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Bogdan Cornea

The Matter of Violence in Baroque Painting

Baroque depictions of violence are often dismissed as 'over the top' and 'excessive'. Their material richness and exciting visual complexity, together with the visceral engagement they demand from beholders, are usually explained in literature as reflecting the presumed violence of early modern society. This book explores the intersection between materiality, excess, and violence in seventeenth-century paintings through a close analysis of some of the most iconic works of the period. Baroque paintings expose or reference their materiality by insisting on various physical changes wrought through violence. This study approaches violence as the work of materiality, which has the potential to analogously stage pictorial surfaces as corporeal surfaces, where paint becomes flayed flesh, canvas threads ruptured skin, and red paint spilt blood.

BIOGRAPHY

Dr Bogdan Cornea is a writer and independent scholar who earned his PhD in History of Art from the University of York. He has published articles on the relationship between materiality and violence in the art of Jusepe de Ribera and on the art and architecture of eighteenth century Romania.



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