

The volume is beautifully designed, with extensive reproductions of both Gentileschi's paintings and a wide range of *comparanda*, though the omission of a complete bibliography, in favor of a list of "works cited" at the end of each essay, is unfortunate. But this is a small criticism; Barker's volume will be vital for Gentileschi scholars—and scholars of the Italian Baroque and early modern women in general—for many years to come.

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*Art and Violence in Early Renaissance Florence*. Scott Nethersole.  
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Scott Nethersole's *Art and Violence in Early Renaissance Florence* is indebted to a Warburgian tradition rich in textual sources. The humanist writings and diaristic accounts that he quotes throughout the book illuminate conceptual understandings of violence that were current in fifteenth-century Tuscany and are the bedrock of his discussion. These literary sources, even more than the sociopolitical fabric or religious history of Tuscany, of which he is well aware, govern Nethersole's approach to the art he discusses.

For Nethersole, any definition of violence simply as bodily damage (he does not consider the destruction of architecture or the mutilation of public imagery) is limited if not misleading. He asks his readers to locate violence and to consider how a scenography of familiar architectural settings in narrative images provided viewers entry into the stories being told. As he posits in his last chapter, however, violence in art can be on, rather than in, the image, where the artist's expressive marks in paint or on stone are signs of attack, and are thus part of the narrative rather than a function of personal style.

A chapter on the Pazzi Conspiracy, of 1478, raises probing questions about differences between hagiographical or heroicizing depictions of violence and the actual event being depicted. One might ask why the only historical images of the Pazzi attack are at the bottom third of Bertoldo's commemorative medals, leaving the portrait busts of the two Medici brothers and simplified views of the altar where murder and attempted assassination took place as the most clearly legible parts of the medal. Was the joining of a historical event with a portrait bust, normally reserved for medallic ruler portraits, a subtle assertion of Medici de facto rulership in the city? Bertoldo's medals also raise questions about Florentine reticence to use art as a visual record of violence, especially since images of actual hanging bodies occur only in drawings, artists' *aides-mémoires*, that never found outlets in finished paintings. Perhaps violent imagery was familiar enough to contemporary Florentines—think of hanged and decaying bodies swinging by ropes from the parapets of the Palazzo della Signoria or the Bargello—that responses were not what a modern viewer might expect.

Nethersole points out that in the latter part of the fifteenth century depictions of a scourged or crucified Christ show an increasing idealization of the human body, free of the physical evidence of torture. These heroicized images of the flagellated Christ depart from written sources describing the event, such as the fourteenth-century *Meditations on the Life of Christ*—and, one might add, from contemporary passion plays. How, he asks, do images of unmitigated or imminent corporal brutality become aestheticized into what we now too narrowly call art? Despite the idealizing of Christ's body, he claims that flagellation and martyrdom imagery, in general, served to “make yourself present,” collapsing sequential time into the singular moment of the event that Mircea Eliade describes as sacral time—when the viewer is a full participant in the action depicted rather than pretending to be there. Rules of decorum seem to have dictated a measured physical reaction to the often-gory events depicted in martyrdom scenes, resulting in witnesses (our surrogates) being treated as framing elements that make long-ago events contemporary and help viewers to concentrate on the image or the miracle itself, rather than on the *mise-en-scène*.

Nethersole sanitizes the blood and gore of assassinations and martyrdoms through references to historical and hagiographical texts, as if such verbal accounts really explain mob violence. I miss what I think was the wild menace of angry gangs running through narrow streets, endangering anyone in their way. Furthermore, in conjuring up viewers' responses to the images (a tricky proposition at best), Nethersole does not indicate that the reactions of viewers steeped in new humanist learning and those in the midst of the action might differ.

Nethersole's book, in laying out a framework for thinking about how violence is depicted, invites us to be active participants—not simply viewers—in the represented narrative; that invitation should provoke animated responses not only to the art but also to the way we talk about it.

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*Divine and Demonic Imagery at Tor de'Specchi, 1400–1500: Religious Women and Art in 15th-Century Rome.* Suzanne M. Scanlan.

Visual and Material Culture, 1300–1700. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2018. 220 pp. + 25 color pls. \$115.

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Susan M. Scanlan traces the patronage of the female religious community known as Oblates of Santa Francesca Romana from its founding, by the devout Francesca Bussa de Ponziani (1384–1440), to the first hagiographic accounts and the canonization trials in 1440, 1443, and 1451, to the decorative campaigns of 1468 and 1485. The frescoes in the *chiesa vecchia* and the *antico refettorio* all center on the would-be Saint Francesca: her