

Miller Renberg calls attention to Salome and her mother as tools of moral instruction and illustrates the myriad uses of the Salome story by early modern sermonists. Chapter iv closes with the very different dancing of David, whose movement drew him not into sin, but closer to God. This striking comparison deserves more stage time in the book because it helps us understand the gendered evaluation of dance and the dancing body in new ways; while male bodies are associated with vertical, heaven-bound movement, women are grounded. There are important (and not always fully explored) implications here for the book's central claims about gender and access to the divine.

The concluding chapter endeavours to map the book's many themes onto the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in order to assess the performative 'rubrics' that resulted from centuries of 'discussions about dance' (p. 160). As Miller Renberg demonstrates, dance sets off a concatenation of sins and emerges as an emblem of sinful individualism, of the failed household, of communities in decline.

This book makes important contributions to an ongoing conversation in the field about dance and the body. The evidence that Miller Renberg marshals throughout the book is invariably interesting and evocative, but (at least for this reader, trained in literary studies) she does not always do as much with it as she could. As I write this review, I keep thinking of the arresting image of the 'carnall Gospellers' who think they 'have God by the toe' (p. 42) – what does this mean, and what are the implications for dance as a way of thinking through issues related to spiritual understanding and even ambition? The larger claims of the book can feel a bit unearned, and its expansive time frame ends up steering some of the most interesting and complex arguments into observations about ideas shifting over time. If some of the analysis and interpretation remains to be done, this is nevertheless an appealing book that consistently draws attention to new ways of thinking about the representation and discursive uses of moving bodies at a time of vast cultural and spiritual change.

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*Art and death in The Netherlands, 1400–1800*. Edited by Bart Ramakers and Edward H. Wouk. (Netherlands Yearbook for History of Art, 2022, 72.) Pp. 368 incl. 191 colour and black-and-white ills. Leiden–Boston: Brill, 2022. £149. 978 90 04 533374 5; 0169 6726  
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This book begins by informing readers that 'In pre-modern times, death was a more visible phenomenon than it is nowadays.' Really? Could any historian of early modern Europe see the photos of the coffins of Covid-19 victims in Bergamo in 2020, piled up in stacks because the cemeteries had run out of space, and not think of similar images of the coffins of plague victims piled up in stacks for the same reason between the 1340s and the 1650s? Could any historian of early modern Europe read the lament of a funeral director of Bergamo in 2020 – 'A generation has died in just over two weeks. We've never seen anything

like this' – and not think of the similar laments voiced by contemporaries in time of plague?

Despite the editors' opening disclaimer, therefore, this collection of eleven essays on the relationship between art and death in the Low Countries and its diaspora could hardly be more topical. The essays (all in English and all beautifully illustrated) are arranged chronologically, according to the period of the main object or event discussed, starting with a chapter on the tombs of Dukes Philip the Bold and John the Fearless of Burgundy, completed in 1412 and 1470 respectively, and ending with another on the death and funeral of Stadholder William IV of Orange in 1751. The editors state that the essays also fall into 'four categories, each characterised by a prevalent theme: bodily materiality; remembrance; theatricality; and what might be termed an anthropology of dying'. Although the majority of the chapters focus on the early modern Low Countries – with one on the Dutch Revolt and two on the Dutch Republic, one on Rembrandt and one on Rubens – several stress the 'diaspora' of Netherlands art. Andrew Murray's examination of the tombs of the dukes of Burgundy, originally in the Charterhouse of Champmol near Dijon, notes that Claus Sluter from Haarlem led the team that created the elaborate funeral monument of Duke Philip, which his son Duke John decreed must be the model for his own tomb together with an effigy of his wife, Margaret of Bavaria. (Because both tombs were moved and then ransacked in the 1790s, several of the fine alabaster statues of 'mourners' surrounding the effigies were stolen, and some must now be admired elsewhere – including four acquired by the Cleveland Museum of Art, Ohio.) Aleksandra Lipińska's study of the materials used to represent death in early modern Netherlandish funeral monuments includes a detailed examination of the impressive tomb of Melchior, baron Reden, in a church in Frýdland (now in the Czech Republic), done by the Amsterdam sculptor Gerhard Hendrik around 1610. Amy Knight Powell analyses the remarkable portrait in 1669 of Dirck Wilre, a slave trader who became governor of the fortress of El Mina, more than 2,000 miles away from the Netherlands on the coast of modern Ghana. She produces convincing evidence that the now forgotten artist, Pieter de Wit, painted the governor in his luxurious apartment in the castle, headquarters of the Dutch West India Company in Africa, making it probably the only 'real or imagined pre-photographic image of the interior of Elmina Castle or any other colonial fort in Africa'.

The volume contains a few errors – 'Breslau' should be Wrocław (p. 15); Egmont and Hornes were executed in 1568, not 1566 (p. 17) – and occasionally one could ask for more information. For example, when we are told that in 1650 'Anne of Austria and her entourage damaged church ornaments and furniture and pilfered alabaster figures' from the tombs of the dukes of Burgundy, it is perhaps relevant to mention (though it does not excuse her pilfering) that Anne was a direct descendant of the dukes through her great-grandfather, Emperor Charles V (whose early wills specified that he be buried in the Charterhouse beside them). An index would have been helpful. Nevertheless, anyone interested in the relationship between Dutch art and death between 1400 and 1800 will find much fascinating new material here, as well as a reminder of the enduring relevance of interment, bereavement and remembrance to those who remain.