

## A Neglected Tradition? Art History as *Bildwissenschaft*

Horst Bredekamp

### 1. The Image and the Arts: An Artificial Split

Because the meaning of the German word *Bild* includes *image*, *picture*, *figure*, and *illustration*, the term *Bildwissenschaft* has no equivalence in the English language. It seems as if this linguistic difference is deepening an ongoing distinction between English- and German-speaking art history.

In Austria and Germany the principal elements of the discipline were created around 1900 and continued to be developed until 1933. After 1970 a major revival of art history as *Bildwissenschaft* took place in German art history. Advertisements, photography, nonart mass photography, film, video, and political iconography became regular subjects. When digital and netart became feasible, they were almost immediately included within the history of art.<sup>1</sup> Historically, then, two essential points comprise *Bildwissenschaft*: first, art history embraced the whole field of images beyond the visual arts, and, secondly, it took all of these objects seriously.

In the English-speaking world, though, the proliferation of media has not been the only complicating factor in reaching a consensus on how *Bild-*

I would like to thank James Elkins, Irving Lavin, and Barbara Stafford for their critical readings of this paper, which was presented in different versions at the Getty conference "Frames of Viewing," Berlin, 2002 and the Clark Art Institute's 2002 conference "The Art Historian."

1. Some significant examples, although published in later years, maybe sufficient: Henriette Vöth's magnificent dissertation "Odol: Reklame-Kunst um 1900" (Ph.D. diss., Gießen, 1985; see also Henriette Vöth-Hinz, *Odol: Reklame-Kunst um 1900* [Berlin, 1985]) on the mouthwash Odol around 1900 as a forerunner of surrealism; Bodo von Dewitz, "'So wird bei uns der Krieg geführt!' Amateurfotografie im ersten Weltkrieg" (Ph.D. diss., Munich, 1989) on soldiers' photographs in World War I; Marin Warnke, "Politische Ikonographie," in *Bildindex zur Politischen Ikonographie*, ed. Warnke (Hamburg, 1993), pp. 5–12; Edith Decker's fundamental work on Nam June Paik, *Paik: Video* (Cologne, 1988); and Hans Dieter Huber's historicization of the reflection of netart in art history, "Digging the Net—Materialien zu einer Geschichte der Kunst im Netz," in *Bilder in Bewegung: Traditionen digitaler Ästhetik*, ed. Kai-Uwe Hemken (Cologne, 2000), pp. 158–74.

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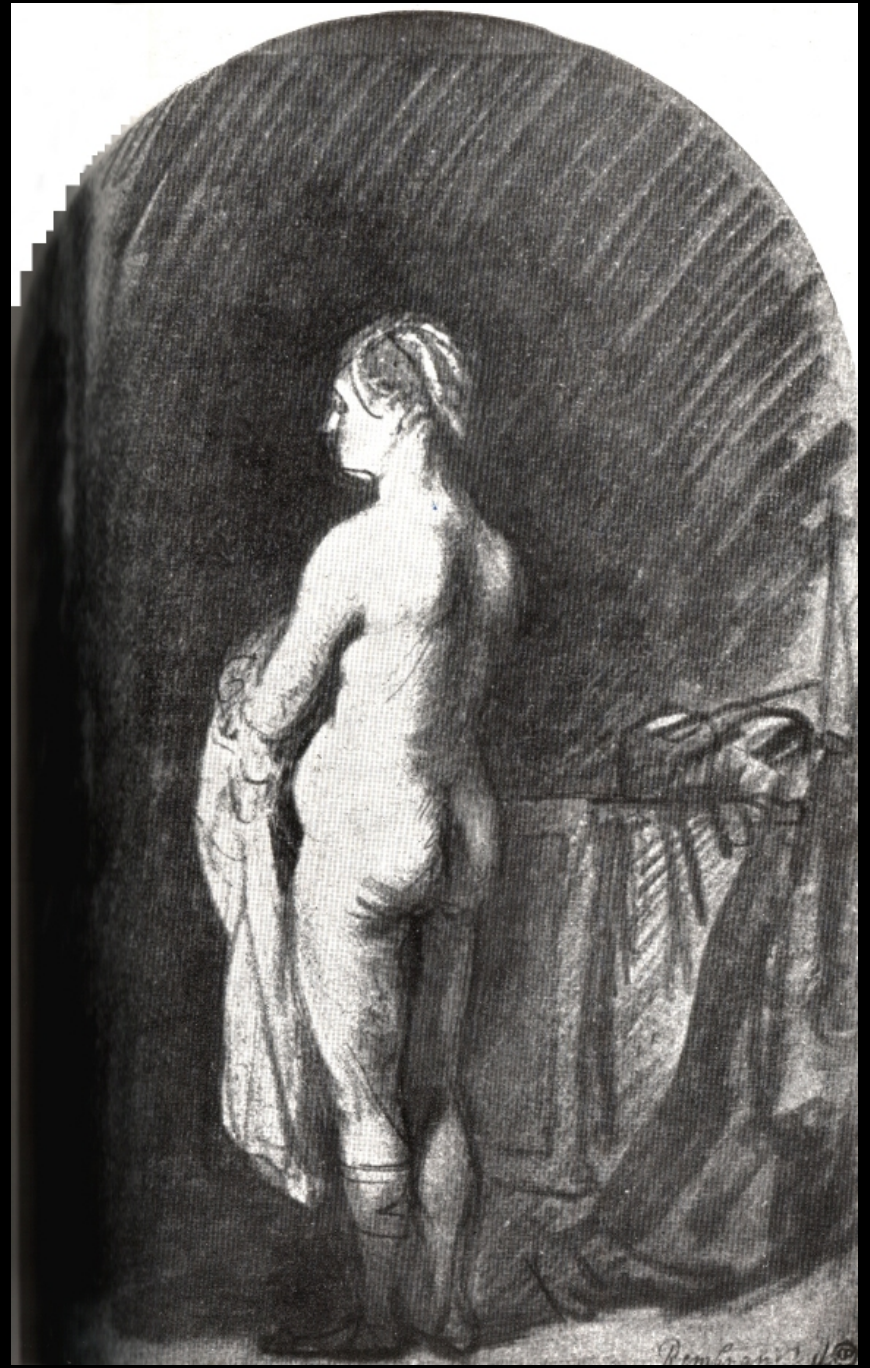
# Horst Bredekamp, *Una tradizione trascurata?*

## colonna visiva e integrazioni

## Estetica 2 A.A. 2011/12

# ***Wölfflin: Concetti fondamentali della storia dell'arte***

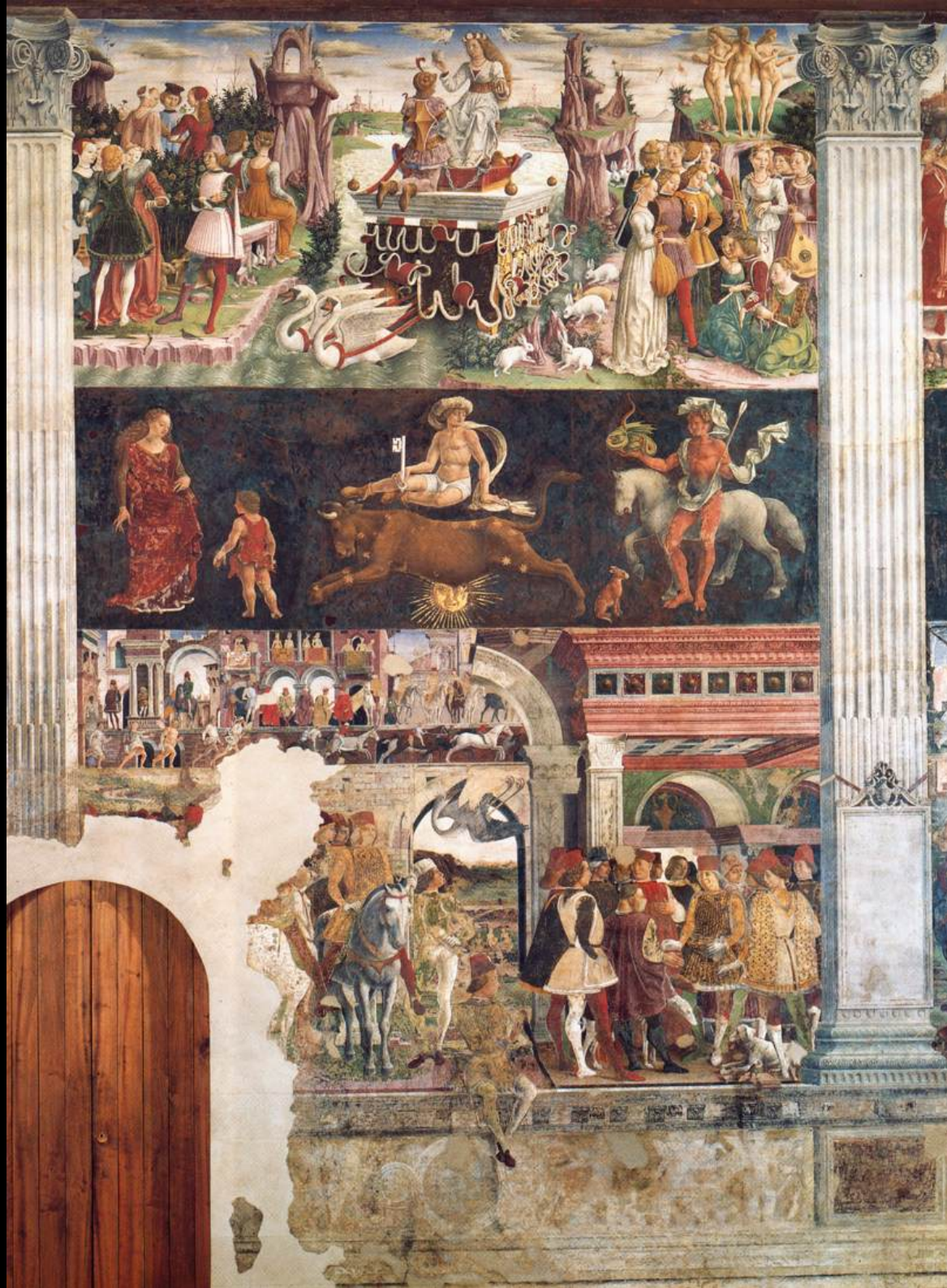
- **lineare – pittorico**
- **superficie – profondità**
- **forma chiusa – forma aperta**
- **molteplicità – unità**
- **chiarezza – non chiarezza (chiarezza assoluta – chiarezza relativa)**



Albrecht Dürer, *Eva* – Rembrandt, *Nudo femminile*



Aby  
Warburg,  
*Mnemosyne*  
(1929),  
tav. 79

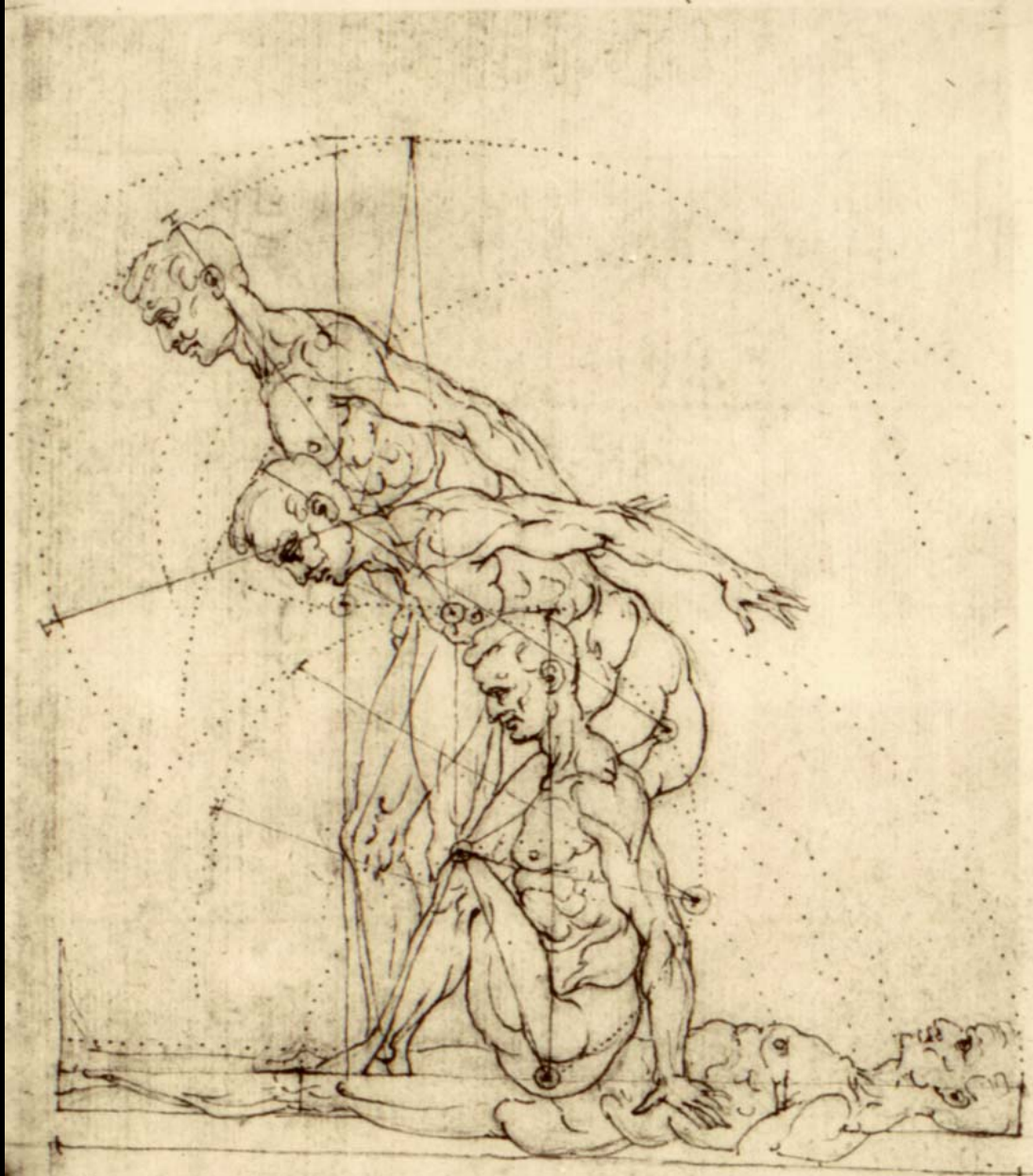


Francesco del Cossa,  
*Aprile –  
Trionfo di  
Venere*  
(1476-84,  
Palazzo  
Schifanoia,  
Ferrara)



Cosmè  
Tura,  
*Agosto –  
Trionfo di  
Cerere*  
(1476-84,  
Palazzo  
Schifanoia,  
Ferrara)





secondo moto  
seconda figura

Leonardo da  
Vinci,  
*Codice  
Huygens*  
(XVI sec.,  
Pierpont  
Morgan  
Library,  
New York)