

Bartsch. Since Bartsch's work set the standard for all subsequent cataloguing, drawing up a catalogue of Bartsch's own creations using a state-of-the-art system was undoubtedly an intriguing challenge. In this respect the book benefits from the author's practical experience as a long-standing employee of the LETTER Foundation in Cologne, which focuses *inter alia* on collecting prints from the period around 1900.

In his own work Bartsch concentrated on making reproductive prints after drawings by other artists. Rieger compares each work with the original – an unprecedented undertaking for an entire *œuvre* of reproductive prints. Bartsch's productivity, as well as his technical brilliance, make him an eminent example among Viennese printmakers of his time, and Rieger thus also adds substantially to our knowledge of printmaking in the territory now known as Austria around 1800, which remains under-researched.

In *Le Peintre-Graveur* Bartsch made the distinction between original and reproductive prints. Nonetheless, he considered reproductive printmakers to be creative in their own way, and so he deliberately included artists such as Marcantonio Raimondi, Jacob Matham, Jan Muller and Jan Saenredam. The quality of the artistic reproduction of an original was clearly a factor when deciding who would or would not be included.

Bartsch's reproductions of the 1780s (after Rembrandt, for instance) reveal a meticulous attention to detail; Rieger describes them as drawing facsimiles. After 1800 Bartsch took a more liberal approach to his originals, 'improving' them, as it were, and his facsimile-style prints became the exception. In his late animal pictures he occasionally went so far as to alter the underlying composition in order to make it match an ideal. This was fully in line with his conviction that reproductive printmakers could also be inventive.

Rieger embeds Bartsch's reproductions of drawings in a European context by analysing all the major eighteenth- and nineteenth-century suites of reproductive prints and describing the various techniques that were employed. He takes as his starting point Rudolph Weigel's catalogue of reproductive prints published in 1865. This panorama is a highlight of his book. Bartsch was well acquainted with reproductive prints through his work at the Imperial Library and his contacts with print dealers, from whom he bought works for the Imperial collection and to whom he sold his own prints in order to boost his salary. The section on print dealers is relatively short, but the survey of the history of various firms is useful. Bartsch was influenced by works by Francesco Bartolozzi, Johann Gottlieb Prestel, Maria Katharina Prestel and Charles Rogers, as Rieger shows convincingly. Nonetheless, Bartsch's prints, especially the stupendous facsimiles of drawings, remain true works of art in their own right.

Bartsch's academic achievement was immense. In addition to *Le Peintre-Graveur* he composed numerous essays and catalogues,

also surveyed by Rieger. Bartsch regarded his artistic and academic activities as inseparable. He used the knowledge he had acquired as an artist to catalogue the Imperial collection and popularised the drawings it contained by means of his own reproductions. The close ties between his academic and artistic work are particularly apparent in the so-called *planches explicatives* that he added to *Le Peintre-Graveur*, detailed reproductions designed to distinguish between the various states and between originals and copies. He added these whenever he thought that language could not explain a complex matter. The technical means available today, by contrast, enable Rieger to supplement his treatise with a wide array of images, not only to describe Bartsch's *œuvre*, but also to illustrate it in its entirety.

Le Mythe du Retour. Les artistes scandinaves en France de 1889 à 1908. By Vibeke Röstrop. 448 pp. incl. 141 col. ills. (Stockholms universitets förlag, 2013), €37. ISBN 978-91-7656-685-5.

Reviewed by RICHARD THOMSON

THIS BOOK IS based on Vibeke Röstrop's Ph.D. thesis, and offers a major review of common assumptions about Swedish and Norwegian art in the two decades between 1889 and 1908. This period – from one of the great Expositions Universelles to a new phase when many Scandinavians came to study in Matisse's studio – is subjected to an exhaustive analysis, covering male and female artists as well as painting, sculpture and the decorative arts, which is also something of a refreshing revisionist polemic. She dismantles the standard notion – accepted by Scandinavian art historians and followed by Kirk Varnedoe, Gabriel Weisberg and others – that northern painters trained in Paris, absorbing the naturalism of Frenchmen such as Jules Bastien-Lepage and perhaps a touch of Impressionism, and then returned across the Baltic to become national artists, consciously striving to represent their own culture and traditions. Röstrop produces much information, allied to graphs and detailed appendices of exhibition listings as well as plentiful and diverse illustrations, which present an alternative, more complex and intriguing picture.

Röstrop argues that many northern painters did not return home after their training, but stayed in Paris, often for long periods or even permanently. The numbers of Scandinavians in the French capital remained pretty consistent throughout this period, on the evidence of the Salon catalogues. While there was certainly a debate about national identity and art in Scandinavia at this time, and a pluralist and divergent one, with Norway finally achieving independence from Sweden in 1905, the distinct internationalism of many Swedish and Norwegian artists makes us see that in a different light.

Röstrop does not deny the importance of the French experience for the northerners.

The exhibition *Des Berges de la Seine*, staged in 1885 by eighteen male artists in Stockholm, was an assertion of that. She points out that not only Bastien, but Pierre Puvis de Chavannes, Léon Bonnat and Jean-Charles Cazin were all, in their different ways, important exemplars for Scandinavian painters. Equally, the so-called Fleskum summer of 1886, which united artists such as Erik Werenskiöld and Christian Skredsvig in a search for core Norwegian values, demonstrated the quest for the national. But she introduces evidence to warn against over-simplification. The intense naturalism of Gustav Wenzel's *Carpenter's workshop*, for instance, had caused problems with the Christiania art authorities in 1881, well before his visits to France in 1883 and 1884.

The author is at pains to prove that many Scandinavian artists did not return home, but stayed abroad. The best known of these is perhaps August Hagborg, but Emma Löwstadt-Chadwick, Emma Beck and Georg Arsenius only begin the list of those who remained in France. Allan Österlind mixed in cultured French circles ranging from the poet Maurice Rollinat to the *Dreyfusarde* Mme Ménard-Dorian. The marine painter Arvid Johanson was treated like a French officer when on board a warship, and his dramatic canvas of French vessels escorting the Tsar's yacht into Cherbourg in 1896 on a visit to cement the Franco-Russian alliance was purchased for the museum at Saint-Brieuc: a foreigner acknowledged for painting what was effectively a French 'national' picture. At the other end of the spectrum, Ragnvald Blix made caricatural drawings for *Le Rire* and *Le Journal*. The highly regarded landscape painter Frits Thaulow, Röstrop emphasises, was in France in 1876–79, and during the 1880s only in the winters, but he settled permanently in France in 1892. In other words, he presented the exact opposite of those who returned in the 1890s to be 'national' artists. The cosmopolitan Swede Anders Zorn was also highly active in Paris in the 1890s, painting portraits of French luminaries as different as the cultural mandarin Antonin Proust, the actor Coquelin cadet and the leading intellectual Ernest Renan. In 1906 the Galerie Durand-Ruel staged a large Zorn retrospective featuring his celebrated etchings. Much the same is true of Edvard Munch, who after a preliminary visit to France in 1885, returned, initially to study with Bonnat, in 1888 and stayed until 1892, returning again between 1896–98 and in 1903, 1904 and 1908. Scandinavian female artists prospered too; the Norwegian landscapist Kitty Kielland exhibited regularly at L'Union des femmes exhibitions in the 1890s, while her compatriot Frida Hansen's tapestry *La voie lactée* (1898) was widely admired at the 1900 Exposition Universelle. Some, like Judith Gérard-Arlberg and Valborg Dubois-Olsen, married Frenchmen. And Scandinavian artists did not only remain in France; Hagborg's brother Otto made a career in Britain while Ava de Lagercrantz and Charles Friberg were among those who made their mark in the United States.

Those who did return often found themselves in complex positions. The Swedish crown and Academy of Fine Arts had not wanted to participate in the 1889 Exposition Universelle because it celebrated the French Revolution. In the event Richard Bergh won a *grand prix* and was appointed a member of the *Légion d'honneur* for organising the Swedish section. Thereafter Bergh did return home – partly for health reasons – and eventually became director of the National Museum in Stockholm. Despite reading Taine on national cultural characteristics and Julius Langbehn on the national ‘soul’ and writing that he sought to make art that was ‘completely Swedish’, Bergh was torn. At the Exposition Universelle he had visited the renegade Volpini show, and in 1892 bought an 1889 Breton landscape by Gauguin from the artist’s estranged wife, Mette, in Copenhagen, a canvas that became a talisman for Bergh and his colleagues in Stockholm. Ernest Josephson was another who returned, but this was for health rather than nationalistic reasons and was organised by friends who realised that his schizophrenia would be better treated at home than on the remote Ile de Bréhant. Like Bergh, Prince Eugen went back in 1889, but he was a member of the royal family with public duties to balance with his output as an artist. Support systems in Scandinavia did encourage artists. Harriet Backer, who had studied and worked abroad between 1878 and 1888, returned to set up an appreciated art school; one later pupil who travelled to Paris to study under Matisse said his corrections were just like hers. But such support was not exclusively national. The Swedish industrialist Pontus Fürstenberg opened his gallery in Göteborg in 1885 and gave generous support to Scandinavian artists, but he also encouraged them to exhibit abroad in search of an international profile. Röstrop’s case – that France remained important for Scandinavian artists after the 1880s and that they returned home to seek a national identity is an over-simplified idea – is forcefully argued, with a substantial body of unfamiliar material.

Publications Received

In Front of Nature. The European Landscapes of Thomas Fearnley. Edited by Ann Sumner and Greg Smith, with contributions by Ernst Haverkamp, David Jackson, Kate Lowry, Greg Smith and Ann Sumner. 120 pp. incl. 90 col. ills. (Giles, London, in association with the Barber Institute of Fine Arts, Birmingham, 2012), £22.95. ISBN 978-1-907804-10-6.

This publication accompanied a small exhibition devoted to the work of Thomas Fearnley held in 2012 at the Barber Institute of Fine Arts, Birmingham. If the selection of works in the show itself was perhaps too much dependent on what was available, the catalogue is nothing short of outstanding, and the best introduction to the artist’s work available in the English language. Well written and published in a handy small format, the book belongs to the dying breed of scholarly yet highly accessible and manageable publications. It makes full use of the wealth of documentation available for the artist, who wrote many letters to his friend Johan Christian Clausen Dahl during his travels in Italy, while more information can be found in the memoirs of his friend and travelling companion Charles West Cope, published

in the late nineteenth century. The book reconstructs the life and incessant travel of this peripatetic artist, a much-liked bon vivant and practical joker, who never ceased studying nature in the many oil-sketches – often dated to the day – that he produced in his relatively short lifetime. They were made as far apart as Norway, Germany, England, Switzerland and Italy, only the sudden death of the artist’s father curtailing his plans to travel onwards to Greece and Egypt. In London the artist painted a well-known oil-sketch of J.M.W. Turner putting the final touches to one of his canvases on show at the Royal Academy, the light emanating from the picture so strongly that it illuminates the room and makes the bench on which Turner stands cast shadows on the floor. It is a thinly veiled satirical portrait, and the two artists could indeed not be further apart; in his quest for truth to nature, Fearnley’s artistic vision was much closer to that of John Constable, but whether they ever met or knew of each other’s work is not known. This excellent publication allows access to all this and much more in an exemplary fashion.

Tromies. Das Gesicht in der Frühen Neuzeit. Edited by Dagmar Hirschfelder and León Krempel. 136 pp. incl. 15 col. + 60 b. & w. ills. (Gebr. Mann Verlag, Berlin, 2014), €59. ISBN 978-3-7861-2694-2.

There has been a surge in interest in the topic of *tromies*, as witnessed by the recent publication of Dagmar Hirschfelder’s *Tromie und Porträt in der niederländischen Malerei des 17. Jahrhunderts* (Berlin 2008) and Franziska Gottwald’s *Das Tromie. Muster - Studie - Meisterwerk. Die Genese einer Gattung der Malerei vom 15. Jahrhundert bis zu Rembrandt* (Munich and Berlin 2009). The latest offering is this collection of papers given at a conference held in February 2011 on the occasion of the exhibition *Tromies. Marlene Dumas und die Alten Meister* at the Haus der Kunst, Munich. Some of the contributions are perfectly good, but that by one of the volume’s editors, León Krempel, is so far-fetched that it almost reads like a parody of iconographic research. Krempel argues that the famous paintings *Girl with the red hat* and *Girl with a flute* in the National Gallery of Art, Washington (the latter not universally accepted as by Johannes Vermeer), are not only pendants, but represent, respectively, Ecclesia and Synagoga. The evidence for both assumptions ranges from very slim to non-existent, but the author nevertheless adduces a variety of prints and textual references that help him to construct a meaning for such details as the decorative forms found in the tapestry in the background and the lion’s heads found on the back rests of the chairs on which the two young women are seated, never once stopping to ask himself whether any of his sources are at all relevant. Having ploughed one’s way through this muddle, the reader is treated to a similarly far-fetched reading of Vermeer’s *Study of a young woman* (Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York) and *Girl with a pearl earring* (Mauritshuis, The Hague), apparently also pendants, with the New York painting representing ‘Simple Beauty’ and the Hague painting ‘Composed Beauty’ (with the meaning of having been assembled). Even less evidence exists for this idea, which is followed by a paragraph explaining that we also know precious little about whether the learned contemporary literature presented as evidence was much known in Vermeer’s milieu in Delft. It is disheartening to think that inevitably more art-historical ink will be spilled when these interpretations are dutifully recorded in future catalogue entries devoted to these four famous paintings.

B. C.

Holland’s Golden Age in America. Collecting the Art of Rembrandt, Vermeer, and Hals. Edited by Esmée Quodbach. 264 pp. incl. 89 col. + 20 b. & w. ills. (Pennsylvania State University Press, University Park, and The Frick Collection, New York, 2014), \$69.95. ISBN 978-0-271-06201-3.

This book contains the proceedings of a symposium organised in 2009 by the Center for the History of Collecting in America at the Frick Collection, New York, and inaugurates a new series of *Studies in the History of Art Collecting in America*. That conference was inspired by the centenary of the Hudson-Fulton exhibi-

tion held in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, in 1909, one of the most spectacular displays of Dutch art in the United States. Divided into three parts, arranged chronologically (*The Early Years. The Formation of America’s Taste for Dutch Art; The Gilded Age. Great Collections and Collectors of Seventeenth-Century Dutch Art; The Twentieth Century. The Dissemination of Dutch Art Across America and the Dutch Reaction*), the American taste for Dutch art is analysed in thirteen chapters, preceded by an historical introduction by Peter C. Sutton. Each chapter draws attention to a specific problem, such as the context of the New York collectors and their relations with the Metropolitan Museum (Walter Liedtke), the mutual influences of the taste for contemporary and old paintings and their links, the taste for Vermeer (Esmée Quodbach) and an overview of the present situation (Quentin Buvelot).

It is no coincidence that a strong preference for Dutch art developed in the United States in the wake of the enthusiasm for contemporary painting. American painters active both in Europe and at home helped to create the sensibility for certain subjects, such as landscapes or interior scenes (and it is helpful to consider in this context the diffusion of reproductions, as Annette Stott proposes). At the same time, portraits were in the ascendant (as analysed by Louisa Wood Ruby in her essay), something that continued into the Gilded Age; and not surprisingly these genres were the best represented in the 1909 Hudson-Fulton exhibition. In this context, the cultural competition with Europe at the end of the nineteenth century led to the astonishingly high sums that American collectors were prepared to spend on Dutch old masters, and in a few years many masterpieces crossed the Atlantic.

Particularly important is the geography of American collecting that emerges from this volume (as the essays by Lanche Humphries, Ronni Baer and Anne T. Woollett demonstrate), helping the reader to get an idea of the broadness of the phenomenon and to distinguish between different collectors and contexts. In this sense, it must be emphasised that the book considers the entire chronological arch in which the history of the American taste for Dutch art developed, including a survey of the competitive formation of the Rijksmuseum collection and further American competition after the great acquisitions of the Gilded Age (Peter Hecht).

Of the great number of protagonists, a few have received wide attention; this is the case with John G. Johnson and his preference for ‘little names’ instead of great and established masters (Lloyd DeWitt), or the role Andrew Mellon and Joseph Widener had in the definition of the first nucleus of paintings for the National Gallery of Art in Washington (Arthur K. Wheelock Jr.).

Alongside collectors and institutions, specific attention has been given to two great historians of art who had a pivotal part in the definition and growth of both public and private American collections: Wilhelm von Bode (Catherine B. Scallen) and Wilhelm R. Valentiner (Dennis P. Weller). The first, the key figure in defining Rembrandt’s *œuvre*, had strong relations with the American art world (he eventually collaborated with J.P. Morgan) and had a first-hand knowledge of some of the best collections in the country. After her fundamental book on Rembrandt’s connoisseurship,¹ Catherine Scallen here sums up her findings on Bode, allotting him his rightful place in the long history of America’s taste for Dutch art. But, if possible, even more decisive for the history that this book traces was the role Valentiner had in the American context. Beginning his career in Germany as a Rembrandt specialist with Bode and Hofstede de Groot, he was appointed curator at the Metropolitan Museum in New York in 1908, and was on the staff when the Hudson-Fulton exhibition was mounted. In his essay Weller traces an overview of Valentiner’s long American career as a specialist in Dutch paintings.

This is a very rich volume and provides the most up-to-date contribution on the subject.

¹ C.B. Scallen: *Rembrandt, Reputation and the Practice of Connoisseurship*, Amsterdam 2004.