



Memoria Saltationis: The Memory of Dance - 5 June 2020

Πάθος and Κίνησις in the fifteenth-century Ars Memorativa

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This paper investigates *πάθος* (pathos) and *κίνησις* (kinesis) in the visual representation of *imagines agentes* in the illuminations of an anonymous manuscript, *Di l'Artifitial Memoria*, produced in Venice around 1450-70 (Paris, Bibliothèque Sainte Geneviève, MS 3368). Unlike other surviving treatises on the art of memory, *Di l'Artifitial Memoria*, includes a substantial apparatus of images which illustrates the instructions in the text to practise memory.

The techniques of the *ars memorativa* aimed to imprint images in memory that are sufficiently active, vivid and powerful to stimulate emotion (*πάθος*) through movement (*κίνησις*) and activate recollection of words and numbers. The illuminations of this manuscript demonstrate how these *imagines agentes* were represented visually as images in motion, with individuals performing unusual, disgusting or violent gestures, which would adhere longer and be imprinted on the memory of the practitioner. I shall trace how the role of *imagines agentes* outlined in Roman rhetoric, Aristotelian definitions of memory and recollection, and their re-interpretation by Thomas Aquinas, is evident within this treatise, through close analysis of selected images. I shall pay particular attention to the interplay between *πάθος* and *κίνησις* in the selected illuminations.