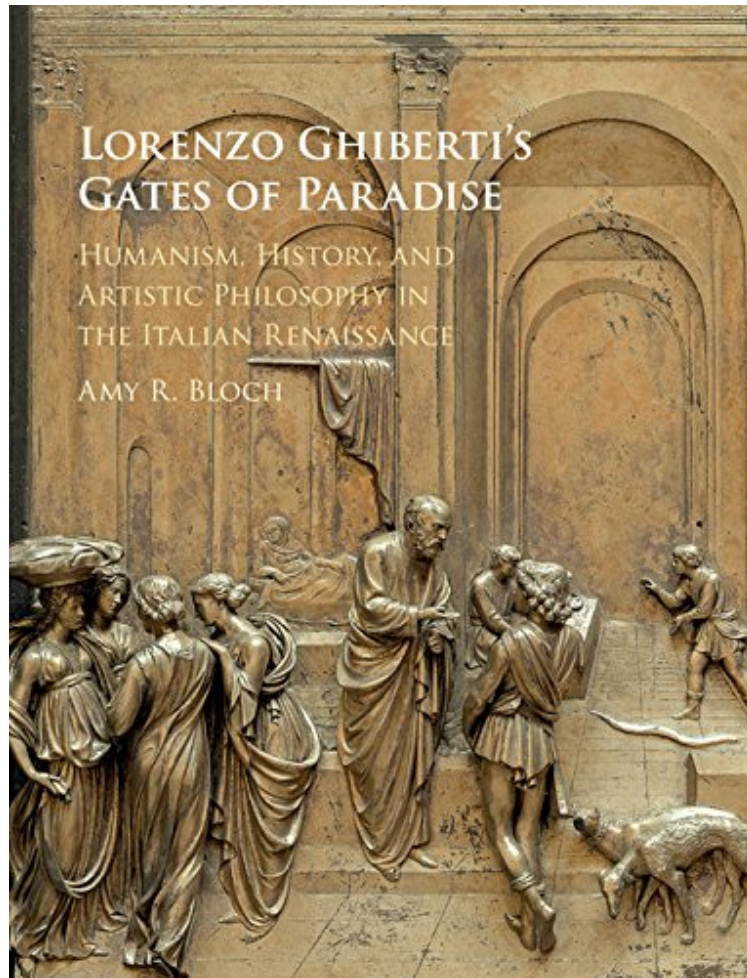


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Lorenzo Ghiberti's Gates of Paradise: Humanism, History, and Artistic Philosophy in the Italian Renaissance

Amy R. Bloch

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Amy R. Bloch : Lorenzo Ghiberti's Gates of Paradise: Humanism, History, and Artistic Philosophy in the Italian Renaissance before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Lorenzo Ghiberti's Gates of Paradise: Humanism, History, and Artistic Philosophy in the Italian Renaissance:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Excellent Scholarship By Jonathan Carter Full of rich details and images on the history and context of Ghiberti's Gates of Paradise. My only issue is the inferior quality of the paper. This is especially true of the 16 page spread of color images that made it difficult locate specific images while reading the text. 4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. VISUAL SCHOLARSHIP By LLOYD BREGMAN Under Construction: Reading Bloch's new work: In Amy Bloch's monograph on Ghiberti's second set of bronze doors the reader encounters the most up to date scholarship applied to the traditional form of art historical method. A remarkable

depth of cultural research is applied with discriminating critical grasp of the texts cited in the footnotes. The Bibliography is therefore not mere academic boilerplate. For example, Bloch cites Lubbock's "Storytelling in Christian Art from Giotto to Donatello" then practices the art of intense visual scrutiny for a narrative. This provides for interpretive conclusions based on objective facts. A novel approach in today's critically overloaded art history. This method also provides for a good prose read which brings us closer to Ghiberti's own narrative approach. Unusually for a scholar so deeply informed by texts -Biblical, Classical Renaissance, then of course art historical- Bloch also has a deep personal experience of the visual material. She obviously spent extensive time with the artworks themselves. As a photographer of the Doors she is aware of the multiple viewpoints that all sculpture presents., Sculptural relief is often perceived written about as flat planes of linear drawing, and yet is subject to interpretative 'shifts' or weighting by any visually aware auditor. This quality of relief is not acknowledged by the visual 'flatness' of photographs consistently ignored by most writers on art. It is a great strength in Bloch's argument that Ghiberti's subjective interpretation of the Biblical narratives demands this level of visual scrutiny. Given that Bloch's text provides no Conclusion the Introduction serves as a powerful statement of her goals and opinions. Bloch's thesis that Ghiberti was an active and informed participant in the Humanist culture of the Early Renaissance in Florence -starting with his own writings extending to his broad network of collaborative associates seems to proven beyond dispute. No mere craftsman he. Further Points:-Pope-Hennessy's International Gothic designation.-retardiaire use of Gothic cathedral vs. Renaissance Classicism B's context/human progress argument-late comment 'not a humanist' -vs visual arts humanism e.g. Masaccio, Donatello or della Robbia.-Cam U P applauded for supporting text arguments with illustrations.

This book examines the heretofore unsuspected complexity of Lorenzo Ghiberti's sculpted representations of Old Testament narratives in his Gates of Paradise (1425–52), the second set of doors he made for the Florence Baptistery and a masterpiece of Italian Renaissance sculpture. One of the most intellectually engaged and well-read artists of his age, Ghiberti found inspiration in ancient and medieval texts, many of which he and his contacts in Florence's humanist community shared, read, and discussed. He was fascinated by the science of vision, by the functioning of nature, and, above all, by the origins and history of art. These unusually well-defined intellectual interests, reflected in his famous Commentaries, shaped his approach in the Gates. Through the selection, imaginative interpretation, and arrangement of biblical episodes, Ghiberti fashioned multi-textured narratives that explore the human condition and express his ideas on a range of social, political, artistic, and philosophical issues.

About the Author Amy R. Bloch is Associate Professor of Art History at the University at Albany, State University of New York. Her research focuses on Italian Renaissance sculpture, and she has published articles and essays on Ghiberti, Donatello, Michelangelo, and on the art and ritual of baptism in Florence. Her work has been supported by fellowships and grants from the Villa I Tatti (the Harvard University Center for Italian Renaissance Studies), the Renaissance Society of America, and the College Art Association.