



## Kleinbub, Christian K. Michelangelo's Inner Anatomies

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production—silver from the New World, dyed silk made by forcibly-converted Muslims in Granada—create a potential for perceived contamination between the tapestries' materials and iconography. Through a consideration of the works of Bruegel the Elder and his followers, Amy Knight Powell argues that, before the Scientific Revolution, the Renaissance was beginning to understand matter, being composed of atoms, as incomplete and impure, always disintegrating. She posits that Bruegel's drawings, with their use of dots, stipples, and circles, reveal how he allied himself with atomistic philosophy and potentially with atheism.

The final essay, by Caroline A. Jones and Joseph Leo Koerner, overlays temporal periods and geography, moving between Albrecht Altdorfer's etchings of the destruction of the Regensburg synagogue and the city's promotion of the cult of the Virgin Immaculate, and Francis Picabia's Dadaist lithograph of an ink stain that seems to besmirch the Virgin's immaculacy. The essay moves on to consider the ways in which art history and its institutions play on the social reversibility of purity and defilement: for example, in the Nazis' rejection of abstraction—for them, associated with the Jews—and their celebration of Gothic style as inherently pure and Germanic. By contrast, the Gothic was anathema to Clement Greenberg, who in the United States promoted once again the purity of abstraction.

Overall, the book is an important contribution in bringing anthropological approaches into our understanding of works of art and architecture.

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**Kleinbub, Christian K.**

*Michelangelo's Inner Anatomies.*

University Park: Penn State University Press, 2020. Pp. 260 + 40 col., 77 b/w ill. ISBN 9780271083780 (hardcover) US\$99.95.

*Michelangelo's Inner Anatomies* is an art history monograph that re-evaluates a selection of Michelangelo's drawings, frescos, sculptures, and architectural drawings, alongside paintings executed according to the artist's designs by

Jacopo Pontormo (1494–1557) and Marcello Venusti (1510–79), by historicizing the humoral body's major internal organs. At the outset, Christian K. Kleinbub tells us that *Michelangelo's Inner Anatomies* seeks to understand what one of Michelangelo's greatest contemporaneous critics, Pietro Aretino (1492–1556), could not (2). Gazing at the *Last Judgment* (1536–41), Aretino famously accepted neither the sacrality of the convoluted bodies hauled up to heaven by their limbs nor the aptness of the nudes heaved underground by their testes. Kleinbub claims that to understand the consecrated nature of the Sistine nudes, we need to comprehend the historical meaning of the bodies' gestures intentionally arranged to indicate the workings of the liver, the heart, and the brain. We need to get to Michelangelo's idiosyncratic anatomical patois, which Aretino putatively overlooked.

Kleinbub ascertains that each meaning that Michelangelo ascribed to a bodily gesture, movement, part, and orientation was culturally constructed and thus can be gouged out from the artist's sonnets and contemporaneous textual sources. The author supports his reliance on numerous texts by claiming that Michelangelo acquired knowledge about the humoral body from various works of poetry (Petrarch, Dante), philosophy (Marsilio Ficino), theology (Girolamo Savonarola), and anatomy (Mondino de Luzzi) in addition to practising anatomy. According to Kleinbub, Michelangelo consolidated his hands-on experience and a wide variety of writings into a pictorial theory of form. By unravelling Michelangelo's theory of form, referred to as "inner anatomical poetics," Kleinbub asserts that we can come to a better understanding of the artist's symbolic use of the body across his entire oeuvre.

The book is structured into five chapters. The chapters are arranged according to the body's viscera, moving up from the "lower" to the "higher" organs (12). Chapter 1, titled "The Liver and Desire," opens with a discussion of Michelangelo's two famed drawings: *The Rape of Ganymede* (ca. 1532), deliberated over a sheet attributed to Michelangelo at the Fogg Museum, and *The Punishment of Tityus* (ca. 1532) from the Royal Collection at Windsor. Building upon Erwin Panofsky's iconology and iconographic method, Kleinbub attributes the cause of Tityus's downfall to his liver. Kleinbub reads the horizontal orientation of Tityus's body as an attestation of Tityus's spirit's prolonged sojourn around the liver and subsequent predisposition to lust. Consistent with the period's understanding of the body, Kleinbub claims, lying down was imagined to reduce the flow of spirits that inclined upward due to their natural

buoyancy. In contrast to Tityus, Ganymede stands upright, thus enabling the ascent of the spirits to the mind for higher contemplation (25). Kleinbub extends a similar analysis to the *Dying Slave* and the *Rebellious Slave* (1513–15) at the Louvre and overall enriches and propagates the interpretations of Michelangelo's sculptures in Panofsky's *Studies in Iconology* (1972).

Moving up through the body, chapters 2, 3, and 4 take the heart as their interpretative cipher and demonstrate the heart's symbolic multivalency. "The Heart Under Siege," the book's second chapter, focuses on Michelangelo's fortification drawings executed for the defence of the last Florentine Republic (1527–30). The chapter maps the body-in-love's internal physiology in the act of meeting the beloved and analogously appraises the city under siege. Bypassing discussions of politics and warfare, Kleinbub reviews the city as the body's vulnerable interior, the city's walls as metaphors for the skin, and the fortification gates as the eyes leading to the heart. Weighing Michelangelo's fascination with the eye's organ, Kleinbub cites the verso of a sheet from the Ashmolean without duly problematizing the drawings (78). The verso of the Ashmolean folio has been contended as regards purpose and authorship, and at least three hands have been identified so far.

Having discussed the internal physiology of the amorous heart and body in general terms, chapters 3 and 4 focus on the anatomy of carnal and sacred love. In chapter 3, Kleinbub examines the "inner anatomical poetics" of carnal love through the painting *Venus and Cupid* (ca. 1532–33) by Pontormo. He posits that Venus's left-hand index finger points to her heart to indicate her willful amorous wounding that puts reason aside (95). Chapter 4 maintains that in Pontormo's *Noli me tangere* (ca. 1532–32), in contrast to Venus, Christ's right-hand index finger touches Mary Magdalene's left breast to accent the pious heart as an instrument of sacred love (105).

The book's last chapter advances further upward from the heart to the head. Titled "The Brain, Judgement, and Movement," this chapter re-examines a letter, the drawing *Il Sogno* (ca. 1533–34) at the Courtauld Gallery, Michelangelo's *Brazen Serpent* (ca. 1508–12) fresco in the Sistine Chapel, and the later Vatican frescos in the Pauline Chapel through Galen's ventricular theories of the brain. For instance, in the *Conversion of Saul* (ca. 1542–50) fresco, Kleinbub notices that Saul's attendant splays his left-hand fingers across Saul's left breast. Through the attendant's hand, Kleinbub claims, Michelangelo pointed to Saul's heart, demonstrating to the viewer the divine vision's passionate

affect. Saul's closed eyes are taken to expose the interior character of the vision initially received in the brain's anterior ventricle, imparted with the faculty of the imagination, and passed on to the heart for salvation (158).

Overall, *Michelangelo's Inner Anatomies* is an overdue addition that brings histories of the humoral body to bear on Michelangelo scholarship with relevance to art and architectural historians. Even though Kleinbub remains embedded in Panofsky's iconographic method of reading artists' intentions through visual clues, the author adds a consequential interpretative layer to previous readings of Michelangelo's works. However, what remains unsettled is Kleinbub's selection of the liver, the heart, and the brain as principal semantic ciphers. Kleinbub's prioritization of three internal organs on account of the body's muscles, limbs, reproductive parts, etc., perpetuates a questionable inside-versus-outside dichotomy with reference to the porosity of the pre-modern humoral body as well as the author's overall claim that for Michelangelo, the conception of the self and the state of the soul relied on the body as a whole.

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### **Le Cadet, Nicolas.**

#### ***Rabelais et le théâtre.***

Les mondes de Rabelais 5. Paris : Classiques Garnier, 2020. 467 p. ISBN 978-2-406-10450-6 (broché) 39€.

Il manquait, jusqu'à ce jour, une étude d'ensemble révélant l'empreinte des sources dramatiques dans la geste pantagruéline. Cette monographie, accueillie dans la collection « Les mondes de Rabelais », comble un vide critique au sein des études rabelaisiennes et permet de saisir, dans toute sa complexité, l'importance de l'univers de la scène à travers les cinq *Livres*.

Rabelais « homme de théâtre » fait son miel de toute une constellation de genres dramatiques, émaillant ses textes d'innombrables emprunts au monde de la farce, au mystère, à la sottie, au monologue et au sermon joyeux. C'est à l'actualisation de ce répertoire dans les récits rabelaisiens que s'intéresse la première partie de l'enquête menée par Nicolas Le Cadet. Si Rabelais multiplie