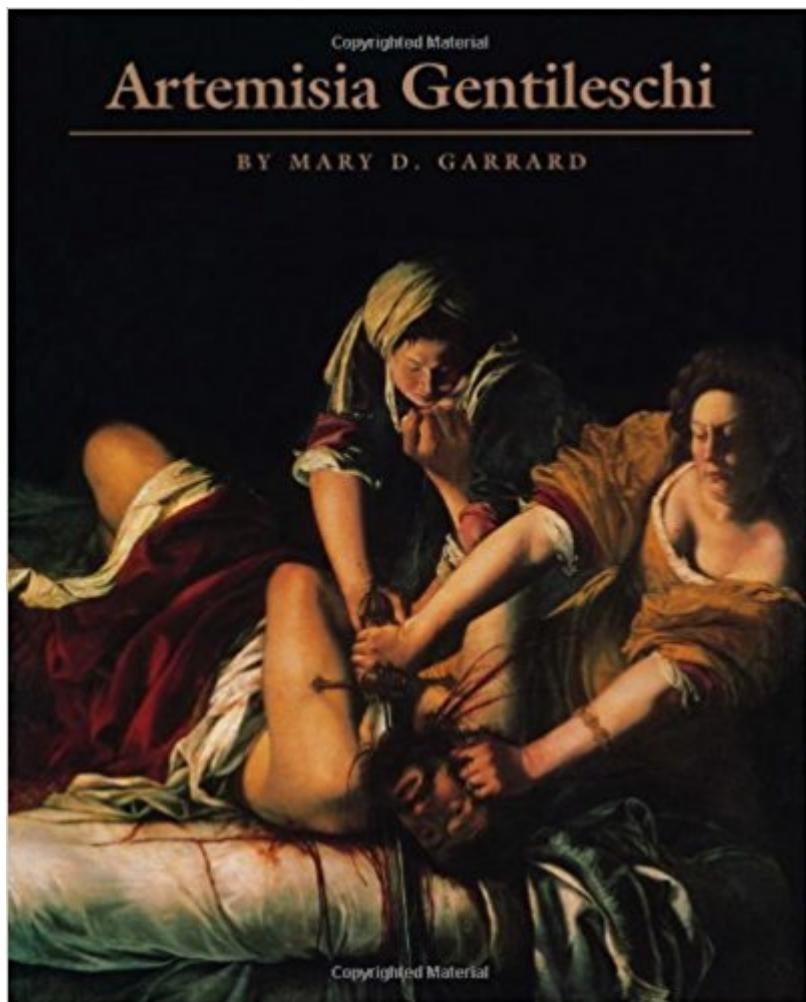


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# Artemisia Gentileschi



## **Synopsis**

Artemisia Gentileschi, widely regarded as the most important woman artist before the modern period, was a major Italian Baroque painter of the seventeenth century and the only female follower of Caravaggio. This first full-length study of her life and work shows that her powerfully original treatments of mythic-heroic female subjects depart radically from traditional interpretations of the same themes.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

"[This book] is doubly welcome, both for its hitherto underrehearsed subject--one of the most accomplished female practitioners in the history of art--and for the exceptionally keen and questing intelligence which the author brings to her task."--John Gash, *Art in America*"Garrard brings her subject vividly to life as few scholars of the period have done for other artists.... [Her] powerfully argued, intelligent appreciation of every facet of Gentileschi's difficult life and artistic contribution will bring the artist a large, new audience."--Ann Sutherland Harris, *The Women's Review of Books*"If you read only one art history book this year, it should be Mary D. Garrard's *Artemisia Gentileschi*."--Raymond B. Waddington, *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900*

Artemisia Gentileschi, widely regarded as the most important woman artist before the modern period, was a major Italian Baroque painter of the seventeenth century and the only female follower of Caravaggio.

On receipt was initially impressed but on opening the book was disappointed at the shortage of large colour art prints spread at intervals throughout. There were 24 full scale colour reproductions all together in the centre of the book.

Mary Garrard pays scholarly tribute to Artemisia Gentileschi in this fine compilation. Anyone interested in Italian Baroque art, especially the Caravaggio followers, will find this book a great resource. Many color plates (most of the artists most important works) and black and white images support the text.

I think that this work delves significantly into the time that Gentileschi lived, bringing as many details as possible about her that are available to us. It is exceptionally well-researched and thought out. If you truly want to know anything about this artist, I feel it probably is in here somewhere. But, with that said, it is a very heavy book. Perhaps Garrard may be forgiven for forgetting to explain things that may be evident to her, but I found myself having to go on the internet to look up what she was talking about a lot of the time. I do not specialize in Italian art history, but I have a pretty good foundation in art history. I found her use of phrases in foreign languages without an English translation tiresome, and I didn't like having to flip back forth through the book so often to get the meaning of a thought. If you have to sit by a computer because you know you're going to need it every couple of pages, there is a problem. My other comment is that, while I respect Garrard's right to an educated opinion, it is just that. For instance, we don't know why Gentileschi painted several Judiths. It was a very popular subject then, and while her court experience and rape might well have led her to want to paint it, we simply do not know. Garrard repeats this and several other opinions ad nauseum, making an already ponderous tome even longer. I find Gentileschi's life and work fascinating, but I gave this book only three stars because, sadly, I am unlikely to have the desire/time to finish it. I am used to reading reference work, used to plodding through academic language, love comparisons with other artists of their time, and I'm willing to go the extra mile to understand an artist's work. But, after awhile I began to feel that Garrard cared more about publishing a brilliant work. Sadly, I think that Artemisia got a little lost in this.

If you want to travel into the mind of Artemisia Gentileschi, as Garrard obviously did, this book is an incredible asset to your journey. She takes you through Artemisia's life (Rome, Florence, Naples etc.) from the very first information to her death. Garrard has her ideas, but they are hardly overtly

feminist or out of context. The intelligent reader goes beyond the author anyhow and reads the paintings. This book has copies of every known letter to have been written or received by Artemisia and most of her artwork, her complete rape trial, along with comparisons to her father's work and other artists that she had contact with. It is extremely fascinating and a more complete analysis of an artist's life that I have yet seen. ...and about Susanna- don't tell me for a minute that the woman who painted that strength of repulsion wasn't being threatened (not necessarily by Tassi but likely Cosimo or even Francesco- think about it) have you ever seen a Susanna that genuinely apalled? Most renditions of the tale feature fear, surprise, or complete oblivion (allure even). Her Susanna is truly defensive and angry; horrified and disgusted.

An excellent examination of this remarkable painter's life and works. The discussion about Artemisia's contribution as a woman in art (including her role in shaping feminism) is interesting. The interpretations given of some of the paintings provide a fascinating look into her works. Highly recommended!!!

came with slight bending at top right corner but other then that its fine.

This monograph is partly responsible for the recent interest in Gentileschi's paintings and life. Artemisia was a Caravagisti, a follower of Caravaggio. Her father, Orazio, was also a painter and Artemisia benefited from his influence, giving her paintings a lushness (I know I am not being academic here, forgive me, I am not an art critic) that Caravaggio's did not have. Since the first publication of this book there have been several shows of Artemisia's work in Florence. Unfortunately there has also been a very, very dishonest and badly made movie about her life, titled "Artemisia." The original edition of this book included the court transcriptions of Agostino Tassi's trial for raping Artemisia. She endured torture (thumbscrews) to verify her testimony. Tassi was convicted but released after seven months. The movie portrays Artemisia as ingenue who chases after Tassi and begs for his love and forgiveness as she is tortured. Artemisia later married, had one child and eventually moved to England to live with her father, where he was a court portrait painter.

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