

Hoefnagel's emblematic images). In his landmark book on still life Charles Sterling already evoked Epicureanism, and works such as Georg Hoefnagel's and Arcimboldo's variations on still life may now be shown to have had philosophical underpinnings in contemporary Neostoicism and Erasmianism. Four decades before the book under review, in *Paradoxia Epidemica* Rosalie Colie already pointed out how still life invited the beholder to "see through" the subject of the painting, to the ontological truth residing beyond the painted objects, beyond the painting itself" (274) and also explicitly noted the self-reflective, thought-provoking aspects of the genre. However, where post-Heideggerian arguments may discover merely the provocation of thought or nothingness, Colie found the paradox resolved in copiousness and plentitude.

Nanette Salomon. *Shifting Priorities: Gender and Genre in Seventeenth-Century Dutch Painting*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004. 163 pp. + 98 illus. \$65.00. Review by ELLEN KONOWITZ, STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK AT NEW PALTZ.

Beginning in the 1980s, Nanette Salomon has been a major figure in the study of Dutch seventeenth-century genre painting. This book, a collection of both previously published and unpublished but newly revised essays written by Salomon between 1983 and 1998, not only assembles some of her most interesting work in a single volume but also illustrates the evolution of some aspects of the field of Dutch art history by juxtaposing studies that reveal the author's own "shifting priorities." As Salomon discusses in her introductory essay, during the two decades spanned in this book, her work first participated in and then moved away from the traditional art-historical method of iconographic study that long dominated the field. This is the approach that was used since the 1950s by Erwin Panofsky and his students, who interpreted realistically portrayed everyday objects in fifteenth-century Northern religious art as "disguised symbols" to explain an image as a whole and was continued, explains Salomon, by scholars such as Eddy de Jongh in the 1970s and 1980s, who analyzed in a similar way what was called "*schijnrealism*" ("apparent realism") in seventeenth-century Dutch art of secular subjects. Salomon credits in particular the work of Mieke Bal and Griselda Pollock for

stimulating her shift of interests. The later articles collected in this book show how her orientation became more assertively informed by feminist, political, and semiotic perspectives, and more attuned to images as unstable signs rather than as stable symbols. As Salomon notes, this methodical shift in her own work finds parallels in the larger discipline of art history, and for this reason her book will also be of great interest to readers outside the field of Dutch art history as well as to those in it.

The book consists of nine essays, all but one focused primarily on one or two works of art. The paintings of Jan Vermeer and Jan Steen receive the lion's share of attention, while several chapters explore the images of other artists including Adriaen van Ostade, Jan Miense Molenaer, and Gerard ter Borch. The essays serve as commentary on each other's method. Thus, a more traditional study written in 1984 on Jan Steen's *Dissolute Household* theme concerns itself with identifying specific sources for the painting *In Weelde Siet Toe* in Vienna. Salomon relates this painting of a topsy-turvy home life to older traditions such as the Ages of Man and understands the painting through Steen's abundant quotations, even self-quotations, from other works of art. This article is followed by Salomon's later essay that considers the sociological dimensions of the theme of domesticity itself as expressed in Steen's home scenes. This essay examines domesticity as a cultural fabrication, as an ideology, and juxtaposes it with its binary, itinerancy, an important and tantalizing subject in Northern art to which more attention should be paid. Particularly interesting is Salomon's consideration of the feelings of nostalgia that these domestic scenes would have evoked for the contemporary viewer.

The book begins with Salomon's earliest published essay (in the 1983 *Festschrift* honoring her dissertation advisor, Egbert Haverkamp Begemann) on Vermeer's *Woman with a balance* (National Gallery, Washington) in which she interprets the woman's actions in the context of Catholic theology. The book concludes also with the subject of Vermeer's women, in a fascinating study that defines their evolution from images of salacious sexuality to images of a more decorous civility.

Salomon is a highly original and insightful thinker. The essays in this book offer particularly sensitive analyses of issues such as the meaning of space in Dutch painting, addressing for instance the private space of Jan Steen's rowdy households in the context of the public space depicted in tavern scenes, and examining the roles of Steen's divided space and its relationship to sixteenth-

century art (a study that now complements Martha Hollander's book on the *doorkijkje*. *An Entrance for the Eyes: space and meaning in Dutch seventeenth-century art*, University of California Press, 2002). In an essay on Ter Borch's paintings that juxtapose drinking young women and sleeping soldiers, she explores how such companion pieces could convey levels of meanings that have less to do with a moralizing admonition than with a witty conceit. She addresses neglected themes which still need more attention. One example is her treatment of old age in Dutch art, particularly in her essay on the role of the father and of old men in Adriaen van Ostade's prints of domestic scenes.

Throughout the past twenty or so years, as Salomon notes in her Introduction, some of her ideas have attracted controversy, especially among some Dutch and English scholars. There were objections, for instance, when she described Vermeer's *Woman with a balance* as pregnant, and when she challenged the accepted idea that Steen's topsy-turvy households were entirely moralizing (see pp. 5 and 7). The minor uproars that issued from some scholars on such points only proves the excitement generated by Salomon's ideas, especially in the case of well-known and much-loved paintings. This book of essays will remain an important and lasting contribution, both for students of Dutch art and for students of methodology.

Wayne Franits. *Dutch Seventeenth-Century Genre Painting: Its Stylistic and Thematic Evolution*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004. viii + 328 pp. + 236 illus. \$60.00. Review by HENRY LUTTIKHUIZEN, CALVIN COLLEGE.

Even though this book does not really offer a new interpretation of seventeenth-century Dutch genre painting, it provides an outstanding synthesis of the best art historical scholarship on the subject over the past three decades. In addition, it has an excellent bibliography and is lavishly illustrated, with over a hundred color plates. Consequently, the book should prove to be helpful for general readers and specialists alike.

In line with much of contemporary scholarship, Franits argues against the notion that genre paintings are simply naturalistic scenes of everyday life. Instead, he advocates the view that these works are highly conventional representations in pictorial traditions established centuries earlier. Franits pays close attention to the complexity of Dutch genre paintings, analyzing their style and