

saw the bust 'sur cette table, ornée d'un tapis', which becomes 'sulla tavola coperta dal velluto'. Then the Cavaliere 'a pris le prince de Marsillac [...] et l'a mis en lieu que le roi tournaît les yeux sur lui', is rendered as 'ed ha pregato il principe di Marsillac [...] di spostarsi in modo da consentire al Re di rivolgere lo sguardo verso di lui'.

<sup>5</sup> M. Stanić, ed.: *Journal de voyage du cavalier Bemini en France*, Paris 2001.

<sup>6</sup> E. Levy: 'Chapter 2 of Domenico Bernini's "Vita" of his Father: Mimeses', (pp.168–70).

<sup>7</sup> E. Bellini: 'From Mascardi to Pallavicino: the biographies of Bernini and seventeenth-century roman Culture', (pp.298–307).

<sup>8</sup> M. DelBeke: 'Gianlorenzo Bernini's "Bel composto": the Unification of Life and Work in Biography and Historiography', (pp.251–74).

<sup>9</sup> Bellini, *op. cit.* (note 7); see also *idem*: 'Le biografie di Bernini e la cultura romana del Seicento', *Intesezioni* 23/3 (2003), pp.399–436, not cited in the book under review.

<sup>10</sup> For example, it is curious that 'hardiesse' in French, analysed as a concept in the *Journal*, should be translated several times in different essays as 'assurance' in English when it means 'boldness'.

<sup>11</sup> S. McPhee: 'Costanza Bonarelli: biography versus archive', (pp.315–76).

<sup>12</sup> H. Damm: 'Gianlorenzo on the grill: the Birth of the Artist in his "Primo parto di devozione"', (p.235).

<sup>13</sup> R. Williams: "'Always like himself': Character and Genius in Bernini's biographies', (pp.180–99).

### Collected writings on Velázquez. By

Jonathan Brown. 447 pp. incl. 112 col. + 47 b. & w. ills. (Centro de Estudios Europa Hispánica, distributed by Yale University Press, New Haven and London, 2008), £35, ISBN 978–84–936060–2–2 (CEEH); ISBN 978–0–300–14493–2 (Yale).

Reviewed by ROSEMARIE MULCAHY

THIS PUBLICATION OF the collected writings of Jonathan Brown on Velázquez is a fitting celebration of the important contribution of this distinguished American hispanist to the study of Spanish painting. It is a companion to the volumes on Velázquez already published by the Centro de Estudios Europa Hispánica (by Enriqueta Harris, 2006, and Diego Angulo, 2007). Brown is widely known for his splendid monograph, *Velázquez, Painter and Courtier* (1986), and for *The Golden Age of Painting in Spain* (1990), revised and expanded as *Painting in Spain, 1500–1700* (1998). Both volumes immediately became essential texts and were particularly welcomed by those attempting to introduce Spanish painting into the art-history curriculum.

In a comprehensive introductory essay, Bonaventura Bassegoda reviews Brown's impressive and extensive body of writings, which ranges over the Golden Age period and beyond, to include Goya and Picasso. Here, however, the focus is firmly on Velázquez in thirty-two pieces of writing: essays, exhibition catalogue entries, articles for specialist journals and the popular press, which have been published in English and Spanish between 1964 and 2006. It is an

impressive body of work, and from the very first piece, 'On the origins of *Las Lanzas* by Velázquez', we already see the traits that have come to characterise Brown's research: intellectual rigour, meticulous investigation of bibliography, visual sources and historical context, and clarity of exposition. There is also a recognition of the complexity of major works of art and a healthy scepticism of attempts at finding a definitive reading. It is this spirit of questioning and openness that ensures these writings are of lasting relevance. As Bassegoda observes in his introduction: 'Brown knows that the historian's task does not consist of finding the "only right" interpretation of each work, but rather to explain and understand the cultural and historical context in which it was conceived'.

*Images and Ideas in Seventeenth-Century Spanish Painting* (1978), based on Brown's doctoral thesis of 1964, exemplifies this approach and it was to be widely influential on the development of the historiography of Spanish art. This reviewer well remembers the sense of excitement on first reading the chapter on *Las Meninas*, which is published here. Although it remains the essential text on the masterpiece, he does not consider his work concluded: 'Every work of art is renewed, not depleted by time'. However, Brown is not reticent in his criticism of theories that he perceives to be erroneous or plain far-fetched. In "Las Meninas" as a Masterpiece' (1999) his rebuttal of Manuela Mena's interpretation of the picture as an expression of Philip IV's political intentions in relation to the succession to his throne, is forensic in its thoroughness and draws upon the historical and technical expertise of John Elliott and Carmen Garrido. This collaborative approach has resulted in important publications, most notably with Elliott in *A Palace for a King. The Buen Retiro and the Court of Philip IV* (1980) and with Garrido, *Velázquez: The Technique of Genius* (1998). These works exemplify the twin foundations of his scholarship: the examination of historical context and of the art object itself. He has a discerning eye and does not shirk from taking issue with questionable attributions, either in scholarly journals or the popular press – he expects others to apply the same intellectual rigour as he does to scholarly debate. "Las Meninas" at Kingston Lacy: a Velázquez original or "from the original"?' (1997), 'Velázquez and *lo velezqueño*: the attribution problems' (2000) and 'Velázquez today and tomorrow' (2006) all make stimulating reading.

Brown likes to consider the larger picture, to stand back and look at Spanish painting within the wider European context. In *Kings and Connoisseurs. Collecting Art in Seventeenth-Century Europe* (1995) he explored relationships between the production of Spanish art in the seventeenth century and that of Italy and Flanders. In the exhibition *Velázquez, Rubens y Van Dyck. Pintores cortesanos del siglo XVII* at the Prado (1999), he opened up the study of Velázquez to comparative analysis

with contemporary European artists, and his two introductory essays are reprinted here in the original English versions. Brown's writings on portraiture are always illuminating, such as 'Enemies of Flattery. Velázquez's Portraits of Philip IV' (1986) and "'Peut-on assez louer cet excellent ministre?" Imagery of the favourite in England, France and Spain' (1999).

This volume of essays goes beyond the immediate field of Velázquez studies. As a masterly demonstration of art-historical methods it is inspirational. The groundwork is always so well prepared, the historical context investigated, possibilities explored and, most importantly, the work of art remains the central focus. The Centro de Estudios Europa Hispánica and its director, José Luis Colomer, are to be congratulated for producing this important volume and adding another title to their impressive list of publications on Spanish art in the European context.