Estelle Lingo, *Mochi's Edge and Bernini's Baroque*

Harvey Miller Studies in Baroque Art, London and Turnhout, Harvey Miller Publishers, 2017, 328 pp., £100.
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Between the late 1980s and the early 2010s, the annual list of PhD dissertations in progress in the United States included one being written at Columbia University on the sculptor Francesco Mochi, born in the Tuscan town of Montevarchi in 1580 and who was one of the outstanding talents of the seventeenth century. Belief that it was well advanced kept many graduate students – including this reviewer – from tackling the subject for their own dissertation. We can now be thankful that this particular study went uncompleted and that it had the discouraging effect it did, since it preserved Mochi as a wide open field of enquiry for Estelle Lingo, whose new book on the artist is possibly the most important contribution to the study of Roman Baroque sculpture produced this century.

The book is more than a monograph on Mochi – and herein lies its significance. As the title establishes, it is also focused on the larger situation of early seventeenth-century sculpture in Rome, whose chief protagonist was the much younger Gian Lorenzo Bernini. By restoring to Mochi's sculpture its historical specificity and intricacy, Lingo helps us see Bernini's art with new clarity. Before reaching Bernini, the reader is led through Mochi's career from his beginnings in Rome during the late 1590s until his return from Piacenza in 1629, when he became involved with Bernini on the statues for the crossing piers of St Peter's Basilica. Each of the major monuments Mochi created over those roughly thirty years is interpreted according to a critical framework that Lingo outlines in her first chapter, entitled 'Sculpture's Shame'. The key point of reference is a statement by Mochi's only seventeenth-century biographer, Giovanni Battista Passeri, about Mochi's relationship with Florence. Passeri writes that Mochi, 'who was born in the state of Florence [...] always wanted to show himself a rigorous imitator of the Florentine manner' (p. 7). Lingo asks what it means that Mochi was committed to a style of sculpture that he saw as being distinctly Florentine, which leads her to investigate how sculpture was being considered in Florence during the second half of the sixteenth century. She notes, as others have, that its critical fortunes were in a state of decline, which she attributes to various constraints being put on sculptors, both political and religious, that were preventing them from practising their art like Michelangelo – that is to say, with the freedom to embrace the idea of monumental sculpture, to revel in the heroics of sculpture-making and to celebrate the nude body. Lingo is undoubtedly correct that Mochi's sculptures demonstrate *fiorentinità* in their consistently large scale, technical daring and ways of revealing the human form.

The title of Chapter 2, 'Draping Michelangelo', prepares the reader for Lingo's interpretation of how Mochi managed to pay respect to Michelangelo's exaltation of the nude in an age of extreme religious modesty, where the new normal in sculpture was to turn attention away from the body by concealing it beneath heavy layers of distracting drapery. Mochi's *Angel of the Annunciation* in Orvieto Cathedral – his first major commission – is used to demonstrate his innovative solution to the dilemma. It amounted to a new language of drapery, in which drapery was allowed to be as expressive as possible provided that it allowed the body to be seen. As the angel's cloak lifts up in a dramatic cyclone of cloth, we are left with views of the bare left leg, as well as the right hip and thigh, revealed through the skin-tight undergarment. Drapery is not the chapter's only concern. Lingo also investigates how Mochi, in his quest for *fiorentinità*, drew inspiration from other icons of Florentine sculpture, including Donatello and Giovanni Pisano. With Pisano, her argument centres on the striking similarities she sees between his *Sibyl* on the pulpit in Sant'Andrea in Pistoia and Mochi's *Virgin Annunciate* in Orvieto Cathedral. Can it be possible, however, that as Mochi started work on his statue, he thought a pilgrimage to Pistoia was the only way forward? This is not to deny that an element of thirteenth-century archaism may have entered into his solution that was born out of a respect for Pisano.

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Francesco Mochi, *Angel of the Annunciation*, 1603–05, detail. Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, Orvieto.
(photo: courtesy of Mauro Coen)

Between 1612 and 1629 Mochi was occupied with the bronze equestrian statues of Ranuccio Farnese and his father, Alessandro, in front of the Palazzo Comunale in Piacenza. In Chapter 3, 'Power and the Grotesque', Lingo first looks at the statues through the lens of technique. As documents make clear, Mochi insisted that the sculptures be cast in a single pour, which reflects his adherence to earlier ideals of bronze casting in Florence. Lingo observes that he calculated elements of the design to celebrate his feat of the single pour. The electrified manes and tails of the horses, as well as the twisting fringes and tassels on the saddles and riders' skirts, are among the details that allow the viewer to appreciate how the molten metal had coursed with energy as it flowed through the mould while being poured. In the rest of the chapter Lingo focuses on understanding the implications of the fact that the statues were not commissioned by the rulers they celebrate but by the people being ruled, the Piacentines, through their governing body. The appearance of grotesque ornament on the base is interpreted as a kind of rebellious language that Mochi used to address his patrons' difficult situation. She also sees it as Mochi's way of demonstrating the power of the artist to invent without constraint – a traditionally Florentine virtue. There are other visual features, such as the horses' rapid gaits and the apparent strength needed to control the animals, that seem to be part of the same subversive message. But it cannot be the case that Mochi was using the grotesque to offend the Farnese, as it is an art form that the family had helped popularize and with which they were still associated. This leads back to the likelihood that Mochi was most interested in using the grotesque to assert his singularity as an artist. As Lingo concludes, Mochi appreciated how the grotesque could play different ways depending on the audience.

Mochi received final payment for the bronzes in April 1629 and returned to Rome, the setting of Chapter 4, 'Crossings'. The principal subject is Mochi's *Saint Veronica* in the crossing of St Peter's. Lingo reviews this sculpture's complicated history, emphasizing the essential fact that Mochi was not working under the thumb of Bernini like the two other sculptors represented in the crossing, Andrea Bolgi and François Duquesnoy. Mochi reported directly to Pope Urban VIII and the Congregazione della Fabbrica, which gave him a certain licence to pursue his own approach, one grounded in *fiorentinità*. Lingo interprets the *Veronica* as a 'Nympha', an ancient figure type that was part of the Florentine revival of

antiquity in the fifteenth century. As Lingo observes, the *Veronica* is like a Nympha in the way she rushes forward with her garments swept back. Lingo reasons that Mochi's use of the Nympha was designed to allow him to project his *fiorentinità* in a more essential way. The drapery, as it catches in the wind, blows against the saint's body, which it reveals sensually, while also being a source of visual wonder in itself – the same strategy he had developed a quarter of a century earlier in Orvieto. The observation serves as a pivot to Bernini's *Saint Longinus*, which Lingo sees as existing in opposition to the *Veronica*. Whereas the *Veronica* brings the Renaissance into the seventeenth century, the *Longinus* breaks with it, and the reason is because of the disconnect between body and drapery. As Lingo concludes, it is the 'rebellion' of the drapery that becomes the essence of the 'baroque' style that Bernini helped spread to all corners of Catholic Europe. Here, the reader is treated to as cogent an analysis of Bernini's style as is to be found anywhere in the vast literature on the artist.

The final chapter, 'Unfinished Endings', addresses the major commissions of Mochi's later career, which unfolded between the completion of the *Veronica* in 1640 and his death in 1654. Traditionally, these works have been seen in a negative light, understood as the bizarre failings of an ageing artist. Lingo shows that the heterogeneous character of the group is a reflection of Mochi's respect for the unique circumstances of each commission. Her most effective demonstration is with his colossal marble statues of Saints Peter and Paul in the Museo di Roma. When they are considered in relation to their intended setting in the Basilica of San Paolo fuori le Mura, where they would have been seen against a backdrop of Early Christian mosaics, the stylized quality of the faces and hair makes better sense. Mochi was trying to create works that meshed visually with their Early Christian environment.

Throughout the book Lingo is to be commended for the superb photographs, which help her drive her points with particular effectiveness. Lingo made it a condition of publishing the book that a new campaign of photography be undertaken, and she was unrelenting in her hunt for the requisite funds. Her approach, which had the sympathies of the series editor, Lorenzo Pericolo, is a model for all scholars.

C. D. Dickerson III

Tomas Macsotay (ed.), *Rome, Travel and the Sculpture Capital, c.1770–1825*
London, Routledge, 2017, hardback, £92. ISBN 978-1-4724-20350

Rome, Travel and the Sculpture Capital, c. 1770–1825 offers a fresh approach to the study of patrons, artists and markets for Roman sculpture in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Instead of focusing on the agency of the traditional cast of powerful tastemakers and artists, such as Antonio Canova, Bertel Thorvaldsen and Johann Winckelmann, the volume emphasizes the shifting status of travellers, trade routes, political systems and institutions that underpinned the production, consumption and reception of marble sculpture in Rome. The book thus points to areas of contingency and flux that have been otherwise obscured by the unquestionably canonical status of Rome as a 'sculpture capital' during the period.

The dates that frame the volume, 1770 to 1825, encompass most of Antonio Canova's career and mark a historical moment when the market for marble sculpture in Rome began to be dominated by foreign visitors, many of whom understood it in terms of a site of 'cosmopolitan projections' (p. 5). While not discounting neoclassicism as a pan-European phenomenon, the volume also makes a case for the uniqueness of Rome as a 'sculpture capital', where 'two types of "goods" were exchanged: aristocratic and tourist taste and the lustre and classical form of Carrara marble' (p. 3). The conditions for the sculpture market in Rome were unique insofar as

Antonio Canova, *Apollo Crowning Himself*, 1781–82, marble, 84.7 cm. The J. Paul Getty Museum, 95.SA.71.
(photo: digital image courtesy of the Getty's Open Content Program)

they relied on 'the constant assembling and disassembling of artistic and national communities and supervisory institutions' (p. 4) in dialogue with a constantly rotating cast of travellers.

One of the most important intervention of the essays in the volume is their implicit challenge of a monolithic understanding of neoclassicism in terms of its public, didactic mission (epitomized by the 'school' of David and Co.), as well as a conception of it as a 'tightly run enactment of Winckelmann's ideas' (p. 6). Many of the essays accomplish this by examining the movements of sculptors and patrons from northern Europe to Rome as a means of providing a critical framework for understanding the mobility of objects, artists and patrons; Rome is understood to be a place where 'the traveling aristocrat met the emigrated sculptor' (p. 5) in official as well as unofficial spaces such as artists' studios.

The book's introduction by Thomas Macsotay is invaluable and is written in a language that will be accessible to new students and specialists alike. In addition to laying out the theoretical and methodological stakes of the volume, the introduction is composed of several sections that provide a historical overview of the development of Rome as a 'sculpture capital' from 1770 to 1825. This includes a dive into questions of historiography and a section that addresses the day-to-day conditions faced by sculptors and patrons during the volatile revolutionary and post-revolutionary period, when riots and war interrupted travel and caused the population of the city to decrease by one-third. The first few sections of this introduction would be useful in an introductory history of sculpture course, in courses related to the grand tour, and for any study abroad programme that is taught in Rome.

The last sections of the introduction summarize the essays in the book and lay out its organizational structure in terms of three thematic sections. The first section, 'A Space for Encounters', addresses the 'socio-economic image of life for sculptors' (p. 17) in late eighteenth-century Rome; Chiara Piva's essay, 'Restoring and Making Sculpture in Eighteenth-Century Rome', offers a lens into the functioning of studios in terms of their transmission of technical knowledge for artists who worked collaboratively in creating new works and, most illuminatingly, restoring sculptures. Susanne Adina Meyer's outstanding essay, 'Promoting Sculpture in Eighteenth-Century Rome: Exhibitions, Art Criticism, Public', examines studio exhibitions of marble sculpture intended to attract the attention of foreign visitors; Meyer's essay addresses a plurality of exhibitionary conditions, including an informal, non-institutional type of exhibition as well as institutional exhibitions, such as the ones hosted by the French Academy to display the works of the *pensionnaires* for a specifically Roman audience. The last essay in this section, 'Bringing Modern Rome to Chatsworth: The Formation of the 6th Duke of Devonshire's Sculpture Collection' by Allison Yarrington, provides an illuminating case study of the ways in which transalpine sculpture galleries depended on a complex network of local Roman agents who facilitated the movement of Roman sculpture across borders.

The second section, 'Close to Canova', offers a reassessment of Canova's studio practice and seeks to complicate our understanding of the artist's reputation for cosmopolitan openness and

magnanimity towards foreign sculptors and patrons alike. Christina Ferando's essay, 'Truly Transnational? Sculpture Studios in Rome after the Restoration', positions Canova's status as a bellwether of Rome's artistic modernity in terms of his complex relationship to the question of transnationalism; Daniella Gallo examines the hierarchies in his studio between master and students in her contribution, 'In the Shadow of the Star: Career Strategies of Sculptors in Rome in the Age of Canova (c. 1780–1820)'. The last essay in this section by Johannes Myssok, 'Canova and His German Friends', focuses on the artist's relationships with Swiss and German sculptors in the 1780s and 1790s. The third section of the volume, entitled 'Distance and Difference', examines the cultural imaginary of neoclassical sculpture and the important role that Rome played in negotiating the expectations of viewers. The essays here approach the problem of spectatorship from several different points of view. In 'Multiple Views, Contours and Sculptural Narration: Aesthetic Notions of Neoclassical Sculpture in and out of Rome', Roland Kanz considers the role that narration plays in the embodied experience of neoclassical sculpture. Eckart Marchand focuses on the travels of John Flaxman to Rome and the representation of his encounters with sculpture in his notebooks in his essay, 'Sculptor and Tourist: John Flaxman and His Italian Journals and Sketchbooks (1787–1794)'. Thomas Macsotay examines a vibrant, if normally overlooked, area of the market for sculpture in Rome, namely classicizing relief sculpture in 'Struggle and Memorial Relief: John Deare's *Caesar Invading Britain*'. Roberto Ferrari's scintillating contribution, 'The Sculptor, the Duke, and Queer Art Patronage: John Gibson's *Mars Restrained by Cupid* and Winckelmannian Aesthetics', focuses on a sculpture commission from the 6th Duke of Devonshire, William Spencer Cavendish, from one of Canova's students, John Gibson, in terms of homoerotic desire, passion and the traditions of the *beau idéal*.

Rome, Travel, and the Sculpture Capital, c. 1770–1825 helps to advance and complicate our understanding of Rome's reputation as a centre of neoclassical art and grand tourism that has long been enshrined in studies related to the history of sculpture. Its focus on complex systems and networks of artists, patrons and other local conditions provides an exciting path for future directions in the study of Roman sculpture.

Katie Hornstein

Herbert M. Cole, *Maternity: Mothers and Children in the Arts of Africa*
New Haven, CT, Yale University Press, 2017 (distributed for Mercatorfonds), 376 pp., 343 colour illustrations, £70. ISBN 978-0-3002-29158

We are all the children of mothers. No matter where or when, the biological fact of birth unites us all. It is the cultural elements surrounding birth and motherhood – the rituals, celebrations, taboos and art – that vary. In *Maternity: Mothers and Children in the Arts of Africa*, Herbert Cole investigates the visual archetype of maternity to 'illuminate the universal character of the icon while revealing deep wells of African thought' (p. 13). Primarily sculptural, maternities in Africa were overwhelmingly made by male artists until recent decades. In Cole's reading, the resulting images reflected both an idealizing masculine gaze and the role of the mother in upholding patriarchy. *Maternity* centres on works used in religious, ritual, and socio-political contexts, emphasizing complexity and cultural specificity rather than a unified thematic interpretation. These 'instrumentalized' sculptures were prized by their users more for their efficacy rather than their aesthetics, asserts Cole, though their beauty makes it immediately evident that significant thought was put into their appearance.

Running to nearly 400 pages, *Maternity*'s eleven chapters include two introductions, six thematic chapters and

three culturally focused case studies. Presenting a selection of the continent's maternity imagery, the content is weighted towards nineteenth- and twentieth-century art from central, western and southern Africa, due to the wide availability of objects and documentation from this period. In many ways aimed at readers familiar with African art history, *Maternity* remains accessible to non-specialists. Glosses of local language terms, field-specific concepts and organizing themes unite its often whirlwind continental dash. A map, bibliography and index round out the text, which is complemented by excellently printed colour field photographs and studio images of objects from private and public collections in Africa, North America and Europe. Many are reproduced at full- or nearly full-page scale.

Chapters 1 and 2 outline the book's theoretical core and survey of 7,000 years of maternity images, starting with prehistoric rock art in the Sahara and southern Africa, moving through the paintings of Christian Ethiopia and Egypt, and ending with West and Central African practices from ancient times through the twentieth century. Chapter 3 considers terracottas from Djenné-Djeno, one of sub-Saharan Africa's oldest urban centres (c. 250 BCE to c. 900 CE). Clasping twins or triplets, Djenné maternities are often entwined by enigmatic snakes or markers of disease.

Kongo artist (Yombe subgroup), *Figure of Mother and Child (Phemba)*, nineteenth century, wood, beads, glass mirror, metal, resin, 27.9 × 12.7 × 11.4 cm (11 × 5 × 4½ in.). Possibly Kongo Central Province, Democratic Republic of the Congo. Brooklyn Museum, Museum Expedition 1922, Robert B. Woodward Memorial Fund, 22.1138 (photo: by permission of Brooklyn Museum)

The following chapter returns to the pan-continental approach, discussing sculpted 'children' owned and used by women to fulfil their desire for offspring, such as the flat-headed *akua'ma* figures that Akan women tuck into their wrappers. Moving beyond biological reproduction, Chapter 5 considers sculptures that honour the generative power of women as goddesses, foundresses, culture heroes and even the earth herself. Breaking down scholarly divisions between 'traditional' objects (i.e. those used in ritual functions) and entertainment-based objects (such as puppets), Chapter 6 takes a wide-ranging view of the object types and materials used to depict maternity. Of special interest to scholars of sculpture is its section on materials and techniques, which offers an introduction to the formal and technical aspects of African creative processes, covering everything from wood and ivory to metal and terracotta, as well as composite objects and other media such as painting and photography.

The first of three case studies, Chapter 7 considers Cole's area of greatest expertise, Akan arts from Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire. There, visual and verbal forms (primarily proverbs) mix to inform and reinforce cultural messages. In Ghana, matrilineal descent inspires royal, religious and secular Akan sculpture alike to depict Queen Mothers and maternities. Reflecting this iconographic fluidity, renowned carvers such as Osei Bonsu (1900–77) often carved works for all three purposes. Chapter 8 considers the iconography and origins of sculpted Kongo mother-and-child figures, arguing for the influence of European Christian sculpture (the Kongo king Nzinga a Nkuwu voluntarily converted to Catholicism in 1491). Equally, when filled with special substances according to local religious practices, certain figures became *nkisi*, empowered sculptures linked to powerful spirits. The final case study, Chapter 9, appraises Yoruba artists' prolific creation of mother-and-child images for shrine, divination or royal architectural contexts. These sculpted representations reflect the revered status and perceived spiritual power of Yoruba women, referred to honorifically as 'mother'.

The penultimate chapter considers arts linked with masquerade. In the African context, masquerade is a sacred or secular event that integrates sculpted face masks, costumes and ritual or entertaining performance. Frequently used in rituals tied to liminality – such as the transition out of childhood/the maternal sphere into adulthood – masks depicting women are nearly always worn by men, and thus represent the majority of Cole's examples. Uniquely in both *Maternity* and in general, Sierra Leonean and Liberian women in the Sande society commission and perform *ndoli jowei* (wooden helmet-style masks depicting idealized women) for their own initiations. They represent an exception within the otherwise male-dominated genre of masquerading.

Finally, Chapter 11 considers post-colonial maternities, centring on artists practising in a 'modern' or 'contemporary' mode in South Africa. Cole argues that after independence, female artists created new, empathetic images of maternity. He contrasts these with the idealized versions historically made by male artists, some of which are still made and used. While sculpture dominated the so-called 'traditional' works considered in earlier chapters, contemporary sculptors such as Claudette Schreuders and Sokari Douglas Camp are in the minority among contemporary artists. Expanding material possibilities through the use of photography, collage and paint, artists such as Kwame Akoto ('Almighty God'), Penny Siopis and Mmakgabo Mapula Helen Sebidi employ naturalism, while reinterpreting sculpted archetypes of women.

While focusing extensively on formal and stylistic analyses, *Maternity* also engages with anthropological theory and art historical debates about maternities in African arts. Drawing from anthropologist Alma Gottlieb's work on cultural practices surrounding infancy in western Africa, Cole uses comparisons with Euro-American parenting to make African cultural practices and their attendant art objects understandable to a Western audience (his self-declared primary readership). The structuralist theory of anthropologist and ethnologist Claude Lévi-Strauss informs his analysis of the binaries inherent in many of these works, where women are often much more than biological mothers. Finally, cultural anthropologist Victor Turner's work on liminality informs interpretations of maternity artworks used during periods of transition, such as initiations or funerals.

Professor Emeritus of African art history at the University of California Santa Barbara, Cole has curated and written extensively on the arts of Ghana and Nigeria, as well as big-picture topics like the art of power and masking. Cole's interest in sculpture is not purely academic: as 'Kofi Cole', he has carved miniatures of African masterworks for nearly two decades. The present volume is the culmination of over five decades of writing and curating on the subject of the mother and child in African sculpture, an interest first started with his 1968 dissertation on Igbo *mbari* houses dedicated to the earth goddess Ala.

Cole's *Maternity* is strengthened by the number and variety of field photographs depicting works in situ, whether placed in shrines, as part of architectural complexes, or in use by their owners. It is through contextualizing images that these sculptures are clearly understood as 'ritual instruments', thus reorienting the sometimes myopic Western focus on aesthetics in African art. Similarly, Cole's emphasis on cultural and object-centred specificity goes a long way to defy stereotypes about African sculptures, such as the simplistic 'fertility doll' or 'fertility goddess'. Both terms are too often used elsewhere to downplay both the complexity of local knowledge systems and the technical skill of artists. In his geographically inclusive approach to the maternal archetype, Cole reflects scholarly trends to unite the arts of Pharaonic Egypt and northern Africa with those from the sub-Sahara. Previously, the artificial separation of the continent on racist grounds derived by Western scholars left a persistent gap in our understanding of continental creativity. It must be noted, however, that with the exception of a brief treatment of Algerian rock art, northern Africa is not treated in this text. Though probably due to the relative lack of representational art in the region, references to male and female sexuality

and fertility certainly exist there, as Cynthia Becker has demonstrated for the arts of the Amazigh (Berber) in Morocco.

The main limitation of this work is in its details. Curiously, many captions lack dates and artists' biographical information, and are otherwise scant when compared to their home collection records. Local language names for objects (such as *dege* for the Dogon mother and child, figure 10) and detailed geography are often omitted. More troubling are captions with incorrect information. Two such examples are Figure 13, a mid-to-late fifteenth-century Ethiopian Christian Marian triptych listed with an incorrect accession number, measurements and a seventeenth-century date, and Figure 37, a Nok terracotta impossibly dated as c. 1912 (Cole dates Nok culture as 300 BCE to 200 CE). The lack of dates in the captions and in many parts of the text lends the works considered an unintentional sense of atemporality. This counters Cole's otherwise careful attention to cultural specificity in his interpretations. For a work that will probably become a reference for both specialists and non-specialists, the accuracy and completeness of this information should have been given far greater editorial attention.

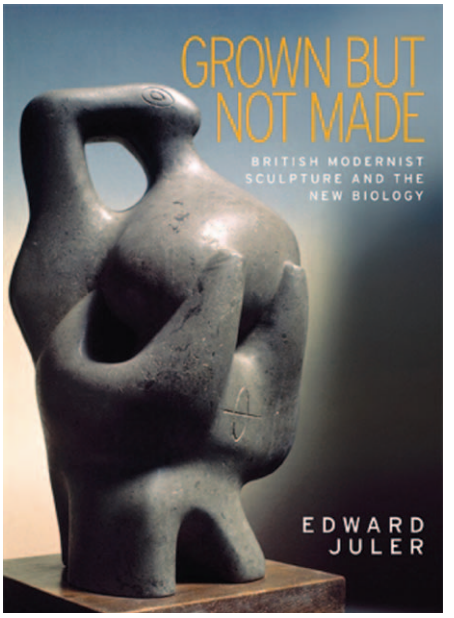
With its broad scope, *Maternity* is a strong introduction to mother-and-child imagery made by African artists, featuring not only Cole's decades of field work on the subject, but also synthesizing studies by many leading scholars. The figure of the mother and her progeny has been a recurrent topic in African art history, forming the subject of numerous books and exhibitions since at least the 1960s, such as the former Musée Dapper's 2008 *Femmes dans les arts d'Afrique*. Yet few recent titles have appeared in English or have sought to cover such ambitious pan-continental ground. Coming soon after the publication of studies on mother-and-child images in medieval France (Marian Bleeke, *Motherhood and Meaning in Medieval Sculpture: Representations from France, c.1100–1500*, 2017) and the Bronze Age (Stephanie Lynne Budin, *Images of Woman and Child from the Bronze Age: Reconsidering Fertility, Maternity, and Gender in the Ancient World*, 2014) Cole's *Maternity* represents a major work in sculpture studies that will broaden our global understanding of this universally human, yet culturally distinct, relationship and its representations.

Kristen Windmuller-Luna

Edward Juler, *Grown But Not Made: British Modernist Sculpture and the New Biology*
Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2015, £75. ISBN 978-0-7190-90324

The sinuous organic forms in the sculpture of Barbara Hepworth, Henry Moore and others are often tied to vague conceptions of Biology; however, few have embarked on the subject with the level of scientific specificity that Edward Juler does in his book *Grown But Not Made*. Juler's intervention into the study of organic modernism – a subject previously discussed by scholars including Oliver Botar, Isabel Wünsche and David Thistlewood – is to historicize the trend in 'bio-centricity' as both a British phenomenon and a wider European endeavour, and to situate modern British sculpture within this context.[1] Through the author's confident explanations of the scientific factions at play – something of a rarity in art historical accounts of bio-centricity – he weaves a comprehensive picture of the biological foundations that underpin the conceptual frameworks of artists and critics in the interwar period.

While the author employs the term 'bio-centricity' as an overarching description, he immediately begins teasing out different strands of inquiry that came under this broad term, constructing a web of interlinked and overlapping ideas in science that, he argues, played a fundamental role in art and art criticism in the 1920s and 1930s. He conveys the wider social and political implications brought about by what he calls the 'New Biology', a school of thought that consciously challenged the predominant mechanistic and positivist ideas that continued to linger from the nineteenth century and included



Edward Juler, *Grown But Not Made: British Modernist Sculpture and the New Biology*, cover (photo: reproduced by permission of Manchester University Press)

theories such as 'neo-lamarckism' and 'neo-vitalism'.

Juler first traces the relationship between science and art in the interwar period, challenging Charles Percy Snow's summation in 1959 that the two disciplines had developed separate languages. He considers the widespread interest in the biological sciences that came about thanks to publications such as Karl Blossfeldt's *Art Forms in Nature* (1928) and D'Arcy Wentworth Thompson's *On Growth and Form* (1942), and emphasizes the profound importance of BBC radio broadcasting which disseminated scientific knowledge to much broader audiences than would have accessed it otherwise. The artists and critics who circulated around the journals *Axis* and *Circle* are among those to have responded most fervently to the expansion of popular science, and these go on to form Juler's principal case studies.

Juler follows this overview with a thematic analysis of the relationship between the New Biology and modern sculpture, examining the biological sciences and the art of the interwar period through the concepts of 'metamorphosis', 'organicism' and 'morphology'. His discussion of metamorphosis focuses on the revival of neo-Darwinist evolution in the New Biology, which became a paradigm for the creative process among artists and critics. Next, he investigates the stylistic manifestations of bio-centricity in the tendency towards 'organismal composition', forging a connection between the process of creating multi-part sculptures and prevalent studies of organic arrangement. A discussion about morphology and the discourses surrounding inorganic and organic form follows on from this. Crystal structures are particularly significant for Juler's argument since technically they are inorganic but have the capacity to grow. Ernst Haeckel's resultant hypothesis that all things, organic and inorganic, possessed life, is presented as a key theoretical source for Herbert Read's writing and for discussions about the life of artistic form. The author ends by examining the impact of micro- and macro-biology on modern sculpture, especially the role it played in ideas about visual perception, establishing a relationship between new photographic technologies and modern sculpture.

Perhaps Juler's most illuminating contribution is his discussion of embryology and modern sculpture. Here Juler examines Adrian Stokes's gendered descriptions of direct carving and the surrealist fetishization of a 'feminine creative force', through this growing field of scientific research, identifying the prevalent forms of the egg and the foetus in works by Barbara Hepworth, Hans Arp, Dora Maar and Paul Nash. The author makes an original intervention by stressing that while these embryological forms became potent symbols of creativity, they also carried sinister connotations, due to the proliferation of eugenic research in the interwar period. On the one hand, this gave rise to pioneering figures such as Marie Stopes but, on the other, it led to dangerous ideas about controlling childbirth among certain ethnic groups and classes. Stopes, who was among the first scientists to propose using eugenics to offer women greater freedom over their reproductive capabilities, was as controversial a figure as those who applied eugenics for more sinister ends, and Juler brings these contentious political and social anxieties to bear on interwar sculpture, rooting it in a socio-historical context that is often negated in analyses of organic modernism.

What is more, this bio-centric lens has illuminating art historical value in inviting comparisons between artists who are rarely discussed together.

Juler achieves this most effectively in the parallel he makes between the British painter Paul Nash and the French dissident Surrealist Georges Bataille, who shared an interest in Karl Blossfeldt's *Urformen der Kunst* (*Art Forms in Nature*) (1928). Comparing Nash and Bataille's writing on *Art Forms in Nature*, Juler reveals a surprising alignment of their perspectives on the perverse function of Blossfeldt's photographs. While one might expect this position from Bataille, the comparison presents Nash in an entirely new light that strays from the romanticism of Herbert Read, with which he is often associated. The implication that Nash was informed by the dissident Surrealist journal *Document* has the potential to open up new avenues for research on the artist.

In interdisciplinary studies, it is often the case that the author has a greater appreciation for one area over another. Juler, in his rigorous reading of modern British sculpture through the New Biology, represents an emerging generation of scholars who bring to the subject an in-depth knowledge of the scientific as well as the art historical landscape of their period. His emphasis seems to be placed on balancing an art historical appreciation with a real understanding of biological science in the interwar period which enables an effective analysis of the specific trends in scientific research that informed different, and sometimes conflicting, artistic and critical approaches.

Rachel Stratton

1. Oliver Botar and Isabel Wunsche (eds), *Biocentrism and Modernism*, Farnham, Ashgate, 2011; David Thistlewood, 'Organic art and the popularization of a scientific philosophy', *Journal of Aesthetics*, XXII, 4, 1982, pp. 311–21.

Sebastiano Barassi, Tania Moore and Jon Wood, *Becoming Henry Moore*

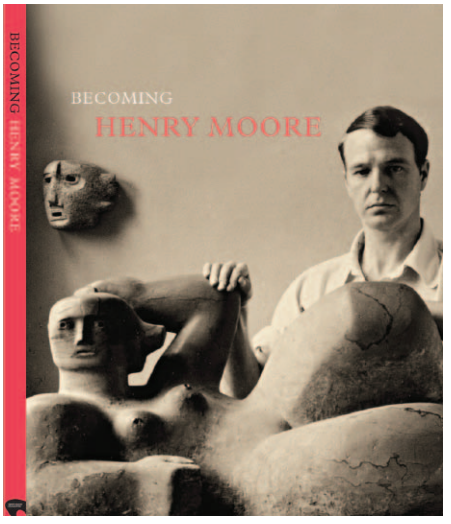
Perry Green, Henry Moore Foundation, 2017, 128 pp., 110 colour illustrations, 790 b/w illustrations, £14.99. ISBN 978-0-906909-33-1

At the age of 17 Henry Moore painted a rather heavy watercolour copy of J. M. W. Turner's *Ulysses Deriding Polyphemus* (1829), allegedly after a postcard, since he had yet to visit the Tate Gallery in London, to which it had been transferred from the National Gallery around 1910.[1] With three distinct forms apparently floating in the water, one of which is an arched rocky outcrop, the painting resembles what would become one of Moore's signature motifs, the multi-part composition. The outcrop itself clearly anticipates Moore's interest in arched forms, seen most clearly in the Lincoln Center *Reclining Figure* (1963–65), but whether he was thinking of Turner at this time, or even Monet's depictions of the Manneport, is moot, for Moore would have maintained that his interest came principally from his own observation of nature. However, he retained a lifelong interest in Turner, owned one of his watercolours, acquired when his wealth permitted, and became the first president of the Turner Society in 1975.

The exaggeratedly sculptural nature of the forms in Moore's sketch (rendered with far greater clarity and weight than by Turner in his hazy original), the balance between three differently shaped elements of the composition and the angles at which they are set on the sea (for which substitute base) already portend an interest in volume, mass and counterpoint composition that was to be fundamental to Moore's work. There was nothing modernistic about Moore's copy of the Turner and it certainly did not herald the arrival of a great talent. Rather it presented the work of a young survivor of the Victorian era, the son of a worker at the local colliery who, like his wife, was photographed seated at a table in front of a fake, luxuriantly curtained backdrop, in a manner similar to the subjects of a Victorian or Georgian 'swagger' portrait. To paint a copy of a Turner in 1916 was to be behind the curve. Vorticism and the art of Bloomsbury were still the dominant avant-garde movements in England, even though many of the Vorticists had enlisted. Moore, isolated in Yorkshire, had not yet encountered them.

Becoming Henry Moore, the catalogue to accompany an interesting exhibition recently held at the Henry Moore Foundation in Perry Green,

which travelled on to the Henry Moore Institute in Leeds, aims to chart the awakening of Moore's modernist conscience from his teenage years to his early thirties (which coincided with the early thirties of the century), principally through a narrative of his absorption of objects from what he called the 'world tradition' seen at the British Museum, but also in Paris and the private collections of, among others, Jacob Epstein and Michael Sadler, the vice-chancellor of Leeds University. Sebastiano Barassi's introductory essay goes over familiar ground in outlining Moore's formal development, indicating similarities with the work of Ivan Meštrović, Michelangelo Buonarroti, El Greco, and later Auguste Rodin, Henri Gaudier-Brzeska, Leon Underwood, Alexander Archipenko, Ossip Zadkine and others, as well as pointing to the Oceanic, Mexican, African and other sources Moore saw and sketched. Some of this material was exhibited alongside Moore's work in the exhibition to telling effect, but the catalogue essay itself is no more than a standard introduction that declines to engage with some of the more recent commentaries on Moore. In particular Barassi glosses over the impact of Moore's war service and the extent to which it may, or may not, have had a profound effect on his work or even his choice of interests. He deals only superficially with the impact of artists who engaged even earlier than Moore with ethnographic art. André Derain, Pablo Picasso and Henri Matisse are the obvious ones that Moore would have known, with Ernst Kirchner and the Brücke artists less well known and, at the time, probably unfamiliar to Moore. It is disappointing that Barassi failed to take the opportunity to revise our understanding of Moore's growth.



Sebastiano Barassi, Tania Moore and Jon Wood, *Becoming Henry Moore*, cover
(photo: reproduced by permission of the Henry Moore Foundation)

Similarly, Tania Moore's essay, 'The Nation's Collections', reviews old territory. Only Jon Wood's detailed and well-researched article on the impact of Sumerian sculpture on Moore, and in particular *Gudea*, adds to our knowledge. Starting out from Moore's 1935 article on Mesopotamian art published in the *Listener* on 5 June (and presumably previously the subject of a radio broadcast), Wood describes the history and restoration of the *Gudea* sculpture acquired by the British Museum not long before the appearance of Moore's article, and asks whether Moore may have seen it either in Leon Underwood's Brook Green School, where Underwood had worked on it in 1931, or even at the home of the collector Sydney Burney, where it had been much admired by artists in Underwood's circle, of which Moore was a 'member'. The importance of Mesopotamian art in relation to Moore was threefold: its compact, compressed form, its lack of emotional expression and, on a more detailed level, the clasped hands that Moore adopted and adapted in a small number of sculptures, notably *Girl with Clasped Hands* (1930) and *Girl* (1931). If Moore had seen *Gudea* in Burney's collection then *Girl with Clasped Hands* would have been an uncharacteristically rapid response to it, although, as Wood states, he may have seen an article by Georges Conteneau about Sumerian art in 1929 in the first issue of *Documents*, which included reproductions of sculptures of *Gudea*. Even more likely he may have looked at Sumerian sculpture in the Louvre, and perhaps even saw Conteneau's earlier article on Sumerian sculpture in *L' Amour de l'art* in 1925.[2]

There is no doubting that Moore was devouring many different forms of ethnographic art and the art of ancient cultures as his many sketchbooks testify. Like the Vorticists before him and many artists of his own generation, at this point Moore rejected the apparently sophisticated art of the high Renaissance, preferring instead manifestations of what was considered primitive, whether it was trecento and

quattrocento painting, Aztec and Mayan sculpture, Nigerian wood carvings, Congolese masks or Cycladic heads. It is a curious anomaly of the period that the word 'primitive' could describe the work of Piero della Francesca as well as what Fry referred to as the art of the bushmen. Barassi's exhibition documents the shift in Moore from a taste for El Greco, and perhaps Aubrey Beardsley and Albrecht Dürer on the one hand, and Michelangelo and Rodin on the other, to an idiom that abjured verisimilitude in favour of the real. While Moore did not altogether dispense with illusion he found a greater reality in acknowledging the power of the block of stone or wood, in coaxing from it a recognizable form that would nonetheless remain conjoined to or inseparable from the matrix. Power was derived from its block-like nature and compression rather than movement, naturalism or expressive emotion.

Masaccio, whom Moore was later to regard as the first artist to 'make sculpture in painting', as Barassi notes, is not mentioned at an early stage in the latter's account, but his *Expulsion from the Garden of Eden* was surely the source for Moore's *Two Nudes Among Trees* (c. 1921), not El Greco. Indeed this fresco must also have been the source of the face for *Woman with Upraised Arms* (1924–25) which bears a strong resemblance to Eve in Masaccio's painting, while the pose itself recalls, if a little obliquely, the left-hand figure in Edgar Degas's *Repasseuses* (*Women Ironing*) (1884–86), which was on view at the Louvre from 1914 onwards.[3] Moore continued to look at Florentine painting and modern painting and sculpture even when he was engaged with the 'world tradition'. As Barassi remarks, Moore spent the next decades trying to elide his interest in what he later called the 'cruel hardness' of the 'world tradition' with 'its opposite' in European art.

The reference to the 'world tradition' is interesting in itself, for it indicates that Moore made no distinction between what was regarded as the art of the 'civilized' first world and what we call ethnographic art of the second and third worlds. The question is never discussed in this book as to why Moore might have been interested in such sources other than by reference to Roger Fry's *Vision and Design* (Chatto & Windus, 1920). Why would a young man be attracted to the art of ancient cultures, especially since it had already been explored by an earlier generation of artists working before the First World War? We might say there was something rather derivative and *retardataire* about this choice, a wish to turn back the clock to pre-war days, and an equivalent to the continental return to order that Barassi, for some reason, suggests Moore ignored. Unless we interpret the return to order as simply relating to the writings and work of the artists grouped around Amédée Ozenfant and Pierre Jeanneret and their magazine *L'Esprit nouveau*, Moore's emphasis on the solidity of the figure, which he saw in the work of Picasso, is undoubtedly a manifestation of this tendency. Like many people of his generation Moore probably felt that the relentless progress towards a sophisticated, 'civilized' society had led to the barbarism of war with its technologically up-to-the-minute machinery and chemical weapons. Many artists felt that the suave nature of Edwardian art was no longer relevant in the post-war era. The elemental emotions and behaviour revealed during the war made the conventions of art seem no more than veneers. There was a need to return to something primal. It seems unlikely that Moore's devotion to the art of world cultures stemmed purely from his interest in Fry.

Moore was typical of many war veterans in rarely speaking about his horrific time in the trenches and the gas attack he suffered. Photographs of him after the war show him in a state of shock and blankness. The sculptures he made in the late twenties and early thirties repeat such blank expressions, and while they mimic, as Wood suggests, the expression of *Gudea*, they also reflect the desire in the post-war era for serenity, repose and restraint, for an art that shunned emotion.[4] Such critics as Stanley Casson echoed Fry's interest in disinterested emotion. During the war there had been a surfeit of emotion and there was now a need not only to forget but also to close down the inhuman experiences that gave rise to strong emotional outpouring. So in adopting models from 'primitive' cultures, Moore drained them of emotional appearance,

1. In his catalogue essay, 'A master in the making', Sebastiano Barassi erroneously states that the painting was in the National Gallery, but in an email to the author dated 1 November 2017 Ian Warrell confirmed that the painting moved

preferring an impassivity that concealed visible emotion. The emotion, however, was contained within the mass of the block of stone, the compression of the object and gestures of his subjects.

There is another aspect to Moore's art, only hinted at in Wood's essay, namely that there is an unmistakable resemblance to Moore's facial features in a number of his works, shown most clearly in a photograph of Moore working on *West Wind* in 1928. In his 1926 *Notebook no. 6* Moore wrote: 'What I am attempting to express connection with my own life & vision.'[5] The autobiographical element of Moore's sculpture needs more serious investigation. Why was Moore so interested in funerary monuments, in Etruscan funerary caskets decorated with reclining figures, in the artefacts of such brutal cultures as the Aztec? Might this interest be related to his war experience? Although often seen as Earth Mother figures, were the reclining and recumbent, sometimes androgynous women monuments to the fallen or memories of sights seen on the battlefield?[6] Their outline resemblance to the war-torn landscape is somewhat uncanny while their pacific qualities parallel Moore's post-war pacifist expressions.[7] While Moore liked to maintain that he sculpted these monumental figures because they were a given subject that became a vehicle for experimentation, this reasoning looks increasingly misleading.

As for the masks that Moore made, there is no mention of the possible influence of Derwent Wood, Moore's teacher at the Royal College of Art, who made prosthetic masks for war victims, or, if not his influence, then the impact of seeing veterans walking around in these strange accessories. Moore's haunting masks with gashed mouths and hollow eyes must have reverberated with an audience for which the sight of a mask was common.

The problem for Moore scholars is that although the sculptor commented extensively on his work, he never discussed its meaning beyond an association with nature or in formal terms. But can we continue to take his comments at face value? Are there not sociological aspects of the work that Moore did not allude to? Can we really continue to believe, as Barassi asserts, that Moore focused on 'pure formal invention without the preoccupation of narrative content' (p. 8)? Surely the fact that he produced variants on a theme was not simply because he wanted to explore the forms more thoroughly but perhaps also because one iteration did not capture the intention in all its complexity or completeness. If ever there was a narrative sculptor it was Moore. Why might a male artist be so interested in the maternity theme in the decade after the cessation of hostilities? Why would he go on to make sculptures with fragmented forms? Again the wartime experience seems pertinent. These are questions that need consideration.

Wood certainly addresses some of the narrative aspects of Moore's work, for example the role of hands in his sculpture. He refers to photographs of Moore touching his sculptures, inserting himself into a close bodily relationship with them, and the symbolic but unrevealed value of the clasped hand in the *Gudea* sculpture. Moore's sculpture differs considerably here from Barbara Hepworth's. Hepworth's sculpture is haptic, almost designed to hold in the hand, as indeed she was sometimes photographed doing. Her mother-and-child sculptures can be held in places where they narrow, and you can hook a thumb or a finger through her pierced forms. Moore's sculptures from the same period are far heavier, more inclined to emphasize the block, and cannot be grasped in this way. Where Hepworth could easily pick up her sculptures in one hand, Moore could only touch his. To counteract their remoteness Moore had himself photographed laying hands on them not simply to suggest their handmade quality but to link them to his own persona and body. Once again the autobiographical nature of the work is not far away.

This well-illustrated book presents an interesting selection of Moore's sculptures and some of the sources he studied. It has a chronology but no bibliography and is elegantly designed. It is a pity that for the most part it leaves so many questions unanswered and, with the exception of Wood's essay, presents little new information.

Jeremy Lewison

from the National Gallery to the Tate Gallery after 1910 to join the enlarged Turner display in the new galleries paid for by Joseph Duveen.

2. *Documents: Doctrines, Archéologie, Beaux-Arts, Ethnographie*, April 1929, pp. 1–8; *L'Amour de l'art*, June 1925, pp. 167–73.

3. The link between *Woman with Upraised Arms* and the Masaccio painting was first announced by Norbert Lynton in David Mitchinson (ed.), *Celebrating Moore*, London, Lund Humphries, 2006, p. 91. In the *West Wind Sketchbook* Moore notes: 'Remember Masaccio in the Nat Art Co Fund', proving that as late as 1928 he was still thinking of Masaccio as a source, in this case, presumably *The Virgin and Child* acquired by the National Gallery in 1916 with a contribution from the National Art Collections Fund. Barassi notes correctly that Moore's visit to Italy in 1925 was particularly important for his visit to the Brancacci Chapel in Florence.

4. *Girl with Clasped Hands* (1930) is something of an exception in suggesting a state of anxiety.

5. In *Notebook no. 6* 1926 (Henry Moore Foundation, Much Hadham, HMF 427), Moore notes on the second page: 'Sculpture is the relation [?] of masses etc etc| Modelling is undulation of surfaces.| Write out thesis of fact present beliefs.| What I am attempting to express -;| Connection with my own life - & vision| make a sketch each night of something absurd during |day; | Keep ever prominent | the big view of sculpture, The World Tradition'. This page, displayed in the exhibition, is reproduced in Ann Garrould (ed.), *Henry Moore. Volume 1. Complete Drawings 1916–29*, London, Lund Humphries, 1996, p. 129, AG 26.2. The inscription is transcribed by Garrould. In the first line she gives the word 'relative' where I have given the word 'relation'. The manuscript is unclear here but the word 'relation' seems more likely and echoes Gaudier's article, 'Vortex', in *Blast* (1914) which began: 'Sculptural energy is the mountain | Sculptural feeling is the appreciation of masses in relation | Sculptural ability is the defining of these masses by planes' (p. 155).

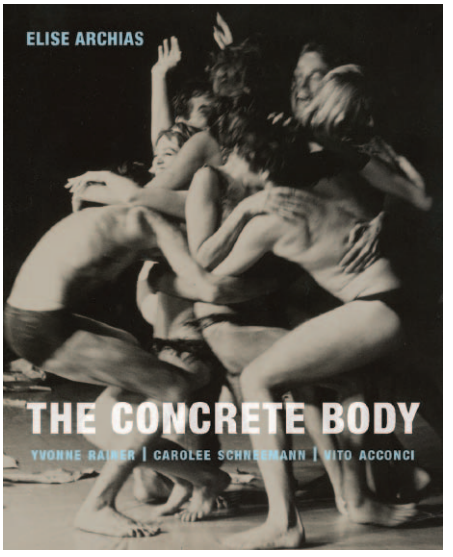
6. Moore's use of this motif to commemorate the death of Christopher Martin in a sculpture of 1946 for Dartington Hall surely points to a funereal association.

7. For a discussion of the relationship of Moore's art to his wartime experience, see Jeremy Lewison, *Henry Moore*, Cologne, Taschen, 2007, pp. 17–27, and, more briefly, Chris Stephens, 'Anything but gentle – Henry Moore – modern sculptor', in Chris Stephens (ed.), *Henry Moore*, London, Tate Publishing, 2007, p. 15.

Elise Archias, *The Concrete Body: Yvonne Rainer, Carolee Schneemann, Vito Acconci*
New Haven, CT, Yale University Press, 2016, £55. ISBN 9-780-3002-17971

Elise Archias's tightly structured study offers a fresh perspective on three artists whose practices are inextricably associated with the material, performative and conceptual upheavals of the 1960s. The position of Yvonne Rainer (born 1934), Carolee Schneemann (born 1939), and Vito Acconci (1940–2017) within graduate syllabuses and undergraduate art history curricula of the post-war era is now unassailable. Archias succeeds in counterbalancing this state of over-familiarity with the provision of distinctive theoretical insights, close re-readings and new analyses of the artists' most iconic works (notably Rainer's *Trio A* (1966) and Schneemann's *Meat Joy* (1964)). Providing the publication's through-line is what Archias identifies as the three subjects' focus on the 'everyday materiality of bodies' (p. 77). Her chapter structure prioritizes the individual treatment of each artist, while retaining a capacity for elegant and unexpected lines of thought to be drawn between them.

The timeliness of this volume is important to note. The first comprehensive museum retrospective of Schneemann, *Carolee Schneemann: Kinetic Painting*, curated by Sabine Breitwieser, Director of Museum der Moderne Salzburg, has travelled widely of late (originating at Museum der Moderne Salzburg, 21 November 2015–28 February 2016, and travelling to MMK Frankfurt, 31 May–17 September 2017, and MoMA PS1, New York, 22 October 2017–11 March 2018), with an accompanying, monumentally scaled monograph, edited by Breitwieser (Prestel, 2015). Schneemann was also recently the recipient of the Golden Lion for Lifetime Achievement at the 57th edition of La Biennale di Venezia, 2017; the ultimate seal of recognition on her art establishment acceptance, decades after she was routinely shunned and overlooked by many critics, museum curators and art historians for her sexually explicit practice.



Elise Archias, *The Concrete Body: Yvonne Rainer, Carolee Schneemann, Vito Acconci*, cover (photo: reproduced by permission of Yale University Press)

Rainer's return to dance choreography and performing in 2000 after a twenty-five-year film-making career was at the invitation of Mikhail Baryshnikov. The visibility of her resultant work for Baryshnikov's White Oak Dance Project marked the beginning of a groundswell of critical reappraisal of her Judson Dance Theater-era practice (c. 1962–68). Rainer published her autobiography, *Feelings are Facts*, in 2006. A documentary film of the same name was released in 2015. In 2014 the Getty Research Institute in Los Angeles mounted a major retrospective, *Yvonne Rainer: Dances and Films*, while a major monographic study that covers similar territory to that mined by Archias was published in 2008: Carrie Lambert-Beatty's *Being Watched: Yvonne Rainer and the 1960s* (MIT Press).

The death of Vito Acconci on 27 April 2017, some months after the publication of Archias's book, prompted wide-ranging tributes that routinely emphasized his seismic impact on the New York art scene of the 1960s and early 1970s, as well as his later practice in radical architecture. Shortly before his death, MoMA PS1 organized an important survey of his early works, *VITO ACCONCI: WHERE WE ARE NOW (WHO ARE WE ANYWAY?), 1976*, from June to September 2016, which included many of the works featured in Archias's chapter on Acconci.

The past five years has therefore provided perhaps the best opportunity to experience, read about or view documentation of the 1960s work of Rainer, Schneemann and Acconci that

there has been at any point during the previous four decades. Given such a bountiful context, Archias's publication achieves the impressive feat of offering up something new for art historians, curators and students of the period alike.

The contents of the three monographic chapters are arranged near-chronologically, starting with the eldest of the three artists, Yvonne Rainer, whose mature work dates from very early in the 1960s, and concluding with the late 1960s/early 1970s practice of Acconci, and his intersections with and divergences from conceptual art. The three chapters are clearly separated out: there are few points of explicit overlap, with the artists treated as independent case studies. In the case of all three artists, the book concentrates on the work produced after they established their professional base in New York, relocating from San Francisco (Rainer), Urbana-Champaign, Illinois (Schneemann) and Iowa City (Acconci), the latter two after the completion of their MFA degrees in painting and poetry respectively.

Archias's book is profoundly ambitious in its specificity. The careful close readings of the three artists, as their practices were configured at specific moments in their respective careers, is a strategy that corresponds to the author's wider thesis of concrete abstraction. It is in the particular that Archias locates the notion of universality so crucial to modernism at this point in time: its moment of collapse. By underscoring the particularity of these bodily expressions of desire, touch and repetitive actions, the work is understood to be simultaneously universal in its address, and particular in its articulation. This connects with Archias's theorization, in the introduction, of the everyday as 'an abstraction grounded in the particular, a notion of "sensuous human activity", as Marx understood it…' (p. 25).

The author treats the three artists like historical objects. Despite the fact that all three were alive during the research and writing of this book, almost all quoted speech from her subjects is taken from or close to the period under consideration, rather than later reflections. This object-based approach resonates with the overall conceptual argument of the book.

In the introduction, 'When the Body Is the Material', Archias sets out her theoretical priorities by positioning her reading of Henri Lefebvre's *The Critique of Everyday Life* (1947 and 1961) as a framework preferable to Guy Debord's *The Society of the Spectacle* (1967), often used in interpretations of these artists' works, notably Lambert-Beatty's reading of Rainer's choreography. Lefebvre is subsequently called on to bolster Archias's framing of the three artists, although this is infrequent, and *The Critique of Everyday Life* is never returned to in as much detail. The following chapters subsequently convey three very different versions of the notion of 'embodiment as abstraction', which is, Archias notes, 'a general condition rather than localized identity – an abstraction, like the everyday for Lefebvre … that is inextricably rooted in particular experience' (p. 19).

The three artists, Archias argues, 'brought together abstract form and the lived immediacy of everyday life rather than choosing one over the other' (p. 2). This crucial dialectic of the abstract and the everyday is convincingly articulated in the introduction, then returned to and developed over the course of the three chapters and coda. Further dialectical structures are seen in Archias's positioning of the artists as representing the turning inside out of three key movements or concerns of 1960s practice: minimalism (Rainer), happenings (Schneemann) and conceptual art (Acconci) (p. 11). Archias underscores the importance of their antagonistic roles, built upon the artists' dual identities – both insiders and outsiders relative to these terms. This is, in part, what enabled them to probe the limits and vulnerabilities of the 1960s body.

Archias is upfront about the difficulties attached to speaking of 'the body' in such generalizing terms: she acknowledges the very real problems associated with universal address in the era of civil rights. Rather than disavow the intrinsic bodily privilege of the works and artists under discussion, she uses it to make the more nuanced contention that 'there is something to be relearned from these moments of

simplification, something about how a more broadly embracing, collectivizing notion of the human was imagined during the transition to what we now call late modernity' (p. 27). This is a crucial pivot for her entire study, and Archias returns to this theme at the very end of Chapter 3 (on Vito Acconci), via a comparative discussion of Adrian Piper's street-based performances, and a reference to Rosa Parks's historic act of public bodily resistance.

In the work of Rainer, Schneemann and Acconci, Archias's argument implies, 'the concrete body' of these artist-performers (and/or their surrogate performers) materializes a sculpture that is *of the body*. The body becomes a new container for sculpture. Sculpture is certainly not visible as the artistic medium of any of these artists, who variously utilize dance, film, painting, performance, photography and poetry. However, it is the stillness and tangibility of sculpture that is of note relative to Archias's proposal of 'concrete abstraction'. As the author writes of *Meat Joy* (1964) in Chapter 2, one section of the performance involved the female cast forming themselves into what Schneemann termed a unit of 'sculptural shapes', which always 'fail and fall apart' (p. 107), destined to underscore the impermanence of body/object compatibility. It is this purposeful failure of *Meat Joy*'s bodies to operate as legible shapes (more than momentarily) that foregrounds the temporal dimension that characterizes any consideration of the body as sculpture.

Archias establishes her opposition to Lambert-Beatty's framing of Judson's 'spectacular visuality' (p. 23), by directly addressing Lambert-Beatty's Debordian negation of Sally Banes's socially affirmative account of the democratic alignment of the Judson Dance Theater (proposed by *Democracy's Body* (1983), among her other publications). Archias's thesis further argues against the 'resigned and melancholy' tone that Lambert-Beatty assigns to Rainer's work, via her extrapolation of the relationship between Rainer's choreography (particularly its mediation by film and photography) and 1960s consumerist and spectacle culture. For Lambert-Beatty, dances such as Rainer's *The Bells* (1961) should be read as a photo-image, with implacable stillness registering even in moments of movement. In Archias's own chapter on Rainer, 'Hurray for People' (the title being a quote from dance critic Jill Johnston's review of *We Shall Run* (1962)), there is a corresponding emphasis on this idea of stillness within movement, which Archias traces back to the artist's 'complete control' over her body (p. 44). 'Control' and 'concreteness' gradually appear as twinned terms throughout the chapter on Rainer, with 'control' often used as a leitmotif implying the purposeful displacement of skill. This articulation of bodily control as favoured over a classical dancer's comportment underpins the author's analysis of *Trio A*'s 'abstracted version of labour'. The movements' 'factual' quality and the overall impression of 'tasklike' activity in *Trio A* combine to suggest Archias's interest in pinpointing Rainer's unique version of the body's abstraction under late capitalist conditions (p. 34).

This terrain relates to what Steve Paxton, one of Rainer's closest Judson collaborators, speaking in 1970 called 'the crisis in dance: whether to become a technical dancer or not is a real choice now'. Paxton acknowledges the impossibility of simply erasing his own classical dance training, saying that he instead found ways to circumvent it.[1] Paxton's comments underscore the fact that this radical, post-John Cage/Merce Cunningham choreography found at Judson was not predicated upon a straightforward opposition of the trained versus untrained body, or indeed any kind of preference for the untrained. Rather, the works subverted expectations for balletic movement and rhythmic timing, with the collective participants' many years of various forms of training (as dancers and as artists) acting as a sort of residual well of physical potential and invention. Archias utilizes Paxton as a foil to illustrate the differences between his approach and Rainer's. While both dancer-choreographers replaced 'impressive' skill with 'the ordinary' (p. 59), in her comparison of Rainer and Paxton, Archias teases out their alternative versions of the everyday in relation to questions of control, rigour and the accidental. In Paxton's work, Archias claims, the everyday was 'emptied out emotionally', in contrast to Rainer's practice, which

she frames as being 'as much about everyday *feeling* [my emphasis] as the look of the ordinary…' (p. 63). It is in the elaboration of this point that Archias most profoundly distances herself from Lambert-Beatty's analysis.

The insistence on emotional context where many critics have seen only an expressive vacuum fortifies Archias's take on Rainer's choreography. Later in the chapter she describes the 'tasklike body' visible in Rainer's work as damaged and alienating, but also tender (p. 75). Archias's claim that post-war spectacle culture made these performing bodies outwardly inexpressive, manifesting a necessarily negative defensive posture, is something that partly explains her decision to contextualize Rainer's dance development using an earlier moment in American art history.

One link between the ostensibly divergent work of Rainer and Schneemann is seen in Archias's perhaps unexpected focus on painting throughout Chapters 1 and 2, as she locates the roots of both Rainer and Schneemann's performance practices in Abstract Expressionism. It is Rainer's relationship with the AbEx painter Al Held that helps Archias address her performative equivalency to Clement Greenberg's writings, in particular his theoretical approach to painting that is grounded in the 'positivist, concrete' (p. 39). Rainer's commitment to working through a Greenbergian lexicon of expression, expressiveness and 'feeling' as painterly affect is lent weight by Archias's clear-eyed recognition of the dancer's links to modernist abstraction in her attitude towards material, structure and frame (p. 65). This chapter ultimately contends that Rainer shares more with Jackson Pollock than Robert Morris. This striking claim distinguishes Archias's volume from more familiar accounts of Rainer in the 1960s, which always hinge on her 'minimalist turn' circa 1966, when in the orbit of Morris. In her choreographic embrace of involuntary bodily effects, Rainer's work embodies an expressive 'texture' that is particular to the concretely performative.

While Rainer absorbed the painterly lessons of modernism indirectly, the start of Chapter 2 concerns itself with Schneemann's early training as a painter in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Schneemann's version of modernism is articulated through a form of expressive painting as 'passionately sensitive living' (p. 87). Archias goes on to provide an intelligent material examination of her collage painting *Quarry Transposed (Central Park in the Dark)* (1960). There is the sense of a deeply felt continuum between the paintings and performances, which Schneemann called 'concretions' (p. 88), again eschewing the language of ephemerality in favour of a materialist-led encounter with performance as an ongoing concern. In *Meat Joy*, Schneemann's audience is confronted with the body as a concrete and immediate thing, its involuntary movements central to the performance (p. 81).

With the body as merely one possible material among many, both organic and inorganic, the concrete as a category becomes 'about what materials can do', in Schneemann's words. Asking if Schneemann understood the body as a 'non-art material' taken from the real world, Archias's provocative question sets the course for much of what follows, specifically the art/life intersection of the chapter on Acconci. One wonders why Archias did not make more of Schneemann's own terminology, to reflect on her transition from a painterly output towards performance. 'Kinetic painting' was the term that shaped Schneemann's recent museum retrospective; its curator Sabine Breitwieser explained that 'the conception of kinetic painting [is one] which Schneemann, a landscape painter by training, devised to describe her mature practice: an embodied and time-bound art and, more generally, one that transcends the boundaries of media'.[2] This state of non-medium specificity is in truth quite relevant for much of what Archias unpacks around her theme of embodied concrete materiality.

Initially, the second chapter on Schneemann is formulated so as to specifically address the bodily materiality of sex, but gradually its contents reveal how profoundly the central work under consideration, *Meat Joy*, goes beyond sexual expressiveness as its main concern. While

it is undeniably important that the work aimed, in the words of the artist, 'to eroticise my guilt-ridden culture and further to confound this culture's sexual rigidities' (p. 85), Schneemann was equally alive to the contemporary co-opting of the sexual revolution by advertisers (pp. 79–80). She desired to reflect that process in *Meat Joy*'s overtly politicized eroticism. We are once again situated in the modernist project of embodiment: a recurring critical motif throughout the three chapters, here seeking to rescue our understanding of Schneemann's mid-1960s project from a one-dimensional focus on its erotics (p. 83).

Archias's text illuminates many small details of *Meat Joy* for her readers, which are often overlooked in critical reflections on the performance. At one point, the 'paper belly' constructions worn by the women operate as a barrier between their bodies and the male performers. This intrusion of Schneemann's earlier collage sensibility into her live work manifests as both absurdity and abjectness (p. 78). These are two key terms that for Archias come to replace or re-complicate the erotic as *Meat Joy*'s conceptual focal point. Central to the successful invocation of absurdity and abjection was Schneemann's belief that the dancer's body is aligned with art, not life. As a result, she endeavoured to make dancers' bodies more 'unfinished' as a material (p. 95) and, like Rainer, used a combination of dancers and non-dancers in her casts to promote imperfection and wild variation in bodily movements. Further aligning the body with physical matter, Schneemann 'overwhelm[ed] the body with sensation', provoked by materials including raw chicken and fish, paint and plastic. Ultimately, 'body and nonbody were intertwined as categories and materials, with the difference between them made less distinct' (p. 114).

Archias also reminds us that *Meat Joy*'s version of modernist practice embraced existing cultural forms, for example in its soundtrack's use of pop music. With various references to consumer and pop cultures, as well as gender stereotyping and commodified forms of sexuality (such as bikini-clad pin-ups), some contemporary reviewers felt the work didn't move far enough away from what it purported to critique. At this chapter's conclusion, Archias meticulously unpacks their collective error. By measuring the work against the 'shock' value of sex/death dramatics (and finding it wanting), these male critics failed to understand that *Meat Joy*'s true subject was the 'everyday coding of mass-cultural life' (p. 118). In this way, Archias's middle chapter circles back to the body's concretions under the conditions of late capitalism.

At the beginning of Chapter 3, 'Reasons to Move: Vito Acconci', Archias efficiently reiterates a primary associative link between the three artists: their shared concern with 'presenting [...] the body's unintended movements' (p. 122). Compared to Schneemann and Rainer, the author emphasizes, Acconci's movements are located within far more 'repellent' territory. Crucially, in this territory he makes use of more rigid structures than those found in *Trio A* or *Meat Joy*. The structural underpinning of the concrete body is a concern that Archias explores with more explicit reference to conceptual art in this final chapter. One crucial device used by Acconci is the notion of a bodily 'test'. In his early performances he assigns himself a 'task', to use Rainer's terminology. Inevitably this task morphs into a test: not of his skill, but rather an endurance test and indeed *defence* against self-inflicted, senseless abuse, such as rubbing soapy water into his own eyes. Yet again, the skilled body is relinquished in favour of involuntary articulations, as seen in Acconci's video performances *Three Adaptation Studies (Blindfolded Catching, Soap and Eyes, Hand and Mouth)* (1970).

Positioning Acconci as 'a modernist in the tradition of Lefebvre' (p. 132), Archias emphasizes his use of a modernist and often serial model, which succeeded in arriving at the real through abstraction (p. 136). This is to say that what we witness in these early performances by Acconci is the body in its 'schematic condition', beyond language and conditioned only by its needs, impulses and desires. Acconci manifests desire as something fundamental to the body and beyond its conscious control, like gagging. Discussing this white male body almost solely in terms of its physiology and reflexes, the

chapter tends to skirt around the sexual politics of the artist's 'beyond control' motivations. Archias does at one point address the feminist critique of Acconci's work, but only really in a footnote. She uses it to bring her 'concrete body' argument back into focus, as inevitably entwined with constraining social structures. She then returns to the topic of bodily vulnerability (as signalled in the introduction), yet as a white heterosexual man, one could argue, Acconci never truly experienced this state of being in 1960s America.

While discreetly acknowledging Acconci's entitled position as a white male body, Archias argues that this very condition is what enables embodiment to equal generalized abstraction. At this chapter's end, the three artists are brought together to suggest again their shared modernist worldview. Adrian Piper's early performance practice is introduced as a new alternative: an artist who by the end of the 1960s wholly questions the status quo of universally accommodating embodiment. Although it feels slightly reductive to use Piper as a tool of differentiation, as a stand-in for the ensuing moment of identity politics, her practice does signal a crucial ambivalence towards embodiment, which is an effective counterweight to much of what proves difficult to digest (from our contemporary perspective), particularly in the concluding Acconci chapter.

The coda of *The Concrete Body* utilizes a more contemporary work by Rainer, *Spiraling Down* (2008), to perform a 'reaching back through time' to *Trio A* and numerous other moments from Rainer's choreographic history (p. 178). It is the importance of Rainer's recursive, self-reflexive structures (still adhering to a modernist sensibility in 2008, Archias argues) that explains why her new work is chosen for the coda, rather than Acconci's or Schneemann's post-1960s developments. What does *Spiraling Down* reveal to us about the very specific period of 1962–70 that *The Concrete Body* focuses on? It is, once again, in the service of 'embodied understanding', and in art's opposition to spectacle, as voiced through collective attempts at signification. In an earlier moment, Archias conveys the three artists' shared search 'for alternative abstractions to the abstractions of capitalism' (p. 134). This is what ties them together, and equally it is what makes the coda so satisfying as a means to bind the project's contents into a whole, despite stark divergences, through the 'making sense of concrete struggles'. Archias strikes an optimistic tone in her concluding argument: that the presence of abstract governing structures can enable the unfolding of many sensuous particulars (p. 182); a contradictory but ultimately energizing state.

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1. Steve Paxton in Don McDonagh, 'Audio interview with Steve Paxton', 1970, call number: *MGZTL 4-2514, discs 1 and 2, The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts: Jerome Robbins Dance Division.

2. Sabine Breitwieser, 'Preface', in Sabine Breitwieser (ed.), *Carolee Schneemann: Kinetic Painting* (exh. cat., Museum der Moderne Salzburg), Munich, Prestel, 2015, p. 7.