

Lasers of the Renaissance

Once the dark ages were over, artists and engineers began to rebuild the lost arts of coherent light, misplaced since Roman times (see: <http://mondodyne.com/Muses.pdf>). A recent exhibition at the St. Wilfred's Lumentic Institute's Gallery of the Dubious Arts was dedicated to this topic.

Below are some examples of how artists of the Renaissance depicted lasers, mostly in the form of pointers. This is not surprising as galvos weren't re-discovered until the early 1700's, when Sir Isaac Newgram first published his monograph, *De Natura Mirroris Flippi-floppi*.

Figure 1 is Leonardo Da Voltage's famous *Man with a Pointer*. This is a faded ink drawing with the laser beam depicted in silver oxide.



Figure 1 *Man with a Pointer*

This is reputed to be a self-portrait of the great man himself, as he set forth to give a PowerPoint presentation to the Count of Photombino C. 1501. He was trying to get a job defending the city of San Moroni from the invading army of the Republic of Burnt Sienna; his plan was to arm the defenders with hundreds of inexpensive pointers which were newly-available from the kingdom of Far Cathay.

Alas, his plan was for naught as the invaders sacked the city before he got there. He returned to Rome and sold the pointers to wandering merchants, who spread them far and wide throughout Europe.

It is said that he drew this portrait to illustrate what a white pointer would look like. He spent the rest of his life unsuccessfully trying to bleach the red pointers of the day to match this.

Figure 2 *Man Drawing a Bead on a Luthier*

To the right is Albrecht Duress's etching, *Man Drawing a Bead on a Luthier*. It depicts master laserist Mordecai Fretbender playing a prank on his assistant while using a laser to lay out the intonation on a Fendürst Stradocaster.

He famously aimed the laser at his assistant Oswald the One-Eyed, who was reportedly not amused.

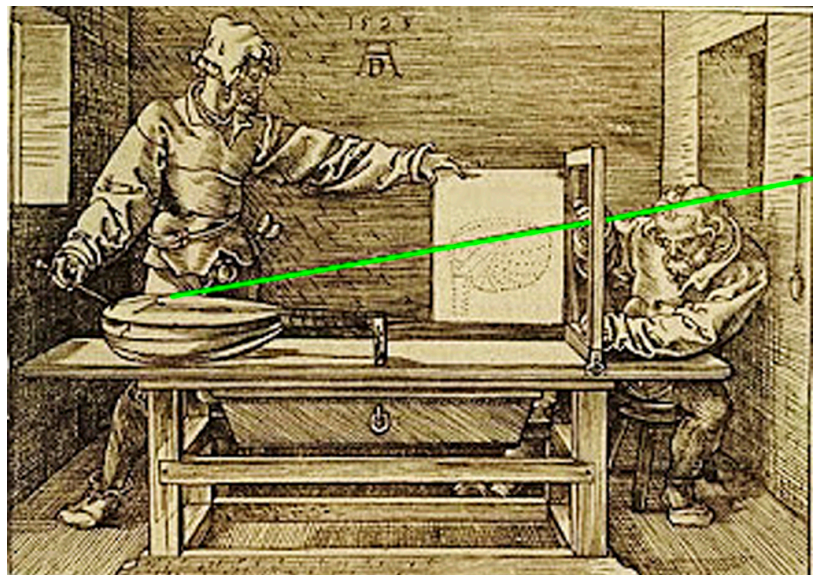




Figure 3 *Man with Cat Toy*

Duress really had a thing for lasers, and depicted them in several of his paintings. To the left, Figure 3, is his masterpiece, *Man with Cat Toy*, which featured one of the newly-re-invented feline amusement devices. Painted in 1500, it was dedicated to his cat Chasé leDot, a French *chat du lap* he picked up on a trip to Paris.

He is credited with discovering the cat-laser interface while accidentally activating a small pointer in the cat's presence. He commemorated the event with this painting.

Figure 4 *The Ambassador*



Figure 4 is by Hans Holbein the Younger. Painted in 1533, it is called *The Ambassador* and shows a man wielding a highly ornate laser pointer of the type favored by the nobility at the time. He is either pointing out a feature on a globe or getting ready to pop a decorated balloon; scholars differ on this.

This painting is in the Tilt Gallery in London, where it is revered as an masterful example of *Gamera Obscura*, a technique that was named after a Japanese monster, for some strange reason.



Figure 3 *The Duchess of Albacore*

To the left is Figure 5, *The Duchess of Albacore*, a portrait by Quenton Tarrynot painted C. 1513. The Duchess was known for pointing out the imperfections of others while ignoring her own. She would do this with her rare 478nm pointer, shown here at the ready.

She un-ironically referred to her pointer as her “Ugly Stick” and would wave it about at raves and debutante balls, which made her very unpopular among the upper classes of the day.

She was the heiress of the Charlé Tuna Frères fishing conglomerate which flourished in Phlegmland from the early middle ages until 1957, when it merged with Bumblebox Tuned Fish and sank into well-earned obscurity.

Figure 4 *The Salt Cellar of the Gods*

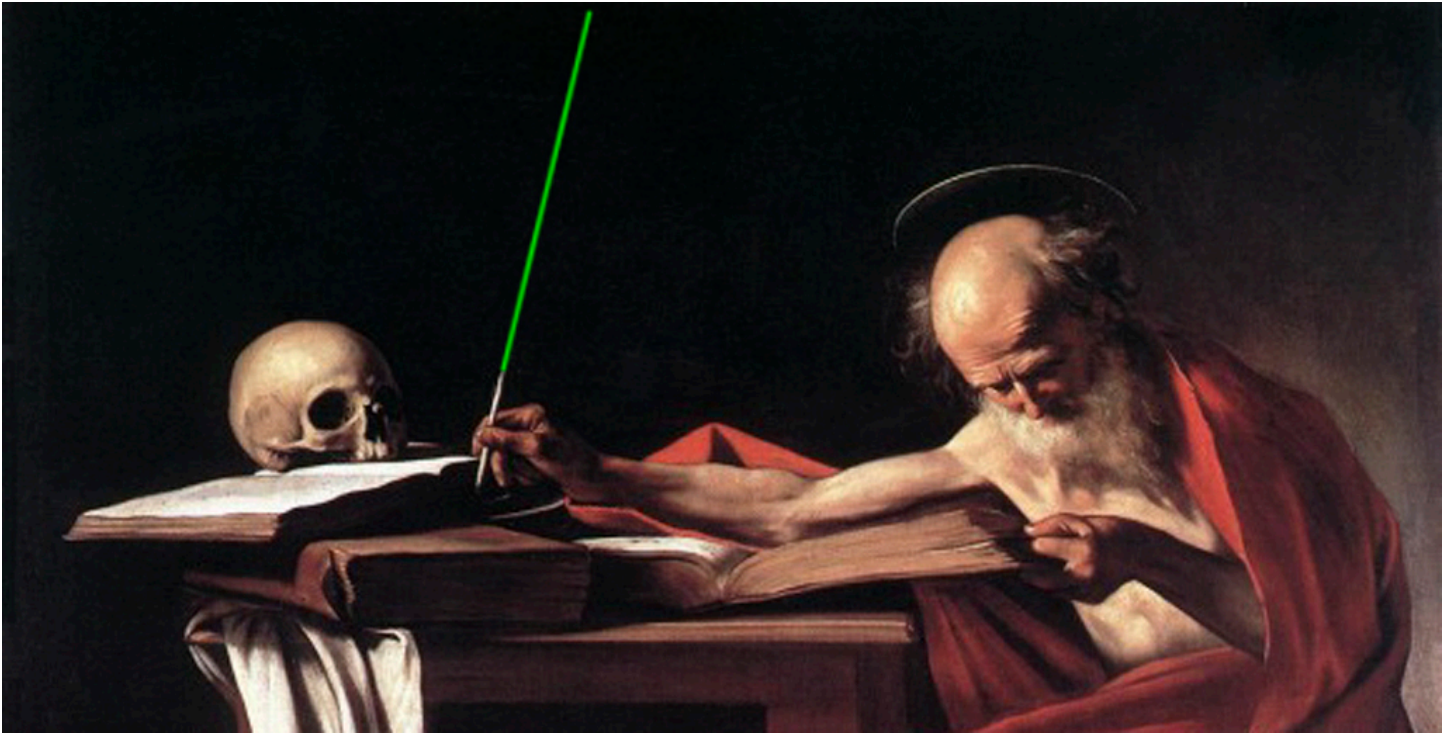
This is a rare sculpture, one of the few that depicts lasers in use. The work is cast in gold with a chalcedony rod depicting the laser beam. By the Italian sculptor Salarium, of the Papal state of Baloney, it is entitled *The Salt Cellar of the Gods*. It shows the Roman god Seasonius showing off the size of his pointer to the goddess Bosoma.

She seems to be impressed.

The heads come off and became salt and pepper shakers.



Figure 5 *Saint Lazarian in his Library*



Our final example is of the little-known Saint Lazarian the Thin of Lunacia, here painted by Doge Caravagio. It is titled *Saint Lazarian in his Library* (Figure 5). The Saint is shown reading the variance documentation for his pointer, which was a rare model imported from the Spanish colony of Pangoleander in Florida, in what would eventually to become the USA.

St. Lazarian is thought to be the namesake of the Laser, and used it as a signaling device whenever he needed to talk to God, sort of like the Bat Signal.

This has been my annual report on the latest in laser art history.
Tune in next year this time for more updates.

...Clickamouse

4/1/2016

Biographer's Note: Clickamouse is the alter id and pen name (for obvious reasons) of Robot J. Van de Graaffenpaper- BongUndDongle- OymabackHertz- Nano- Neener- KnightNih- Van der Waalmart- RumbleForeskin- Grosser Schwanzstucker- mit BallzäBrassen- ByteWitz- BrewsterTinkerFiddlyBitzen- ScannerTunor- MondoPhoto- Gonzo- Gondor- TapSnapper- RosintinkleSolderBern- Bierspiller- DiödzMaken- Pangopoker- KvantWanter- Lümiater- Kinemantic- Neo- Geo- HanSoloMio- MontyPlagerizen, ILDA, OCD, BMF, of Ypsilanti.

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