

may be inflected by the specific historical and local circumstances that characterize place and patronage.

While each chapter merits study, general and specialized readers alike might gain from an exploration of the open-access website that houses the database connected to the volume: <http://continentallegories.univie.ac.at>. The database, a necessary supplement to the overall topics and a few individual chapters, is well organized and contains excellent, high-resolution color photographs that supplement the research in the volume. This provides the added benefit of expanding beyond the confines of a work published in a traditional manner with a necessarily limited number of reproductions; it does not include all material represented in the volume (e.g., East-Central European examples). Searchable via place, a timeline, and index (using Iconclass codes for standardization), the database allows the reader to compare multiple images at the same site, or more than one artist active at a given site. It is a useful vehicle for connecting spatial-temporal material to narrative, with the caveat that the data presentation in the volume sometimes weighs the discussion down and subsumes the main ideas; at other times it provides insight into time-space phenomena. One of the main contributions of this well-researched volume is the editors' participation in the further refinement of these useful and often groundbreaking methodologies.

Carolyn C. Guile, *Colgate University*

Buying Baroque: Italian Seventeenth-Century Paintings Come to America.

Edgar Peters Bowron, ed.

The Frick Collection Studies in the History of Art Collecting in America. University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2017. xvi + 186 pp. \$69.95.

This book presents ten essays by distinguished scholars, most of them museum curators: Edgar Peters Bowron, Virginia Billiant, Eric M. Zafran, Marco Grassi, Richard E. Spear, Pablo Pérez D'Ors, Patrice Marandel, Andria Derstine, Ian Kennedy, and Andrea Bayer. Their essays were first presented at a 2013 symposium held at the Frick, organized by the Center for the History of Collecting. All of the contributions probe the history of collecting Baroque paintings in America from the late nineteenth century to the present. While early American connoisseurs generally regarded the Baroque with distaste, the increasing availability of such works to private and public collectors during the vicissitudes of two world wars helped change their minds. At least, that's the subtext that seems to weave itself in and out of these highly detailed accounts of providence and provenance. As Mr. John Ringling's art advisor Julius Böhler put it, "we bought whatever pictures we thought were right and good in price" (23). The case for American Baroque connoisseurship seems to have been formulated, at least in part, against the backdrop of this availability.

Someday, someone will write a great biography in English about the Italian critic and twentieth-century art historian Roberto Longhi. In 1911 Longhi wrote his dissertation on Caravaggio, publishing his first articles on the painter in the 1920s; one suspects that the specter of death that haunted Europe after World War I created a receptive atmosphere for the rediscovery of the prince of darkness of Baroque painting. In fact, Baroque painting in general provided a symphony of ecstatic martyrdom that would not have been out of place among the agonies and mutilations of newly technologized warfare. In 1951, Longhi curated the first, and now famous, exhibition of Caravaggio paintings, further legitimizing not only Baroque art but renewing interest in European painting in general, just as the center of modernism was taking hold in New York. This perhaps helps to contextualize the final essay in the book by Andrea Bayer, on collecting Baroque art at the Metropolitan Museum in New York, titled “Better Late than Never.” Although the Met did collect Baroque paintings in the early part of the twentieth century, Bayer points out that a systematic approach to a representative collection only began in the 1960s and 1970s, guided by the influence of Wittkower’s championing of Baroque style. Andria Derstine provides a nice counterpoint in an essay that highlights the perspicacity of the Detroit Institute of Arts, which exhibited Baroque paintings in its 1883 Art Loan Exhibition and increased its Old Master holdings through donations by the early patron and newspaperman James E. Scripps (gifts later augmented by his heirs) and through the steady and determined curatorship of museum director William R. Valentiner. It’s ironic to think that patrimony was, in very recent years, very nearly lost to the slow erosion of Detroit’s urban infrastructure and the disasters of Wall Street.

It is always a pleasure to read Richard E. Spear, who in this volume offers a brief history of the indefatigable art historians responsible for the rediscovery and reassessment of Baroque painting in the twentieth century, scholars who exerted considerable influence on American collecting. His essay is an homage to pioneering scholars and beloved teachers, many of whom will be equally familiar to the art historical experts likely to be the chief readers of this volume. Other essays examine the collections of the Hartford Atheneum and of Walter P. Chrysler (both by Zafran), reminiscences by third-generation art dealer Marco Grassi about the role Grassi family ancestors—conservators and art historians—played in the creation of American collections, the Museo de Arte de Ponce (Pablo Pérez D’Ors), the Heim Gallery in London (Marandel), and the Bob Jones University Collection (Kennedy). In his introductory essay, Edgar Peters Bowron characterizes the 1950s and 1960s as a period of rehabilitation for the reputation of Baroque painting in America, attested to by a proliferation of documents—letters, bills of sale, diaries, stock records—presented by the contributors here. American connoisseurship for Baroque painting was largely created by curators, collectors, and dealers who relied on precisely the kind of meticulous art historical scholarship that characterizes these essays. This volume is a tribute to that tradition.

Sally Hickson, *University of Guelph*