

The acclaimed Académie royale de peinture et de sculpture, the second oldest academy in France, was abolished in 1793. Whilst a number of studies have explored the drama of its dissolution, often associated with a speech by former member Jacques-Louis David, this outcome can only be fully understood in the context of the evolving governance of the institution.

In this groundbreaking work, Reed Benhamou provides the first comprehensive examination of the codes and practices of the Académie, from its inception in 1648 to its abolition in 1793. As well as exploring why certain rules were adopted, how they facilitated the development of institutional power bases, and the part they played in the Académie's growing factionalism, the author uncovers changing attitudes to the guild, women, associate academicians and unaffiliated artists. This astute and comprehensive analysis is followed by nine annotated appendices of both registered and proposed statutes and of other related documents, many of which are made readily accessible for the first time.

Offering new insights into the tensions between art and state throughout the *ancien régime* and beyond, *Regulating the Académie* is an invaluable reference not only for art historians, but also for those working in cultural or legal history.

Reed Benhamou is a Professor Emerita at Indiana University. Her publications focus on the Académie royale de peinture, and educational programmes in art and architecture of the *ancien régime*. She is currently researching the effectiveness of the Ecole royale des élèves protégés.