

Presence and Absence:

The Play of Race and Aesthetics
in the Portraits of Thomas Bock
and Benjamin Duterrau

David Taylor
Honours,
University of Tasmania

The year was 1841 and Benjamin Duterrau sat in his small house in Campbell Street, Hobart.¹ His 'glowing face, angelic in its display of brotherhood feeling' related to James Bonwick the story of George Augustus Robinson.² From humble beginnings in the English building trade, Robinson had arrived in Hobart in 1824, and thereafter engaged in numerous religious and civil activities prior to answering a Government advertisement in 1828, which called for a mission to bring in the 'wild Tasmanian Aborigines.'³ During the following six years, Robinson moved around the colony, eventually gathering up Tasmanians, and overseeing their resettlement on Flinders Island.⁴ The removal followed almost a decade of upheaval in the colony, with white settlers clashing violently with Aboriginal people, culminating in a call for removal of the 'hostile blacks.'⁵ Duterrau shed tears at the plight of the Tasmanians, which he had depicted years earlier. 'I can but set forth the story on canvas,' Duterrau told Bonwick.⁶ Indeed, the portraits that Duterrau had wrought on canvas were a direct result of Robinson's success in relocating Tasmanian people. In an

1 Rand, "Duterrau, Benjamin (1767-1851)," *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, accessed September 23, 2014, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/duterrau-benjamin-2010>. Duterrau had only arrived in Hobart in 1832, having answered an ad for a position as an Art Teacher, which subsequently failed. Dating comes from James Bonwick, *The Lost Tasmanian Race* (London: Sampson Low, Marston, Searle and Rivington, 1884), 135.

2 Bonwick, *The Lost Tasmanian Race*, 135.

3 Rand, "Robinson, George Augustus (1791-1866)," *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, accessed September 23, 2014, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/robinson-george-augustus-2596>.

4 Bonwick, *The Lost Tasmanian Race*, 135.

5 *Hobart Town Courier*, April 22, 1836.

6 Bonwick, *The Lost Tasmanian Race*, 135.

unmistakable statement of his allegiance to, and support and admiration of Robinson, Duterrau said unequivocally: ‘There is a real hero, though not one of your world’s heroes.’⁷

Nine years earlier in November 1832, Thomas Bock, previously found guilty of administering drugs to a young woman and sentenced to fourteen years transportation, walked free and began an art career that would link him inextricably with Benjamin Duterrau and his revered friend George Augustus Robinson.⁸ Bock’s respected stature as an award-winning engraver and miniaturist had followed him to Van Diemen’s Land and despite his convict past, his reputation in the new colony grew alongside his work output.⁹ Indeed, despite Duterrau’s relative fame today, due to his masterwork *The Conciliation*, Bock was the first professional painter to practice his craft in the colony, and later attracted the patronage equivalent to that stature.¹⁰

This article explores the portraits of Aboriginal Tasmanians by Van Diemen’s Land artists Thomas Bock and Benjamin Duterrau, created in Hobart in the 1830s.¹¹ The primary linkage is the relationship between the two artists and the renowned George Augustus Robinson, who led the Tasmanian Aborigines into exile on Flinders Island. The investigation must only be confined to these two artists due to the lack of professional attempts during the period to accurately depict Aboriginal people in Tasmania. One of the only meaningful alternatives to Bock and Duterrau’s representations come from John Skinner Prout (1805-1876), who is better known as a landscape painter.¹² While elements of Skinner Prout’s work give sympathetic treatment to Aboriginal Tasmanians, his arrival in 1844 came too late for him to be able to represent them as Duterrau and Bock did.¹³ Artist Robert Dowling, sympathetic to Bock’s representations of Aboriginal people, was also later to make copies of Bock’s portraits and use them in his own revisionist tributes, such as his 1859 work *Aborigines of Tasmania*.¹⁴ This leaves our two artists as the leading painters practicing portraiture in this period in Hobart.

This article will compare a portion of the series of watercolours made by Bock, with oil portraits of the same people by Duterrau. While their respective aesthetic appearance will be discussed, the central aim is to elucidate the factors underpinning the creation of each series. On the surface, the creations by each artist differ enormously. These differences can be demonstrated by reference to a handful of the artists’ works. *The Conciliation* shows Duterrau’s Raphaelite influences,

7 Ibid.

8 William Bryden, “Bock, Thomas (1790-1855),” *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, accessed September 23, 2014, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/bock-thomas-1800>.

9 Ibid.

10 Ibid. See Museum of Australian Democracy, “Documenting a Democracy.” Benjamin Duterrau, *The Conciliation* (1835), accessed August 2, 2015, <http://www.foundingdocs.gov.au/enlargement-eid-49-pid-66.html>.

11 For the sake of continuity, the names attributed to the Aboriginal Tasmanians in these portraits are those ascribed to them by Thomas Bock, from his pictures in the collection of the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, Hobart. For information on naming customs, see Andy Baird, “Voices of Aboriginal Tasmania: Ningenneh Tunapry Education Guide,” Tasmanian Museum & Art Gallery, accessed October 11, 2015, http://www.tmag.tas.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0004/66766/Voices_of_Aboriginal_Tasmania_ningenneh_tunapry_education_guide.pdf.

12 For brief biographies of these two artists, see *The Companion to Tasmanian History*, accessed January 20, 2014, http://www.utas.edu.au/library/companion_to_tasmanian_history.

13 Tony Brown, “John Skinner Prout,” in *The Companion to Tasmanian History*, accessed January 20, 2014, http://www.utas.edu.au/library/companion_to_tasmanian_history/P/Prout.htm.

14 An example of this painting can be found at the National Gallery of Australia, accessed January 20, 2014, <http://nga.gov.au/exhibition/DOWLING/Default.cfm?IRN=192011&BioArtistIRN=22797&mystartrow=13&realstartrow=13&MnuID=3&GalID=3&ViewID=2>.

but also shows the Tasmanians as ‘black lead polished.’¹⁵ Duterrau’s background, and his self-portrait, clearly show he possessed artistic technique. When it came to accurately portraying the colouration of the Tasmanians, there is no reason to suppose that he could have mistaken it, unless by choice. It shall be shown below that the arbiter of taste, Lady Jane Franklin – who was familiar with art but also Aboriginal Tasmanians, having housed Mathinna for some time – was particularly supportive of Bock’s interpretations. In regard to individual portraits, the differences are more striking. Duterrau’s *Mannalargenna* (1834) in the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery shows the leader rotund, his body bulging in girth in comparison to that shown by Bock. This was not simply a singular depiction by Duterrau, as he also represented Mannalargenna in a similar way in an etching in 1835.¹⁶ Further, Duterrau emphasised Mannalargenna’s indigineity, showing him with a spear and firestick. Though Duterrau has attempted to show the chieftain with red ochre in his hair and face, the effect is to show him with an almost orange head. Bock’s portrait also shows Mannalargenna with ochre in his hair and holding a firestick, yet he is depicted with a very different physique and facial rendering. Bock’s Mannalargenna is well-modelled, and more nuanced in its composition.

The same stark differences survive in the artists’ representations of Truggernana. Duterrau’s *Portrait of Truganini* (c. 1835) shows the same rotund, ill-defined features as his *Mannalargenna*. Truggernana is covered by a fur in a rather European style, as if her fur were a toga.¹⁷ This modest method of wearing the kangaroo fur is also used by Bock in his *Truggernana*, as is the depiction of a necklace, but here the similarities end.¹⁸ Bock’s Truggernana is characterised by the same subtle colouration present in his *Mannalargenna*, and in his other portraits of the group. Further, Bock shows the sitter’s well-defined individual characteristics, compared to Duterrau’s lumpish subject.¹⁹ Although she is depicted without hair in both works, Duterrau’s artistic conception of Truggernana remains underdeveloped. These two examples – Mannalargenna and Truggernana – show the vast differences that existed between the two artists’ depiction of the Aboriginal Tasmanians, which could briefly be identified as colouration, figuration, pose, and approach.

Yet there is no reason to suppose that one artist was inferior to the other. Rather, the difference in style is readily apparent, and while this does not denote skill or talent, what this article will argue is that there is a concrete, underlying cause for the difference. What, then, caused each artist to take so different a view of Robinson’s ‘conciliated Aborigines?’ It will be argued that the differences between Bock and Duterrau are grounded in the latter’s personal admiration of George Robinson, and the racial and religious beliefs held by Duterrau himself. An important argument is made as to the role of the Italian master Raphael in Duterrau’s self-conception, and his values as an artist and man of taste. Primary source accounts from Duterrau himself, and others, will shed light on the philosophical and anthropological beliefs of the day, which contributed to

15 NJB Plomley, “Notes on some Tasmanian Aborigines and portraits of them,” *Papers and Proceedings of the Royal Society of Tasmania* 102, part II (1968), 53-54.

16 “Manalargenna, a celebrated chieftain of the east coast of Van Diemen’s Land,” Centre for Australian Art Australian Prints + Printmaking, accessed July 13, 2015, <http://www.printsandprintmaking.gov.au/works/26545/images/1703/>.

17 National Library of Australia, Digital Collections Pictures, Benjamin Duterrau, “Truggernanna” (1835), accessed August 2, 2015, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.pic-an7467857>.

18 The British Museum, Thomas Bock, “Trugernanner,” accessed August 2, 2015, http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?objectId=1665126&partId=1; Geoffrey Dutton, *White on Black: The Australian Aborigine Portrayed in Art* (Melbourne: Macmillan, 1974), 160.

19 “Picturing Australia: National Library of Australia Collection Highlights” (Canberra: National Library of Australia, 2009), 23.

the respective views of Robinson and Duterrau toward Robinson's 'conciliated Aborigines.' The comparison and understanding of the two artists' works is further complicated by Duterrau's aspirations to commercial success, which link his British artistic origins to his Hobart career and his lectures at the Mechanics' Institute. Primary and secondary source materials, including period newspapers, sketch a picture of Duterrau that contributes to a new understanding of his motivation in creating his portraits of Aboriginal people. A relative dearth of primary source material exists relating to Thomas Bock, and what does exist survives predominantly as reportage in period newspapers. Thus we must leave his philosophical motivations open to interpretation in the hope that further sources emerge. It is noteworthy, however, to see that Bock did omit several portraits when he later came to make copies of the series, yet this omission need not be taken as racially motivated – artists historically reproduced their most popular portraits.²⁰ In sum, this article attempts to promote a new interpretation of Duterrau's work which has previously been glossed over in favour of aesthetic evaluations. In doing so, the article attempts to determine the degree to which the representations of Aboriginal people run in congruity with, or counter to, contemporary perceptions and understandings of Aboriginal people by Tasmanian settlers, and the reasons for this congruity or difference. Inherent in this is a discussion of the theory of likeness, and how this is represented in art. This article will begin with a survey of the source materials and historiography of this topic, and a discussion of a methodology for approaching the works through the paradigm of likeness, underscored by contemporary thought.

In exploring the rocky terrain of European-Aboriginal relationship in 1830s Hobart, both contemporary and modern sources significantly contribute to understandings of the period. A portion of the source materials for this article have been used to inform numerous surveys of the period, yet have been not been significantly applied to the specific figures and events discussed in this article. Thus the bulk of modern literature has drawn on the same pool of source material, in an attempt to differentiate the many general surveys that have been published. Most pertinent to this article, source material on Thomas Bock informed the 1991 art exhibition *Thomas Bock: Colonial Engraver, Society Portraitist*, which elaborated studiously on Bock's many artistic roles.²¹ Benjamin Duterrau has been more poorly served, having only recently been the subject of an Honours thesis, authored by Amy Tritton in 2009.²² This is despite a wealth of coverage concerning his masterwork, *The Conciliation* (1840). Although influential art historian Bernard Smith highlighted Duterrau's Hobart Mechanics' Institute lectures in his survey of colonial art, this dates back some forty years.²³ Importantly for this article, Paul Paffen's 2001 article explored the linkage between Duterrau and the British view of history painting as represented by the Italian Master Raphael.²⁴ While this article touches upon Paffen's argument about the influence of Raphael on Duterrau, it does so in order to expose the racial beliefs pervading Duterrau's portraiture, rather than *The Conciliation*. George Robinson, however, has been the subject of significant scholarship, most notably in the body of work compiled by historian Brian Plomley, including a masterly edition of

20 NJB Plomley, "Thomas Bock's Portraits of the Tasmanian Aborigines" in *Thomas Bock: Colonial Engraver, Society Portraitist*, ed. Diane Dunbar (Launceston: Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery, 1991), 37.

21 Diane Dunbar, ed., *Thomas Bock: Colonial Engraver, Society Portraitist* (Launceston: Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery, 1991).

22 Amy Tritton, "A Colonial Palimpsest: Benjamin Duterrau's Portrayals of Aboriginal People" (unpublished Honours thesis, University of Tasmania, 2009).

23 Bernard Smith, ed., *Documents on Art and Taste in Australia: The Colonial Period, 1770-1914* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1975).

24 Paul Paffen, "A Grand Illusion: Benjamin Duterrau and *The Conciliation*," *Melbourne Art Journal* 5 (2001), 53-60.

Robinson's journals.²⁵ The above-mentioned 1991 Bock exhibition informed many people about the illustrious career of a man who rose above his conviction to become a successful Hobart-based portraitist, while Tritton's thesis has been the most significant contribution to the knowledge and re-framing of Duterrau in recent times. However, both artists have yet to be fully and comparatively contextualised in relation to their Aboriginal portraits, and their relationship to the colossal figure of George Augustus Robinson.²⁶ Non-academic writing has most recently shone a light on the search for a missing Duterrau painting in Stephen Scheduling's *The National Picture*, published in 2002.²⁷ Beyond this body of study, there is little other authoritative scholarship on the two artists, and even less that goes to any comparative length.²⁸ This article, then, contributes to the knowledge of the two artists in close association, while also contextualising the lives of two artists who sought both truth and success, albeit to different degrees. Thus, as essentially the only comparative investigation on this topic, it is hoped that this article breaks some ground for further investigations into the nexus of racial, intellectual and artistic thought in 1830s Hobart society. The interpretation and perception of race in relation to Aboriginal portraits has been investigated, but the artists' views have been under-explored. It is hoped that further research will build on this article's foray into contemporary perceptions of Aboriginal people, both by the artists, and by Robinson.

The methodology for this article centres on the representation of Aboriginal Tasmanians by Hobart's two leading portraitists of the period. To do this, our starting point must be 'likeness' in portraiture. By establishing what likeness is, we can then begin to assess Bock and Duterrau's works on this basis. We can thus derive the elements that prove fruitful to investigation, which are the underlying philosophical approach to their subjects, and their subjects' perception of it. Richard Brilliant, in his seminal work *Portraiture*, articulates the paradigm through which we can attempt to define the likeness of Bock and Duterrau's works, and set them in greater context. We can link the degree of likeness to the viewer's perception of it, and in turn link this with the environment of 1830s Hobart. A thread, then, links all these factors and defines our methodology. Brilliant argues that some degree of 'discernible connection' must exist between the portrait and the subject in order to legitimise the likeness.²⁹ Although likeness denotes a fair resemblance of the subject, a degree of difference will always occur because otherwise we would not say a portrait is 'like' the subject, we would say it *is* the subject.³⁰ Essentially, according to Brilliant, the degree of likeness is equal to the prevailing view about an objective measure of 'resemblance.'³¹ Brilliant writes:

Every portrait makes the subject look like something, however confected that something may be, and the very act of making a portrait confirms, even in some small way, the reality of the historical person according to the standards of the time.³²

25 NJB Plomley, *Friendly Mission: The Tasmanian Journals and Papers of George Augustus Robinson 1829-1834* (Kingsgrove: Tasmanian Historical Research Association, 1966).

26 The references in this article attest to the absence of comparative investigations of the three men.

27 Stephen Scheduling, *The National Picture* (Sydney: Vintage, 2002).

28 One of the only comparisons of the two artists available to the author can be found in Tritton, "A Colonial Palimpsest," 24-28.

29 Richard Brilliant, *Portraiture* (London: Reaktion Books, 2002), 25.

30 *Ibid.*

31 *Ibid.*, 26.

32 *Ibid.*, 31.

Thus our approach must naturally accept that some degree of likeness exists in both the interpretations by Bock and Duterrau. There is little evidence that sheds light on the opinion of the portraits' subjects about their own likenesses. The aim is not to discover which is the 'truest' likeness, but rather to explore why Bock and Duterrau's conceptions of the same people differ so greatly. This necessitates the inclusion of the contemporary society of Bock and Duterrau, and what ideas and beliefs pervaded it. In understanding prevailing beliefs in Hobart during this period, historian Tony Birch's words on the 'settler psyche' are helpful. 'Control of the Australian landscape is vital to the settler psyche,' writes Birch.³³ With Birch's assertion that 'the victors' histories are those of absence' alongside the clearly commemorative nature of the portraits, we are given scope to see how the Van Diemonians 'devalued [Aboriginal] culture.'³⁴ As cited by Birch, Chris Healy noted in 1990 the 'seamless normality [of] a triumphal national history.'³⁵ As will be noted below in this article, it was Robinson himself who enacted the settler belief that Aboriginal people were 'fated to disappear.'³⁶ In 1996, influential historian Lyndall Ryan noted the dispersal of the notion of the extinct Aboriginal Tasmanians.³⁷ The march of this 'doomed race theory,' according to Ryan, began in 1876.³⁸ In fact, though this theory was proliferated after 1876, the theory of Aboriginal Tasmanian extinction, as Ryan sees it, began with their dispossession at the end of Robinson's 'friendly mission' in August 1834.³⁹ So the contemporary society discussed in this paper is the very society that engaged in purposeful dispossession, and creation of a new narrative of Aboriginal extinction followed by white ascendancy. A lack of documented opinions – and indeed a Tasmanian Aboriginal voice – in this narrative does, however, leave us with a rather incomplete picture.

Confirmation or praise from Duterrau's contemporaries and friends – James Bonwick and George Robinson – likewise does little to solidify a sense of veracity in Duterrau's pictures, as it served to form a self-serving attitude to the reception of Duterrau's pictures. The naivety of Duterrau's belief in Robinson's cause correlates to the artistic naivety of his pictures. In his 1884 book *The Lost Tasmanian Race*, educator, author and wanderer James Bonwick recalls seeing Duterrau's Aboriginal portraits. Among them were Duterrau's portraits of Mannalargenna, Woureddy, and Truggernana. Mannalargenna's 'powerful head' reminded Bonwick of a 'Hercules or a Jove', Duterrau's work evoking Mannalargenna's 'superior intellect, courage, and benevolence.'⁴⁰ In Woureddy, Bonwick saw 'the *physique* of an athlete.'⁴¹ As for Truggernana, Bonwick sees her as 'the Beauty of Bruni.'⁴² At this point, one is led to believe that Duterrau has masterfully and flawlessly captured an authoritative likeness of these individuals, set to be the superior record of their form for posterity. Despite the seeming inevitability of Duterrau's success, Bonwick's interpretation of Duterrau's paintings is affected by his admiration for Duterrau, just as Duterrau's connection to Robinson

33 Tony Birch, "A Land So Inviting and Still Without Inhabitants': Erasing Koori culture from (post-) colonial landscapes" in *Text, Theory, Space: Land, Literature and History in South Africa and Australia*, eds. K Darian-Smith, L. Gunner and S. Nutall (London; New York: Routledge, 1996), 176.

34 Ibid.

35 Ibid.

36 Joanna Gilmour, *Elegance in Exile: Portrait Drawings from Colonial Australia* (Canberra: National Portrait Gallery, 2012), 98.

37 Lyndall Ryan, *The Aboriginal Tasmanians* (Crows Nest: Allen & Unwin, 1996, 2nd ed), 1.

38 Ibid.

39 Ibid., 1-5.

40 *Hobart Town Courier*, April 22, 1836.

41 Bonwick, *The Lost Tasmanian Race*, 135. Italics belong to Bonwick.

42 Ibid., 140.

affected how he went about his own work. Neither Robinson or Bonwick, however, were aware of Duterrau's philosophical leanings. The *Hobart Town Courier* of 22 April 1836 recalls how Duterrau presented his portraits of the Aboriginal Tasmanians to Robinson, 'in token of that gentleman's services to the colony in conciliating the hostile blacks.'⁴³ According to Amy Tritton, Duterrau was naïve in wanting to believe in the success of Robinson's mission, in that it had benefited both the Aboriginal and European communities.⁴⁴ Moreover, Tritton has argued that Duterrau believed Robinson's mission to be a success not merely in eradicating the Aboriginal threat, but in promoting within the latter the belief in Christianity and sanguinity.⁴⁵ In short, Duterrau's work gives credence to Robinson's notion that Aboriginal Tasmanians were 'fated to disappear.'⁴⁶

George Augustus Robinson provided Benjamin Duterrau, an ambitious man who came to the colony late in life in search of commercial success, a cause to which he could become attached. 'Though Duterrau was a professional painter,' Geoffrey Dutton has noted, 'there is something engagingly naïve about him.'⁴⁷ Duterrau arrived in Hobart from an England emerging from an artistic culture shift, particularly in the popular interest in the Italian Master Raphael.⁴⁸ It is not the argument of this article that Duterrau consciously mimicked Raphael's style or aesthetics. Rather, his self-conception was heavily influenced by Raphael's work, to the extent that Raphael's status as an arbiter of taste and, combined with that artist's wild commercial success, significantly affected Duterrau's Tasmanian portraits.⁴⁹ Duterrau's admiration for Raphael is highly conspicuous, and is prominent in his self-portrait in which he holds a large folio of *Rafaelle's Cartoons* [sic].⁵⁰ As Art Historian Andrew Sayers has noted, 'nothing could more conspicuously declare Duterrau's somewhat grand sense of himself as a man of taste and a painter in the tradition sweeping back to the Renaissance.'⁵¹ By the middle of the eighteenth-century, Raphael's Cartoons had become the by-word for connoisseurship and true artistic taste.⁵² He is certainly well-praised by Bonwick, and by contemporary newspapers, but we will never know whether a popular or press-led campaign willfully supported Duterrau. The absence of more leading artists in Hobart perhaps served to elevate Duterrau's social stature.

There is no doubt that upon his arrival in Hobart, Duterrau immediately set about associating himself with the literate and cultured members of the colony, as evidenced by his immediate declaration that he would give a lecture at the Mechanics' Institute in Hobart.⁵³ The subject of this lecture was to be on the importance of the role of fine arts in developing a cultured colonial

43 *Hobart Town Courier*, April 22, 1836.

44 Tritton, "A Colonial Palimpsest," 54.

45 *Ibid.*, 23-24.

46 Joanna Gilmour, *Elegance in Exile: Portrait Drawings from Colonial Australia* (Canberra: National Portrait Gallery, 2012), 98.

47 Dutton, *White on Black*, 36-37.

48 For a highly informative article on this point, see Chia-Chuan Hsieh, "Publishing the Raphael Cartoons and the Rise of Art-Historical Consciousness in England, 1707-1764," *The Historical Journal* 52 (2009): 899-920.

49 As noted above, Paul Paffen's 2001 was seemingly the first article to significantly explore this linkage between Raphael, British art, and Duterrau in Van Diemen's Land.

50 This picture can be found in the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, Hobart.

51 Andrew Sayers, "The Artist's Self-Portrait in Australia," accessed September 16, 2014, <http://www.portrait.gov.au/exhibit/look/essay.htm?pagenum=>.

52 Hsieh, "Publishing the Raphael Cartoons," 912.

53 Bernard Smith, ed., *Documents on Art and Taste in Australia: The Colonial Period, 1770-1914* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1975), 87.

society.⁵⁴ Duterrau's purpose was to compare the famous philosophical school of Ancient Greece – as depicted Raphael's work *The School of Athens* – to the burgeoning Hobart philosophical society of the Mechanics' Institute.⁵⁵ Duterrau's pretensions to be the leading artist-philosopher in the colony echo his idol George Robinson's desire to be recognised as the leading figure in bringing peace and harmony to Van Diemen's Land, through his 'conciliation of the Aborigines.' As Vivian Rae-Ellis has noted, Robinson's 'reputation as friend of the Aborigine was a creation of [his] imagination, designed solely to advance his own career.'⁵⁶ The quote could just as easily describe Benjamin Duterrau.

Yet more abstract ideas underpin and pervade Duterrau's Aboriginal portraits, and link him to George Augustus Robinson. These abstract ideas in turn separate him from Thomas Bock, as will be seen later in this article. Duterrau created *The Conciliation* around 1840 as a tribute to Robinson's achievements. In 1833, however, long before *The Conciliation*, Duterrau laid out his philosophy of art in which he asserted that the artistic vision came before factual accuracy. 'Painting, like poetry,' Duterrau said in his first Mechanics' Institute lecture of 1833, 'is not confined to strict historical truth – a plausible or probable appearance is sufficient, and frequently gives great force to the effect.'⁵⁷ Moreover, as seen above, Duterrau's philosophical beliefs stemmed from his origins in Britain, from whence he carried his artistic ideas as based on Raphael, and his racial and philosophical ideas, as based on the prominent thinking of the day. Duterrau's close ties to and admiration of George Robinson caused his works to take on much of Robinson's thinking about Aboriginal people. This thinking is important to our interpretation of Duterrau's subsequent works.

As Henry Reynolds has argued, Robinson was acutely aware of the 'intellectual and theological currents of his time.'⁵⁸ Robinson would have also been aware, Reynolds argues, of the theories emphasising the gradations in the classification of man and beings, then popular in science.⁵⁹ Historian Christian Sundquist notes that classification theories up to and including the Enlightenment owed much to Aristotelian beliefs concerning the ordering of all things in a natural hierarchy.⁶⁰ The Aristotelian idea that there were different variants of mankind, some superior to others, was called polygenesis in this period. Race and intelligence were classified according to the geographical proximity to the peak of intelligence in Europe.⁶¹ As Reynolds has also highlighted, Robinson would no doubt have been aware of the theories of J. C. Prichard, whose ideas that all human beings were equal and originated from Adam and Eve (monogenesis) stemmed from the earlier theorist Johann Blumenbach.⁶² Robinson thus faced an internal conflict between his

54 Ibid.

55 Ibid.

56 Vivian Rae-Ellis, *Black Robinson: Protector of Aborigines* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1988), xix.

57 Benjamin Duterrau, "The School of Athens, as it assimilates with the Mechanics' Institution," in *Documents on Art and Taste in Australia: The Colonial Period, 1770-1914*, ed. Bernard Smith (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1975), 93.

58 Henry Reynolds, "George Augustus Robinson in Van Diemen's Land: Race, Status and Religion," in *Reading Robinson: Companion Essays to Friendly Mission*, ed. Mitchell Rolls (Hobart: Quintus Publishing, 2008).

59 Ibid. An early exponent of this classification Carl Linnaeus, whose 1735 text *Systema Naturae* introduced a modern scientific system of classifying organisms.

60 Christian B. Sundquist, "The Meaning of Race in the DNA Era: Science, History and the Law," *Temple Journal of Science, Technology & Environmental Law* 27(2) (2008): 237.

61 Ibid. Noted Art Historian Christopher Allen also speculated that Duterrau may have followed the theories of Richard Payne Knight, whose *Analytical Enquiry into the Principles of Taste* (1801) noted the expressivity present in the minds of savages as opposed to civilised people, see Stephen Scheduling, *The National Picture* (Sydney: Vintage, 2002), 121.

62 Ibid. In fact, Blumenbach practically spawned modern studies on man and animals with his groundbreaking 1775 doctoral thesis "On the Natural Varieties of Mankind." For more biographical information on Blumenbach, see "Johann Friedrich Blumenbach (1752-1840)," accessed September 23, 2014, <http://embryo.asu.edu/pages/johann-friedrich-blumenbach-1752-1840>.

evangelism and the prevailing opinions of the day; that is, between monogenesis and polygenesis.⁶³ The corollary has been identified by Stephen Scheduling, who has argued that ‘Robinson probably influenced, or at least reinforced, Duterrau’s thinking about Aborigines.’⁶⁴

Scheduling argues that, in *The Conciliation*, Duterrau veers neither toward imbuing the Aboriginal people in the painting with noble savage qualities, nor depicting them as romanticised itinerant stargazers.⁶⁵ Also, the figures are not ‘diminutive’, as they are in John Glover’s pictures.⁶⁶ The art historian Tim Bonyhady argues that Duterrau is perhaps the sole artist to have taken a strong interest in the events leading to the expulsion of Indigenous Tasmanians from their homeland.⁶⁷ While Robinson is intended to be portrayed as the ‘peacemaker’ in *The Conciliation*,⁶⁸ it becomes clear that Duterrau sought to place within the Aboriginal figures ideas of the ‘passions,’⁶⁹ including incredulity, anger, suspicion, surprise and cheerfulness.⁷⁰ The ‘passions’ originate in Aristotle⁷¹ and pervade Renaissance thought. However, Duterrau’s creations also show the influence of racial and philosophical ideas about the lesser racial strength of Aboriginal people. James Romm, in his study of the relationship between distance and intelligence in historical thought, argues that authors both ancient and modern saw a correlation between the distance from themselves, and the level of civilisation one might encounter.⁷² Naturally, Romm writes, for European colonisers, peak civilisation resided in European, Greek and Roman authors, while the further one was removed geographically from those places, the more ‘bestial’ beings one would encounter.⁷³ The synthesis of these background ideas will be explored below. However much Duterrau wept at the plight of Aboriginal Tasmanians, this supposed empathy simply does not play out in his paintings of them, as will be shown.

Blumenbach advocated that black people were simply different due to environment and opportunity, and not because of the ‘natural superiority’ of white men,⁷⁴ and we have seen that to some extent Robinson was exposed to these ideas.⁷⁵ Despite the awareness held by Robinson and Duterrau of racial and philosophical thought, which links them together, they differ in their interpretation and use of it. Where Robinson states in a letter to Governor Gipps that Aborigines

63 Ibid.

64 Scheduling, *The National Picture*, 122.

65 Ibid., 8-9.

66 Ibid., 9.

67 Ibid., 36.

68 Lois Hunter, *The Australian Art Companion: A Selection of Influential Artists* (Balgowlah: Reed Books, 1990), 16.

69 This idea is confirmed in the *Hobart Town Courier* of November 29, 1833, August 2, 1836, and in Scheduling, *The National Picture*, 104, 206.

70 *Hobart Town Courier*, August 2, 1836.

71 For Aristotle’s exposition of *pathos* or the Passions, see his text “*Rhetoric*, Book II,” accessed September 20, 2014, <http://classics.mit.edu/Aristotle/rhetoric.2.ii.html>. A further helpful text is by Amy Schmitter, “Ancient, Medieval and Renaissance Theories of the Emotions,” *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, accessed September 10, 2014, <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/emotions-17th18th/LD1Background.html>.

72 James S. Romm, *The Edges of the Earth in Ancient Thought: Geography, Exploration and Fiction* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992), 47.

73 Ibid.

74 Raj Bhopal, “The beautiful skull and Blumenbach’s errors,” *British Medical Journal* 335: 1309. As Christian B. Sundquist also explains, Blumenbach was not ignorant of atypicality in the human species in terms of skin colour and physiognomy, see Sundquist, “The Meaning of Race in the DNA Era,” 236-237.

75 Reynolds, “George Augustus Robinson in Van Diemen’s Land.”

were ‘human beings and [Robinson] thought they should be treated as such,’⁷⁶ Duterrau begins to include such theories as the use of phrenology in his lectures on understanding race and type, as shown in an advertisement in the *Colonial Times* of 24 November, 1836.⁷⁷ As Tritton has argued, Duterrau’s moral and possibly evangelical beliefs led him to perpetuate the belief that art, and European society in general, had a moral duty to civilise the indigenous population.⁷⁸ Duterrau’s key method of procuring this civilisation was through art, in a method which used, in a distorted way, the works of his hero Raphael as a guide.

We will now seek to ascertain how white Tasmanians viewed the Aboriginal portraits of both artists, in order to obtain a clearer understanding of their importance to contemporaries and ourselves. Several contemporaries endorsed the degree of likeness in Duterrau’s Aboriginal pictures. The *Colonial Times* of 19 August 1839 called his painting of *Timmy, a Tasmanian Aboriginal throwing a spear* ‘a characteristic painting.’⁷⁹ The *Hobart Town Courier* called Duterrau’s paintings ‘the first effort that has been made here or in England to fix and hand down to posterity a true resemblance of these interesting people.’⁸⁰ Likewise on 20 December 1833 the same paper extolled Duterrau’s skill in depicting their ‘original appearance and costume.’⁸¹ In fact, 113 Hobart citizens petitioned to buy Duterrau’s four Aboriginal portraits in 1837, but the Government declined this opportunity.⁸² The *Hobart Town Courier* also believed that Duterrau’s canvases were ‘eminently possessed’ of a certain ‘expression of the mind.’⁸³ Only a few weeks later the same paper endorsed Duterrau’s likeness of Mannalargenna as ‘powerful’, and his portraits of Truggernana, Woureddy and Mannalargenna’s wife Tanleboueyer were said to have elicited ‘the greatest satisfaction.’⁸⁴ Governor Arthur himself, it is noted, ‘recognised and acknowledged [the pictures] to be most perfect likenesses.’⁸⁵ This last comment was the most important of all for Duterrau, who had ambitions to be the leading painter in the colony. At the changeover from Governor Arthur to Governor Franklin during 1838-1837, the key link was Duterrau himself. Indeed, the *Hobart Town Courier* proclaimed Duterrau to be ‘intimate in [Franklin’s] family’, and the only individual acquainted with the incoming Governor.⁸⁶ On top of this claim, Duterrau was given high praise in the *Hobart Town Courier* on at least thirteen occasions between Friday 12 July 1833 and Friday 22 April 1836.⁸⁷ Lastly, descriptions of Aboriginal people in James Bonwick’s chapters on ‘Dress and Adornment’ and ‘Physical Appearance’ are similar to Duterrau and Bock’s paintings, suggesting that settler society and newspapers endorsed their depictions of Aboriginal people.⁸⁸ While abundant praise was given to Duterrau for his work, a minority chose to favour Bock’s works as more representative.

76 “GA Robinson Journal, 22 September 1838, Papers, Vol. XIII, ML, mss. A7034,” in Reynolds, “George Augustus Robinson in Van Diemen’s Land.”

77 *Colonial Times*, November 24, 1836.

78 Tritton, “A Colonial Palimpsest,” 23-24.

79 *Colonial Times*, August 19, 1839.

80 Scheduling, *The National Picture*, 104.

81 *Ibid.*, 105.

82 *Ibid.*, 123.

83 *Hobart Town Courier*, November 29, 1833.

84 *Hobart Town Courier*, December 20, 1833.

85 *Ibid.*

86 *Ibid.*, August 26, 1836.

87 Noted occasions being July 12, 1833; July 19, 1833; October 11, 1833; November 5, 1833; November 20, 1833; April 4, 1834; April 17, 1835; July 24, 1835; September 18, 1835; October 2, 1835; October 9, 1835; April 22, 1836.

88 James Bonwick, *Daily Life and Origin of the Tasmanians* (London: Sampson Low, Son & Marston, 1870). “Dress and Adornment,” 24-27, and “Physical Appearance,” 99-138.

As eminent historian Brian Plomley noted in his 1968 article ‘Notes on some Tasmanian Aborigines and portraits of them’, Thomas Bock elicited much praise outside of the newspapers for his work depicting Aboriginal people.⁸⁹ An eloquent critic of Duterrau, and supporter of Bock, Henry Dowling stated his views in a letter to *The Mercury* on 21 August 1884. Dowling points to the superior technique and skill of Bock, writing that Bock’s works possessed ‘great thoughtfulness and merit, in marked contrast to those of M. Duterrau.’⁹⁰ As we have seen above, Duterrau’s public profile demonstrates the public assent to his view and depictions of Aboriginal Tasmanians. However, Bock’s work, while less public, seems to have held more credence with artists. On a personal level, Dowling recognised the essential difference between the two artists. ‘Mr. Bock,’ he wrote, ‘made no such pretensions to an art career as M. Duterrau, but his genius and ability were very superior.’⁹¹ According to Dowling, Lady Jane Franklin also used her connoisseur’s eye to select Bock over Duterrau. ‘With Lady Franklin’s appreciation of art it was only natural to her to employ Bock, and not Duterrau’, wrote Dowling.⁹² The earlier notice trumpeting Duterrau’s connection with the Franklins in the *Hobart Town Courier* now appears less clear-cut. Dowling made a final judgement on the likeness of Duterrau’s works as compared to those of Bock. ‘Duterrau represents them as black, as “black lead polished,”’ wrote Dowling. ‘Bock gives the proper colour, when they were besmeared with grease and red ochre, as they came in from the bush.’⁹³

Duterrau’s classic styling of *The Conciliation* harks back to his idol, Raphael. Raphael’s Cartoons – the principal aesthetic reference for Duterrau’s Tasmanian Aboriginal portraits – show many of the characteristics subsequently employed by the latter. As one of the most important teaching tools, as well as artistic icons, in late eighteenth century Britain, Duterrau particularly admired Raphael’s Cartoons.⁹⁴ The religious element is the key central theme, as Raphael’s Cartoons depict the Act of the Apostles St Peter and St Paul, principal actors in the founding of Christianity.⁹⁵ There are particular works in the cartoon cycle that Duterrau has clearly utilised in his work. These include ‘The Conversion of the Proconsul’ (1515-1516), ‘The Healing of the Lame Man’ (1515-1516), and ‘Paul Preaching at Athens’ (1515-1516). The first two works show similarities not merely in their religious theme, but in their composition, which reinforces religiosity. In ‘The Conversion of the Proconsul’, Paul is seen to be striking the sorcerer Elymas blind for the latter’s efforts to prevent the spread of Christianity.⁹⁶ In this work, Paul’s mission is one of conversion of the Gentiles. His counterpart, Peter, is seen in ‘The Healing of the Lame Man’ to be carrying this miracle out in a Jewish temple during his mission to convert the Jews. Duterrau’s *The Conciliation* imitates these two works, with its depth of figures, and the interplay of movement. It is clearly drawing upon methodological and compositional motifs inspired by these works by Raphael. The religious aspect of conversion is not unimportant to Duterrau’s translation in his own Tasmanian work. In ‘Paul Preaching at Athens’ (1515-1516), the theme of preaching and conveying of religion is shown, and the rapture in which Paul is held by the councillors at the Aeropagus⁹⁷ mimics the serene rapture paid to Robinson by the Tasmanian Aborigines in *The Conciliation*.

89 Plomley, “Notes,” 53-54.

90 Ibid., 53.

91 Ibid.

92 Ibid.

93 Ibid., 53-54.

94 “The Raphael Cartoons,” Victoria and Albert Museum, accessed 13 July, 2015, <http://www.vam.ac.uk/content/articles/t/raphael-cartoons/>.

95 Ibid.

96 “The Conversion of Proconsul,” Victoria and Albert Museum, accessed 13 July, 2015, <http://www.vam.ac.uk/users/node/7926>.

97 “Paul Preaching at Athens,” Victoria and Albert Museum, accessed 13 July, 2015, <http://www.vam.ac.uk/users/node/7928>.

The historian thus comes to understand Duterrau's portraits as representative of his racial, religious and philosophical beliefs. Duterrau's racial ideas came to the fore in his canvases. Art historian and academic Ian McLean has pointedly argued that Duterrau drew on the same semiological language as Charles Le Brun and Petrus Camper, both of whom associated meaning and emotion with physiognomy.⁹⁸ Captain James Kelly, who had earlier been associated with Aboriginal Tasmanians, also throws the likeness of Duterrau's primitive *Truggernana* into doubt. Kelly declared that Duterrau's pictures misrepresented the real appearance and personality of Truggernana.⁹⁹ Society, Kelly noted, seemed to have selected 'the most hideous' works to preserve, including among his list the works of Duterrau.¹⁰⁰ In recent secondary literature, the racial construction of Duterrau's works has also come under scrutiny. Duterrau was one of a number of artists, including Joseph Lycett and John Glover, to present Aboriginal people 'pre-contact'.¹⁰¹ What this portrayal suggests, author Tim Bonyhady argues, is that artists who conveyed images of 'pre-contact' Aboriginal people were 'not necessarily interested in accurately reconstructing the Aborigines' traditional way of life.'¹⁰² While Duterrau's work has been seen as contributing to the historical record of the eradication of Aboriginal people,¹⁰³ one of his biographers explains the artist's mindset as a conflict between memorialising Aboriginal cultural traditions, while simultaneously believing that those traditions needed to be terminated.¹⁰⁴ Historian Joanna Gilmour makes perhaps the most important assertion of all in regards to Duterrau's complicated relationship with Robinson and Bock. Although both artists were creating their Aboriginal portraits at a time when many were lionising Robinson's deeds, Bock did not fall into the habit of simple documentation or memorialisation, but rather imbued his subjects with life and personality.¹⁰⁵

This article will now turn to Thomas Bock. His relationships with both Duterrau, who he lived near, and Robinson, for whom he worked, are too inextricably linked to suppose that Bock's work is not important to any considered interpretation of the portraits of Robinson's 'conciliated Aborigines'. Despite the above evidence of Duterrau's compromised views toward Aboriginal people, Bock is not without modern critics, who see his subsequent reproductions of Aboriginal portraits as changing in meaning and detail. Dunbar asserts that Bock's portraits of Aboriginal people were part of a public relations exercise for Robinson.¹⁰⁶ Though he did not seek to 'give an idea of the gay, happy life the natives led before the White people came here' as John Glover had intended to do,¹⁰⁷ he nevertheless seemed intent on showing them in his own way, as proud and noble people, neither entangled in Robinson's mission nor hunting and fishing as free people. Similarly, Bock did not get drawn into the grotesque or redemptive myths of Aboriginal people in Tasmania, where 'Aboriginal' and 'Pastoral' arcadias distort the truth of the Aboriginal

98 Ian McLean, *White Aborigines: Identity Politics in Australian Art* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 43. For an authoritative text on Le Brun's theory, see Jennifer Montagu, *The Expression of the Passions: The Origin and Influence of Charles Le Brun's Conference sur l'expression generale et particuliere* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 1994). A helpful source for Camper's scientific views of race and aesthetics can be found in Miriam Claude Meijer, *Race and Aesthetics in the Anthropology of Petrus Camper (1772-1789)* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1999).

99 Vivian Rae-Ellis, *Trucanini: Queen or Traitor?* (Hobart: Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies, 1976), 21.

100 Ibid.

101 Tim Bonyhady, *Images in Opposition: Australian Landscape Painting 1801-1890* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1985), 25.

102 Ibid.

103 Tritton, *A Colonial Palimpsest*, III.

104 Ibid., 41.

105 Gilmour, *Elegance in Exile*, 98-99.

106 Dunbar, *Thomas Bock: Convict Engraver, Society Portraitist* (Launceston, 1991), 1.

107 Bonyhady, *The Colonial Image*, 29.

story.¹⁰⁸ This claim has been leveled at John Glover, whose inclusion of Aboriginal people in his landscapes has been questioned.¹⁰⁹ Bock's escape from this bracketing is primarily due to his work as a portraitist above all else. Although his early convict career also included making engravings and other commissions, Bock's mainstay was portraiture.¹¹⁰ The commission given to him by Lady Franklin to paint his portraits of Aboriginal people also, in the eyes of Lady Franklin's connoisseurship, allowed little room for Bock to engage in the sort of cultural elaboration seen in the work of Duterrau, Glover and others. Indeed, it has been noted that Bock's works portray character as well as likeness,¹¹¹ but this does not tell us about the accuracy of the likeness, or Bock's motivations. Bock's art did not corroborate Glover's version of the pre-contact Aboriginal 'cacdaemons' as 'the epitome of savagery,'¹¹² nor Glover's vision of them as 'ghosts in a landscape.'¹¹³ Bock had initially prepared extensive portraits of at least fifteen Aboriginal people for Robinson, but when it came time to reproduce his works for his own benefit, he omitted several of the portraits.¹¹⁴ 'Because Bock was interested in selling his work,' Plomley argues, 'it was now desirable that he should present portraits which were acceptable to the public.'¹¹⁵ It is important to note, however, that as Plomley has identified, the changed appearance of the Aborigines, from Nicolas-Martin Petit's very early works to Bock's Robinsonian works, could perhaps be attributable to their extended time spent in the presence of whites.¹¹⁶ Thus Bock's omission of several portraits could be due to marketing and sales factors alone, and not his own aesthetic predilections. No evidence exists for a conclusive answer here. Could Bock also have imposed his preconceptions on his subjects? Above, it was shown that the society in which Bock lived certainly sought to gloss over the dispossession of Aboriginal Tasmanians. Whether Bock aligned himself with such views we do not know. We can draw very little from his art, and this is perhaps due to his lack of public profile.

Trained and established as an engraver and miniaturist in London, Bock had a successful award-winning career prior to his conviction and transportation.¹¹⁷ Commercial success flowed naturally to Bock during the conduct of his sentence and post-conviction, and we might point to Bock's involvement in artwork for the Van Diemen's Land Bank as a mark of the admiration of his contemporaries.¹¹⁸ Perhaps rather tellingly, Bock was asked by Lady Jane Franklin and others for further copies of his Aboriginal portraits, which were valued for their superior likeness.¹¹⁹ Lady Jane later confirmed her own opinion of the superb likeness of Bock's *Mathinna* to the real girl,

108 Ian McLean, "John Glover: The limits of redemption" in *Radical Revisionism: An Anthology of Writings on Australian Art*, ed. Rex Butler (Brisbane: Insitute of Modern Art, 2005), 140-141.

109 For a discussion of Glover's motivations and art, see Jeffrey Auerbach, "The Impossibility of Artistic Escape: Thomas Watling, John Glover, and the Australian Picturesque," *Journal of Australian Colonial History* 7 (2005), 161-180.

110 William Bryden, "Bock, Thomas."

111 Ibid.

112 Ibid., 141. It was Robert Hughes, according to McLean, who saw Glover's Aborigines as 'cacdaemons.' Tim Bonyhady argues that Glover depicted the Aborigines as 'the epitome of savagery.'

113 Ibid., 142. More information is provided here by the National Gallery of Australia, who write of Glover's *A corrobbery of natives in Mills Plains* that when Glover painted the work, there were no Aboriginal Tasmanians left in the area at all. His inclusion of native people is thus a fiction. See Ron Radford, "John Glover," accessed 2 September 2015, <http://nga.gov.au/Exhibition/Turnertomonet/Detail.cfm?IRN=128979&BioArtistIRN=18324&MnuID=3>.

114 Ibid.

115 Ibid.

116 Ibid., 41. For more on Nicolas-Martin Petit's early Aboriginal depiction, see Jacqueline Bonnemains, Elliott Forsyth and Bernard Smith, eds., *Baudin in Australian Waters: the artwork of the French voyage of discovery to the southern lands, 1800-1804* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1988).

117 William Bryden, "Bock, Thomas."

118 Ibid.

119 Gilmour, *Elegance in Exile*, 98.

who had been taken in by the Franklins.¹²⁰ ‘The attitude is exactly hers,’ Lady Jane wrote.¹²¹ ‘She always wears the red dress you see her in – when she goes out, she wears red stockings and black shoes.’¹²² Several influential art historians have also noted the ‘subtle and sensitive modeling’ of Bock’s Aboriginal portraits, notably *Mannalargenna*, *Woureddy*, and *Truggernana*, impressive as ‘distinct portrait’ representations of individuals.¹²³ Brian Plomley, noting the associations between Bock, Duterrau and Robinson, found it most remarkable that Robinson had in fact selected Bock and Glover to make drawings for his memoirs on the Friendly Mission.¹²⁴ Although Robinson had received a picture by Bock and by Duterrau, it is clearly Bock’s numerous artworks depicting Aboriginal people that Robinson envisaged in his book.¹²⁵ In seeing Bock’s works as more accurate and acceptable to discerning and knowledgeable Van Diemonians, we are not discounting the idea that Bock also wanted to commemorate what he may have seen as a near-extinct race.¹²⁶ Nor are we avoiding the idea that Bock’s works may not have represented the true appearance of the Tasmanians he painted.¹²⁷ Rather, as Plomley notes, Bock’s aim was to present Aboriginal people as living, breathing, free people, imbued with the humanity that his potential audience wanted to see in them.¹²⁸ Far from finding success, however, Bock’s work and talent went unrecognised until the subsequent decade, when he began gaining commissions for society portraits. Bock’s story, therefore, is one of a slower development, in which the commercial ambitions and overt intellectual leanings of Duterrau are absent. As Andrew Sayers argues, Bock’s reputation is largely built on his society portraits of the 1840s and 1850s,¹²⁹ when the *Hobart Town Advertiser* was moved to state that ‘Mr Bock deserves more patronage than we fear he has gained.’¹³⁰ Bock never serialised or promoted his Aboriginal portraits, but as has been noted by Sayers, demand would have surely been there for them.¹³¹ Thus what we are left with is a picture of Bock out of step with that of Duterrau. Though acutely aware of one another’s work – and being neighbours in Campbell Street¹³² – the two artists could not have produced more different works of the same subjects.

In conclusion, this article has shown that the Aboriginal portraits by Benjamin Duterrau were motivated in no small part by his aesthetic leanings, and desire to emulate the work of Raphael. Praised by contemporaries for his works, Duterrau is linked to Robinson by events of the period. Bock’s efforts at likeness were seen as more convincing by his contemporaries. Lastly, by exposing the presence of racial, philosophical and aesthetic theories in the complicated tripartite relationship between Bock, Duterrau and Robinson, this article has sought to assess how the

120 For a recent masterly article on the genesis of myth and fact surrounding the Aboriginal girl Mathinna, see Penny Russell’s 2012 article “Girl in a Red Dress: Inventions of Mathinna,” *Australian Historical Studies* 43 (2012): 341-362. The article presents Mathinna in a series of ‘frames’ or tropes, seeking to find the real story behind the young Aboriginal girl while at the same time brilliantly elaborating on Tasmanian colonial culture.

121 *Ibid.*, 124.

122 *Ibid.*

123 *Ibid.*, 98-99. As cited in Gilmour, these ideas originate in *Australian Colonial art 1800-1900*, ed. Ron Radford (Adelaide: Art Gallery of South Australia, 1995), 52; Andrew Sayers, *Drawing in Australia: drawings, watercolours, pastels and collages from the 1770s to the 1980s* (Melbourne and Canberra: Oxford University Press, 1989), 42.

124 Plomley, *Friendly Mission*, 927.

125 *Ibid.*

126 Bonyhady, *The Colonial Image*, 22.

127 NJB Plomley, “Thomas Bock’s Portraits of the Tasmanian Aborigines,” 41.

128 *Ibid.*, 37.

129 Andrew Sayers, “Thomas Bock: Draughtsman” in *Thomas Bock: Convict Engraver, Society Portraitist*, ed. Diane Dunbar (Launceston: Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery, 1991), 19.

130 *Ibid.*

131 *Ibid.*, 24.

132 Scheduling, *The National Picture*, 119.

Aboriginal portraits of Bock and Duterrau were influenced by their respective worldviews, filling gaps in scholarship and offering areas of further exploration for scholars.
