

policy of the bishops of Strasbourg (P. Lorentz). L. Dauphant takes a wide perspective on the patronage of René II d'Anjou, while A. Calzona compares public artistic commissions meant to convey the idea of the good government of the *comune* of Mantua with similar initiatives taken by Ludovico Gonzaga in the fifteenth century. R.-M. Ferré looks at the transfer of power from Alfonso of Aragon and René of Anjou in the reign of Naples through the lens of the markedly celebratory art of medal casting.

The role of the universities is examined by C. Frova and J. Verger. Frova focuses on the Italian context while Verger is concerned with imperial, French, and Burgundian princely constructions. Other essays look at how the role of chancelleries and notaries evolved in the transition from the commune to the Signoria (G. M. Varanini). These and other contributions explore the intangible cultural heritage of the literary topos of Maecenas as an alter ego of rulers (C. Revest).

The volume tackles political, historical, but also specific art historical questions and is therefore directed to a wide audience of scholars. Approaches and methodologies vary substantially from one paper to another, yet, despite this, the contributions never lose sight of the primary theme underlying the volume. The variety and scope of the studies gathered here demonstrate the fruitfulness of this approach, while this volume itself represents a significant addition to this field of study.

Manlio Leo Mezzacasa, *Veneranda Arca di S. Antonio*

The Medici's Painter: Carlo Dolci and Seventeenth-Century Florence.

Eve Straussman-Pflanzer, ed.

With Francesca Baldassari. Exh. Cat. Wellesley: Davis Museum at Wellesley College, 2017. 136 pp. \$35.

Early modern European art is in overall need of innovative scholarly publications and dynamic exhibitions in order to reaffirm its significance and relevance. In light of this need, *The Medici's Painter*, a publication accompanying an exhibition at the Davis Museum at Wellesley College, is a refreshing look at a widely unknown, but incredibly talented, Florentine Baroque painter. Throughout the book, Eve Straussman-Pflanzer leads a noble effort to reevaluate Dolci's paintings, overshadowed for centuries by circulating copies of lesser quality. *The Medici's Painter* includes a foreword and chronology of the artist's life, as well as five chapters devoted to a careful analysis of Dolci's unique stylistic traits, the cultural and political contexts in which he worked, and an overview of his reception by his contemporaries and later writers. Francesca Baldassari's essay "Diligenza Pratica Pazienza: The Painting of Carlo Dolci" presents both the luxurious finish of Dolci's works and his personal spiritual interest in religious subject matters as reasons why he served as a painter to the Medici family in Florence and why his works remain worthy of consideration today. Closely examining a range of paintings,

including *Salome with the Head of John the Baptist* (ca. 1666–70, Royal Collection, London) and *Saint Agatha* (1664/65, private collection), Baldassari points out that the glazed surfaces with jewel-like colors painted by Dolci have long been admired as “impressive technical accomplishments—the result of his documented slowness and otherworldly calling to perfection” (22). The book’s numerous high-quality illustrations invite the reader to enter Dolci’s realm of impossibly tight brushstrokes and alluringly saturated hues. In “Looking at Carlo Dolci,” Edward Goldberg examines seventeenth-century criticism of Dolci, which could have perhaps been presented more clearly from the outset of the book as directly influencing Dolci’s later reception. The artist and biographer Filippo Baldinucci, for example, wrote of the “diligence” of Dolci in a way that suggested his works were lacking in invention. Goldberg makes the important point that most of Dolci’s works would have been placed in personal spaces within his patrons’ homes. It would be fascinating to hear more about how such domestic settings might have influenced the artist’s delicate style in works like the *Christ Child with a Garland of Flowers* (1663, Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza, Madrid), where the Christ Child’s open gesture and gentle gaze invite the viewer’s devotion. While works by Dolci recall some stylistic aspects of paintings by Correggio and Bronzino, his style remains original, and perhaps most comparable to the brilliant effects created through the technique of *pietre dure*, as Scott Nethersole points out in “Carlo Dolci and the Art of the Past.” Lisa Goldenberg Stoppato’s essay “Doctor and Confratello: Antonio Lorenzi’s Patronage of Carlo Dolci” includes an unusual focus on Dolci’s bourgeois patron, Doctor Lorenzi, who also treated the artist for depression. The reader is left feeling that there is yet more to be discovered about Dolci, especially in examining his *Self Portrait* (1674, Uffizi, Florence), a simultaneously melancholic and playful self-representation.

Straussman-Pflanzer’s final essay is a fascinating presentation of widely varying reactions to the artist’s paintings, ranging from the praise of Thomas Jefferson, to John Ruskin’s utmost disdain. The few narrative paintings and drawings included in the book are not discussed in depth, even though Dolci’s use of chalk to softly model the features of his sitters, as in the *Portrait of a Girl* (1665, Getty, Los Angeles), is both exquisite and reminiscent of Rubens’s approach to depicting children. That the reader is left with a yearning to learn more about Dolci and his meticulous painting and drawing techniques is a testament to the authors’ success in arguing on behalf of the artist’s merits.

Veronica Maria White, *Princeton University Art Museum*

Baroque Seville: Sacred Art in a Century of Crisis. Amanda Wunder.

University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2017. xviii + 210 pp. \$84.95.

The artistic efflorescence of late seventeenth-century Seville coincided with the city’s economic and political decline. This apparent paradox is at the center of Amanda