Claudia Swan. *Art, Science, and Witchcraft in Early Modern Holland: Jacques de Gheyn II (1565–1629)*.
Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005. xvi + 254 pp. index. illus. bibl. $85. ISBN: 0–521–82674–8.

Claudia Swan's *Art, Science, and Witchcraft* examines the interactions between art and science in seventeenth-century Holland through the work of Jacques de Gheyn II, the prolific Dutch artist who painted some of the earliest flower still-life images. Among de Gheyn's vast production, the book focuses on two distinct groups of images, which differ drastically in subject matter, tone, and execution: the images representing the natural world of plants and animals and the images illustrating the magical world of witches and demons. Inspired by David Freedberg's concern to understand the relationship "between particular kinds of knowledge on the one hand and individual representational genres on the other" (5), Swan interprets de Gheyn's images of nature within the context of seventeenth-century natural history and the artist's imagery of witchcraft in relation to contemporary thoughts on demons, melancholy, and the imagination. The author also explains how de Gheyn's images of nature and witchcraft are described, respectively, by the critical terms *near het leven* and *uyt den gheest* that Karel van Mander introduced to Dutch art criticism in 1604 to define images made "after life" (*near het leven*) and images made "from the mind or the spirit" (*uyt den gheest*). Relating van Mander's terminology to "contemporary distinctions between naturalism and *phantasia* — and hence between mimesis and imagination" (196), Swan structures her book on the dichotomy between images of nature and images of witches, science and art, mimesis and imagination, and naturalism and *phantasia*.

Part 1 is dedicated to de Gheyn's images of nature, including the exquisite Lugt album and his early flower still-life paintings. Swan reconstructs effectively the intellectual links between de Gheyn and scholars of natural history at the University of Leiden, where the artist lived from 1595 to 1603. She also investigates the meaning of the term *after life* before its appearance in art criticism, explaining how, in sixteenth-century natural history, *after life* was a label widely used to guarantee the one-to-one correspondence between an image and the specimen it represented: indeed, to make possible the substitution of the image for the thing itself. Finally, Swan discusses the role of images in natural history, firmly aligning her interpretation with the paradigm that Michel Foucault identified as characteristic of early modern science. Unlike modern science that investigates nature according to its hidden structure, early modern science classified nature according to its visible characteristics, which are best described through images of individual specimens made after life. Tables, diagrams, and grids, which, as Swan shows, are also widely used in sixteenth-century books on natural history, connect individual specimens (or their images) to each other.

In the second part of the book the focus shifts to de Gheyn's images of witchcraft, which Swan interprets in relation to Jan Wier's and Reginald Scot's writings on witches and demons. These authors, who had considerable influence in the Netherlands, did not believe in the power of witches as such but in the powers of the devil. It is the devil who plants images of witchcraft in the deluded imagination of melancholic old women, forcing them to believe in the reality of such fantastic images. According to Swan, "de Gheyn's pictures of witchcraft partake of a broader discussion or argument about the reality of witchcraft. And they manifest the logic of those arguments pictorially" (174). Following Scot's thinking on the relationship between imagination, melancholy, and witchcraft, Swan also suggests parallels with the role of the melancholic imagination in witchcraft and artistic creation, although a more in-depth treatment of these fascinating interactions might have been desirable.

Art, Science, and Witchcraft is full of insights, especially in the interpretation of de Gheyn's images of nature, such as the Lugt album or the drawing representing witches and a crab. Advocating "ways of seeing witchcraft as an image" (24), it is also a contribution to recent interpretations of witchcraft as a fantasy. More problematic is its interpretative framework, which opposes images of nature to images of fantasy, science to art, mimesis to *phantasia*. Although the book starts effectively with the analysis of de Gheyn's drawing representing, side by side, a crab made after life and scenes of witchcraft made from the mind, it then proceeds by separating what de Gheyn ostensibly saw as related. The structural dichotomy of the book makes it more difficult to investigate how mimesis and imagination worked jointly, albeit differently, in natural and fantastic images, or how the wondrous, abnormal, and magical were part and parcel of the classification of nature in early modern Europe. Recent scholarship by historians of art, culture, science, and philosophy, whose works Swan often quotes, amply discusses the visual, social, epistemological, cultural, and intellectual interrelations between art

and science: indeed, the collapsing together of the two categories. But in *Art, Science, and Witchcraft* this interrelationship between art and science is argued only at the very end of the investigation, when it is too late to relate the epistemological analysis of de Gheyn's works with other cogent themes to the understanding of the relationships between art and science — such as agency, social interactions, reception, and cognition — which are relegated to lists of rhetorical questions. Fundamentally unresolved is also the concluding, speculative suggestion that de Gheyn's pictures articulate Rene Descartes's philosophical debate on the credibility of images, a suggestion that would have deserved deeper scrutiny. Undoubtedly successful, however, is the author's interpretation of specific works of art by de Gheyn and of the cultural context of their production.

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https://doi.org/10.1353/ren.2007.0043 Published online by Cambridge University Press