

Bourdud, Louise. *The Franciscans and Art Patronage in Late Medieval Italy*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2004. xiv, 242 pp., 74 b/w illustrations. ISBN 0-5218-2158-4 US.\$75.

In this beautifully produced book, Louise Bourdud examines the decoration of three Franciscan churches in the Veneto in the period 1250–1400. These case studies explore the respective roles of the Franciscans and of their lay patrons in shaping and implementing these artistic programs. In the process, the author re-examines a recent hypothesis that Franciscan churches followed closely an artistic program laid out by the mother church in Assisi. She demonstrates instead that there was significant local influence, both by local friars and by their lay patrons, in shaping the decoration of the churches.

Franciscan commissioning of art was complicated by their vow of poverty, which restricted their ownership of property and handling of money. In her first chapter, Bourdud outlines the implications of this issue and its development over time. This background discussion is valuable, as the issue shows up repeatedly in the subsequent chapters as a complicating factor.

The three churches were selected because they still possess both substantial surviving original decorations and good documentary records. Each of the case studies includes a detailed description of the surviving art, and an analysis of the available documentation describing the patronage and production that led to the art's creation. The first case study looks at the church of San Fermo Maggiore, in Verona, whose surviving decoration is mostly painted, while the second looks at the church of San Lorenzo in Vicenza, whose relevant decorations are mostly sculptural.

The longest chapter, and the one of greatest interest to confraternity scholars, is the final case study on the church of Sant'Antonio in Padua, which deals with an overall building project as well as individual decorative programs for different parts of the church and its chapels. The scale of the project, combined with the restrictions caused by the Franciscan's vows, led to a complex management process in which the friars collaborated at various times with the civic leadership, the Franciscan Third Order, and committees of citizens.

There are only two mentions of confraternities, in both cases in relation to the decoration of a specific section of the Church. Bourdud briefly challenges the idea that the confraternity of Saint Anthony was responsible for the decoration of the church's chapter hall (p. 98). Of much more interest is the case of the Cappella della Madonna Mora (pp. 104–108). In an unusual arrangement, this chapel was shared between the Negri family and the confraternity of Saint Anthony. Bourdud examines their respective roles in developing the chapel's art, and also how they worked with each other, and with the Franciscans, to administer the chapel and maintain its decorations. This tripartite arrangement seems to have been tricky to manage, because a clause in the agreement between the confraternity and the friars

stipulated that “neither the friars nor the confraternity were to speak ill of each other on pain of a fine”!

The rest of the chapels in the church were commissioned by individual families. However, the detailed examination of the respective roles of lay donors and Franciscans in developing the artistic programs and administering these chapels could provide insight into similar arrangements for confraternal chapels in other churches.

With its thoughtful background discussions and detailed case studies, this book will be useful to anyone engaged in examining a confraternity based in a Franciscan church, particularly if it commissioned decorations.

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The Cambridge Companion to Giotto, eds. Anne Derbes and Mark Sandona. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2004. xix, 313 pp., 46 plates, 49 figures. ISBN 0-5217-7007-6. US.\$ 95.

This collection of essays provides a representative sampling of up-to-date scholarship on Giotto, including a survey of scholarship (Hayden Maginnis), analyses of Giotto’s work on the St. Francis Cycle at Assisi (Bruno Zanardi, William R. Cook), of his figures (William Tronzo), and of his contributions to architecture (Gary M. Radke). Essays by Joanna Cannon (“Giotto and Art for the Friars: Revolutions Spiritual and Artistic”) and Julia Miller and Laura Taylor-Mitchell (“The *Ognissanti Madonna* and the Humiliati Order”) provide insights into Giotto’s connections with the Franciscans and their associated lay confraternities. Issues of lay patronage are also addressed by Benjamin Kohl, and finally Giotto’s work in the Arena Chapel is subjected to two very different kinds of readings by the volume’s editors and by Andrew Ladis.

This Cambridge Companion, like all of the other volumes in this series, is designed to provide a working knowledge of its subject: Giotto’s life, his methods, contemporaries, patrons, and the traditions of his critical reception. As is clear from the start, the picture is not simple: this is an artist who has generated a wide range of approaches and responses, so the representation provided by the volume attempts a similar breadth. Because there is repeated emphasis on the Franciscan connection, the volume will be of particular interest to students in this field. Joanna Cannon’s essay in particular provides a helpful survey of the cultural context of Quattrocento Franciscan spirituality, emphasizing the links between the order and Giotto’s early works, and demonstrating the ways in which the friars’ spiritual revolution and the conditions of the thirteenth century prepared the conditions for Giotto’s artistic revolution. William Cook’s essay addresses