

The roles and influence of monographic exhibitions on art historical scholarship

Review of:

Maia Wellington Gahtan and Donatella Pegazzano, eds. *Monographic Exhibitions and the History of Art*. Studies in Art Historiography, hbk: 368 pages, New York and London: Routledge, 2018, ISBN-10: 9781138712485, ISBN-13: 978-1138712485, \$150

Andrew Graciano

Maia Wellington Gahtan and Donatella Pegazzano's edited collection, *Monographic Exhibitions and the History of Art*, is the fruit of a remarkable symposium hosted at the Istituto Lorenzo de' Medici in Florence in March/April 2016. The event brought together likeminded scholars of art history and museum studies from around the world to speak about, to discuss, and to reflect upon the impact of monographic exhibitions on the written trajectory of art historical scholarship, and vice versa. The focused brevity of the twenty main essays indicates that the volume is primarily comprised of the conference proceedings, polished but perhaps little expanded. In another era, when academic publishing was less constrained by market forces, this would have easily been published as a two-volume set, allowing the contributors the space to elaborate and to include additional research and commentary undoubtedly inspired by the event's dialogues.

It is clear, nonetheless, that the editors created a volume that is as comprehensive as the conference that gave birth to it. The essays within consider monographic exhibitions that occurred from the late-18th through the 21st centuries, featuring artists ranging from the Renaissance to the contemporary periods. In this way, the book is of value and interest to scholars specialising across these many centuries.

The introductory chapter, written by the co-editors, contextualises the volume's intent, which is broadly 'to analyse the relationship between institutions that keep and display art and the discipline of art history'. The book focuses, as the title indicates, on monographic exhibitions of various kinds, using several case studies as a lens through which to view the complexity and multi-directionality of the relationship above. Gahtan and Pegazzano begin by tracing the history of temporary displays as well as what may be considered the earliest art historical texts that documented such exhibits, such as Athenaeus's description of the Sikyon school paintings displayed in the dining pavilion in Alexandria for Ptolemy II Philadelphus in the third century B.C.E. In so doing, the authors attempt to establish the (Western) historical trajectory that led ultimately to the first monographic exhibitions. The subsequent influence of Antiquity on the Early Modern period is highlighted in a discussion of how Pliny the Elder's notions about the value of

displaying artwork from different periods to invite comparative assessment led to Renaissance collectors' decisions regarding display. Isabella d'Este's intentional exhibit in her grotto of an ancient Roman sculpture of Cupid beside a modern figure of the same by Michelangelo is one specific example cited. Such a juxtaposition not only prompted qualitative comparison but also, as Gahtan and Pegazzano argue, lauded the living artist by showing him to advantage. Such specific emphasis on the celebrated Michelangelo may be seen as a small step towards a monographic focus.

Several similar instances through the 17th century are briefly discussed before the introduction turns to proper monographic exhibitions, the first of which occur in the last quarter of the 18th century. The motivations for such early displays varied widely from a desire to present the work of a renowned painter as exemplary of a national tradition, in the case of Pahin de la Blancherie's 1783 exhibition devoted to Joseph Vernet, to personal and professional conflicts with conventional artistic institutional authority, in the case of Joseph Wright of Derby who mounted his own show in 1785. Monographic exhibitions increase in frequency through the 19th and 20th centuries, operating as celebrations of particular Old Masters, retrospectives of recently deceased artists of major importance, and, at times, showcases for the singular achievements of contemporary living artists.

Gahtan and Pegazzano's book and the related symposium were undoubtedly motivated by the increasing art historical and institutional focus in recent decades on major institutional exhibitions of the past. In some cases, art historians and museums set about reconstructing specific exhibitionary events for both historical and visual analysis. This seems to be particularly the case in British art history in which major studies of the Royal Academy of Arts—its membership and exhibitions—and the Society of Artists have appeared in close succession. Gahtan and Pegazzano, and their contributing authors, surely began to ask questions similar to ones I raised in my edited volume, *Exhibiting Outside the Academy, Salon and Biennial, 1775-1999: Alternative Venues for Display* (Ashgate, 2015), which is somewhat thematically related. What motivated such monographic exhibitions? Who mounted them? What meanings are communicated in the displays and who creates that meaning? They also ask: How is art historiography affected by monographic exhibits and, eventually, vice versa? What is the institutional value of monographic displays? What is the scholarly value and what are the scholarly limitations of monographic exhibitions? The book's questions are insightful and critical to a re-evaluation of the relationship between museums and academe. In the excellent and pointed Epilogue, Joneath Spicer reflects more critically on how such reconsideration is relevant and timely in this era of diminished support for (public) higher education and of populist dismissal of art history as a valuable academic subject, which makes museums and other cultural institutions ever more vital for the survival and florescence of the discipline. I would add that the volume is all the more poignant in a world of trending social media hashtags like

#Museumsarenotneutral, as it is well-placed to participate immediately in a larger debate about museums' collecting and exhibitionary agendas.

The book's twenty chapters are divided thematically into five parts. Part I includes four chapters that each consider retrospectives devoted to artists who were alive at the time of exhibition. In chapter 1, Konstantinos Stefanis discusses what is commonly considered to be the first self-mounted retrospective, Nathaniel Hone's 1775 exhibition in London. Hone's decision to display his work was motivated by the controversy surrounding his painting of *The Conjuror*, which was removed from the Royal Academy of Arts' exhibit that year. The RA's decision prompted Hone to remove all but one of his six paintings intended for the official event and to decide to create a retrospective exhibit showcasing a summary of his entire professional career to that point. Stefanis not only makes cogent points about Hone's roles as artist, curator, and catalogue author, but also about the impact of the unprecedented event for contemporaneous and future artists. Not long after Hone's exhibition, Wright of Derby and Thomas Gainsborough came into conflict with the same institution and, thus, followed a similar path—the latter preferring to exhibit work at his home. Others artists, too, realised there were ways around conventional restrictions, Stefanis continues, citing John Singleton Copley's private exhibition of *The Death of the Earl of Chatham* (1781) and the politically radical artist, Robert Edge Pine, who privately exhibited his work in 1782. The irony is not lost on Stefanis or his readers that an artist whose groundbreaking show was so immediately influential in setting a precedent is today little known and often overlooked in both scholarship and exhibitions, and that his exhibition is considered to have been somewhat of a failure. Implicit in this realisation, in the context of the larger volume, is a connection between the historical popularity of artists and exhibitions, and scholarly attention, and vice versa.

Ruth Iskin discusses, in chapter 2, Edgar Degas's and Mary Cassatt's two-person exhibition in 1915 at the Knoedler Gallery in New York, organised by Cassatt's friend, the American collector Louisine Havemeyer. Iskin points out that the unusual exhibition was originally intended to include only Degas, Havemeyer owning the world's largest collection of his work, and that the show would benefit the cause of women's suffrage. It might seem odd perhaps to have an exhibition of a male artist's oeuvre connected to a feminist cause. Iskin provides evidence of Havemeyer's intentions by citing a letter from her to Cassatt in which she says having such an exhibition would be ““piquant” considering Degas [sic.] opinions’. However, without benefit of the entire letter, it is difficult to ascertain those opinions. By going on to assume that Degas' views were decidedly influenced by ‘conventional gender biases’, and, therefore, anti-suffrage, Iskin determines the piquant nature of the show to be in its biting irony. The author, however, ignores some key scholarship on Degas's connection to feminist circles that have re-evaluated much of his work. It is, therefore, possible that the piquant nature of the exhibition was in Degas's unconventional support for feminist causes.

The question of Degas's feminism aside, Iskin's arguments about the exhibition in relation to the larger volume's thematic concerns are well founded. She demonstrates that Havemeyer intended to exhibit an equal showing of both artists' work, which she proves, moreover, by examining and publishing three recently discovered photographs of the 1915 exhibition. The photographs not only verify the equal representation of Cassatt—long presumed to be second-fiddle—but also indicate that her portion of the display showed greater variety of style and subject than previously assumed. Havemeyer's correspondence also indicates, Iskin astutely points out, a desire to show a deeper truth about the relationship between the two painters. The long-held assumption that Cassatt was Degas's pupil and follower, and by extension that her works were derivative and lesser is challenged by the author's understanding of Havemeyer's curatorial decisions. Cassatt, Havemeyer tells us, was at least Degas's equal and the two benefitted from mutual criticism and encouragement. Iskin, thus, successfully uses the Degas-Cassatt exhibition of 1915—and its refrain at the National Gallery of Art in DC in 2014—to demonstrate how two-artist exhibitions may be designed to show a more nuanced artistic relationship that allows for 'affinities, mutual inspirations, dialogue, competition, and rivalry' rather than simpler conventional (patriarchal) notions of unidirectional influence. Such nuanced exhibitions are particularly poignant when departing from the two-male-artist format, which is still overwhelmingly more common.

In Chapter 3, Kate Kangaslahti describes three separate, but concurrent monographic exhibitions in 1933 Switzerland devoted to Georges Braque, Juan Gris, and Fernand Léger, which followed on the heels of Pablo Picasso's retrospective in the previous year. The author successfully demonstrates how the various parties involved in these exhibitions were connected and/or at odds with one another. These included: the artists themselves, who were gratified by and benefited from the singular attention afforded by retrospective exhibitions; major collectors who lent several works to each show in an effort to promote the artists in whose oeuvres they were directly invested—culturally and financially; Parisian art dealers who sought to benefit from the export of the Paris-centered Cubist art movement while finding new collectors among the Swiss and international elite; curators of the Kunsthhaus in Zurich and Kunsthalle in Basel who desired to put their museums on the world stage of avant-garde modernism; and influential art critics whose writings shaped the reception of the exhibitions, the artists, and the artworks, while expanding their own critical power. Subsequently, Kangaslathi argues, such retrospective exhibitions of major practitioners of Cubism came to define the movement, its origins, variety, parameters, and development within the history of art.

Similarly, the following chapter describes how Francis Bacon's 1971 exhibition at the Grand Palais in Paris launched Bacon into international renown as the greatest living artist. Already somewhat of a celebrity artist in his native Britain,

the Grand Palais show was his first public, institutional retrospective in France. Monika Keska argues that the prestige of the venue, the honour of being the first living artist thus celebrated at the Grand Palais since Picasso, the comprehensiveness of the show, featuring 108 paintings representing over 40 years of work, and the artist's friendship with art critic Michel Leiris were what contributed to its blockbuster success. Leiris's writings were influential on some of Bacon's paintings, while the author and critic was an ardent supporter of the artist's work, writing two monographic studies of the artist in the 1980s. Keska shows how Bacon's international exhibitionary footprint dramatically expanded after the 1971 Grand Palais show, and how this uptick in museum interest was paralleled by the appearance of numerous academic publications and doctoral theses in the 1970s and 80s devoted to Bacon's art.

'Part II: Posthumous retrospectives' examines the motives, goals, and achievements of retrospective exhibitions of recently deceased artists' work and the effect on these artists' art historical reputations. In Chapter 5, Marie-Claire Rodriguez considers the posthumous retrospective exhibition in 1857 dedicated to Paul Delaroche at the *École impériale et spéciale des Beaux-Arts* in Paris. Although not the first monographic exhibition in France, it was the first posthumous retrospective, and certainly one of the earliest examples of such a display devoted to a contemporary artist in that country. Rodriguez discusses the circumstances that led to the formation of the exhibit, as well as the curatorial decisions regarding selection and display, and how these factors allowed the show to advance a new understanding of the artist and his work. The comprehensiveness of the exhibition, which included drawings and prints alongside a sweeping chronologically arranged selection of paintings, presented the most complete view of Delaroche's life and career. It specifically called attention to the development of his artistic talent over time, while displaying little-known paintings from the late phase of his oeuvre. The retrospective led to an art historical re-evaluation prompted by both the accompanying catalogue and generally positive critical reception—many critics openly reversing their long-held biases against Delaroche—as well as to the creation of a lavishly illustrated and scholarly catalogue raisonné in 1858. Unfortunately, as Rodriguez points out, the revised opinions about an increased interest in Delaroche were short-lived. Museums, institutions, and art historians went on to ignore Delaroche for the remainder of the 19th and most of the 20th centuries. Art history, in particular, continued to focus on early and mid-career exhibition pieces in isolation, ignoring the late works shown in the posthumous retrospective that certainly swayed critical responses in 1857. Rodriguez, however, does not attempt to answer or address the possible reasons why Delaroche has been so neglected or why art history has chosen not to remember Delaroche for the genius apparent in those late works.

Similarly, heretofore little-known artists were once highlighted in a series of monographic exhibitions organised by Max Jordan of the Royal German National

Gallery in the 1870s and 80s. Jordan's role as innovative curator of contemporary art while director of the gallery is the subject of Chapter 6, written by Saskia Pütz. Pütz argues that Jordan intentionally orchestrated a series of temporary exhibitions, apart from the museum's permanent collection, devoted posthumously to German contemporary artists of national importance. The displays were innovative in their inclusion of not only finished paintings, but also drawings, sketches, and graphic work, allowing for and encouraging close consideration of an artist's process over the course of a career. Pütz argues that even the group shows displayed in the space should be understood as monographic—each artist in the group treated individually, mitigating against the formation of a group identity while still acknowledging contemporaneity. Each exhibition was accompanied by a brief catalogue, and it is clear, Pütz shows by investigating the network of Jordan's artistic, curatorial and critical supporters, that the implicit agenda was patriotic and nationalistic. Artists of varying genres, regional affiliations, and movements were presented as German at a time when cultural unity could be used to underscore the legitimacy of political unity.

Chapters 7 and 8 have in common the question of how posthumous retrospectives can help determine artistic (and art historical) legacy. Petra ten-Doesschate Chu writes about Courbet's retrospective of 1882, organised by Jules Castagnary less than five years after the painter's death. She demonstrates that Castagnary had to navigate carefully the political conservatism of the moment, which was far-reaching and long-lasting. The political climate exacerbated the negative reputation of Courbet, who had participated in the radical Paris Commune and was thought to have had a hand in the destruction of the Vendôme column. Chu argues that there was an odd arrangement to the exhibition catalogue—by genre category—and to the seemingly haphazard arrangement of the display itself—neither by genre nor chronology. The even dispersal of the artist's best-known and controversial figural works, hanging among examples of the lower genres, suggests that Castagnary's curatorial decisions were intended to focus attention on the paintings as art objects, and to underplay the artist's politics. He, thus, attempted to resurrect Courbet's artistic reputation by presenting talent apart from controversy. Acknowledging, like Chu, the retrospective exhibition's potential power to rewrite history or to emphasise selectively certain aspects of it, Elisa Gradi points out how the December 2014 exhibition 'Ab Imis' in Pietrasanta was designed to assert notions of generational and artistic legacy among three generations of the Tommasi family. Despite the fact that Marcello and Riccardo Tommasi's artistic output is quite different from one another and from that of their father, Leone Tommasi, the exhibition was designed to highlight ideological affinities and continuity among the artistic family members. Gradi writes as curator of the 2014 exhibition, offering insights into the decision making process, the desire to see common artistic and theoretical approaches among artists of the same descent, and

how earlier monographic exhibitions and scholarship influenced the trajectory of her work.

Parts III and IV both concern Old Master exhibitions in the 20th century—before and after World War II, respectively. It is not clear why the war is useful in organising these essays and, therefore, seems to be nothing more than a convenient way to divvy up the century into roughly two halves. Perhaps, with more judicious editorial selection, these parts could have been narrowed down to one. The chapters that seem to offer less impact in their present form, although they may well have more significance if expanded and published in other venues, are Elisa Camporeale's essay about the 1912 Duccio exhibition and Luca Pezzuto's work on Bartolomeo della Gatta. The former's main argument, it seems, is that the exhibition brought greater attention to Duccio's oeuvre—a point that seems a little simplistic in its current form. The latter's focus on a marginal artistic figure unnecessarily takes up valuable real estate in which the other chapters might have otherwise had room to elaborate.

The other chapters successfully conform to the book's titular theme. Lena Bader's essay on the 1871 Hans Holbein the Younger exhibition in Dresden demonstrates how it was indeed a significant moment in the development and advancement of art history as a discipline. The opportunity to display examples of Holbein's work from across European collections in one space was unprecedented, and it allowed these works to be viewed and compared side-by-side for the first time. Among these comparative instances was the display of two versions of the same subject: Dresden's own *Madonna of Jakob Meyer zum Hasen* and a newly surfaced version from a private collection in Darmstadt. The display sparked related debates about connoisseurial authority; qualitative analysis; authenticity; original vs autograph copy vs studio (re)production vs copy vs forgery. Certainly, as such debates concerned these two Madonna pictures, in particular, the Dresden Gemäldegalerie was partial to seeing its work as qualitatively superior and original, while art historians (connoisseurs) speculated that the Darmstadt version was, in fact, the original. It was eventually agreed by 1910 that the art historians were correct and the Dresden picture was a high-quality studio copy. Bader's point is that had the exhibition not occurred, or not been so ambitious as to bring Holbeins from across European museums and private collections, such a direct comparison would not have been possible, and such questions not raised within the scholarship. Although more limited in scope, a similar notion is central to Elisa Camporeale's discussion of the 1912 Duccio exhibition in Chapter 11, which utilised large photographic reproductions to complement the displays of originals, inviting similarly unprecedented comparisons.

Camilla Murgia's essay in Chapter 10 about the Joshua Reynolds exhibition at the Grosvenor Gallery in 1883-84 deals similarly with issues of re-evaluation of an artist's work. Murgia points out how the display seemed very unlikely for its time and place. Grosvenor Gallery was known as a venue for avant-garde contemporary

art in the 1880s and hardly fit the profile of the institutional conservatism of the first president of the Royal Academy of Arts. Reynolds's reputation and contribution to national taste had come under fire in the 19th century by leading lights of Victorian art and art criticism. His snobbery and the contradictory statements he made throughout his *Discourses*, along with the paradox of his endorsement of historical painting while being so prolific in portraiture, were all reasons Victorians loved to despise him. But Murgia investigates how the Grosvenor show, organised by its owner and founder, Sir Coutts Lindsay, was in fact designed to reassess Reynolds as an Old Master of national importance and British innovation, which led directly to the eventual restoration of Reynolds as the author says, the 'father of British art'.

Giuliana Tomasella in Chapter 13 and Henry Keazor in Chapter 14 discuss the Titian retrospective of 1935 and the Poussin retrospective of 1960, respectively. Each author demonstrates similar things about the exhibitions—that the displays prompt a re-evaluation of the artists concerned and that this revision is set in relation to 19th-century modernism. For Titian, the inclusion of his late work in 1935, led to the first serious art historical consideration and definition of Titian's late style. Much of the critical analysis that followed described late Titian as having more in common with artists and movements that followed, including Mannerists, Romantics, and especially Impressionists. Rethinking Titian as an artist who birthed the long modern period of art helped make High Renaissance art, and the art of Venice, of greater popular and national appeal at the moment when once-reviled Impressionism was being hailed as the beginning of modern abstraction. It also liberated Titian from being simply another Renaissance artist connected to a long Classical tradition that seemed dead or dying in 1935—at least according to the avant-garde. Thus, institutions holding Titians and Titian scholarship enjoyed the artist's new relevance in the 20th century.

Keazor's discussion of Poussin's retrospective at the Louvre and subsequent monographic displays devoted to the artist points out the 20th-century tendency to proclaim connections between Poussin and the celebrated masters of late 19th-century modernism, apparent in the years leading up to the 1960 show. Much of the revision of attitude about Poussin arrived because of the realisation that artists, such as Paul Cézanne, long admired the Old Master's work for a variety of reasons. The author also looks at the 1960 exhibition's influence on attitudes and programming in subsequent exhibitions, most notably the 1994 retrospective commemorating the quadricentennial of the artist's birth and the 2015 exposition honouring the 350th anniversary of his death. Where the Poussin of 1960 was revelatory and surprisingly modern, the latter exhibitions cast him again in the conventional role of Old Master, whose artistic and intellectual appeal is often limited to those with art historical knowledge.

Catherine Scallen's fascinating essay, 'Rembrandt and the polemical monographic exhibition', critically examines the impact of the Rembrandt Research Project (RRP) on the 1991-1992 monographic exhibit devoted to the Dutch master.

The curatorial agenda, Scallen shows, adhered to the new and controversial ‘findings’ of the RRP, while the exhibition catalogue allowed for moderately dissenting opinions. Such disagreement further played out in the art critical press, with exhibition reviews critical of both the conservatism of the show and the problematic logic of the RRP’s theories. Scallen then traces the development of the RRP board, whose makeup changed substantially over a short period, and demonstrates how this affected the RRP’s mission and subsequent publications, including several key reversals of opinion. These factors—the controversial exhibition, the problematic beginnings of the RRP, and the subsequent shifting views of the RRP—helped spawn renewed scholarly and exhibitionary interest in Rembrandt not only regarding issues of connoisseurship but also along other methodological and thematic lines that provided new insights into areas other than attribution.

The challenges of orchestrating a monographic exhibition devoted to a prolific and diverse Old Master artist are the subject of Silvia Catitti’s work in Chapter 16. Catitti highlights five such exhibitions commemorating the 400th anniversaries of Michelangelo’s birth and death in 1875 and 1964, respectively. The two 19th-century shows and three 20th-century ones faced the similar challenge of how to represent the painter, sculptor and architect adequately, either in full or in part, in one monographic display. Catitti discusses and compares these exhibitions as case studies, focusing on their differing strategies for overcoming such challenges, which, she argues, is directly connected to their differing priorities and goals.

Given that most major museums plan their exhibitions at least two to ten years in advance, it is worth asking: What is it that informs museums’ and curators’ decisions about what artist or artworks to display next? It has been demonstrated in several chapters in this volume that art historical scholarship plays a part, as do notions of commemoration and nationalism. Heiner Krellig, however, reminds us that the art market and cultural tourism—i.e. capitalism—often factor into these decisions, whether institutions are willing to acknowledge it or not. In Chapter 17, Krellig uses a sudden surge in exhibitionary interest in Antonio Canal (Canaletto) and other *veduta* painters, his relatives and those who followed him closely, in the early years of the 21st-first century. Time after time, Krellig shows how the curators—of the exhibition venues and of the lending institutions—had ties to the art market and dealers; how the prominent marketing of exhibitions that associated lesser artists with major ones led to higher sale prices of both artists’ works; how connecting Venetian *veduta* painters to Canaletto, in particular, by calling them collectively ‘Canaletti’ drove up prices as well as museum attendance/income; and how the association and promotion of *veduti* with Venice in Venetian exhibitions boosted cultural tourism there. Moreover, Krellig is very critical of the content of such exhibitions, claiming that while the number of exhibitions dedicated to *veduta* painters has increased to unprecedented levels, these displays have ultimately

contributed very little to scholarly discourse. This seems to demonstrate a recent pattern of monographic exhibitions that are somehow disconnected from art historiography.

Quite the contrary seems to be the case for several exhibitions commemorating the 400th anniversary of El Greco's death. Livia Stoenescu discusses these commemorative retrospectives in Japan, Spain and Greece, pointing out these displays' differing art historical perspectives and foci. The Japanese show built upon the conventional understanding of El Greco, while innovatively expanding its scholarly scope by incorporating and displaying the artist's writings alongside the art. The writings helped inform viewers' perception of El Greco's art as a 'personal experiment with theology and... sacred iconography'. Spain's International Symposium presented a view of El Greco set against a not very subtle contemporary (21st-century) concern with issues of globalism and multiculturalism. The artist's Cretan heritage and training, supplemented by a transformative period in Venice, and eventual settlement in Toledo, made El Greco a hero of cultural synthesis and European unity. The Greek retrospective, however, calling El Greco by his proper name, Domenikos Theotokopoulos, sought to focus on the Byzantine character of the artist's process and oeuvre.

The monographic exhibition format as institutional preference is the subject of Evi Baniotopoulou's chapter, 'Past institution's future: Monographic exhibitions and Tate Modern's make-up'. Before 2000, The Tate represented an historical institution dedicated to the preservation and promotion of British art through the 19th century. With the opening of the Tate Modern in 2000, however, the Tate brand was extended to encompass a similar authority over modern and contemporary art in a way that was intended to compete (and successfully) with museums of modern art established in other cities of global significance—the Centre Pompidou and the MoMA, in particular. Baniotopoulou shows that the Tate Modern's curatorial direction was largely three-fold, involving the display of a permanent collection; the orchestration of primarily solo shows of contemporary artists of importance or rising significance; and the commissioning of installations from major contemporary artists specifically for particular spaces within the museum, thereby expanding the permanent collection. It is a model that seems to have worked. The museum is a major tourist attraction for foreigners and Britons alike, and has, thus, made contemporary art all the more accessible to a larger segment of the global public. The author, moreover, critically assesses the reasons behind the choice of curatorial direction and whether, in practice, its focus on monographic exhibitions has been in line with the museum's originally stated charge.

Thus far, Gahtan and Pegazzano's collection focuses exclusively on European artists and Western venues, all but ignoring especially the monographic installations of such scions of global contemporary art as Ai Weiwei. The one notable and welcomed exception is Chapter 20, Ronit Milano's 'The rise of the monographic exhibition: the political economy of contemporary art'. Milano

discusses the role of the Qatar Museum Authority in the development and projection of Qatar as a modern nation of means with a global cultural outlook, collecting, commissioning, and exhibiting not only British, European and American artists, but also Takashi Murakami, among others. Milano views the shift in Qatar from group and/or thematic exhibitions to monographic displays as paralleling the Western tendency. He argues that this seems to involve a move away from scholarly and intellectual appeal towards 'the creation of mass appeal and conform[ity] to the current economic conditions of the Western art world'. The author cites several Western examples of contemporary art exhibitions featuring and/or curated by celebrity artists. While Qatar deserves credit for recognising the value of the visual arts and of cultural productions more generally in a progressive society, Milano points out that it is, nevertheless, following the mass appeal strategies of the West in its recent monographic exhibitions, perhaps at the expense of real intellectual progress and art historical discourse. The chapter also connects to some arguments advanced by Krellig regarding the art market and the promotion of 'Canaletti' in that the art market and artistic celebrity seem to play a key role in the Qatar Museum Authority's decisions.

While this book offers meritorious content, in the form of valuable scholarly insights, there are a few problems to mention. There is little to no attempt to link the chapters together in any way. Even where content among two or more chapters is so clearly related (e.g. art market issues in Krellig's and Milano's chapters), there is no mention of either chapter in the other. This is most certainly a product of the nature of the volume as conference proceedings, but the editors could have exerted a greater hand in the cohesiveness of the book. However, this in no way affects the reading experience or content of the volume, and my view is simply one of personal preference. Much more distressing and surprising, on the other hand, is the slipshod copyediting throughout the volume. There is an overabundance of misspellings, incomplete sentences, grammatical errors, and either poor word choices or inaccurate translations. Sadly, these occur throughout the main text, as well as in the footnotes and bibliography. The publisher might consider revising the volume to address these abundant errors and issuing a second edition because they are pervasive enough to affect the reading experience, although without any major impact on content.

All in all, Gahtan and Pegazzano have put together an excellent volume in which the authors have contributed a great deal of valuable art historical and museological content for our consideration. It is a book that will undoubtedly inspire further research by others, stimulate scholarly discourse, and lead to future publications of import. Teaching academics will find it, in whole or in part, to be a useful and stimulating textbook for advanced undergraduate and graduate seminar courses. I have attempted above to provide an objective overview of the contents and to indicate its many strengths and few weak points. No publication is perfect,

