Walter S. Melion, Joanna Woodall, and Michael Zell, eds.

Ut pictura amor: The Reflexive Imagery of Love in Artistic Theory and Practice, 1500–1700. Leiden: Brill, 2017. Pp. 770. Hb, €249.

Ut pictura amor (“as is a picture, so is love”) was the theme of the fifth Lovis Corinth Colloquium held at Emory University, Atlanta in October 2015. An equally apt title, one used in the contribution by Laura Gelfand, could be “What’s love got to do with it?” borrowed from Tina Turner’s famous song. “Everything” is the rousing response of the twenty-one contributors in this extremely stimulating and diverse volume of essays. The relationship between art and love takes many, sometimes surprising, portrayals. The editors use the term reflexive “to refer to images that invite reflection not only on their form, function, and meaning, but also on their genesis and mode of production” (1). Most of the essays address the power of the visual to engage the viewer, reader, or listener either very directly, vicariously—as through seeing figures who touch or withhold contact—or allegorically. The art of love is both sacred and profane, yet each category can be endlessly parsed. The editors’ thoughtful introduction exemplifies this variety through their explanations of Maarten van Heemskerck’s *Saint Luke Painting the Virgin and Child* (1532), Otto van Veen’s emblem (1608) showing Amor holding an image of the wounded heart as he tries to stir the seated woman’s affections, and the engraving of the *Meal at the House of Simon the Leper* in Jerónimo Nadal’s *Adnotationes et meditationes in Evangelia* (Antwerp: Martinus Nutius, 1595).

The volume is divided into eight thematic parts, though many of the contributions could easily have been assigned to more than one section. Part 1 (“Vision, Imagination, and Erotic Desire”) opens with Wietse de Boer’s consideration of the contemporary medical and moral discourses on love. Ursula Härtig explores bathing culture, especially what is known about the decoration of the baths in Flemish country houses and palaces where mythological subjects potentially aroused the passions of amorous couples. Joshua S. Mostow contrasts the prints of Hishikawa Moronobu, notably his *Pillow-Pictures* (1682), with Giulio Romano’s *I modi* (Venice: clandestine 2nd ed., 1527) to address the very different attitudes the Japanese had toward pornography in comparison to the Italians. Dawn Odell contextualizes two illustrations of beautiful Chinese women that appeared in Athanasius Kircher S.J.’s *China monumentis* (Amsterdam: Apud Joannem à Waesberge & Elizeum Weyerstraet, 1667). Although the engravings show the women as “rare, inanimate, and foreign as the expensive objects that surround them” (133), the prominent calligraphic painting behind each animate their desirability in ways not too dissimilar from Chinese poetic conventions.

Part 2 (“Metamorphic Images of Love”) opens with Haohao Lu’s fascinating study of the stimulatory use and placement of Jan Gossart’s erotic mythological paintings, some of which were once kept in intimate private settings in the residences of Philip of Burgundy, Philip of Cleves, and Henry III of Nassau in the Netherlands. Melion considers the classical poetics of anthropomorphic image-making in several drawings and prints by Hendrick Goltzius. In part 3 (“Optics, Aesthetics, and the Visual Poetics of Desire”), Kishwar Rizvi discusses the paintings of Kamal al-din Gazargahi’s *Majālis al-ushshāq* (Assembly of lovers), a sixteenth-century Safavid manuscript, as a complex discourse about love. Thijs Weststeijn studies paintings, such as Caravaggio’s *Medusa* (c.1597) or depictions of Venus and Bathsheba, that look directly at the viewer as if demanding a response. He frames the discussion within Aristotelian and Platonic pre-modern theories of vision. Weststeijn reminds us that the invention of painting (or, more accurately, drawing) occurred as an act of love when, according to Pliny, Butades’ daughter traced her lover’s shadow on a wall.

Part 4 (“Amorous Desire, Domestic Virtue, and Love’s Mirror”) opens with Stephanie S. Dickey’s consideration of two very different paintings by Rembrandt and Anthony van Dyck from the 1630s that show the “rush to the beloved” (321). Griet Jan, an Amsterdam shipbuilder’s wife who brings a message to her husband and Cupid who rushes to Psyche, are demonstrations of *agape*, altruistic love. H. Rodney Nevitt, Jr. examines Vermeer’s *Milkmaid* (c.1657–58) within the pictorial tradition of Christ in the house of Martha and Mary. Michael Zell explores Gabriel Metsu’s *A Woman Seated at a Table and a Man Tuning a Violin* (c.1658), in which the roles are played by the artist and his wife as a performance of burger courtship and the art of painting. Part 5 (“Portrayals of Spousal Love”) begins with Laua D. Gelfand’s excellent investigation of the myriad of love knots exhibited in the Royal Monastery at Brou. Often dismissed as simple decoration, these knots conveyed powerful messages about Margaret of Austria’s conjugal, filial, and sovereign love as well as personal obligation. H. Perry Chapman considers how differently the wives of Rubens and Rembrandt served as model and muse. She delves into the question of whether Helena Fourment and Hendrickje Stoffels ever posed nude. While Rubens exalted in and was inspired by Helena’s beauty, Rembrandt depicted Hendrickje in different roles in which “she feels her nakedness, her exposure” (436).

Parts 6 (“Youth, Friendship, and Other Inflections of Divine Love”) and 7 (“Desire, Fellowship, and Marian Mimesis”) explore different pictorial expressions of spiritual or sacred love. Joseph F. Chorpenning presents a wonderful discussion of Francis de Sales’s practice of creating word pictures in his preaching as well as his detailed meditation on the mystery of the Visitation. Henry Luttikhuizen’s posits a compelling reading about longing and deferred

intimacy in Jacob Cornelisz van Oostsanen's *Noli me tangere* (1507). Els Stronks considers the emblem books of Daniël Heinsius and Otto van Veen as a means for instructing Dutch youth about *amor Dei*. Margit Thøfner focuses on Marten de Vos's representations of the Virgin Mary and his collaborations with the composer-musician Cornelis Verdonck. Jonathan Unglaub traces how Bernardo Accolti's poetry about sacred beauty has resonance with Raphael's *Sistine Madonna* (1512–13).

Part 8 ("Picturing Love in the Marketplace") begins with Joanna Woodall's superb look at Abraham Ortelius's *Album amicorum* (1574–96) with its one-hundred and thirty surviving contributions by the humanist-cartographer's many friends and scholarly acquaintances. These exemplify the platonic ideal of love among friends but also relate to the contemporary debate in artistic circles that love—not honor or profit—is the highest motive for art. Lisa Rosenthal delves wonderfully into Frans Francken the Younger's *Discovery of Achilles* (c.1627), set in a collector's cabinet, as a discourse about art as an object of desire and collecting as motivated by love. Finally, Natasha Seaman ponders Gerrit van Honthorst's *Old Woman with Coins* (c.1623) where by the light of a lamp she carefully studies the coin in her hand. In the art of Honthorst and his Utrecht contemporaries, the old woman is frequently cast in the role of the avaricious procuress, embodying the commercialization of venal love (or lust). If once hung besides portraits of prostitutes, this picture shows "the other side of the coin" (760) or a "moralizing gloss on the seductions of beautiful women, and paintings of them" (25).

Ut pictura amor delivers a richly rewarding, interdisciplinary look at the different ways love was understood and visualized in the early modern period. Although the majority of essays focus on the art of the Low Countries, others direct us to Japan, China, and Persia. Collectively, the texts offer wonderfully varied case studies about how art engages or, arguably, even enamors its beholders.

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