CHAPTER 5

The Painter’s Right Hand: Teghenwoordigheydt and the Presence of Painting

If ever I have seen in the spring twilight
the god Pan himself, I, as the only one of my friends,
when we, small children, ran through my parents’ garden
towards Venus’ Forest in The Hague all in verdure,
everyone busily playing their pipes in the evening
and sounding small cymbals with small hands . . .

Janus Secundus, Elegiae III, 13

The Reception of Junius’ Ideas among Artists

Junius wanted to present his ideas to artists even before their publication. Early in 1632 Blaeu handed him quires to share with a “friend”;1 this may have been Van Dyck, who wrote to the scholar about the treatise later that year. It is unclear whether he saw the proofs of the Latin book or an early manuscript of the Dutch translation, for his polite words of praise declare only that “art will also be made clearer to the world by this eminent book . . . a resumption of lost art, which will bring great glory and satisfaction to the author.”2 In 1639 Junius again wrote that he had presented the manuscript of the Dutch edition to some of his friends, which suggests that he checked the validity of his concepts against the experience of artists throughout the writing process.3 These benevolent readers will have included Hendrik van der Borcht and Robert van Voerst, to whom the scholar was particularly devoted.4

The correspondence gives no details about presentation copies of the English and Dutch editions; however, an English copy is found in Constantijn Huygens’ library. He had visited the Arundel collection in 1618 in the company of the draftsman Jacob de Gheyn.5 Through Huygens’ range of contacts in artistic circles in the Netherlands, various other painters may have also discovered Junius’ publications. As discussed in Chapter 1, Arundel House never failed to attract artists. Of course Rubens, who first visited in 1629, and Van Dyck, who was a personal friend of the Countess, were welcome guests. Von Sandrart, who quoted Junius in his biographies of painters, may likewise have