

when materials (even lead) could be sourced nearby and loft space could be rented for a song. In terms of the artist's multifarious practice, this work reveals his inventiveness and dedication to process.

For Morris, the small sculptures are 'process-type objects', for they 'address processes of the body as well as actions that leave a trace' (p.70). Inspired by Duchamp's handmade and readymade art, and by the 'event scores' of George Brecht and John Cage, the small sculpture may entice the viewer to open a door or pull a handle or it may suggest an activity that has already occurred. Either way, attention is focused on process – of making and of viewing – as an end in itself. Materials are the keynote here, since processes of making and viewing are keyed through the work's materials. At the same time, the material of the small sculpture plays the conceit of dematerialisation (of the famous 'dematerialisation of the object' in conceptual art) since, in Morris's hands, material is not only a tactile or formal medium, but also a conceptual one. Akin to Morris's art in general, the material relations (tactile, formal and conceptual) of the small sculpture suggest several open-ended questions.

One of these concerns 'the irrevocable separation of the process of a work from the work itself' (p.33). This lies at the heart of *Box with the sound of its own making*, one of the earliest small sculptures (Fig. 53). In this deceptively simple work the artist has divided process and work only to put them together again. We see the box the artist has created and we hear the sound of its making. Although process and work are ostensibly synonymous activities in *Box*, they do not merge or align. On the artist's side, *Box* opens a space for elements that have dropped



53. *Box with the sound of its own making*, by Robert Morris. 9th January 1961. Wood and sound recording, 24.8 by 24.8 by 24.8 cm. excluding plinth. (Seattle Art Museum).

out or cannot be communicated in the final work, such as childhood memories of the scent of the wood. On the viewer's side, the looping sound of the box's manufacture can take on a life of its own, loosening the relation between the sound of making and the thing made, until the *Box* is perceived as an uncanny object emitting the noise of empty information.

Weiss considers the object sculpture 'in relation to the means and motivations of Morris's activity overall', but he deems the work 'conceptually idiosyncratic' (pp.2 and 8). The works' small size no doubt contributes to this view, since Morris is best known for his large minimal sculpture executed after 1965. Be that as it may, the author's tendency to consider the object sculpture from the standpoint of later and more recognisable developments of minimal art and 'the post-studio era' serves to cement this view. Yet Weiss also indicates that this work is part of a multifarious practice in which Morris's inventiveness is more striking than his conformity with artistic or art-historical categories. It is this view of Morris and the object sculpture which comes through the academic chatter, and this important book allows us to fully perceive the artist's early innovations, perhaps for the first time.

### Publications Received

*Apostolic Iconography and Florentine Confraternities in the Age of Reform*. By Douglas N. Dow. 220 pp. incl. 5 col. + 79 b. & w. ills. (Ashgate, Farnham, 2014), £65. ISBN 978-1-4094-4054-3.

For decades scholars of Counter-Reformation art have focused on Rome, the movement's centre and the seat of its greatest protagonists and patrons, from the Papacy to Alessandro Farnese. Yet Florence was one of the earliest cities to respond to the dictates of the Council of Trent (1545–63). Florentine Reformist painters such as Santi di Tito helped to influence stylistic changes in the papal city while in Florence Duke Cosimo I de' Medici had Giorgio Vasari open up the nave and systematise the side chapels of S. Maria Novella and S. Croce within a decade of the Council's directives. But in our discipline's desire for neat packaging we tend to pass over the late sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century artistic activities of this city we persistently associate with the Renaissance alone.

This is one reason why Dow's book on iconographical cycles in three Florentine confraternities of the 1580s–90s is so important. More than just a window onto a neglected field, it is a thorough, meticulous study based on archival research and stylistic analysis, in one case including a methodical reconstruction of a long-lost interior. It represents the kind of scholarship that has too often fallen by the wayside in an era when detail (and often accuracy) are neglected in favour of the big, interdisciplinary picture. Contributions such as Dow's are especially needed in places like post-Tridentine Florence, where the literature simply has not yet done the groundwork: we will not be able to see the big picture until we get our facts straight.

The cycles – two of them frescos and the third a sculpture series – are all in small oratories within a short walk of the Piazza S. Marco and were executed under varying degrees of supervision by Archbishop Alessandro de' Medici (1536–1605), himself a member of the Congregazione di Gesù Pellegrino (the other two

treated here are the oratories of S. Giovanni Battista, detto dello Scalzo, and SS. Annunziata). While all three series focus on the lives of the apostles – a symbol of the renewed mission of the Church and of the corporate identity of the confraternities – they vary according to each group's priorities (the depiction of gruesome martyrdoms in the atrium of SS. Annunziata reflects the confraternity's penchant for self-flagellation).

One of the book's revelations concerns the myriad ways in which artists and artisans who were members of the confraternity made contributions. Sculptor members of the Scalzo donated clay *modelli* to their chapel, some of them possibly scale models for larger commissions made for elsewhere in marble, but a reflection also of a growing enthusiasm among collectors for wax and terracotta models. Benedetto Buglioni, a member of the family of terracotta sculptors, belonged to the Scalzo, and specialised in inexpensive lunette reliefs for oratory façades. More creative (and prosaic) agreements were also made, as when a mason member of the Scalzo who had installed a *stemma* for them performed a biannual roof cleaning in lieu of his dues.

This was a particularly self-reflective time for Florence, when the legend of Michelangelo was flourishing (the decorations of the shrine-like Casa Buonarroti were begun in 1612), and the commissions discussed in this book demonstrate a Florentine pride in the city's artistic heritage, as in the overt references in the frescos in the Gesù Pellegrino to Andrea del Sarto and Raphael. This archaism runs in parallel to Rome's Paleochristian revival, when cardinals (including Alessandro de' Medici) redecorated their titular churches in a pseudo-Byzantine style to stress Rome's ties to the early Church. Years ago this reviewer was advised by a friend not to write a book on Santi di Tito because nobody would read a book about a Florentine reformist sacred painter. I am optimistic that with more books like Dow's we can eventually prove her wrong.

GAUVIN ALEXANDER BAILEY

*The Italian Townscape*. By Ivor de Wolfe, with an introduction by Erdem Erten and Alan Powers. 280 pp. incl. 481 b. & w. ills. (Artifice, London, 2014), £24.95. ISBN 978-1-908967-09-1.

This book, written by the former editor of *Architectural Review*, Hubert de Cronin Hastings, under the pseudonym Ivor de Wolfe, was first published by The Architectural Press in 1963. A scholarly love letter to the topography of Italian towns, it doubled as a polemic against post-War reconstruction in Britain and the structure of social life under consumer capitalism. This reprint is given particular value by following the book's original layout and typography, restoring the structural importance of the photographs taken by Hastings's wife Hazel, credited as Ivy de Wolfe, as well as the full impact of their dramatic compositions. An introduction by Erdem Erten and Alan Powers throws new light on Hastings's life and the immediate context of the publication.

*Metaphysical Art: The de Chirico Journals n.11/13*. Edited by Gabriella Greco. 416 pp. incl. numerous b. & w. ills. (Fondazione Giorgio e Isa de Chirico, Rome, 2013), €50. ISBN 978-88-98855-06-3.

The latest issue of the Fondazione Giorgio e Isa de Chirico's biannual journal collects important scholarship on Giorgio de Chirico conducted between 2011 and 2013, along with reviews and previously unpublished writings by the artist. These include de Chirico's *Desecrated Reality*, written in 1945 and translated into English here for the first time, and an analysis of the essay by Riccardo Dottori in light of Heidegger and Gadamer's approaches to ontology. Other notable contributions include Victoria Noel Johnson's examination of de Chirico's formative years in Florence – tracking the artist's reading through the Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale di Firenze library registers – and essays by Ester Coen and Willard Bohn on the metaphysical paintings.