



CHAPTER 6

Decorating the Capitol in the Pompeian Style

With his successful completion of the frescoes for the Agriculture Committee room, Constantino Brumidi's career spanning twenty-five years as the artist of the Capitol was launched (figs. 6–1 and 6–2). Having hired Brumidi and numerous skilled craftsmen in 1856, Meigs began to move ahead with the decoration of the new rooms. Walter included “frescoing 89 rooms” at \$1,000 each in his estimate of the cost to finish the extensions; he used the word “frescoing” loosely to include any decorative painting on plaster, as was common in the nineteenth century. Meigs immediately set Brumidi to work

“making designs & cartoons for ceilings & walls.” In the spring of 1856, Brumidi was making designs for the Senate Reception Room (S-213), the ceiling of the Hall of the House, the Senate Committee on Naval Affairs room (S-127), and the Senate corridors. By November, Meigs

Fig. 6–1. Senate Appropriations Committee hearing room. *The ornately decorated room, originally painted for the Senate Committee on Naval Affairs, is the most fully Pompeian in style in the Capitol. S-127.*



Fig. 6–2. Constantino Brumidi, c. 1860. *Brumidi's congenial personality as well as his expertise and talent enabled him to effectively oversee painters of diverse backgrounds. Lola Germon Brumidi Family Album. United States Senate Collection.*

could report on the progress of the decoration of seven rooms. That year alone, 19 orders were placed for painting supplies.¹

Contrary to the popular impression, Brumidi did not single-handedly decorate the Capitol. In the years the extensions were being completed, they were a beehive of activity, with several artists and many decorative painters simultaneously at work along with plain painters and plasterers and specialists in decorative plaster, gilding, and scagliola, an imitation marble. However, Brumidi was indisputably the major artist decorating the Capitol. He executed all of the true frescoes himself, while supervising teams of painters who carried out the more decorative

elements of his designs. In some cases, his designs were even carried out under someone else's supervision. Although Captain Meigs had Brumidi design most of the highly decorated rooms, he asked other artists to contribute to some of his rooms and also had others design and supervise room decoration. He was under pressure to complete the extensions and could not assign all the decoration to Brumidi.²

Because of Meigs's regard for his qualifications, Brumidi had the highest rank of any of the artists working in the Capitol. His status was reflected in his relatively high pay, which in 1855 was at the same rate as a member of

Congress. In July 1857, his pay was raised from \$8 to \$10 per day, retroactive to April.³ This rate was less only than Walter's salary of \$375 per month (approximately \$15 a day, based on the six-day work week that averaged 26 days a month). It was much higher than Meigs's \$150 per month, the equivalent of less than \$6 a day. Emmerich Carstens, who was in charge of all the decorative painters, earned only \$5 a day, half as much as Brumidi. Another fine artist, Johannes Oertel, was paid \$6 a day, while James Leslie, considered an independent artist, received only \$4. The most highly skilled assistant painters, such as Alberto Peruchi and Joseph Rakemann, earned \$3, while apprentices and laborers were paid as little as \$1 a day.

As "the chief conductor of the work," Brumidi was insistent on his right to have independent control over his own work and crew, asserting "I have always considered that I had the entire management (i.e., in an artistic sense) of those who were place [*sic*] under my immediate superintendence in executing my work. . . ." He himself created the overall design and painted the most ambitious parts himself, especially the historical scenes, large figures, and portraits. He explained that the panels containing figures "require carefull [*sic*] studio, and drawings and cartoons from models, before [I] paint it in the walls, and I cannot employ any other artist to help me, but I must do everything by my hand. . . ."⁴

Brumidi, who had experience in working with teams of painters and decorators in Italy, was able to use effectively the skills of artists of different abilities and nationalities to create a harmonious whole. As mural artists still do today, he assigned assistants to make the best use of their individual skills. Several painters might work on any one section, and the master artist made sure that the style was consistent throughout, making it impossible to distinguish individual contributions.

Brumidi developed a loyal team of assistants, whom he evidently treated with respect. Meigs wrote that he had "never [in Brumidi] seen the petty jealousy which inferior artists exhibit. I have always found him ready to praise where praise was due. . . . He has suffered from the cliques and jealousies which have beset the works of the Capitol, as they do, I presume every great national work, but has himself behaved with modesty and propriety, and



Fig. 6-3. Photograph of room designed by Emmerich Carstens in 1856. Carstens's decorative murals for the Judiciary Committee of the Senate (S-126) were painted over in the twentieth century.

From Glenn Brown, *History of the United States Capitol*, 1902.

attended laboriously to his duties."⁵ Among Brumidi's closest assistants were Alberto Peruchi and Ludwig Odense, who worked frequently with him at the Capitol and whom he also hired for outside projects, such as the decoration of Walter's house.⁶ Peruchi seems to have been his main assistant, since he was giving orders for Brumidi in 1858. He was an expert in "arabesques" and



Fig. 6–4. Trophy of military equipment, detail of wall panel. *In the Brumidi Corridors, the beautifully detailed trophies representing various areas of human endeavor are attributed to English artist James Leslie. Near S–125.*

prepared designs for individual figures in the Senate corridor.⁷ Other Italian assistants were Peter Schio, who died in 1858, and Joseph Uberti.⁸ Urban Geier helped prepare cartoons and colors, and Michel Long worked under Brumidi as a laborer. Brumidi also worked with Henry Walther and Joseph Rakemann, emigrants from Germany who specialized in painting fruits and flowers.

Alongside Brumidi and his assistants, German-born Emmerich Carstens, called “master painter” and later “foreman of decorative painters,” played a major role in the decoration of the Capitol. He was in charge of ordering painting supplies and of decorative painting, which included solid-colored plain walls, trompe l’oeil molding, repetitive designs, and small figures, but not historical or allegorical scenes. Meigs had recruited Carstens in 1854, trying to persuade him to move from New York shortly before Brumidi appeared on the scene. He finally succeeded in hiring him in January 1856. He directed Carstens to paint rooms in tempera rather than having Brumidi decorate them all in fresco not to save money but because of lack of time. Although dismissed in 1859, Carstens was reappointed “foreman of ornamental painting” in 1861. He continued to work at the Capitol until 1898, long after Brumidi’s death.⁹

At times, disputes arose between Carstens and Brumidi over lines of authority, such as when Carstens fired one of Brumidi’s assistants, but in general they worked together amicably for many years.¹⁰ In some cases Carstens executed Brumidi’s designs, as perhaps in the case of the tempera ceiling of the Senate north entry, for which he was paid for “frescoing” (see fig. 6–20). He himself also designed decorations for rooms in the Capitol, including the Committee on Foreign Relations (S–118) and the Senate Committee on the Judiciary (S–126) (fig. 6–3). Meigs commented on this room, comparing Carstens to Brumidi and showing sensitivity to the difference between fine art and decorative painting:

It is very beautiful, though not so high a style of art as the fresco in room number 17 of Agriculture [H–144]. The coloring is gay and cheerful, with striking contrasts but very harmonious. The effect is very beautiful, and at first sight it pleases as much as the higher art in the other room. But it does not wear so well. The mind finds nothing to study in it. A few scrolls and bunches of fruit and flowers are the whole; and after a few minutes, the novelty wears off, though the impression of beauty and harmony remains.¹¹

In the 1850s the highly skilled English painter James Leslie worked independently alongside Brumidi and Carstens and earned Meigs’s esteem and appreciation. Leslie first offered designs for the Capitol in 1856; Meigs eventually agreed to hire him at a daily rate. Meigs noted in his journal that he would “have the benefit of the skill and taste which Leslie seems to have, though he is not a Brumidi.” Leslie painted the trophy panels in the Senate Committee on Military Affairs room (S–128) (see fig. 8–19) and sections of the first-floor Senate corridors (fig. 6–4). He was entirely responsible for the design and exe-



Fig. 6–5. Corner of room painted by James Leslie. *The room for the Committee on Territories was intricately designed and skillfully painted by Leslie in 1856 with Indian implements, wild birds and other animals, and seals of the areas soon to become states. The tulip stenciling and seal of the House of Representatives are later additions.* H–128.

cution of the elaborate decorations for the House Committee on Territories (H–128) (fig. 6–5), and he applied to be foreman when Carstens was fired in 1859. His skillful contributions to the decoration of the Capitol ended with his sudden death from typhoid fever in 1860.¹²

In managing the decoration of the Capitol, Meigs also hired other artists, such as George West and Johannes Oertel, with whose work he was less pleased. He also attempted to bring in others, such as illustrator F. O. C. Darley, to contribute designs.¹³

We know relatively little about the surprisingly large number of other painters listed on the payrolls. The scant information available about individuals who decorated the Capitol comes primarily from letters complaining about pay or disputing hiring decisions. The payroll documents give no indication of specific areas where a painter worked. The names on the rolls are primarily Italian, German, and English. The painters were hired for varying amounts of time, some for as little as a few weeks, while others worked continuously for many years. Between 1856 and 1861, the names of approximately 75 decorative and fresco painters were listed on the payroll (see Appendix B). In 1857 alone there were 81 painters of all types, including plain wall painters, at work. In 1858, a newspaper claimed that “a crowd of sixty or seventy foreign painters, chiefly Italians and Frenchmen” was working under Brumidi. In actuality, that year Brumidi supervised 15 painters and 3 laborers in 5 rooms, while Carstens kept 15 painters and 2 laborers working in 3 rooms. In May 1858, 22 decorative painters petitioned

to be reinstated after having been let go. By November of the same year, 29 decorative and fresco painters were on the rolls.¹⁴ Added to these numbers were the utilitarian painters and plasterers and the decorative plasterers, gilders, and experts in scagliola, who worked alongside the decorative and fresco painters to create the total room decorations.

The few problems that did arise between Brumidi and the other painters working in the Capitol seem to have been created by ambiguous or duplicate orders given by Meigs, perhaps by oversight, in haste to get the work finished, or in order to have a variety of designs from which to choose, as in the conflict with Johannes Oertel over S–211 (see chapters 7 and 8). In 1856 Louis Franze, originally recruited by Brumidi, became resentful after Meigs reduced his pay. Another painter caught by conflicting orders was Otto Lahayne, who was told by Robert Briggs, the mechanical engineer, to take charge of painting materials, while Brumidi had given this duty to Peruchi.¹⁵ Significantly, there is no evidence that Brumidi was ever the direct cause of conflict with others at any time during his career at the Capitol.

Brumidi was considered the major artist at the Capitol because of his knowledge of true fresco, his expertise in drawing the figure, and his thorough and first-hand knowledge of the classical tradition. Brumidi’s antique sources can be seen most clearly in the present Senate Committee on Appropriations room (S–127), originally created for the Senate Committee on Naval Affairs, and in the first-floor Senate corridors, today called the Brumidi Corridors.

S–127

The room designed for the Committee on Naval Affairs, now the Senate Appropriations Committee hearing room, shows Brumidi’s virtuosity in designing murals in the Pompeian style (see fig. 6–1). This richly decorated room was created for a committee crucial to the defense of the nation following naval reforms led by its chairman Stephen H. Mallory.

In May 1856, when Captain Meigs began planning this room, he was pleased with Brumidi’s just-completed first room (H–144); however, he was still interested in finding other artists to help decorate the Capitol. For the Committee on Naval Affairs, he thought of asking James Hamilton, an Irish-born marine painter in Philadelphia, to paint naval battles from the War of 1812. He solicited designs from Henry Sharp and James Leslie and considered making Brumidi responsible only for the figures, apparently to save money. In late August, however, he rejected Sharp and Leslie’s \$4,000 estimate as much too costly, shortly after having approved Brumidi’s overall de-

sign.¹⁶ During the two years the room was being painted, Meigs learned that he could rely on Brumidi for both quality and dependability.

For the committee room, the right-hand design in Brumidi's beautiful watercolor sketch, signed by Meigs on August 20, 1856, was adopted for the decorative framework (fig. 6-6). Along with a naval battle featuring the *General Armstrong*, the sketch includes the scene *Colum-*

bus and the Indian Maiden, which Brumidi did not use for this room but many years later painted over the door to S-132 (see fig. 6-29). By the fall of 1856, the room was being painted, "the ceiling in distemper and fresco, the walls in oil."¹⁷ In addition to designing the overall decorative scheme, Brumidi executed the important figures, including the eight gods and goddesses frescoed on the ceiling and the floating maidens painted in oil on the walls.



Fig. 6-6. Brumidi's sketch for Naval Affairs Committee room, 1856. This beautifully detailed watercolor showing an overall design for ceilings and walls is the only known sketch of this type by the artist. It shows different designs and color schemes in the two sections of the room. Architect of the Capitol.



Fig. 6-7. Detail of ceiling decoration showing Neptune. *The god of the sea, holding his trident, presides over the other sea gods and goddesses and sea nymphs in the ceiling. S-127.*

Still seeking to recruit other artists, Meigs asked George R. West, known for his scenes of China, to paint in the upper wall panels the naval battles suggested in Brumidi's sketch. Meigs thought that West would work as Brumidi's pupil, but found that West had a high opin-



Fig. 6-8. Detail of ceiling with America. *Brumidi included the figure of an Indian woman dressed in deerskin and holding a bow and arrows as one of the American symbols in the committee room. S-127.*

ion of himself, thought he deserved greater pay, and was insulted by Meigs's offer to keep him on as a decorative painter. By the end of 1856, Meigs was so displeased with him that the artist offered to erase his six naval scenes. These included the War of 1812 battles between



Fig. 6–9. Detail of cherubs over doorway. *Brumidi’s winged cherubs with leaves instead of legs are directly inspired by Pompeian murals, while the striped shield adds an American note.* S–127.

the *Constitution* and the *Guerrière* and between the *General Armstrong* and the British and, possibly, the 1855 launch of the frigate *Minnesota*.¹⁸ West’s scenes were obliterated; it is possible that traces of them still exist under later paint layers.

The six architectural perspectives now visible in the lunettes were painted by Camillo Bisco, one of the Italian painters who worked directly under Brumidi. However, because he was fired in 1858, only the central portion of one lunette was ever completed. Also left blank were the circles on the lower walls, for which portraits of naval heroes were designed by Brumidi after Johannes Oertel failed to produce them.¹⁹

In 1858, shortly after the room was occupied by the committee, an explanatory note about its classical sources, most likely based on what Brumidi had told Meigs, was posted in the room:

The decorative paintings of this room are a specimen of the manner in which the ancient Greeks and Romans ornamented their splendid buildings, some of which are still extant in the precious monuments of Pompeii and the baths of Titus. America, with the sea divinities, are painted on the ceiling in real fresco. These mythological figures are delineated agreeably to the poetical descriptions we have received of them, and they are Neptune, the god of the seas,

Amphitrite, his wife, Aeolus keeping the winds chained to the rocks, Venus, the daughter of the Sea, Oceanus with crampfish claws on his head, Thetis, his wife, and Nereus, the father of the Nereids, drawn by Glacus, and the Tritons by marine horses or swans, or else mounted on sea monsters.²⁰

Meigs was very proud of Brumidi’s achievement. After comparing it to plates in books on Pompeii and Gruner’s *Ornamental Art* in the Library of Congress, he concluded that “the decoration of the Capitol will compare favorably with the best of the examples that are given. The Pompeian rooms are better than the examples from Pompeii. . . .”²¹

All the designs in the room are adaptations of types of wall painting that can be found in Pompeii or in what Brumidi knew as the Baths of Titus (see fig. 1–4). The ornamental trelliswork painted on the ceiling vaults frames classical figures related to the theme of the sea. Into this profusion of antique imagery, including Neptune (fig. 6–7), Brumidi introduced a few American symbols, an allegorical figure representing America (fig. 6–8) and faces of pioneers and Native Americans on one of the ceiling arches. In the lunettes under the arches, Bisco’s illusionistic architectural frames hold depictions of classical porticoes painted in convincing perspective. Over the doorways are cherubs with striped shields, painted on a black background suggesting night, similar to ones found in Pompeii (fig. 6–9).



Fig. 6-10. Southeast corner with floating maidens. *One of the maidens directly inspired by a Pompeian figure carries an American flag. S-127.*

Lower on the walls, illusionistic columns frame nine panels with floating female figures by Brumidi (fig. 6-10). The maidens, dressed in flowing classical robes, hold nautical and marine objects, including an anchor, chart, compass and telescope, sextant, fish, and pearls (fig. 6-11). They are modeled after Pompeian maenads, or followers of Bacchus (fig. 6-12). As seen in Brumidi's color sketch (see fig. 6-6), early descriptions, and recent test cleaning patches, these figures originally floated on a light blue background; with discoloration and yellowed varnish, the fields turned to dark green, which is the color they were repainted.²² The pilasters and lower walls are decorated with scagliola. The Pompeian style of the room made it a



Fig. 6-11. Cartoon for maiden with pearls. *Brumidi transferred this drawing directly to the wall.*



Fig. 6-12. Bacchante in a fresco from Pompeii. *Brumidi adapted the pose of this figure for his maiden carrying the flag. Museo Archeologico Nazionale, Naples, Italy.*

Photo: Alinari/Art Resource, NY.

lightning rod for attacks on the decoration of the Capitol. One writer disparagingly compared it to a valentine shop and argued that classical motifs were obsolete:

It is scarcely possible to imagine anything more absurd, or in more outrageous taste. Yet it is entirely



Fig. 6–13. Room S–127 as it appeared c. 1900. *By the turn of the century, Brumidi’s murals were partially obscured by bookcases and other furniture. Note the original bronze chandeliers decorated with anchors.*

From Glenn Brown, *History of the United States Capitol*, 1902.

in keeping with the general style of decoration of the Capitol, which is a servile, tasteless reproduction of the Pompeian style, with its worn-out, *fade* [insipid], wearisome gods, goddesses, nymphs, and monsters. . . .²³

In contrast, today the room is considered one of the treasures of the Capitol, with its wealth of detail and symbolism showing Brumidi’s mastery of the Pompeian idiom.

The room suffered some changes during its history. The Naval Affairs Committee met in the room until 1897, briefly followed by the Committee on Printing. From 1899 the room was used by the Committee on the Philippines until 1912, when it was assigned to the Senate Committee on Appropriations, which still occupies it today. By

the turn of the century, cabinets hid parts of the walls (fig. 6–13). Although Brumidi’s basic designs remain largely intact, many areas in the room have been repainted. Charles Moberly touched up the room in 1919, and decorative painters worked there in 1955. In 1978, during the restoration of the room, the plain fields were repainted and damaged areas redone. This restoration was carried out by in-house painters before the professional mural conservation program at the Capitol was begun.²⁴

S–210

Another room decorated in a variation of the Pompeian style is S–210, known since 1964 as the John F.



Fig. 6-14. Another example of the Pompeian style. *This room, designed to be the Stationery Room for senators, has a framework of classical designs; the blank areas were intended for Brumidi's frescoes. S-210.*

Kennedy Room, because he used the room while president-elect (fig. 6-14). Now used by Senate officers, it was created as the Stationery Room for the Senate and was used for many years by the Official Reporters of Debates. The decorative framework painted in 1856 includes trompe l'oeil moldings and classical motifs painted in tempera on the ceiling and lunettes; it may

have been designed by Brumidi but was probably carried out by Emmerich Carstens. The palette of cream, greens, and reddish browns is similar to that in the ceiling he painted in the north entry. The numerous plain fields were intended for frescoes, for which Brumidi gave an estimate in late 1859, but which he never executed.²⁵



Fig. 6–15. View from west to east of the north Brumidi Corridor. The decoration of the Capitol corridors was inspired by Raphael’s loggia in the Vatican, which was in turn based on Roman murals. First floor, Senate wing.



Fig. 6–16. Raphael’s Loggia in the Vatican. Decorative details that inspired Brumidi’s designs for the Brumidi Corridors are more visible in this nineteenth-century photograph than they are today.

From Heinrich Strack, *Baudenkmaeler Roms des XV-XIX Jahrhunderts*, Berlin, 1891.

The Brumidi Corridors

The most extensive and most accessible space in the Capitol decorated in the Pompeian style is the network of corridors on the first floor of the Senate wing, in recent years called the Brumidi Corridors (fig. 6–15). The Italian artist, who played a major role in the overall design for the walls and ceilings and in painting the most important elements, was assisted by many others in creating the ornate mural decoration. Brumidi himself painted the historical portraits along the walls and the frescoed lunettes with historical and allegorical figures and scenes. In his design for the corridors, Brumidi integrated American motifs into a classical framework.

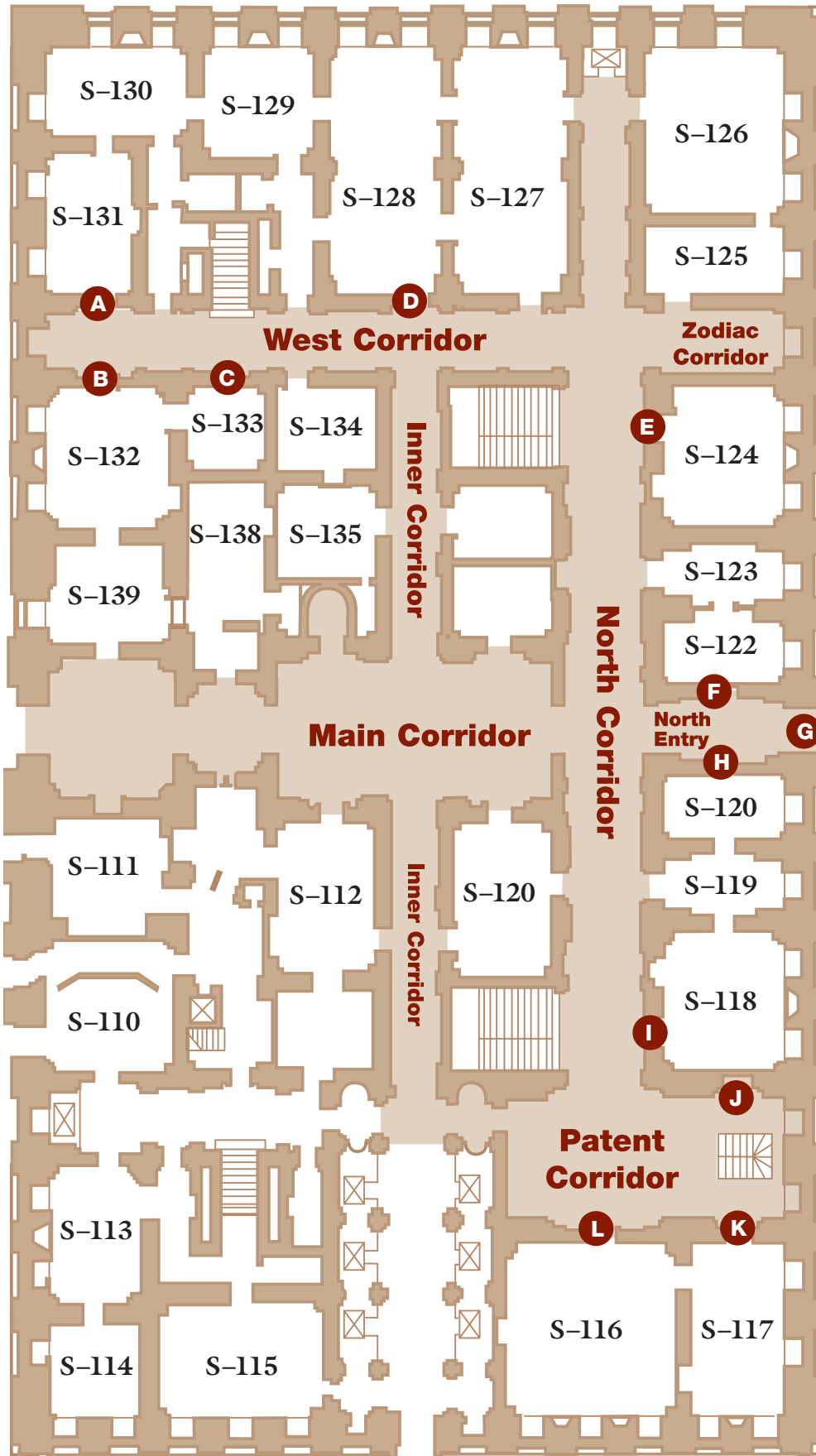
The design of the corridors reflects the classical Roman style as it had been recreated in the corridors of the Vatican, where the walls and ceilings are divided by trompe l’oeil architectural moldings and filled with classical flora, fauna, and mythological figures. Raphael’s second-floor

loggia in the Vatican was a direct source of inspiration (fig. 6–16). Brumidi’s work is more richly colored and ornate than Raphael’s, giving it the Victorian flavor characteristic of his time, which is further enhanced by the colorful Minton tile floors.

Remarkably, before he had met Brumidi, Captain Meigs had already envisioned having the corridors decorated like Raphael’s Vatican loggias, which he had seen in colored engravings. Meigs was therefore enthusiastic about Brumidi’s elaborate decorative scheme and put it into effect, even though architect Walter found it “excessively ornate,” preferring walls painted in “light and harmonious tints” with “a few frescoes where the lights are favorable.”²⁶

As an early guidebook justly estimated, “It would require a volume to describe the corridors accurately. . . .”²⁷ It would take many hours if not days of careful looking to appreciate all of the details. The Italian artist incorporated American flowers, fruits, birds, small mammals, insects, reptiles, inventions, and historical portraits, along

The Brumidi Corridors



Frescoed lunettes by Brumidi:

- A** *Authority Consults the Written Law*
- B** *Columbus and the Indian Maiden*
- C** *Bartholomé de Las Casas*
- D** *Bellona, Roman Goddess of War*
- E** *Cession of Louisiana*
- F** *Chancellor James Kent*
- G** *Chancellor Robert R. Livingston (bust)*
- H** *Justice Joseph Story*
- I** *Signing of the First Treaty of Peace with Great Britain*
- J** *John Fitch*
- K** *Benjamin Franklin*
- L** *Robert Fulton*

Fig. 6-17. Floor plan of the first-floor Senate wing showing the Brumidi Corridors. The names of the individual corridors and locations of the frescoed lunettes are indicated to correspond with the descriptions in the text.

with classical figures and motifs, within the trellises of rinceaux, scrolling vines growing out of urns, acanthus leaves, and the like, set in panels framed with illusionistic molding.

It is important, however, to appreciate the overall concept of the corridors before succumbing to delight in the details. Brumidi and Meigs created a space that lets visitors know immediately that they are in a place of great importance, and that the Senate is an institution with roots in the classical world.

The decoration on the walls originally gave the illusion of three-dimensional moldings and recessed panels, thus enriching the flat walls upon which they were painted. This relief effect has been to a large degree hidden by several campaigns of repainting the solid background fields and the constant touch-up needed in the heavily trafficked area (see chapter 15 for a more detailed description of this process). The plain border areas have gradually changed from a sandstone-colored light tan to a murky green. In the central panels cleaning tests have revealed the original colors of red, white, and blue described in early guidebooks.²⁸ Each time the wall was repainted, details were changed through heavy-handed retouching. Varnish applied to protect the murals has significantly yellowed and added a sheen to the walls, which flattens out the trompe l'oeil effects and makes the decorations look like wallpaper to the untrained eye. In addition to all of the other changes, the electric lighting creates a markedly different effect from that of the old gas fixtures. For all of these reasons, it is difficult to grasp fully the overall design and original visual impact of the corridors.

The corridors are complex on several different levels. Architecturally, they are laid out in a network, with the longest, the north corridor, running east and west parallel to the north end of the wing (fig. 6–17). This corridor is bisected by the north entry, which connects to the main corridor, actually a series of halls leading toward the center of the building. The perpendicular Zodiac Corridor and western corridor are also highly decorated. On the east lies the open hall called the Patent Corridor. A narrower inner corridor which runs east and west is much plainer in design.

Brumidi created in these corridors a complex scheme, like a symphony with themes and variations, that demonstrates his great ability to visualize space in architectural terms. Brumidi used the projecting pilasters, which transmit the weight of the vaulted ceilings, to establish the fields of design. The walls are subdivided by vertical panels framed by illusionistic molding on the pilasters and rectangular panels between them. The panels simulate designs that in antiquity would have been carved in three dimensions. Each panel is symmetrically designed. The panels are also interrelated symmetrically in three-dimensional terms, mirroring each other across the corridor; for

example, the pilasters with parrots face each other. In addition, the basic divisions continue vertically up the walls and around the ceiling vaults. There is a larger symmetry as well: basic design patterns alternate symmetrically, starting from the north entry; for example, the pilasters near the staircases at both ends of the northern corridor are decorated with mice and squirrels.

Beyond these principles of order, no two panels are identical. Complexity of design is compounded by variations in style, which stem from the piecemeal decoration of the corridors by many artists over a long period of time. The decorative painting of the corridors began in late 1857, and it was at its greatest intensity throughout 1858 and most of 1859. During this period, the spaces planned for pictures were left blank because of restrictions set by Congress as it contemplated giving authority to an art commission (see chapter 7). Brumidi added the signs of the zodiac and the medallion portraits in the 1860s, and he painted the frescoed lunettes between 1873 and 1878, twenty years after the start of the project. Because of lack of time and funds, Brumidi was never able to fill many areas intended for paintings, which remain blank today.

In order to carry out the elaborate decoration Meigs envisioned, Brumidi supervised teams of decorative painters of many nationalities, who at times had to work by candlelight.²⁹ Among his assistants for the corridors were two Italians, Camillo Bisco and Albert Peruchi, and many painters of German descent, including Joseph Rakemann, Ludwig Odense, Frederick Roeth, Anthony Dempf, Peter Baumgras, F. Schneck, and Otto Lahayne. The Englishman James Leslie is documented to have worked on ceilings and walls in the corridors. He is thought to be responsible for the beautifully painted trophies (see fig. 6–4), since they are similar to the trophy panels in the Senate Committee on Appropriations room that are known to be by him (see fig. 8–19).³⁰

Adding to the stylistic diversity of the corridors, some of the blank areas in the north corridor have been filled by more recent artists. The walls of the north entry, noticeably different in style from the rest, probably date from the turn of the century. Around 1930, an unknown artist portrayed the Wright brothers' airplane and Charles Lindbergh's *Spirit of St. Louis*, and a scene showing the U.S.S. *Constitution* was added by George Matthews. In 1975, Allyn Cox painted *The First Landing on the Moon, 1969*. The most recent addition to the corridor is the scene depicting the ill-fated crew of the space shuttle *Challenger* by Charles Schmidt, painted in 1987.

The corridors are technically as well as stylistically complex. Brumidi painted all but one of the lunettes in true fresco, while the most recent additions to the corridor were painted in oil on canvas and then applied to the



Fig. 6–18. Details from the Brumidi Corridors. *The decorative painting in the corridors includes birds, flowers, fruits, classical figures, and landscapes; other animals, statues, and historical portraits can also be found.*

wall. The walls were originally painted in an unusual medium, called *fresco in sciabaltura*, which allowed the artists time to paint the surfaces and details in multiple passes. Because the walls were later touched up in oil paint and varnished many times, they today have the shiny appearance of oil paint. The ceilings were decorated in water-based tempera, but many areas were later overpainted in oil; the only section of entirely original ceiling is that in the north entry (see fig. 6–20).³¹ The corridors



are rich in subject matter as well as in design and technique. At least a hundred distinct species of birds are depicted in the corridors; although they are mostly North American, South American examples appear as well (fig. 6–18). The painters worked from stuffed birds and animals borrowed from the Smithsonian Institution. However, many of their ornithologically correct details have been obscured by later overpainting.³² In addition to the birds, there are many distinct species of mammals, insects,



reptiles, fruits, vegetables, and flowers painted with great naturalism. The natural subjects alternate with classical figures and historical portraits and scenes.

Beginning with the elevator near S-126 and S-127, at the west end of the north corridor are distinctive large plain panels with delicately painted trophies of weapons, musical and nautical instruments, and agricultural implements and products at their centers; all are attributed to James Leslie (see fig. 6-4).³³ On the pilasters can be seen

brilliantly colored parrots and other birds, such as owls, woodpeckers, and herons. Among the flora are morning glories, cornstalks, and fruit baskets. Classical figures such as Mercury and Poseidon and allegorical figures of the Constitution, Union, and Freedom add a more serious touch, as do the illusionistic relief portrait medallions by Brumidi.

The ceilings are punctuated with vases of flowers and ovals showing sky and clouds, most likely painted around

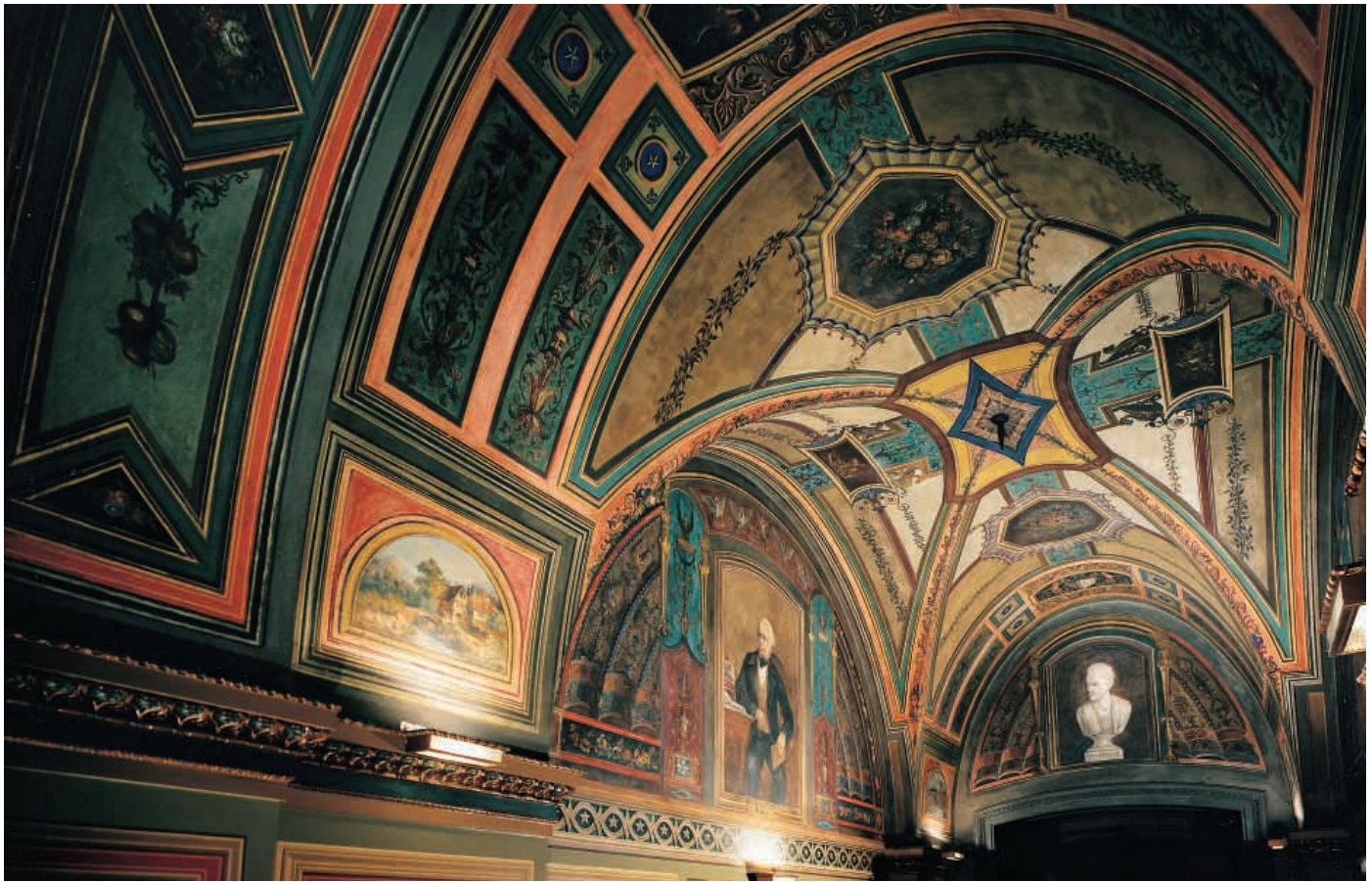


Fig. 6–19. North entry. *This area includes frescoes of prominent early jurists by Brumidi.*

1900. The vault at the crossing of the north and west corridors has oval medallions with types of plows.

On the walls of the Zodiac Corridor, at the end of the west corridor, are more trophy panels attributed to Leslie. In the ceiling at the end of the western corridor are oval landscapes and the signs of the zodiac painted by Brumidi in 1860 on fields of blue.³⁴ Modern inventions, such as new types of plows, are highlighted in the nearby ceiling, with the airplanes obviously twentieth-century additions.

The west corridor begins with a landscape lunette of Day and ends with one of Night near S–131 and 132.³⁵ This corridor contains four frescoed lunettes by Brumidi. Along the walls of the west corridor, Brumidi’s monochrome profile medallion portraits of famous early Americans include signers of the Declaration of Independence and other members of the Continental Congress, such as John Hancock, Robert Livingston, John Jay, and Robert Morris.³⁶ Eagles decorate the tops of the panels, where hummingbirds and parrots are among the birds featured. The most distinctive motifs on the walls in this area are the miniature altars, one of which includes a tiny representation of the marble seated statue of George Washington that was then on the Capitol grounds. The delicate

architectural frameworks, similar to those inside the Senate Committee on Appropriations room, may also have been painted by Camillo Bischo.

Moving back to the north corridor, and turning past the staircase, the panels contain birds, such as quail; reptiles; small mammals, including chipmunks, squirrels, mice, and an ermine; and many varieties of flowers and fruits, as well as classical dancing cherubs and canephores. The monochrome medallion portraits show leaders of the Revolutionary War such as Jonathan Trumbull, Horatio Gates, and Israel Putnam.

The north entry was one of the last areas to be finished; Carstens painted the decorative ceiling with classical patterns in 1875 and Brumidi added the frescoed portraits in 1878 (fig. 6–19). Untouched by overpainting, the original tempera colors are here darker and earthier and the surface is more velvety and matte than those of the repainted ceilings in other areas (fig. 6–20). Brumidi

Fig. 6–20. North entry ceiling painted by Emmerich Carstens, 1875. *This ceiling, one of the few areas in the corridor never painted over, shows the original soft colors of the tempera decorations.*





Fig. 6–21. One of the Members’ private staircases. *The bronze railings are composed of cherubs, eagles, deer, birds in nests, squirrels, and snakes, entwined in leafy rinceaux, echoing the designs in the pilasters. Across from S–118.*

contributed the illusionistic paintings of Supreme Court Justice Joseph Story and New York Chancellor James Kent and an illusionistic marble bust of New York Chancellor Robert R. Livingston.³⁷ These murals highlight the role of the judicial branch, possibly in recognition of the Supreme Court, which then met in the Capitol.

On the walls of the north entry are profile portraits identified as Andrew Jackson, Henry Clay, Daniel Webster, and [John Quincy] Adams, now partially obscured by the doors. The decorative trellises with birds and medallions of wild animals, which appear inferior in quality, probably date to the turn of the century. Across from the entry is a small lunette showing the U.S.S. *Constitution*, painted by George B. Matthews, after a 1924 lithograph which was sold to finance the preservation of the ship.³⁸

At either side of the north corridor are the senators’ private stairs, called the Brumidi Staircases, which echo the wall decoration (fig. 6–21). From Brumidi’s design (fig. 6–22), they were sculpted by Edmond Baudin, using live children and animals as models, and cast in Philadelphia by Archer, Warner, Miskey & Co. in 1858 and 1859. Cleaning and conser-

vation in 1988 brought back their original architectural bronze patina.

Brumidi’s frescoed lunettes above the doors of committee rooms reflect the functions of the committees that met there at the time the frescoes were planned. The Committee on Patents occupied the room on the east end of the north corridor, now S–116. For the Patent Corridor, Brumidi created frescoed lunettes paying tribute to three important American inventors: John Fitch working on his steamboat model (1876), Benjamin Franklin (completion

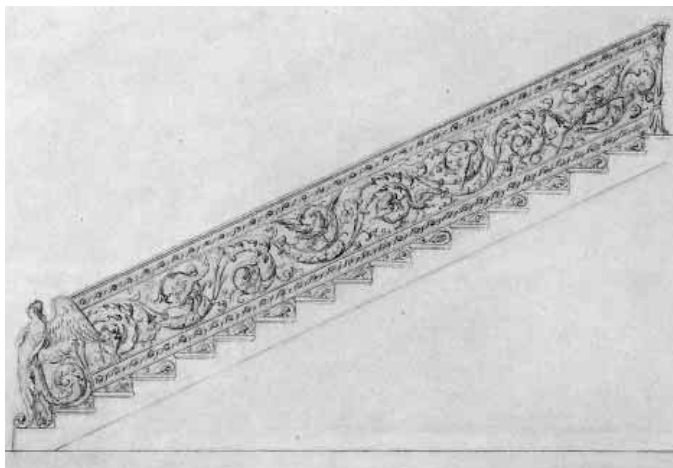


Fig. 6–22. Design for the Members’ private staircases, c. 1857. *Brumidi established a general design for the railings in this drawing. Architect of the Capitol.*



Fig. 6-23. *Robert Fulton*, c. 1873. Brumidi showed the inventor seated in his studio, looking out at the palisades of the Hudson River and his steamboat; a portrait of Benjamin West, with whom he studied painting, is on his easel. Over the door to S-116.



Fig. 6-24. *Signing of the First Treaty of Peace with Great Britain*. This lunette, one of the most seriously damaged, has been conserved. The faces of John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, John Jay, and Henry Laurens have been reconstructed from the famous eighteenth-century portraits that Brumidi copied. Over the door to S-118.



Fig. 6-25. *Cession of Louisiana*. The Marquis Barbé-Marbois, the representative of the French government, is depicted standing and showing a map to Robert Livingston, who coordinated the negotiations, and James Monroe, the minister to France. Over the door to S-124.

date undocumented), and Robert Fulton (1873). The wide lunette showing Fulton (fig. 6-23) is a focal point visible the length of the north corridor. Emblems of various fields of knowledge, such as science, agriculture, navigation, and the arts, are depicted in the ceiling among garlands of fruit, while roses, fruit, and birds are included in the wall decorations.³⁹

At the east end of the north corridor, over S-118, then the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations room, is the *Signing of the First Treaty of Peace with Great Britain*, fin-

ished in 1874 (fig. 6-24). The scene of the 1782 event was based on an unfinished sketch by Benjamin West, with a figure representing the British representative Richard Oswald added.⁴⁰ In 1875, at the west end of this corridor, over S-124, then the Senate Committee on Territories, Brumidi painted the *Cession of Louisiana*, depicting the 1803 negotiations that led to the Louisiana Purchase (fig. 6-25).⁴¹ This lunette is one of the best preserved and shows Brumidi's ability to suggest the textures of various materials, using fresco almost like oil paint.



Fig. 6-26. Bellona. The Roman goddess of war stood guard over the door to the room of the Military Affairs Committee. Over the door to S-128.

Above the Senate Committee on Appropriations room, S-128, originally the room of the Committee on Military Affairs, is *Bellona, Roman Goddess of War* (fig. 6-26), whose date of execution is unrecorded. The figure, visible down the long inner corridor that she faces, stands with a sunset sky behind her and stacked rifles and cannons to either side.⁴²

At the end of the corridor is *Authority Consults the Written Law*, painted about 1875. The subject is related to the Senate Committee on the Revision of Laws, which met in S-131 (fig. 6-27). The scene is composed in the manner of a Venetian Renaissance altarpiece, with Authority like a madonna before a niche with flanking saints.

Justice, standing next to her, holds scales and a silver and ebony mace, modeled after the one in the House of Representatives. The bearded, elderly male figure holding the book of law represents Judgment or Lycurgus, author of the Spartan constitution.⁴³ The figure of Authority was once repainted in oil, in a pose much different from the original (fig. 6-28). All of the lunettes have now been cleaned and conserved, so that Brumidi's original designs can be fully appreciated.⁴⁴

Columbus and the Indian Maiden and *Bartholomé de Las Casas* were painted in the lunettes over the doors to the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs room, now S-132 and S-133. In the lunette over S-132, Columbus stands near the center (fig. 6-29). The composition painted by Brumidi about 1875 seems to be based on classical groups, such as *Truth unveiled by Time*, and may reflect Brumidi's knowledge of Italian monuments to Columbus as well as Luigi Persico's *Discovery*, then on the east front of the Capitol.⁴⁵ Brumidi portrayed the seated woman with a classical profile and dressed her in a Native American necklace with a transparent sari-like veil tied over her shoulder and a white veil or shawl bordered in blue over her head. She is surrounded

with a variety of cacti to create a sense of exotic locale. The rosy sky may signify the dawn of a new age. The fresco was completed by early 1876, when a newspaper humorously commented about the pair: "She is dressed in a gaily-colored robe, and altogether is as interesting looking a female aborigine as one would care to see. The expression on the face of Columbus, notwithstanding this, is one of entire indifference. Not even a ghost of a smile lights up his grim countenance. . . . [which] suggests the idea that Mrs. Columbus was watching her liege lord from the vessel near by."⁴⁶

In the 1920s, the lunette, after being scraped to prepare the surface, was almost entirely overpainted with oil pigments by George B. Matthews, leaving an awkward-looking scene (fig. 6-30). Fortunately, Brumidi's fresco was discovered basically intact during the conservation treatment.



Fig. 6-27. Authority Consults the Written Law. Enthroned Authority, robed in red, holds a sword and wears her attribute, a wreath of the three-pointed hastate leaf. Over the door to S-131.



Fig 6-28. Authority Consults the Written Law as it appeared before conservation. The top half of the central figure was drastically changed from Brumidi's design.



Fig. 6-29. Columbus and the Indian Maiden. With his rowboat and ship visible in the distance, Columbus lifts the veil of an Indian maiden, symbolizing the discovery of America. Over the door to S-132.



Fig. 6-30. Columbus and the Indian Maiden as it appeared before conservation. Brumidi's fresco had been repainted with a spotty blue sky dotted with seagulls, a beach with sea shells instead of the spiky plants, and different colors and patterns for the clothing.



Fig. 6-32. Bartholomé de Las Casas before conservation. Before it was cleaned of overpaint, the painting showed Las Casas holding a large piece of paper with the names of the men who painted over Brumidi's composition in 1928.

Fig. 6-31. Bartholomé de Las Casas (detail). Brumidi showed the priest at his desk with an Indian companion, looking out a window at the native peoples whose enslavement he denounced. Over the door to S-133.

Next to Columbus Brumidi painted Bartholomé de Las Casas, called “the apostle of the Indians” or “apostle of the Indies,” a sixteenth-century Spanish missionary to Columbus’s settlement Hispaniola (fig. 6-31). Las Casas was author of *The History of the Indies*, which only had recently been published at the time Brumidi painted him in 1876. For an unknown reason, Brumidi painted this lunette in oil directly on the plaster rather than in true fresco. Because of its deeper colors, the scene carries well as one descends the stairs opposite. This mural was also heavily overpainted in 1928 (fig. 6-32).⁴⁷

Moving toward the center of the Capitol, the east-west inner corridor is decorated with eight oval medallions of landscapes on plain walls. In the bisecting narrower middle corridor are eight medallions of wild animal groups alternating with repeated red, white, and blue shields. During the recent conservation of these medallions it was discovered that Charles Ayer Whipple, who restored these areas around 1919, deliberately painted his own scenes over the originals, which have now been uncovered and conserved.

The main corridor opens into a square space between S-111 and S-139 which contains lunettes with monochromatic trophies of battered armor and weapons, attributed to James Leslie. The original tempera ceiling gives the effect of carved stone coffers with eagles and

wreaths (fig. 6-33); it is similar to areas Brumidi may have painted in the theater of the Villa Torlonia in Rome.

The story of repairs and restorations to the corridors is almost as complicated as that of their creation over time. Brumidi was requested to make repairs to the decorations of the north wing as early as 1861, and attention may well have been needed in the corridors.⁴⁸ The first major campaign of scrubbing the walls and repainting the plain backgrounds, which had “scaled,” was carried out “in light colors” by William H. Duckstein in 1896 and 1897.⁴⁹ He may have painted the walls of the north entry at this time. A major campaign of retouching and sometimes complete repainting was gradually carried out by Charles Ayer Whipple from 1918 into the 1920s, and restoration continued in the corridors until 1935 (fig. 6-34).⁵⁰ In the 1920s, Whipple and George B. Matthews proudly signed and dated some of the repainted lunettes, after changing costumes and colors and adding their own details. Beginning in 1952 and continuing on and off for a decade, the walls were retouched and ceilings repainted under Francis Cumberland, Joseph Giacalone, and others.⁵¹ Leaks created problems in a number of areas, including the Zodiac Corridor, which was “redesigned and painted” by Cliff Young in 1980.⁵² In addition, minor repairs and retouchings have been constantly carried out as part of the routine maintenance of the building. Since



Fig. 6–33. Area with trophy lunettes and ceiling with illusionistic coffers. *The original tempera decoration of the ceiling remains mostly untouched. Near S–111 and S–139.*

1985, the focus has been on systematically restoring the corridors as much as possible to their original appearance.

With all of the attention paid to the first-floor Senate corridors, it is puzzling to learn that the matching House corridors received no similar decoration. A number of possible explanations for this imbalance suggest themselves. One factor was Thomas U. Walter’s opposition, reinforced by criticism in the press, to classically inspired decoration in the Capitol. Another was the difference between the collective aesthetic sensibilities of the two houses of Congress: at this time, senators were not directly elected by the people, and the Senate was, therefore, a more elitist body than the House of Representatives and less prone to “populist” taste. Other, more pragmatic, reasons were budgetary and time constraints. However, the major reason for the overall imbalance in the number of rooms decorated was that the House wing was completed earlier than the Senate wing. When the appropriation bill was being debated in 1858 a representative pointed out that it was obvious that the money would go toward decorating the Senate side, since the interior decoration of the House rooms was “in such a state of forwardness that to stop them would be a waste of public money. In the other end of the Capitol, these are barely begun”⁵³ In any case, the first-floor corridors on the House side of the Capitol were left bare until a mural program was begun by the United States Capitol Historical Society in the 1970s.



Fig. 6–34. Charles Ayer Whipple repainting the Brumidi Corridors. *Whipple was one of several so-called restorers who painted over Brumidi’s murals.*

From unidentified clipping, 1920, Architect of the Capitol.

Notes to Chapter 6

1. TUV to MCM, August 8, 1856, TUV/PA (AAA, reel 4137). Voucher no. 124, June 26, 1856, in Meigs's handwriting, signed by both Meigs and Brumidi, AOC/CO. *Annual Report of Capt. M. C. Meigs, in charge of the Capitol Extension*, 34th Cong., 3d sess., November 1856, Senate Ex. Doc. No. 5, v. 2, p. 217. Supply Orders, 1856 AOC/EXT.

2. MCMJ, August 4, 1856 (B-245).

3. CB to Senator Justin Morrill, November 30, 1874, AOC/CO. MCM to Mr. Denham, Disbursing Agent, April 3, 1857, AOC/LB.

4. CB to MCM, December 10, 1858, AOC/CO. CB to EC, July 20, 1866, NARA/RG 48, series 290, box 2.

5. MCM to Caleb B. Smith, June 5, 1862, NARA/RG 48, series 291, box 4.

6. TUV to CB, April 6, 1863, TUV/PA (AAA, Reel 4141).

7. Otto Lahayne to MCM, October 24, 1859, AOC/CO.

8. Uberti was a witness when Brumidi filed his naturalization papers. November 12, 1857, NARA/RG 21.

9. MCMJ, November 18, 1854 (A-311) and August 4, 1856 (B-245). MCM letter of recommendation for Carstens, March 18, 1859, AOC/LB. Carstens's Oath of Office, March 9, 1861, AOC/EXT.

10. E. Carstens to MCM, December 6, 1858, AOC/EXT.

11. MCMJ, May 15, 1856 (B-207).

12. MCM to James Leslie, December 9, 1858; MCMJ, August 28, 1856 (B-277); James Leslie to MCM, December 7, 1858; MCM to James Leslie, August 28, 1856; James Leslie to MCM, March 18, 1859; William J. Belshaw to "My Dear Friends," October 21, 1860. Correspondence in AOC/CO and AOC/LB.

13. MCM to F.C. Darley, September 18, 1856, AOC/LB; MCMJ, December 11, 1856 (B-362).

14. MCMJ, April 18, 1857 (B-525). "The Decoration of the Capitol," *New York Tribune*, May 17, 1858. E. Carstens to MCM, February 6, 1858, AOC/CO. Petition to MCM, May 7, 1858, and Roll of Persons employed in the Extension of the U.S. Capitol, November 18, 1858, AOC/EXT.

15. MCM to Louis Franze, December 18, 1856, AOC/LB, and Franze to MCM, December 18 and 29, 1858, AOC/CO. Lahayn to Briggs, March 26, 1859, AOC/CO.

16. MCMJ May 17, 1856 (B-211). May 15, 1856, Pocket Diary, MCM Papers, LC. The Sharp and Leslie proposal was received August 27, 1856, AOC/CO; see also: MCMJ, August 27, 1856 (B-275) and August 28, 1856 (B-276).

17. Brumidi may have included ideas for both the Naval and Military Affairs rooms in the sketch. Francis V. O'Connor, "Constantino Brumidi as Decorator and History Painter: An Iconographic Interpretation of Two Rooms," paper delivered at United States Capitol Historical Society Symposium, March 16, 1990. Samuel Chester Reid, captain of the *General Armstrong*, wrote to his son of the same name on January 12, 1856, about Brumidi's picture of the battle, Samuel Chester Reid Papers, LC. *Annual Report of Captain Meigs*, November, 1856, p. 220.

18. MCMJ, September 10, 1856 (B-288); October 31, 1856 (B-332); George R. West to MCM, December 10, 1856, AOC/CO; MCM to West, Dec. 12, 1856, AOC/LB. Ben Perley Poore remembered that "after he [West] had completed two he refused to submit to the military rule of Meigs, and stopped work." *Perley's Reminiscences*, vol. 1 (Philadelphia: Hubbard Brothers, Publishers, 1886), p. 495. For the subjects of the naval battles, see: MCMJ, October 6, 1856 (B-312), October 30, 1856 (B-331), and November 3, 1856 (B-334), and letter

from Samuel Chester Reid to his son, January 12, 1857, Samuel Chester Reid Papers, LC.

19. Camillo Bisco to MCM (in French), February 10, 1858, AOC/CO. CB to MCM, April 26, 1855, AOC/CO.

20. "The Decoration of the Capitol." The article may have misprinted "crampfish" for "crayfish."

21. MCMJ June 22, 1858 (C-352).

22. The blue background appears in Brumidi's sketch and also in early guidebook descriptions, such as DeB. Randolph Keim, *Keim's Capitol Interior and Diagrams* (Washington, D.C.: n.p., 1875), p. 52. The backgrounds appear light in plate 237 of Glenn Brown, *History of the United States Capitol*, Volume II (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1903). Even as late as 1950 Murdock described them as "dark blue," Myrtle Cheney Murdock, *Constantino Brumidi: Michelangelo of the United States Capitol* (Washington, D.C.: Monumental Press, Inc.), p. 32.

23. "The Decoration of the Capitol."

24. This project won a 1984 Preservation Award from the Washington Chapter of the American Institute of Architects.

25. TUV to WBF, November 29, 1859, and TUV for the art commission, February 2, 1860, AOC/LB. On the first list, Brumidi's estimate of \$1000 for frescoes in the Stationery Room was crossed out and changed to \$500.

26. TUV to John B. Floyd, Secretary of War, December 21, 1857, AOC/LB.

27. Dr. John B. Ellis, *The Sights and Secrets of the National Capital* (Chicago: Jones, Junkin & Co., 1869), p. 82.

28. Study prepared for the Architect of the Capitol by Cunningham-Adams Fine Arts Painting Conservation, January 4, 1994, AOC/CO.

29. "The Senate Wing," *Washington Union*, June 9, 1858.

30. James Leslie to MCM, December 7, 1858, AOC/CO. Leslie reported that he began to paint pilasters in May, and was ordered to work on the ceiling in July, for a total of 4 months' work on the corridors.

31. On December 7, 1875, Carstens was paid \$250.00 for this work, AOC/CO. This is the only section of the ceiling in the corridors that is specifically documented.

32. DeB. Randolph Keim, *Keim's Illustrated Hand-Book: Washington and Its Environs* (Washington, D.C.: n.p., 1874), p. 101. The Smithsonian collection of birds began in 1850 with a donation of 3600 birds by Spencer F. Baird; he also donated his extensive collection of animals, which was supplemented by those gathered on government and other expeditions. George Adams of Cunningham-Adams Fine Arts Painting Conservation, "Preliminary Identification and Comments on the Birds of the Brumidi Corridors, Senate Wing, U.S. Capitol," 1993, AOC/CO.

33. When elevators were installed, the pilasters at the end of the corridor were damaged and repainted, and murals on the end wall were destroyed or covered over. Frescoed lunettes in the vestibule of the eastern entrance have also disappeared.

34. W.B. Franklin wrote to Brumidi on September 8, 1860, suggesting the proper order of the zodiac signs, AOC/LB.

35. *Keim's Illustrated Handbook*, 1874, p. 101.

36. A request that Brumidi correct the spelling of Thomson's name establishes that some if not all of the portrait medallions were in place by 1865, TUV to CB, February 21, 1865, AOC/LB. All of them were completed by the time Keim described them in 1874.

37. Edward Clark ordered a Brady photograph of Story for Brumidi, per a voucher of July 5, 1877, AOC/CO. The portrait of Kent was

based on an engraving after a painting by Alonzo Chappel published in *National Portrait Gallery of Eminent Americans*, vol. 2 (New York: Johnson, Fry & Company, 1862), p. 39. Brumidi was paid \$500 for painting the portraits on August 24, 1878, AOC/CO.

38. Information regarding the lithograph provided by George W. Adams.

39. The subjects of Franklin and Fitch were directed by Edward Clark, according to *The Evening Star* (Washington), February 25, 1876, p. 1. An oil sketch of Franklin is at the Corcoran Gallery of Art (Washington, D.C.), one of Fitch at the Western Reserve Historical Society (Cleveland, Ohio). There is also a portrait of Samuel F. B. Morse at the Corcoran, which may have been intended for the Fitch lunette. A small oil sketch of the scene with Fulton was published, but its present location is unknown; Fulton's likeness was said to be based upon a portrait painted by Fulton himself, according to *Keim's Illustrated Handbook*, 1874, p. 101. Before its restoration, the Fitch lunette was signed "Whipple 1926."

40. The Architect's report of November 1, 1874, stated that the lunette was done "from a sketch by Benjamin West," AOC/CO. West's 1783–1784 sketch was left unfinished. West's original study is in the collection of The Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum. A copy of it, now in the Diplomatic Reception Rooms, U.S. Department of State, was owned by Lewis Cass, American Minister to France and later Secretary of State in Washington, and it could have been this version that Brumidi saw and copied. Senator Charles Sumner of Massachusetts left a copy of West's picture for Brumidi, according to *Keim's Capitol Interior and Diagrams*, p. 55. Brumidi changed the positions and identities of some of the figures. George B. Matthews signed his overpainting in two places, AOC/CO.

41. Brumidi painted the fresco in the summer of 1875, according to the *Evening Transcript* (Boston), April 23, 1875, p. 6, which first reported the title as the "Cession of Louisiana." The fresco, called *The Negotiation for the Acquisition of Louisiana* was completed by November 1, 1875, AOC/AR. Brumidi's 10 1/2 x 21 1/2 inch sketch for the lunette was published in an ad in *Antiques Magazine*, November 1980, but attributed only to "American School."

42. *Bellona* was completed earlier in 1875, AOC/AR. .

43. The identification as Lycurgus was given in "Art and Artists," *Evening Transcript* (Boston), February 29, 1876, p. 6. However, the writer described the central figure as Justice. The figures have the symbolic attributes described by Cesare Ripa, *Iconologia*, first published in

1593, and Gravelot and Cochin, *Iconologie par Figures*, 1791. The fresco is not specifically documented but was executed in 1875 or early 1876, since it was described as "recently finished" in the article.

44. The lunettes were conserved over a number of years: *John Fitch*, by Bernard Rabin, 1985; *The Signing of the First Treaty of Peace with Great Britain and Benjamin Franklin*, by Constance Silver, 1989; *Robert Fulton*, by Christy Cunningham-Adams, 1991; *Authority Consults the Written Law*, by Catherine S. Myers, 1991; *Columbus and the Indian Maiden*, by Constance Silver, 1991; the portraits of Chancellors Kent and Livingston and Justice Story, by Christy Cunningham-Adams in 1992; *Bartholomé de Las Casas and Bellona, the Roman Goddess of War*, by Catherine Myers, 1993; and *The Cession of Louisiana*, by Christy Cunningham-Adams, 1993.

45. Columbus was shown with an Indian maiden representing America in a monument by Lorenzo Bartolini in Milan and a similar one by Vincenzo Vela in Lima, which was published through an engraving (Constance Silver, "The Conservation Treatment of the Fresco *Columbus and the Indian Maiden*," 1991, p. 2).

46. "Art and Artists." The author says that Brumidi copied his Columbus from a portrait and the ship from a drawing made by the explorer.

47. "New Pictures at the Capitol," *Evening Star* (Washington), February 23, 1876, p. 1, and "Art and Artists." The now-removed inscription read "Moberly/Matthews/Held/Weishautt/1928," AOC/CO.

48. CB to MCM, June 3, 1861, AOC/CO.

49. 1897 AOC/AR, p. 5, AOC/CO. "Painting the Capitol," *Evening Star* (Washington), October 8, 1897, p. 12.

50. C.A. Whipple to Elliott Woods, September 23 and September 25, 1918, AOC/CO. "Artist is Restoring Capitol's Great Paintings," *Sunday Star* (Washington), April 13, 1919, p. 1. See: AOC, Annual Reports of the Architect of the Capitol for 1919, 1920, 1921, 1922, 1923, 1924, 1926, 1929, and 1935. "Capitol Gets Redecorated," *Evening Star* (Washington), September 9, 1933.

51. *National Geographic*, vol. 102 (August 1952), p. 179. *Washington Post-Times Herald*, September 30, 1957. *Washington Post*, January 10, 1962.

52. Cliff Young to Florian Thayne, October 28, 1980, AOC/CO. Architect George M. White remembers that Cliff Young only made minor changes. Flaking paint was reattached in 1994.

53. *Congressional Globe*, June 7, 1858, p. 2760. Testimony of Rep. Dan Sickles.