

Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo, and the Renaissance in Florence / Edited by David Franklin.—Ottawa, Canada: National Gallery of Canada, in association with Yale University Press, August 2005.—380 p.: ill.—ISBN 0-88884-804-8: \$65.00.



The exhibition *Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo, and the Renaissance in Florence*, on view this past summer at its organizing institution, the National Gallery of Canada in Ottawa, was well-received by the Canadian public and media. It brought together over 120 objects from over 50 private and public collections, and many of the works traveling from Italy were on view in North America for the first time. Art created in Florence in the period 1500 to 1550, and the impact of the innovations of Leonardo da Vinci and Michelangelo on their peers, were the focus of the exhibition. The National Gallery was the sole venue for the exhibition, and it is therefore fortunate that the event and the scholarship were comprehensively documented in this substantial catalog.

In the catalog's preface the editor and primary curator of the exhibition, David Franklin, explains that the core criterion used for the selection of paintings, drawings, and sculpture was how well a work illustrated the concept of *disegno*, or "...objects in which the active and expressive figure is paramount, especially in the context of strong narrative content." Franklin, the National Gallery of Canada's Deputy Director and Chief Curator, has written many articles and books on topics in Italian Renaissance art, most notably *Painting in Renaissance Florence, 1500-1550* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2001). For this catalog, he has written an essay on drawing, while two other essays on painting and sculpture were contributed by Louis A. Waldman and Andrew Butterfield.

Butterfield, Waldman, and Franklin share an approach to Florentine art of the first half of the 1500s that relies on a close reading of the object and an examination of the relationships among artistic peers. They reject traditional art historical categories such as High Renaissance or Mannerist, which theorize a stylistic break between the art produced before and after the death of Raphael in 1520, preferring to center their discussions on the continuity of style shared by artists in Florence between 1500 and 1550. Each of the essays places its subject—drawing, painting, or sculpture—in the context of the academic art practices of the period. Franklin's essay on drawings describes their functional purpose for Florentine artists and identifies the different types—cartoons for frescoes, preparatory sketches, and compositional drawings—and the variety of materials. The impact of the major projects of Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo, and Vasari on art practice during this period is illustrated through works by Andrea del Sarto, Francesco Salviati, Jacopo da Pontormo, and others. In his essay, Waldman describes how the earlier trend toward an unadorned and archaizing manner, influenced by the followers of Savonarola, lost favor among younger artists like Franciabigio, Rosso Fiorentino, and Vasari, who embraced the idea of *invenzione* or originality, and artistic practice as an intellectual activity. Since Michelangelo dominated sculptural practice and theory during his lifetime, the artist is at the center of Butterfield's discussion of sculpture in the early to mid sixteenth century. Butterfield also references the work of Giovanni Francesco Rustici, Jacopo Sansovino, and Niccolò Tribolo, all represented in this exhibition.

More than twenty authors supplied catalog entries. The text is accessible to non-specialists. Reproductions are of generally high quality and provenance and references are supplied for each object. This book is highly recommended for academic, museum, and public libraries with collecting interests in Italian Renaissance art, since it brings together a large sampling of art objects produced in Florence in the period 1500 to 1550.

Rina Vecchiola, Reference Librarian/Instruction and Outreach Coordinator, University Libraries, Washington University in St. Louis, rvecchio@wustl.edu

Published and Copyright held by ARLIS/NA