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of course be (and there is) discussion of comparative works from other traditions (mainly the Tuscan and the Germanic), but the decision to include works from places such as Verona, Padua, and Friuli before they came under the control of the Venetian state is more problematic. On the other hand, the section on Veneto-Cretan painting's adoption of the Man of Sorrows is highly effective. Another strength of the study is its attention to terminology. The tracing of the development of the term *Cristo passo* is particularly astute.

No doubt this book will serve as an essential resource for scholars studying any late medieval or early modern depiction of the dead Christ, not only in Venice and the Veneto, but also further afield. Its vast bibliography, fine index, and extensive endnotes make it an excellent reference tool, and the discursive notes make some striking points, including a reference to the presence of a tattoo of Florigerio's sprawling *Dead Christ* (ca. 1530) on the soccer star David Beckham's chest! However, the absence of dimensions in the captions and list of illustrations is a surprising omission, which sometimes makes it harder to evaluate the authors' contentions about the relationship between artworks. The illustrations themselves are impressive and include many little-known objects in far-flung or difficult-to-access venues. More energetic editing might have tightened up the text and smoothed out some stilted phrasing.

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Black in Rembrandt's Time. Elmer Kolfin and Epco Runia, eds.
With Stephanie Archangel, Mark Ponte, Marieke de Winkel, and David de Witt. Amsterdam: WBOOKS, 2020. 136 pp. €24.95.

No catalogue can convey the phenomenology of the exhibition goer's experience. For me, as a woman of African American ancestry, this is all the more so for an Amsterdam-based House Museum show centering European notions of the historical presence and visual representation of Black people in the colonial-era Netherlands. It goes without saying that however neutral—or "sensitive" (13) or "dignified" (79) or "impressive" (107)—they may appear to some viewers, the Black figures in the exhibition's early modern images and texts were constructed, even if taken from life, by white artists and writers amidst the flourishing of transatlantic slavery. Moreover, despite early modern and, particularly, modern Amsterdam's cultural diversity—"more than half the people living in Amsterdam today are migrants or come from migrant families" (4)—the white gaze is nearly inescapable in the city and it does not appraise or taxonomize or welcome all migrants in the same way. How potentially refreshing, therefore, to enter a formerly white domestic space newly populated by Black and brown faces and bodies, rather than portraits and allegories of the people who prospered from their subjugation and enslavement.

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The danger, however, given the homogenous artists and majority viewership, is a result more akin to Frantz Fanon's famous account of being fixed within what Stuart Hall terms the "binaries of fear and desire" animating the white (colonial) gaze ("The After-life of Frantz Fanon: Why Fanon? Why Now? Why *Black Skin, White Masks*?" in *The Fact of Blackness*, London: ICA, 1996, 17). "Look! A Negro!" cries the frightened and ignorant white child confronted by skin and a body she will simultaneously misrecognize, dehumanize, and constitute.

Accordingly, "HERE," the emphatic declaration that preceded "Black in Rembrandt's Time," aptly conveys a curatorial agenda as well as somewhat modest and insufficiently theoretical methodological ambition. The foreword opens with the show's origins in questions raised by the Rijksmuseum's junior curator and historian Stephanie Archangel, a Curaçao-born sociologist by training who was keen to see the Black presence in Dutch art more fully historicized and acknowledged. In 2016, Archangel, not the first to do so, began a quest for seventeenth-century images of Black figures beyond those of Rembrandt. She partnered with the art historian Elmer Kolfin and the two assembled the catalogue's range of fifty-six works demonstrating that real and represented Black people inhabited Amsterdam alongside Dutch Old Masters.

The catalogue comprises four essays punctuated by short excurses on race and representation. Relying on the generative archival scholarship of contributor Mark Ponte, the authors take seriously the apparent need to prove that identifiable free Black people had lives of their own, mostly as servants and sailors, in neighborhoods such as Rembrandt's own diverse Jodenbreestraat. David de Witt's broadly art historical essay examines popular, mainly biblical, topoi enlivened by a Black visual presence. Archangel takes the reader through an impressively comprehensive if painfully redundant (and dispiritingly pull-quoted) litany of racist characterizations and stereotype-driven texts by Northern writers, many of whom had never traveled to Africa. At the beginning of his essay, Kolfin contends that "no other seventeenth-century artist depicted black people so often, in such varied ways, or in so many different art forms" (10). He counts "figures recognizable as black" in at least twelve paintings, eight etchings, and six drawings—crediting Rembrandt for his "eagerness to experiment" as he found "new ways of capturing the black likeness" (10).

Which brings me to the exhibition's un/apologetically diachronic argument—that the burgeoning of slavery made seventeenth-century Dutch people progressively racist—and to the authors' at times unsettlingly clinical descriptions of what they believe can be counted as Black/African features and physiognomy. Recent semantic shifts in scholarly and curatorial accounts of Blackness in Northern art register related conceptual pitfalls, from recklessly downplaying to overdetermining white supremacy. One could begin with the Nieuwe Kerk's controversial 2008 exhibition "Black is Beautiful: Rubens to Dumas." But whereas it might be said that "Rembrandt's Africans," Kolfin's 2010 contribution to the regrettably dubbed series Image of the Black in Western Art, had the effect of instantiating white male possession of Black

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bodies, his catalogue essay "Black in the Art of Rembrandt's Time" reorients the discourse somewhat, albeit by identifying the tragically anonymizing epoch of African enslavement, with a single, named, white European artist.

Although progress remains to be made, it would take the Rijksmuseum's monumental 2021 exhibition, the frankly titled *Slavery*, co-curated by Stephanie Archangel with Eveline Sint Nicolaas, Valika Smeulders, and Maria Holtrop, to vividly and violently evoke what Black probably looked like to the vast majority of white people in seventeenth-century Europe—regardless of whether the few "autonomous" people of color in their neighborhoods did not wear chokers or could not be observed being lashed, raped, or otherwise victimized and demeaned; regardless of whether they were attractively represented in classical garb or contemporary fashion. As Saidiya Hartman, Marisa Fuentes, and other scholars working in slavery's records maintain, that "there must have nevertheless been cruel exploitation, as well, even though the traces of it have not yet been found in the archives" (37) is precisely the point.

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Contamination and Purity in Early Modern Art and Architecture. Lauren Jacobi and Daniel M. Zolli, eds.
Visual and Material Culture, 1300–1700. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2021. 366 pp. €129.

The editors explain that the book is about the early modern distinctions between the pure and the impure. They point to preserving religious purity by expelling, isolating, or converting the other, as well as Christianizing/de-Christianizing religious sites and liturgical objects. They also speak of maintaining bodily and spiritual health by isolating the contaminated via the establishment of *lazzaretti* and ghettos. These two forms of eradication of contamination make a great deal of sense. However, then the editors go on to speak about purging Latin of the barbarism of the Goths and Vandals, evangelists of linguistic purity sanitizing speech to contribute to civic order, and pure materials and locally sourced pigments used by artists as connotations of "physical hygiene, flawless genealogy, or spiritual piety" (25). The editors even frame the *paragone* between sculpture and painting as issues of purity versus contamination, citing Leonardo's statement about carving as a task that causes sweat, dust, and fatigue. Frankly, some of these attempts are rather forced.

There are also issues with forcing some of the essays into the purity/contamination trope. Carolina Mangone only addresses the theme in one paragraph and, while this is a strong essay, it has little to do with purity and contamination. Instead it deals with Michelangelo's *non-finito* sculptures displayed as part of conjured archaeologies, then

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