

Marian imagery to the depictions of the four Evangelists and their distinctive and intriguing personal cityscapes. In “Place and Memory: The Franciscan Maestà,” Flora sets out an original argument regarding Cimabue’s influential manipulation of the iconography of the Maestà genre to emphasize specific links between the Virgin and the Order.

The underlying premise throughout is that Cimabue assimilated and mediated Franciscan doctrine to a remarkable level to create new visual forms which best represent the Order’s ideals and serve to promote the specificity of Saint Francis and his role as an *alter Christi*. Flora’s careful research and her understanding of Franciscan writings, most notably those of Bonaventure, provide real insights into the relationships between image and text. She rightly raises the vexed issue of agency, and this is hard to resolve. She proposes the necessity of “a protracted dialogue between the artist; members of his workshop and the friars themselves” (19) and there is what may be an inevitable blurring of these boundaries throughout the book. How far can Cimabue be considered responsible for the innovations with which he is credited here and how far might he have been minutely directed by the Friars? Whatever the answer, Flora makes persuasive arguments regarding how the formal elements support and enhance the subtlety and nuance of the spiritual, doctrinal, and propagandist messages expressed and shows the artist’s central desire and ability to heighten the viewer’s experience.

The book is richly illustrated with images of Cimabue’s works and those of artists preceding, concurrent with, and following him. Providing what must be an almost complete catalogue of Cimabue’s oeuvre, perhaps for the first time, is very welcome. That so many of the Assisi works are damaged makes it hard to identify some details in the images discussed, but enabling cross-referencing with such a wide range of other works is a great achievement and will greatly benefit scholars. A significant weakness, for this reader, is the lack of dates in the captions. Having to constantly go back to the text, which is sometimes on a different page than the image, is frustrating.

In this impressively researched book Flora reclaims Cimabue’s importance and demonstrates the dynamic, innovative, and influential nature of early Renaissance art and its symbiotic relationship in Italian cultural and spiritual life.

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Mantegna and Bellini. Caroline Campbell, Dagmar Korbacher, Neville Rowley, and Sarah Vowles, eds.

Exh. Cat. London: The National Gallery Company, 2018. 304 pp. £35.

The book that accompanies the London-Berlin exhibition *Mantegna and Bellini* is not by any means a catalogue, since it follows the fashion of recent years in

omitting separate entries for each object exhibited, presumably because such a format is too technical or specialist to have commercial appeal. Instead, it presents high-quality illustrations of numerous works by the artists—brothers-in-law whose work transformed the history of painting in the Veneto and in Northern Italy in the later Quattrocento—along with short essays comparing the activity of the artists at various phases of their careers.

Following a series of sometimes controversial earlier exhibitions on Mantegna, one of which (Paris, Louvre, 2008) reactivated early twentieth-century quarrels about his seniority to and influence on Bellini, the 2018–19 show seems geared toward reinstating a cautious mid-twentieth-century consensus. While judiciously sidestepping the unresolvable question of Bellini's birth date, *Mantegna and Bellini* returns us to the position that Bellini is the junior artist, and that his first known works—none of them here dated to earlier than 1453—register the impact of Mantegna's obdurately sculptural style. An early *Pietà* by Bellini (Milan, Poldi Pezzoli) adapts the rocky landscape background of Mantegna's ca. 1450 *Adoration of the Shepherds* (New York, Metropolitan Museum) and is here dated to 1457, when Giovanni was working in Padua. Mantegna was then at work on his altarpiece for San Zeno in Verona: Bellini's close study of its spectacular predella panels is convincingly demonstrated. Drawing on the technical findings of a small exhibition in Venice in 2018, Bellini's Querini Stampalia *Presentation of Christ in the Temple* is presented as being based on a cartoon traced from an earlier (1453) version of the subject by Mantegna, now in Berlin.

For the premise of this exhibition to work, however, the sibling dialogue must be sustained beyond the earlier years of close contact, and correspondingly there are attempts to show that the mature Bellini in turn influenced Mantegna. The attempted even-handedness is not always supported by the works: while Bellini's Murano *Resurrection* of 1475–79 pointedly cites Mantegna as if to emphasize Bellini's superiority in rendering the natural world in its luminous vitality, there is little sign that the court painter of Mantua, now the most famous artist in Italy, responded to the challenge. It is a stretch to claim that Mantegna's anguished *Pietà with Angels* (now in Copenhagen), all grimace and rigor mortis, reflects lessons learned from Bellini's languid and sensuous dead Christs. There is moreover too much of an emphasis on seeing Mantegna's achievements in terms of the influence of Donatello's work in Padua, and not a word about the importance of the Paduan Trecento tradition. And there is only the barest consideration of function or meaning, as if the claim by a contemporary that Mantegna surpassed Bellini in invention were self-evident.

The exhibition at best was an invitation to look, requiring that the viewers explore the comparisons and juxtapositions for themselves. The purpose of this publication, however, is not fully clear. At their best (for instance the London/New York catalogue of 1992–93) individual entries can be miniature essays in acute critical observation as well as documentary and technical analysis. *Mantegna and Bellini* presents itself as a

survey, referring to and illustrating numerous works not on display. To find out what was exhibited, the reader has to skip to a checklist at the end, which includes provenance and selective bibliographical information with conspicuous omission of work by university-based scholars. This is not, then, a publication for specialist scholars or students, nor can it be said to give a nonspecialist public access to the scholarly state of the question on Mantegna and Bellini. Since it does not highlight newly attributed works on display—a new drawing for the *Triumphs of Caesar*, a *Resurrection of Christ* now shown to be a missing upper portion of Mantegna's *Descent into Limbo*—there is little sense of how exhibitions can be sites of scholarship and discovery. Surely the curators deserve a better record of their work?

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Leonardo da Vinci: A Closer Look. Alan Donnithorne.
London: Royal Collection Trust, 2019. 204 pp. £29.95.

Leonardo's Paradox: Word and Image in the Making of Renaissance Culture.
Joost Keizer.
London: Reaktion Books, 2019. 232 pp. £25.

On the occasion of the five hundredth anniversary of Leonardo's death, books on the artist continue to be published at an astonishing rate. And not surprisingly. We simply cannot get enough of him. He continues to enthrall scholars and nonspecialists alike, not only for his wide-ranging interests, above all in science, but also for the power of his art. The two books reviewed here, which represent very different approaches to the artist, capture just some of the fascination Leonardo has for so many.

The former head of paper conservation at Windsor Castle, Alan Donnithorne, seeks to explore Leonardo's drawings through a study of his materials and methods. His purpose is to celebrate the beauty and complexity of the artist's graphic work. Exploiting optical microscopy, infrared imaging, infrared transmittography, multispectral imaging, X-ray fluorescence, and other technological means, the author makes visible much that is not seen by the naked eye. His book is all about magnification. The results are enthralling. Exploring the uses of different kinds of colored paper, the use of stylus, metal point, chalk and charcoal, brush and mixed media, he guides the reader (or should I say viewer?) page after page from drawing to drawing. The reader is left in awe of Leonardo's aesthetic virtues.

Consider, for example, what Donnithorne has to say about a red chalk drawing from ca. 1503, probably related to the *Battle of Anghiari*, which he illustrates with two details, one of the horse's haunches, the other of the spectacularly gyrating head of the beast.