

*Miraculous Encounters: Pontormo from Drawing to Painting*. Bruce Edelstein and Davide Gasparotto, eds.

Exh. Cat. Los Angeles: J. Paul Getty Museum, 2018. 160 pp. \$40.

---

*Miraculous Encounters* is an exhibition and accompanying catalogue organized around Jacopo da Pontormo's (1494–1557) masterpiece, the *Visitation* (ca. 1528–29). The altar painting from the Tuscan parish church of Carmignano is making a miraculous journey of sorts in order to raise funds for the historic Franciscan friary attached to the church, which is in danger of collapsing. *Miraculous Encounters* is a collaboration between the Uffizi, Florence (with an Italian edition of the catalogue), the Morgan Library & Museum, New York, and the Getty Museum, Los Angeles.

Bruce Edelstein's essay (17–61) resolves numerous mysteries surrounding the *Visitation*, which represents a miraculous encounter between two pregnant women, the Virgin Mary and her cousin Saint Elizabeth, as recounted in the Gospel of Luke (1:39–45). For example, the two female attendants are not mentioned in the scripture, but Edelstein traces the iconography back to a medieval mosaic in the Florentine baptistery. Study of this painting was significantly aided by scientific analysis from a restoration begun in fall 2013. Cristina Gnoni Mavarelli reviews the conservation history (63–67), followed by Daniele Rossi (69–79) recounting how conservation uncovered instructive details that had been hidden under later overpainting and gave insights into the artist's process. It became evident, for example, that Pontormo did not employ the customary cartoon when transferring the composition to the large panel but, rather, the squaring technique. The grid discovered in the underdrawing of the painting is identical to the one applied in a red-over-black chalk drawing of the group of four women in the Uffizi (inv. 461 F). Given the high degree of finish, the drawing can almost certainly be identified as the *modello* of a *Visitation* by Pontormo mentioned by Giovanni Cinelli in 1677, which he related to the full-size original, then in a villa of the Pinadori family near Carmignano. Bonaccorso Pinadori, a merchant of pigments and other art materials in Florence, who counted Pontormo and his pupil Agnolo Bronzino (1503–72) among his clients, is the most likely patron for the painting, which could explain the innovative choice of intense chromatic hues.

Vasari does not mention the *Visitation* in Pontormo's biography in the 1568 edition of the *Vite*, probably because he was unaware of its existence. However, he singles out two portraits the artist made in the same years, 1528–30, when Florence was besieged by imperial troops. Pontormo's maturity and the key turning point in the development of his art fall exactly in this timeframe. According to Vasari, Francesco Guardi (1514–54) was portrayed in the habit of a soldier, which he esteemed a very beautiful work. It is quite likely that the *Portrait of a Halberdier*, at the Getty Museum, represents the young Guardi, around 1529–30. A fine red-chalk drawing (Uffizi, inv. 6701 F) can be seen as a preparatory study. From Vasari's account we know that Bronzino painted a cover for

this portrait, depicting Pygmalion—this work, of slightly smaller dimensions, still exists (Uffizi, inv. 1890 no. 9933). The *Portrait of a Young Man in a Red Cap* (rediscovered in 2008, now in the collection of Mr. and Mrs. Tomilson Hill) is almost identical in size to the *Halberdier*, and the pose of the sitter is strikingly similar, with the face seen frontally and the body turned to a forty-five-degree angle. This might be the second portrait Vasari mentions, representing Carlo Neroni (1511–67). Neroni must have ordered his image subsequently, around 1530, to conform explicitly to the model.

The exhibition focuses on eleven works (though only five were on view in New York), presenting a series of “miraculous encounters” between paintings, and between paintings and drawings. Since this is a small selection, each work is analyzed in detail. In addition to the essays and catalogue entries, the catalogue boasts nearly twenty pages of large, colorful illustrations of details from the three main paintings. It makes an essential contribution to our understanding of Pontormo and is a joy to leaf through as well.

Gudrun Dauner, *Munich, Germany / Philadelphia, PA*  
doi:10.1017/rqx.2019.393

*Jüdisch-christliche Buchmalerei im Spätmittelalter: Ashkenasische Haggadah-Handschriften aus Süddeutschland und Norditalien.* Franziska Amirov.  
Berlin: Deutscher Verlag für Kunstwissenschaft, 2018. 304 pp. €99.

One of the challenges presented by medieval Jewish book art is understanding to what extent this art was actually “Jewish.” It is well known that both Jewish and Christian artisans participated in each other’s book production. Manuscript illumination in particular, which did not necessarily imply knowledge of the other’s language, often provided common ground for interreligious cooperation. The book under review, based on Franziska Amirov’s doctoral dissertation, addresses this issue right away, referring in its title to the imagery of Hebrew manuscripts as “Jewish-Christian.” According to the author, her main goals are to uncover contacts between Jews and Christians through Hebrew illuminated manuscripts and to trace Christian influence on Jewish book illumination (38). To do so, the author focuses on Haggadah (Passover tale) manuscripts produced in Southern Germany and Northern Italy (Ashkenaz) during the fifteenth century.

To make the book accessible to a general audience that is not acquainted with Jewish literary genres, the author includes a history of the text of the Haggadah in the first chapter. The second chapter provides historical background to the discussion. It addresses the condition of the Jewish communities in late medieval Ashkenaz and their relationship to their Christian surroundings, with a focus on Jewish-Christian collaboration in manuscript production. Next, the author presents the state of research of