

on a sophisticated yet accessible review session among some of the field's seminal figures, including Claire Farago and Thomas Kaufmann. The verdict is mixed: while thriving within its own walls, the global Renaissance is hemmed in by hostile forces in the surrounding territory, for reasons that will resonate with anyone struggling through contemporary academia. Despite the obvious relevance of inclusive pedagogy to an increasingly diverse student body, informal survey data suggest that global approaches and examples still appear only intermittently in textbooks, syllabi, course offerings, and faculty support. Small wonder, alas, when fewer students seek art history, fewer care about art before World War I, opportunities for new hires are shrinking, and administrators prioritize marketing over innovation. A bit of anecdotal corroboration: one author graduated from my own program at the City University of New York. While she was there, the faculty developed and approved a new curriculum track in global early modern, but due to lowered enrollment and presentism, no students have chosen this major. The minor key dominating these essays aptly recalls the biblical prophet Isaiah, the inspired "voice crying out in the wilderness" to whom no one listened.

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*Thresholds and Boundaries: Liminality in Netherlandish Art (1385–1520).*

Lynn F. Jacobs.

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Jacobs's stirring text analyzes representations of the *limen* (threshold) as a signifier for sharp divisions, hazy borders, and dramatic transitions within religious, socio-economic, and political spheres in the Northern Renaissance. Building on her remarkable study of spatial logistics in triptychs (*Opening Doors: The Early Netherlandish Triptych Reinterpreted* [2012]), Jacobs's new book offers a theoretical paradigm for appreciating the complexity and nuance of an artistic tradition that has often found itself at odds with the "simplicity of unified, infinite space, [the] spatial ideal of Italian Renaissance painting" (108).

Jacobs situates her arguments in past literature, and her accessible prose—occasionally punctuated with modern-day analogies—will appeal to a wide readership. Although liminality is a multifaceted topic with nearly endless permutations, Jacobs demonstrates its presence in early modern art with just four case studies and a coda. These case studies represent a diversity of media, and their multiple ancillary examples only make liminality's relevance more ubiquitous. Indeed, one of the book's most important contributions is a methodological toolbox for a multidisciplinary spectrum of scholars.

Chapter 1 situates the *limen* in the anthropological investigations of Arnold van Gennep and Victor Turner, introducing key concepts, such as the transitory “betwixt and between” state (4). Although Netherlandish liminality is unique to its time and place, Jacobs indicates the far-reaching relevance of liminal studies with examples from literature, television, Gothic choir screens, and the Virgin Mary’s threshold theological position as *porta clausa* (closed door) and *porta paradisi* (door of paradise). Chapter 2 is a case study in stone, featuring Claus Sluter’s portal that literally formed the threshold to the Carthusian church where the Valois duke, Philip the Bold, was interred. This highly charged space engaged transitions from life to death, purgatory to paradise, and sin to redemption through sculpted figures that are “betwixt and between” in their twisting postures and disparate gazes. Left unpainted, the grisaille statues mediate the brilliant color of Philip’s tomb inside, and Jacobs notes that the “rosette” of cloth over the Virgin Mary’s breast evokes *Maria lactans* (the nursing Madonna) (32). This motif becomes one of several elements linking the portal to Sluter’s *Well of Moses* in the monastery cloister, where the dying Christ “nurses” the faithful with his brilliantly painted blood.

Chapters 3 and 4 deal with manuscript miniatures. In the *Très Riches Heures*, the Limbourg brothers reinforced boundaries of class by depicting peasants “imprisoned” in the land by blockades of rivers, fields, plowed ridges, and even an armed scarecrow. The aristocrats, by contrast, overpower the land with their size and color and move unfettered through it. Chapter 4 further articulates a Netherlandish view of space that is “multiplex” in its “formal and iconographical richness . . . achieved through . . . multiple zones of space” (108). The manuscripts included here exhibit a dizzying variety of transitions—between center and sides, front and back, the world of the viewer and the world of the page—images on the borders of other images, disjunctures of perspective, and paradoxes of continuous landscape. These complex boundaries are often keyed to the metaphysical *limina* of prophecy, meditation, and prayer.

In chapter 5, Jacobs posits that the grisaille shutters of Netherlandish altarpieces—functional doors in and of themselves—served as colorless *limina* between the real world and the world of polychrome glory on the altarpiece interior. The development of demi-grisaille shutters, where the figures seem to transition from stone to flesh, further underscores an altar’s liminal significance, for transubstantiation is itself “betwixt and between,” with the real presence of Christ veiled beneath accidentals of bread and wine. Similarly, the painted shutters often give way to a different medium, opening to reveal three-dimensional sculpted figures. The final chapter discusses the liminality of socioeconomic boundaries, chastity, cleanliness, and privacy in the oil paintings of the Dutch Golden Age and thus nods to the potential for further application of Jacobs’s methodology.

My only criticism of any consequence lies in the book’s illustrations. Many have been reproduced too small to do justice to Jacobs’s intricate analysis. Moreover, although Jacobs cites far more works than could be illustrated, there are times when

the reader may feel frustration that no picture accompanies a particularly vivid description. These are minor criticisms, however, for a formative work on Netherlandish art with promising extrapolations to other disciplines as well.

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*Insect Artifice: Nature and Art in the Dutch Revolt.* Marisa Anne Bass.  
Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2019. xii + 300 pp. \$65.

Joris Hoefnagel's life and career (1542–1601) hinges on the paradox that warfare in late sixteenth-century Europe occasioned widespread dislocation and destruction and at the same time fostered the growth of vibrant international networks of merchants, scholars, and artists, who creatively adapted to the tumultuous circumstances of their lives. Hoefnagel both benefited and suffered from Europe's political turmoil. In the 1560s he traveled through France, Spain, and England to escape Spanish oppression in Antwerp. When he returned, in 1570, he joined a circle of artists and humanists in the ambit of the geographer Abraham Ortelius (1527–98). Following the "Spanish Fury" in Antwerp, in 1576, Hoefnagel and Ortelius traveled to Germany and Italy, where they explored and recorded sites of historical and geographic interest, and where Hoefnagel made his way into elite circles of collectors, including the Wittelsbach dukes of Bavaria and the Habsburg emperor Rudolph II.

One can think of Hoefnagel as a wily navigator of patronage networks, through which he constructed a remarkably successful career. But this is not the narrative arc of Marisa Anne Bass's splendid book, *Insect Artifice*. Building upon prior studies by Marjorie Lee Hendrix and Thea Vignau-Wilber, Bass focuses on selected works by Hoefnagel as the private expression of an individual preoccupied with his identity as an artist and with his travails as a refugee. Two chapters are devoted to Hoefnagel's mottoes, insignias, and inscriptions in friendship albums, by which Hoefnagel insisted upon his originality as an artist, beholden only to nature and to his own genius. Other chapters are devoted to Hoefnagel's plaintive emblem manuscript *Patientia* (1569), the landscape and city views he designed for Braun and Hogenberg's six-volume *Civitates Orbium Terrarum* (Cologne, 1572–1612), and his four volumes of natural-history miniatures (National Gallery, Washington, DC), grouped according to the elements earth, air, water, and fire (ca. 1575–92).

Bass's three chapters on the *Four Elements* and the accompanying color plates form the centerpiece of this beautifully designed book. Whereas some scholars have discussed these volumes as a turning point in the history of scientific illustration, Bass maintains that "despite the project's long-standing association with treatises of natural history—and Hoefnagel's indisputable debt to their content—this protoscientific category of