

This is far from reductive source hunting; rather, it offers a fully realized view of Rembrandt as a creative thinker who considered a wide range of visual material to arrive at a satisfying expression of his own.

Readers less familiar with contemporary Dutch ideas about artistic imitation and emulation might wish that she had introduced her discussion of these concepts earlier than in chapter 4, perhaps in the preface. Not all visual comparisons she draws seem equally compelling to me, though each one made me think carefully about the possible relationship. These are small quibbles to make about such an accessible and stimulating book. Her informed, wide-ranging, sensitive, and above all intelligent presentation of ideas formed over the course of her career offers ample rewards for a variety of readers, those well versed in Rembrandt studies or new to them.

Catherine B. Scallen, *Case Western Reserve University*  
doi:10.1017/rqx.2023.607

*Renaissance Metapainting*. Péter Bokody and Alexander Nagel, eds.  
Studies in Medieval and Early Renaissance Art History. Turnhout: Harvey Miller, 2020. iv + 348 pp. €215.

---

Elegantly produced and lavishly illustrated, this collection of essays explores “paintings that make reference to painting itself” (4) through a series of case studies ranging from the fourteenth to the sixteenth century. Building on seminal works by André Chastel, Victor Stoichita, and Hans Belting, this volume is a most welcome addition to the study of the self-reflectivity of painting.

The title is an explicit homage to Victor Stoichita, who detected metapainting in self-portraits; signatures; representations of artists’ studios, frames, doors, windows, and mirrors; and of images-within-images in his 1993 classic study (*L’instauration du tableau: Metapinture à l’aube des Temps modernes*). But the collection has the merit of expanding Stoichita’s geographical and chronological span from Northern European painting between 1522 and 1675 to images from across Europe painted on a variety of supports—panels, canvases, walls, book pages—and ranging from the mid-thirteenth to the early sixteenth century. Another merit of the volume is the broadening of Belting’s influential view that the era of the Christian image ended in the early sixteenth century when the era of art began. As the editors explain, metapainting is not exclusively “a function of *l’art pour l’art*” but it can also “induce reflection on the status and making of images, elucidate theological problems, allude to levels of awareness inside a scene and for the viewer, or fine-tune thematic tensions” (8).

The book includes three foundational essays by André Chastel (1964), Klaus Krüger (1993), and Wolfgang Kemp (1995) that are translated into English for the first time, and eight new studies to elucidate the numerous ways artists across Europe engaged in

metapainting, while at the same time enhancing their works' religious and spiritual meaning.

Robert Brennan examines the metapictorial qualities of Giusto de' Menabuoi's frescoes in the Conti Chapel in the Basilica of Saint Anthony in Padua, showing how they mediated "a complex array of political and religious tensions rooted in the function of the chapel and the agenda of its patrons" (33). Péter Bokody considers statues in painted architectural settings between 1350 and 1450 as exemplary of how metapictorial experiments weaken when they are "replaced by a more repetitive approach" (10), as with Giotto's self-reflective images repeated by his followers. Erik Eising provides a wide-ranging excursus of religious images represented in fifteenth-century paintings and book illuminations from Siena, Bologna, Prague, Avignon, and Paris—all cities that shared pictorial models alongside political, cultural, and religious ties.

Nicholas Herman expands metapainting with a rich corpus of fifteenth-century European book illuminations to show how illuminators' virtuoso effects offered "a richer understanding of pictorial illusionism, artistic self-referentiality, and metapainting" (139). Anna Degler looks at saints' attributes as *parergon* (bywork), selecting Saint Lucy's eyes from Francesco del Cossa's Saint Lucy altarpiece to suggest that attributes were "meant to be seen and to comment on the rest of the painting" (208). Beate Fricke elucidates Durer's engagement "in artistic exploration of what 'representation' could be" (211) through an insightful analysis of blood traces, marble, and paint matter in his *Christ as the Man of Sorrow*. Alexander Nagel reaffirms his consequential interpretation that sixteenth-century painters staged archaic modes in their works "in an acknowledged gap between technical means and artistic meaning" (265). Shira Brisman examines prayers inscribed on frames, aureoles, and transparent cloths in images of the Immaculate Conception as threshold between physical reality and painted world.

Presenting such a rich array of metapainting across Europe over three centuries and suggesting that the chronological span can be expanded to later centuries—the book's epilogue is Chastel's essay on pictures within pictures from the Renaissance to the twentieth century—the authors make a strong case for metapainting as "a threaded legacy of European art" (12). One can hardly argue with their conclusion.

As future studies on metapainting emerge, whether for images created before or after the Renaissance, it is useful to recall that neuroscientists regard art as metacognitive in nature—that is to say, as self-reflective. In their view, art emerged from the human capacity for self-observation and from a mimetic skill that allows us to rehearse and refine our body's movements voluntarily and systematically—and to remember, reproduce, and improve on those rehearsals. As a manifestation of this mimetic skill, art always compels reflection—both at the individual and collective levels—on the very process that created it. If art is inherently self-reflective, then the self-reflectivity of painting can be taken for granted, the search for its origins dispelled, and art historical efforts may concentrate instead on the innumerable, inventive ways artists engaged in

creating thresholds between the world beholders occupy and the painted world artists imagined. This rich collection of essays is a significant step in that direction.

Francesca Fiorani, *University of Virginia*  
doi:10.1017/rqx.2023.608

*Samuel van Hoogstraten's Introduction to the Academy of Painting; or, The Visible World.* Samuel van Hoogstraten.

Trans. Jaap Jacobs. Ed. Celeste Brusati. Los Angeles, CA: Getty Research Institute, 2020. 424 pp. + 24 b/w pls. \$75.

---

The newly released English translation of Samuel van Hoogstraten's *Inleyding tot de hooge schoole der schilderkonst; Anders de Zichtbaere Werelt* [1678] (*Introduction to the academy of painting; Or, the visible world*), translated by Jaap Jacobs and edited by Celeste Brusati, represents a significant and long-awaited addition to the body of literature on seventeenth-century Dutch art history. Written in a style that is challenging even for experienced readers of seventeenth-century Dutch, Van Hoogstraten's *Inleyding* is one of the most frequently cited sources for Dutch art theory and practice of the period—but few have read it in its entirety. While previous translations have been published in French (Blanc, 2006) and English (Ford, 2013), recent scholarship on artistic terminology and Van Hoogstraten's life and work called for a fresh English translation of the *Inleyding*. The present English edition by Jacobs and Brusati provides modern readers with a much-needed gateway into Van Hoogstraten's world and enables a fuller understanding of the rich and diverse content of his ambitious literary project.

The book opens with the editor Celeste Brusati's introduction (1–43), which situates Van Hoogstraten's writing in the contemporary world and describes the main issues of the text. Building on her earlier monograph on Van Hoogstraten (1995), Brusati provides valuable insight into the life, career, and inner world of this well-traveled, learned, and multifaceted painter-poet. She explains that the digressive nature of Van Hoogstraten's writing, which makes it hard to read for modern readers, was the exact characteristic that appealed to the contemporary audience (11–14). Then Brusati guides the reader into Van Hoogstraten's theoretical thinking, treating the art of painting as “the practical sciences” (*werkdadige wetenschappen*) (2). For this reason, she places Van Hoogstraten in the social and cultural world of his time, justifying the discussions that deviate from pure art theory and foray into the business side of the painting industry such as training, trade, and patronage.

After the stimulating introduction follows the translation of Van Hoogstraten's treatise (without the original text), with the editor's annotations at the end of each of the nine books titled under nine muses. In the translator's note (viii–ix), Jaap Jacobs explains the many choices he made in the translation while striving to stay faithful to