

## Leo Steinberg's Sexuality of Christ Revisited (New Orleans, 22-24 Mar 18)

New Orleans, Louisiana, USA, Mar 22-24, 2018

Deadline: May 10, 2017

Benjamin Braude, Boston College

Renaissance Society of America Annual Meeting, New Orleans, Louisiana, 22 (Thursday) -24 (Saturday) March '18

### Leo Steinberg's Sexuality of Christ Revisited

Despite the controversy that it provoked more than thirty years ago, Leo Steinberg's insight about ostentatio genitalium has become almost a commonplace. Through that motif, Steinberg claimed, artists created what was prominently preached from roughly 1400 to 1600, a theology of palpable Incarnationism. Critics countered variously: Textual evidence supporting his conclusion was weak. Treatment of sexuality was too narrowly male. The visual evidence itself was too inconsistent and unconvincing. Others simply found the entire subject discomforting. Et al.

Today among Renaissance specialists Steinberg's insight is more invoked than examined, though new reasons to interrogate it have emerged. Medievalists have called attention to the nudity of Christ in earlier centuries. The body of Christ was not just a penis. The relationship between the religious and the sensuous is an increasingly vibrant subject of research. Studies of sexuality and gender have become more finely granular. In contrast to the parochially western Christian and Greco-Latin perspectives that have heretofore dominated, specialists have started to incorporate other ancient influences, notably Egyptian, as well as interactions within all-Christendom and between it and Judaism/ Islam. The lives of the great art historians have been explored to offer insight into their scholarship. Provocative and wide-ranging proposals integrating these and related approaches are welcome.

Proposals (MS Word attachment ONLY -- no PDF or Google Doc) submitted to Benjamin Braude <Braude@bc.edu>, before 10 May, must include name and affiliation, short title (15 word max), abstract (150 word max), cv (not in prose, 300 word max), e-address, cell and land line numbers, keywords, as well as scheduling and a-v needs. To participate one must be a member of the RSA.

Keywords: Art history, art historians, nudity, religion, sexuality, gender, theology, iconography, polemic, Islam, Judaism, Eastern and Western Christianity, papal ritual, Michelangelo.

#### Reference:

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