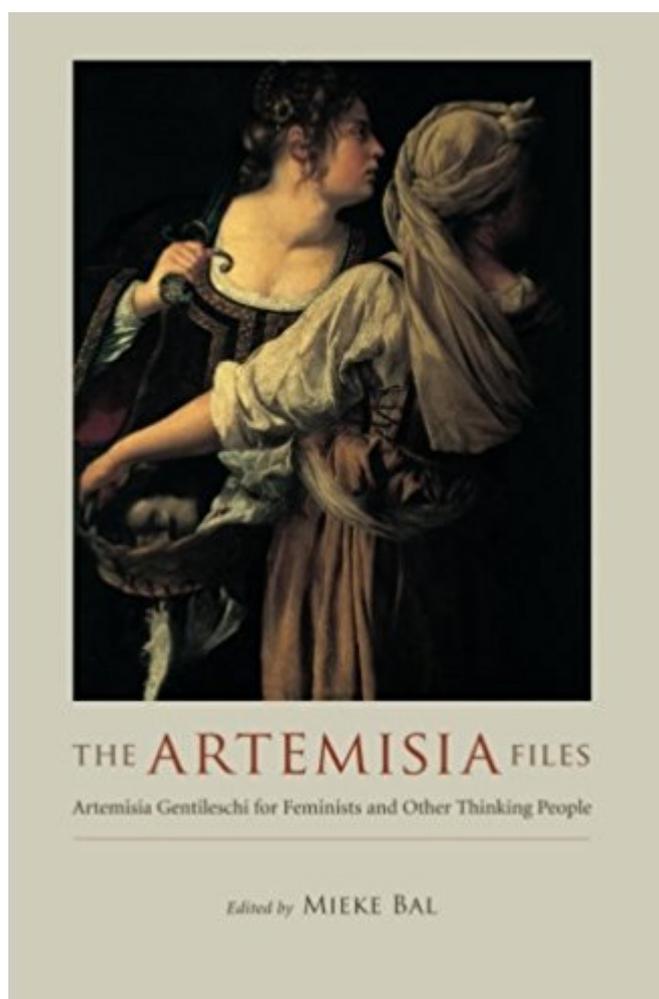


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The Artemisia Files: Artemisia Gentileschi For Feminists And Other Thinking People



Synopsis

One of the first female artists to achieve recognition in her own time, Artemisia Gentileschi (1593-1653) became instantly popular in the 1970s when feminist art historians "discovered" her and argued vehemently for a place for her in the canon of Italian baroque painters. Featured alongside her father, Orazio Gentileschi, in a recent exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Artemisia has continued to stir interest though her position in the canon remains precarious, in part because her sensationalized life history has overshadowed her art. In *The Artemisia Files*, Mieke Bal and her coauthors look squarely at this early icon of feminist art history and the question of her status as an artist. Considering the events that shaped her life and reputation—her relationship to her father and her role as the victim in a highly publicized rape case during which she was tortured into giving evidence—the authors make the case that Artemisia's importance is due to more than her role as a poster child in the feminist attack on traditional art history; here, Artemisia emerges more fully as a highly original artist whose work is greater than the sum of the events that have traditionally defined her. The fresh, engaging discourse in *The Artemisia Files* will help to both renew the reputation of this artist on the merit of her work and establish her rightful place in the history of art. "Over the last generation Artemisia has been transformed from a talented curiosity . . . into a standard bearer of early feminist consciousness. This book offers a fascinating glimpse into the critical frame of mind underlying this transformation."—Keith Christiansen, Jayne Wrightsman Curator of Italian Painting, The Metropolitan Museum of Art

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Customer Reviews

"The Artemisia Files makes an important contribution to the current debates surrounding Artemisia Gentileschi. This collection of essays has a potential audience not only of scholars in art history, gender and women's studies, and cultural history but also of the more general public. It brings together a group of noted scholars whose work has energized and charged the entire discipline of art history." (Mary Sheriff, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill)"Over the last generation Artemisia has been transformed from a talented curiosity – a successful female artist working in the seventeenth century – into a standard bearer of early feminist consciousness. This book offers a fascinating glimpse into the critical frame of mind underlying this transformation." (Keith Christiansen, Jayne Wrightsman Curator of Italian Painting, The Metropolitan Museum of Art)"An engaging and provocative collection of essays about the now infamous Italian woman artist, Artemesia Gentileschi. Responding to the outpouring of recent exhibitions, articles, monographs and even a film focusing on and to some degree, sensationalizing the life and works of this artist, the pieces in The Artemisia Files try to shed light on this talented painter's actual accomplishments and to deconstruct the myths that surround her art and work. Each of the six authors directly confronts both contemporary and historical discourses on hotly debated issues of attribution and interpretation and attempts the difficult task of divorcing the skilled artist from the sexualized or scandalous woman." (Linda Nochlin, The Institute of Fine Arts, New York University) --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

One of the first female artists to achieve recognition in her own time, Artemisia Gentileschi (1593–1653) became instantly popular in the 1970s when feminist art historians "discovered" her and argued vehemently for a place for her in the canon of Italian baroque painters. Featured alongside her father, Orazio Gentileschi, in a recent exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Artemisia has continued to stir interest – though her position in the canon remains precarious, in part because her sensationalized life history has overshadowed her art. In *The Artemisia Files*, Mieke Bal and a distinguished group of contributors look squarely at this early icon of feminist art history and the question of her status as an artist. Here, Artemisia emerges more fully as a highly original artist whose work is greater than the sum of the events that have traditionally defined her life and reputation, such as her relationship to her father and her role as the victim in a highly publicized rape case during which she was tortured into giving evidence.

The six essays in *The Artemisia Files* offer a new critical assessment of Artemisia Gentileschi's work by devising a variety of approaches that amend past injustices and reconsider the artist and her work from many different angles, including the question of attribution, critical judgment, personal confrontation, Artemisia's historical context, the exhibition of her work, and popular recastings of her story. The fresh, engaging discourse in *The Artemisia Files* will help to both revive the reputation of this artist on the merit of her work and establish her rightful place in the history of art.

I really enjoyed this book! I was looking for a close fact based book about Artemisia and this book comes really close to giving me all the facts. It is easy to read, easy to understand and allowed me the chance to use the information in my classes about Art History. I'm fascinated by her story and the artwork that she created from her life experiences. This book allows me to follow her story and her life as an artist. I really enjoyed it.

Very interesting, good defense of feminism.

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