

*Exporting Caravaggio: The Crucifixion of Saint Andrew.* Erin E. Benay. Cleveland Masterwork Series 4. Cleveland: Cleveland Museum of Art, 2017. xiv + 170 pp. \$28.95.

---

The *Crucifixion of Saint Andrew*, purchased by the Cleveland Museum of Art in 1976, is one of only seven works by Caravaggio in the US and the only altarpiece. It has recently undergone a two-year conservation process during which extensive research was undertaken to try to discover more about the commission, the subject, and the fortunes of the painting after it left Naples. All of this is covered in this volume written by art historian Erin E. Benay, the fourth in the Cleveland Masterwork series. Benay concludes, based on style and the manner of execution, that the painting was completed in 1606–07, during Caravaggio's first period in Naples. In all probability, the work was commissioned by Juan Alfonso Pimental de Herrera, Duke of Benavente and 25th Viceroy of Naples, in connection with his renovation of the tomb of Saint Andrew in the cathedral of Amalfi. When Herrera left Naples, in 1610, he brought the *Saint Andrew* with him, and it is described with great precision in a 1653 inventory of the Benavente collection. Cleveland purchased it from the sale of the Arnaiz collection in Madrid, suggesting that the work stayed in Spain in private hands for over three centuries.

Benay's discussion of the painting is framed within the contexts of Caravaggio's career and, in particular, his first period in Spanish Naples, in 1606–07, immediately after he fled Rome. Despite the limits that this situation must have imposed on the painter—who could not have brought his studio with him and is famous for never producing a drawing—his protectors secured him commissions. Drawing on his painter's recall, he summoned up a repertoire of Roman figures to create works that are experiments in space and figural arrangement. The *Seven Acts of Mercy* and the *Madonna of the Rosary*, both from this period, are, to be frank, wonderfully strange paintings. The *Saint Andrew*, while more conventional, still offers us the partial figures of witnesses in the foreground, the kind of abbreviated close-ups he continued to explore in later works, tightly encircling the base of the cross, and sets the whole drama at a dizzying *di-sotto-in-su* perspective.

In chapter 2, "Martyring Saint Andrew," Benay might make a little too much of too little. She points out the many seventeenth-century published sources Caravaggio might have consulted to picture the precise iconography of Saint Andrew's crucifixion, which remains a relatively unusual subject. But iconographic fidelity was more an exception than a rule for Caravaggio, and it is hard to think that he sought out specific sources. In fact, his use of a standard, T-shaped cross for Andrew's crucifixion marks the end of a sixteenth-century tradition; it was up to painters of the seventeenth century to adopt the more immediately recognizable x-shaped, or decussate, cross, which became Andrew's main attribute.

In chapters 3 through 5, Benay elucidates the case of Caravaggio in Naples, the importance of Spanish vice-regal patronage in the early seventeenth century, and what amounts to the relatively limited appeal of tenebrism among Spanish collectors in general, who largely seemed to prefer the coloristic vibrancy of the painters of the Venetian school. Having provided a variety of contextual considerations, Benay turns to technical analysis (chapter 6) and to the presentation of evidence, gleaned from the painstaking conservation process, to distinguish Cleveland's picture from its copies.

One of Benay's main interests throughout the book is the perceived demotion of Caravaggio's altarpiece from a devotional object to one of private ownership, a fate shared, around the same time, by the artist's *Death of the Virgin*, which was sold to the Gonzaga, in Mantua, in 1607. Before it went to Mantua, the *Death of the Virgin* was displayed in the house of Giovanni Magni, a Mantuan ambassador in Rome, who described the work as modern. Interestingly, he also decreed that making copies of the work was forbidden (*Correspondance de Rubens et documents épistolaires, 1600–1608*, vol. 1 [1887], 362). No such fiat against copying appears to have existed for the *Saint Andrew*, of which there are three other copies, the best attributed to Louis Finson, who himself owned half-shares (with the Amsterdam artist Abraham Vinck) in at least two works by Caravaggio, one of them the famous *Madonna of the Rosary*, made at approximately the same time as the *Saint Andrew*.

In the final chapter, Benay returns to the discussion of Caravaggio's modernity, and notes that the displacement of his pictures from their functional, sacred contexts into private collections was part of what made Caravaggio so famous and, perhaps, what made him so modern. While we might see the rejection of many of his religious commissions, or their later removal, as failures, their mobility was essential to their reputation and their influence, and to the persistence of his popularity today.

Sally Hickson, *University of Guelph*  
doi:10.1017/rqx.2019.401

*Artemisia Gentileschi in a Changing Light*. Sheila Barker, ed.

The Medici Archive Project Series 4. Turnhout: Harvey Miller, 2017. 248 pp. €125.

---

As Sheila Barker points out in the introduction to this collection of essays, there has been no shortage of scholarship concerning Artemisia Gentileschi in recent years. And much of it has teetered between examining the artist from a feminist viewpoint or not, creating rifts in attribution and interpretation that seem impossible to bridge. There is a certain irony in this, because it was the publication of Mary D. Garrard's groundbreaking, staunchly (and, to this reviewer's mind, rightly) feminist monograph, *Artemisia Gentileschi: The Image of the Female Hero in Italian Baroque Art* (1989), that propelled this growth in scholarship. Earlier studies, primarily by Roberto Longhi