

of scholars of North Italian music of the early seventeenth century, any serious scholar of North Italian culture will find the book both a useful reference source and an engaging read. Nearly every important Milanese composer, institution, patron, and printer receives at least minimal attention, and much of the detail assimilated appears in no source published heretofore. Musicians and non-musicians alike will value both the rich detail and the interdisciplinarity of Kendrick's approach, and scholars of rhetoric will find his musical analyses, which rely heavily upon an understanding of the basic principals of rhetoric as taught in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, especially worthy of further discussion. Those interested in attempting to unravel the effects of the rather strange co-existence the Ambrosian and Roman rite that characterizes Milanese ritual will also find much food for thought, for Kendrick engages this difficult subject directly through a thorough examination of the extant manuscript and printed sources of the period. In short, scholars of North Italian culture will find Robert Kendrick's *The Sounds of Milan, 1584-1650* not only a highly useful reference book but also an engaging and thought-provoking introduction to the role of music in urban life in seventeenth-century Milan.

Arthur K. Wheelock, Jr. with Peter C. Sutton. *Rembrandt's Late Religious Portraits*. Washington: National Gallery of Art, 2005. 152 pp. + 21 color plates + 70 comparative ills. \$40.00. Review by LARRY SILVER, UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA.

Beginning students in art history have difficulty distinguishing iconic religious imagery from the conventions that it shares with portraiture, so they frequently will try to discuss "portraits of the Virgin." Actually there is something truly profound about the turn that religious art made in the later Middle Ages towards icons that share the palpable presence and plausible likenesses of portraits. This icon tradition, established first in Byzantine bust-length images, was exported to Italy and Flanders in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries and had a long afterlife in religious art, as demonstrated in the recent (2004) major exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum, *Byzantium: Faith and Power (1261-1557)*.

In many respects both the title and the content of this new Rembrandt

catalogue, from a current exhibition shared between the National Gallery in Washington and the Getty Museum in Los Angeles, poses many of the same challenges with its portrait-like images by the artist of Christ and various saints. These are precisely the sensitive, moodily dark pictures for which Rembrandt is best known and justly celebrated. That they combine his life-long talents for portraiture with a religious agenda makes them doubly fascinating. In fact they were all painted within a few years of each other, some of them possibly conceived as a series.

The premise of this exhibition is to test that hypothesis of a series, first voiced almost a century ago, when Rembrandt scholarship was in an early phase but at an intense peak of interest (Catherine Scallen, *Rembrandt, Reputation, and the Practice of Scholarship*, Amsterdam, 2004; not cited). Two scholars, Wilhelm Valentiner and Fredenk Schmidt-Degener, postulated that these images, stemming from the late 1650s and early 1660s, belonged together, even though there is no record of a commission or a particular destination to a known religious community. Thus these images also raise the question of their religious content and perhaps even of Rembrandt's own beliefs—especially at a time in his life when he had been battered economically and personally while still maintaining a career as a painter (his printmaking output virtually ceases at the time of these pictures).

Unfortunately, this handsomely produced catalogue resolves none of the basic puzzles and postulates, though it does provide the basic data. Nor does it take on any of the related pictures, once attributed to Rembrandt and now assigned to his last pupils or “workshop” (whatever that might mean for a straitened painter), such as the handsome *Head of Christ* (Bredius 627; formerly Harry John coll., Milwaukee; now Brigham Young University Museum of Art), or related images by pupil Aert de Gelder. One exception is the workshop *Christ/St. James Minor* (1661; no. 12, Metropolitan), here called “School of Rembrandt.”

The three essays in this catalogue remain at a general level. Wheelock's introductory remarks do adduce the theories about this group of pictures as well as Rembrandt's attributed religious affiliations, and he incorporates the state of knowledge about Rembrandt and the Jews of Amsterdam, utilizing the provocative recent study by Michael Zell (*Reframing Rembrandt* [Berkeley, 2002]). He also considers the heritage of apostle series in prints and paintings by Dutch artists as well as Catholic Rubens, arguing that Rembrandt's saints

have a Protestant tinge in their humility. The self-identification of Rembrandt with St. Paul, embodied in a 1661 self-portrait from Amsterdam (no. 11), stands as a hallmark of the entire enterprise and receives its own focused essay by Peter Sutton. A more general but relatively superficial study by Volker Manuth characterizes Rembrandt's apostles as "pillars of faith and witnesses of the word," to round out the essays.

Far more valuable are the individual entries, though even here inconsistencies should be noted. The entries begin with an image of *A Bearded Man in a Cap* (165[7]; no. 1, London), which is not clearly related to these issues; it has historically been thought to be "a Jew," but largely from a romantic notion of Rembrandt's affinity for his neighbors; it is not even clear whether this is a portrait (like the young man with a skullcap; Kimbell Museum, Fort Worth) or a general type (it does closely resemble Rembrandt's *Aristotle* of 1653 in New York). By contrast, *An Elderly Man as Apostle Paul* (165[9]; no. 4, London) *does* look like a portrait and was even identified by Regteren Altena as the poet Vondel. Rembrandt's common-law wife, Hendrickje, appears in a 1660 half-length (1660; no. 5, New York) and hardly looks like the "sorrowing Virgin" that she is claimed to be in the catalogue. Nor does the Rotterdam *Man in a Red Cap* (1660; no. 13) resemble an apostle; despite his open book and pen, his costume seems rather contemporary. And the falconer identified as *St. Bavo* (a later work, dated, ca. 1662-65; no. 17, Göteborg) seems much more flamboyantly aristocratic than saintly; despite his cross, this is neither an apostle nor a Dutch saint (St. Bavo is local to Ghent, where Rubens produced an altarpiece in his honor). The *Monk Reading* (1661; no. 16, Helsinki) cannot be fitted into any definition of apostles, and he is not distinguished as a saint, such as Francis, let alone the "Protestants" argued for in the essays (note, however, that Rembrandt prints include a *St. Francis* and a *St. Jerome*, and his pupil Dou painted hermit monks). Even the attribution of *Bartholomew* (1661; no. 8, Getty) to Rembrandt rather than an imitator seems dubious, though its dimensions do tally well with other images in the exhibition.

So there are problems with any hypothesis of a unified cycle of apostle figures with Christ, not least the different presentations, some with attributes and suggestions of settings or more at half-length (*St. James Major*, 1661, no. 9, private coll.), others merely bust figures against a dark background. On the other hand, why produce any painting at all of obscure figures like Bartholomew or *Simon* (1661; no. 10, Zurich), unless within a larger series—at

least planned, particularly around the shared date of 1661. There are some unfamiliar and stunning pictures in this exhibition, notably the aged *Madonna of Sorrows* (1661, no. 14; Epinal) or the half-length *Christ* (ca. 1657-61; no. 15; Glens Falls, Hyde Coll., whose repaired mutilation is well covered in the catalogue).

What this moving and attractive, if compact, exhibition achieves is to remind the viewer—particularly around the newly cleaned Amsterdam *Self-Portrait as Apostle Paul*—how powerfully Rembrandt managed to combine the pious with the personalized. We might never be able to answer the question definitively of whether (or not) he ever envisioned a cycle of Christ and the apostles (why paint the Virgin for Holland?), albeit never completed as planned. But we can clearly see how a gifted portrait painter could re-imagine spiritual heroes as lifelike presences—just as he also painted two similar large canvases, three-quarter length against dark backgrounds, of two Jewish leaders at critical moments in their lives during this same period in his own life: *Moses with the Tablets of the Law* (1659) and *Jacob Wrestling the Angel* (both in Berlin). Thus there still remain larger questions about Rembrandt, religion, and the role(s) of such “pious portraits.”

John Michael Montias. *Art at Auction in 17th Century Amsterdam*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2002. 336 pp. \$39.00. Review by HUBERT MEEUS, UNIVERSITY OF ANTWERP.

As early as 1608 specialized auctions of works of art were held in Amsterdam. But there is nearly no comment on auctions in contemporary writings, neither are there contemporary representations of art auctions. The only available sources are the Notebooks of auction records conducted by the Orphan Chamber of Amsterdam dating from 1597 to 1638. These Notebooks offer unique material because apart from the description of objects sold and the prices they mention the names of all the buyers that did not pay cash. Montias has analyzed the contents of the Orphan Chamber Notebooks in a database, and in the first part of his book he tries to complete that material with prosopographical research on all persons mentioned in the notebooks. He identified 2,048 buyers who bought about 13,000 lots of art objects in 524 sales. Some were professionals, art and print dealers, painters