



ALBANY MUSEUM OF ART

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AMA ART LOVERS BOOK CLUB TO EXPLORE *THE PASSION OF ARTEMISIA*

Artemisia Gentileschi Is One of the Most Accomplished 17th Century Artists

[For Release Sept 9, 2020 – Albany, GA] — Artemisia Gentileschi is one the few female post-Renaissance painters who achieved fame during her own era, one that was dominated by male artists. A fictional account of her life, *The Passion of Artemisia* by Susan Vreeland, will be discussed **Tuesday, Sept 15, 2020** at the AMA Art Lovers Book Club meeting.

AMA Executive Director Andrew J. Wulf, Ph.D., will host the meeting, set to begin at **6 pm** at the Albany Museum of Art.

Once seen as a curiosity, Artemisia's work came under re-evaluation by art scholars in the 20th century and the Baroque artist is now regarded as one of her generation's most progressive and expressive painters. Europe in the 17th century was not a time when women artists were accepted, but Artemisia challenged the conventions of the day and defied expectations for women. An exhibition of her work is scheduled to open Oct 3, 2020 at The National Gallery in London.

"It is a rare treat to devote an evening to the discussion of this iconic artist whose work should be revisited regularly via exhibitions and, in this case, a book discussion around Vreeland's fictionalized retelling of Gentileschi's life," Wulf said.

Vreeland's *The Passion of Artemisia*, published in 2002, is a fictionalized investigation of Artemisia's life, one of the several books by the late writer that deal with art and fiction.

Artemisia was the first woman to become a member of the Accademia di Arte del Disegno in Florence. The majority of her work, which includes self-portraits, emphasizes women, often from myths, biblical accounts and allegories. She is noted for her natural depictions of female figures and for her ability to use color to add dimension and drama to her paintings.

She often explored violent subject matter, creating courageous conspirators and from milkmaids and turning victims into survivors. Her artistic achievements were overshadowed for part of her career by the rape she suffered at age 18. Her artist father, Orazio Gentileschi, hired artist Agostino Tassi to tutor

Artemisia. Tassi sexually assaulted her, then reneged on a promise to marry her after the pair maintained an intimate relationship for several months. With the marriage off, Orazio pressed charges, prompting a seven-month trial during which Artemisia was subjected to torture by thumbscrews as a method of verifying the truthfulness of her testimony. Tassi was convicted and sentenced to exile from Rome, though the punishment was never carried out.

Artemisia then married and moved to Florence, launching a successful career that saw her return to Rome a decade later, then spend time in Venice, Naples and England, where Charles I invited her to his court. She returned to Naples, where scholars think she may have died with many other Neapolitan artists when the plague swept through the area in 1656.

Little attention was paid to her work by art scholars until 1968, when an article by R. Ward Bissell was followed by more literature about the artist and her work as she gained attention from art historians and feminists.

There is no cost to participate, but space is limited. Email Annie Vanoteghem, director of education and public programming, at annie.vanoteghem@albanymuseum.com to reserve a spot so that you can share your thoughts on this popular novel while enjoying the company of fellow book lovers in a safe environment. You may also contact Vanoteghem by calling **229.439.8400**.

The AMA is following guidance health officials in regard to activities conducted at the museum. Space is limited to a maximum of 12 participants at the book club meeting. Guests entering the AMA are asked to wear masks to protect others, and to allow at least six feet of space between them and anyone who is not in their party.

The AMA Art Lovers Book Club, in its second season, has meetings scheduled every two months so that club members have plenty of time to obtain and read the books before each session. They are conducted at 6 pm on the second Tuesday of the month at the AMA. Club members may attend as many or as few meetings as they want.

Books selected for upcoming meetings dates are:

- **Nov 17:** Club member selections from *The Andy Warhol Diaries*, edited by Pat Hackett; hosted by AMA Director of Development and Membership Chloe Hinton;
- **Jan 19, 2021:** *In her Hands* by Alan Schroeder;
- **March 16, 2021:** *Loving Frank* by Nancy Horan.

CURRENT AMA EXHIBITIONS

- *JUAN LOGAN: creating & collecting* is in the Haley Gallery July 9-Oct 24, 2020.
- *Works by Brian Willmont* is in the East Gallery July 9-Oct 24, 2020.
- *Viberations from Pasaquan* is in the West Gallery July 9-Oct 24, 2020.

ABOUT THE ALBANY MUSEUM OF ART

The Albany Museum of Art is located at 311 Meadowlark Drive in Albany, Ga., adjacent to Albany State University West Campus just off Gillionville Road. The museum is accredited by the American Alliance of Museums. The Albany Museum of Art is open to the public 10 am-5 pm Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays and noon-7 pm Thursdays. Admission is free.

For more information about the AMA please visit our website, www.albanymuseum.com or call 229.439.8400. Be sure to follow the @AlbanyArtMuseum on Twitter, AlbanyMuseum on Instagram and AlbanyMuseumOfArt on Facebook.

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