

result, are largely deprived of any light. The documentary record, unfortunately, does little to elucidate any of this, but it does testify to a secrecy on Michelangelo's part in respect to his evolving plans for the building. Maybe that secrecy was fuelled by indecision, but maybe, too, it was exacerbated by Michelangelo's gradual withdrawal and by an increasing senility, rumours of which, as Vasari records, Ligorio and his associates had long been circulating.

These complications aside, and despite the positive slant placed on Michelangelo's late activities, the book provides an engrossing and refreshingly different account of this great artist during a neglected and poorly understood period of his life.

Giovanna Guidicini, *Triumphal Entries and Festivals in Early Modern Scotland* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2020), 349 pp. incl. 23 colour and 45 b&w ills, ISBN 9782503585413, €90
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Architectural history remains the most insular branch of histories of cultural artefacts. Whereas books or music can be read or performed anywhere, and paintings and statues are portable, buildings need to be studied *in situ*, which means that the architectural histories of most countries are written by their natives. Rarely do we have an Anthony Blunt, writing authoritatively about buildings in Renaissance and Baroque France and Italy. It is refreshing, therefore, to have Giovanna Guidicini, a native of Ferrara and alumna of Bologna University, cast her Italian gaze over such a wide range of Scottish cultural artefacts. She looks beyond the usual suspects of England and the Low Countries to point out parallels in the great Italian Renaissance cities and courts, as well as France, which produces great fruits. Thus, when discussing the Butter Tron, a weigh house for dairy products as well as luxury goods — a more impressive piece of civic architecture than Edinburgh's Tolbooth (Scots for town hall), until Cromwell reduced it to a ruin — she compares it with Orsanmichele in Florence rather than a more obvious Dutch cheese weigh house. Her encyclopaedic knowledge of Renaissance triumphal entries and festivities, a field that has exploded in recent years, is displayed throughout the book, a typical example being her demonstration that the iconography of the arch with the cardinal virtues in Margaret Tudor's 1503 entry follows that in Bartolomeo di Bartoli's *La Canzone delle Virtù e delle Scienze*, written in Bologna in 1349 but not printed until 1904.

Another strength of the book is its relating of ephemeral productions for specific events to the wider context of Scottish art and architecture. An example of the insights this allows is that the scenes on painted ceilings, found in many elite Scottish houses around 1600, were intended to be seen by moving rather than static observers — which, as soon as one reads it, makes sense. It explains why the quality of the paintings can vary from the sumptuous panels in the gallery at Pinkie House for Alexander Seton

(educated at the Collegio Romano), which explicitly evoked the *Stoa Poikile* in Athens, to the sketchy, almost perfunctory nature of some of the images on painted ceilings such as that at Culross Palace. The latter, Guidicini persuasively suggests, were designed principally to function mnemonically for practitioners of *Ars Memorativa*, among whom was James VI's queen, Anne of Denmark. She was taught it by William Fowler, one of the devisers of the festivities for the baptism of Prince Henry in 1594, while William Schaw, royal master of works, prescribed it for initiates of modern Freemasonry in his first statutes in 1598.

The book brings together and interprets a vast body of archival material on royal entries between 1503 and 1650, focusing not exclusively but overwhelmingly on Edinburgh. An 'Introduction to Edinburgh as a Ceremonial City' is followed by seven chapters beginning outside the burgh's bounds, and proceeding to the customary stations where arches were erected, pageants enacted and fountains flowed with wine during the course of an entry within the burgh, namely: the West Port (the gate in the city walls expanded after the defeat at Flodden in 1513); the Overbow (the old west gate in the walls erected by James II in the mid-fifteenth century); the Butter Tron (at the head of the Lawnmarket in the High Street); the Tolbooth with the adjacent high kirk of St Giles and Mercat (Scots for market) Cross; the Salt Tron; and finally the Netherbow, the gate at the eastern end of the High Street which led into the separate burgh of Canongate, at the east end of which was the palace of Holyrood. Guidicini avoids this device becoming a straitjacket, however, making it clear in the introduction that these are merely hooks to allow her to discuss material from any entry where appropriate. The potential downside is that, to build a picture of one particular entry, the reader has to search through each chapter. This problem is remedied by an invaluable chronological index of all the entries, as well as a comprehensive general index. To compensate for the dearth of illustrations of Scottish entries, the book contains an illuminating range of images of comparable material from elsewhere.

Inevitably, a book of such wide scope raises questions for further research. The assumption that in 1503 Margaret Tudor entered Edinburgh through what must have been a precursor of the post-1513 West Port, rather than by the main road from the south, needs substantiating given that Margaret had lodged the night before a few miles south of Edinburgh and the first arch she encountered is described as an ephemeral wooden structure. One wonders if the mechanical opening globes featuring in several entries, which first made an appearance at the Holyrood Tournament of the Wild Knight and Black Lady in 1506, are the same one recycled. And to what extent were the Lords Lyon, kings of arms and heralds behind the artworks for the entries? In a paper in 1997, on the 1503 entry of Margaret Tudor, and on crown steeples, I argued that the entry's arches were explicitly triumphal and pointed out that a herald had visited Rome in 1502. Another herald, John Scrymgeour of the Myres, was master of works to James V. Certainly, some painters who worked on entries, such as Walter Binning and John Workman, are also known as heraldic painters, and the connections need further exploration.

Such questions are not meant to diminish Guidicini's achievement. There is only so much one can cram into one book. She may have written the essential reference work on Scottish entries, but hopefully it will not be her last word on the subject.