

Federico Barocci: Inspiration and Innovation in Early Modern Italy.
Judith W. Mann, ed.

Visual Culture in Early Modernity. London: Routledge, 2018. xviii + 194 pp. \$149.95.

One of the offshoots of the great St. Louis and London Barocci exhibitions in 2012 was a symposium, the papers of which form this book. The symposium took place in January 2013, and the papers are now available, five years later. The chapters show only some acknowledgement of what has transpired in Barocci scholarship in the last few years. But that does not lessen the value of the volume, which covers many aspects of the artist's work. The book is illustrated with color plates that do not require the reader to hunt down pictures in another volume. Babette Bohn and Judith Mann open the volume reinforcing what they believe to be an important outcome of the exhibition, stressing elements of reduced copies and a market orientation that is picked up by Bohn later. Carol Plazzotta adds to her research on the London *Madonna del Gatto* by publishing documents establishing a companion, *Rest on the Return to Egypt*, in the Brancaloni collection. Claudio Pizzorusso reviews Barocci's early career, especially connections to Francesco Menzocchi and Battista Franco. Alessandra Giannotti considers the influence of Urbino's artistic culture as a source of Barocci's naturalism, especially the maiolica and stucco industries. Stuart Lingo takes the opportunity of the exhibition to revisit themes from his previous work, reflecting on Barocci's life drawing and his unique ability to blend life observation with antique and contemporary models under the discipline of his relentless search for convincing figures. Babette Bohn returns to her work on Barocci's drawings in the St. Louis and London exhibitions, reflecting on the order in the "madness" of the artist's obsessive production by focusing on color and drawings of "extremities" (hands, feet), and seeing how the excess of drawn works feeds into a market outlet for Barocci. Judith Mann used the symposium to reflect on Barocci's doctrine of Mary, producing a very learned survey of a number of paintings featuring Mary, investigating their textual inspiration, citing comparanda, and offering a number of useful iconographic insights into a number of paintings. Richard Spear provides a useful review of Barocci's fees and cost of living, seeking to get at the question of his wealth and arguing that because Barocci executed mostly altarpieces, and then only infrequently, he missed out on a large swath of small-picture production, leaving him "very well off" but perhaps not rich. Finally, David Ekserdjian reflects on the survival of Barocci's drawings by studying a number of other artists' estates. He usefully translates and analyzes the *Minuta*, or inventory, of Barocci's studio at his death, tracing the survival and meaning of the indicated items.

All in all, the book represents the state of the art of English-language work on Barocci. Apart from many individual insights about documentary evidence, new cultural connections, and interpretations, something more could be said about the theme of workshop practice, a central preoccupation of the exhibition, and carried forward in the introduction and Bohn's chapter. The idea to move many of Barocci's

works into a category of copies for the free market is an important one, but more work still needs to be done on the pastel and painted heads and “reduced cartoons” that are promoted as this extra source of revenue. A traditional sense of connoisseurship is used to separate originals from copies, but the reader still lacks a clear sense of the glue that bound Barocci’s practice together. For example, some head studies are regarded as not preparatory because they do not match the painting. But head studies that do not match the final painting are more often than not determined by the desire to fill a page of paper (scaled down if too big, or up if too small). A good example of the complexities involved is shown in Berlin Kupferstichkabinet 20466 (on page 90), which is introduced as evidence of life drawing but is exactly half the size of the actual figure (as are a group of other drawings in Berlin), forcing one strongly to limit that claim. There is still more to be said about the artist, and the book is strongest in delving deeper into the Urbino context and understanding the artist in comparison to other artists and practices.

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Federico Barocci and the Oratorians: Corporate Patronage and Style in the Counter-Reformation. Ian F. Verstegen.

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This volume makes a valuable contribution to the study of Federico Barocci’s patronage by exploring his popularity with the Oratorians in Rome, and with the “Oratorian orbit” elsewhere, and how he helped “the fathers understand just what their aesthetic was” (2). In his introduction, Verstegen validates the concept of a collective Oratorian style, and points to his support of this by “analyzing how a style or aesthetic can emerge from the actors and the values and social organism they share” (6).

Verstegen begins by showing affinities between Barocci’s style and the focus of the Oratorians’ visual rhetoric on “direct, uncognized grace” (15) in his first chapter. He applies the concept of “Christian optimism” to the “intensely personal and ecstatic approach to prayer” (23) of Filippo Neri, the founder of the Congregation of the Oratory. The occurrence of visions in Neri’s devotions finds parallels in the development of visionary iconography in Barocci’s paintings, suggesting why Barocci’s eventual altarpieces for the Chiesa Nuova, in Rome, were considered so effective by Neri and other Oratorians.

In the second and third chapters, Verstegen discusses the two altarpieces Barocci executed for the Chiesa Nuova, the *Visitation* and the *Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple*. The two paintings belong to a unified program of Marian imagery, centered on the mysteries of the Virgin. Verstegen describes the *Visitation* as being itself a vision, rather than a depiction of a vision, which may account for its selection by Neri as the focus of his often-