisely takes up her husband's earlier pose as her own (Fig.19).

The surviving inventories of the widowed Madame Lavoisier's possessions are frustratingly incomplete, as the notary deemed himself unqualified to evaluate paintings and awaited a member of the Commission temporaire des arts.⁴⁹ However, in spite of himself, he listed what appears to be Madame Lavoisier's colour box, 'several unfinished paintings' as well as 'statues, plaster models, paintings, and other such objects'.⁵⁰ The only three paintings listed specifically, valued at a lump sum of six hundred livres, were Charles-Antoine Coypel's *L'amour précepteur* (1740; private collection) and Anne-Louis Girodet de Roucy-Trioson's two *concours de Rome* submissions, serving as pendants, described as 'le départ de Coriolanus [sic] pour l'Exil' (*Coriolanus taking leave of his family*, 1786; National Gallery of Art, Washington) and 'la morte des Enfants de Seducias [sic]' (*Nebuchadnezzar orders the slaying of Seducias's children in the presence of their father*, 1787; Musée Tessé, Le Mans).⁵¹ Coypel's painting had sold at the duc de la Vallière auction in 1781, when the Lavoisiers may have purchased it, and it marked

the taste of an earlier era.⁵² Girodet's student work, however, is a striking testimony to the Lavoisiers' interest in David and his school around 1787.⁵³ That they would own both of his *concours de Rome* submissions from sequential years suggests a particular investment in the promising young artist; in a further suggestion of Madame Lavoisier's continued interest in Girodet's artistic progress, Samuel Romilly's journals from a visit to Paris in 1802 record her taking him to see Girodet's recently completed *Ossian* (1801; Musée national de Château de Malmaison).⁵⁴

David's portrait, the Lavoisiers' greatest painting, barely seems to have merited notice in the revolutionaries' inventory. It appears almost incidentally, but with particular poignancy as one of two objects that the recently widowed Madame Lavoisier petitioned to keep in the face of the government's seizures: a silver *nécessaire* and 'a large painting which represents her portrait and that of her deceased husband, the said portrait is in the room in which I am currently'.⁵⁵ Perched at the brink between the personal and the public, vanity and propriety, her choices speak to image-making at the end of the *ancien régime*. As the revelations of technical analysis have made clear, however, invention and reinvention took place in intimate dialogue with the past, with the most advanced sitters and artists pushing through the conventional in pursuit of the revolutionary.

(unnumbered); 'des Statues, modèles en plâtres, peintures, et autres semblables objects' (no.24); the colour box appears to be 'une table en bois d'acajou à deux tiroirs servant à resserrer en ustenciles de peintures et des couleurs' (no.21), *Inventaire*, fols.33v and 26r-v.
 51 'Inventaire après décès', *Inventaire*, fol.13r. The identifications are modified from those given in Poirier, *op. cit.* (note 2), pp.389-90. All three appear in the library in

Mme Lavoisier's posthumous inventory. David's portrait was in the 'grand salon', 'faisant le pendant' to Nicolas-André Monsiau's *Death of Raphael* (1804; Salon of 1804). See the transcription of Archives Nationales, MC/RE/XCIX/12 (3rd March 1836) that appears as 'Inventaire après-décès de Marie-Anne Paulze-Lavoisier (1836)', in F. Antonelli: *Scrittura, sociabilità e strategie di persuasione: Marie-Anne Paulze-Lavoisier, secrétaire (1758-1836)*, PhD thesis, Università

di Bologna/École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales 2021, pp.238-87.

52 Specified as on canvas, aligning it with T. Lefrançois: *Charles Coypel, Peintre du Roi, 1694-1752*, Paris 1994, p.312.

53 For Girodet's *concours* submissions, see S. Bellanger: exh. cat. *Girodet, 1767-1824*, Paris (Musée du Louvre), Chicago (Art Institute), New York (Metropolitan Museum of Art) and Montréal (Musée des Beaux-Arts), pp.188-201;

Coriolanus taking leave of his family was only recently rediscovered, see Sale, Christie's, New York, 29th October 2019, *Old Master Paintings and Sculpture*, lot 749.

54 S. Romilly: *The Life of Sir Samuel Romilly*, London 1842, I, p.409.

55 '1° du nécessaire inventorié article cent quarante quatre ci-dessous 2° et d'un grand tableau qui représente son portrait et celui du [?] défont [sic] son mari, le dit tableau est dans la chambre ou j'opere actuellement', *Inventaire*, fol.37v.