John Donne Journal
Vol. 27 (2008)

Dr. Donne's Art Gallery and the *imago dei*

Kirsten Stirling

Wesley Milgate's 1949 essay in *Notes and Queries*, "Dr Donne's Art Gallery," attempts to establish the composition of Donne's collection based on bequests made in Donne's own will and previous and subsequent bequests in the wills of others. He concludes that Donne "possessed upwards of twenty pictures, at least two of which were by distinguished painters." One painting bequeathed to Donne by Christopher Brooke was supposed to be "an originall of an Italian Masters hand," and, more tantalizingly still, Milgate deduces that the "picture of the Blessed Virgin Mary which hangs in the little dining-chamber" mentioned in Donne's will was the same painting listed in Abraham van der Doort's catalogue of Charles I's paintings as "done by Titian; being our Lady, and Christ, and St John . . . given heretofore to his Majesty by my Lord of Carlisle, who had it of Dr Donn, painted upon the right light."[1] Milgate's article leaves us with an image of Donne surrounded by pictures; in Ernest Gilman's words, "[his collection] was surely large enough to have filled nearly every corner of Donne's little world with imagery."[2] The sheer size of the collection and the fact that at least two seem to have been by continental masters suggests that Donne was a connoisseur of paintings, an impression which is supported by the (albeit few) references to painting to be found in Donne's poetry. A

[1]Milgate, "Dr. Donne's Art Gallery," *Notes and Queries* 194.15 (1949): 318–319.

[2]Gilman, *Iconoclasm and Poetry in the English Reformation: Down Went Dagon* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1986), pp. 120–121.

reference to "*Durers* rules" in *Satyre IV* (204)[3] suggests, as L. E. Semler points out, at least an awareness of *Elementia geometrica* or the *De symmetria partium humanorum corporum*, or both.[4] Donne's reference to Nicholas Hilliard in the opening lines of "The Storme" is even more revealing—"a hand, or eye / By *Hilliard* drawne, is worth an history, / By a worse painter made" (3–5)—because these lines suggest a capacity to judge art.

Given all this evidence of Donne's connoisseurship, it is rather surprising that the last paragraph of Milgate's short piece asks: "does the fact that the pictures Donne bequeathed deal mostly or entirely with theological matters mean that he valued them for their subject alone?"[5] The implication seems to be that, given his clerical status, Donne's interest in the theological subject matter might outweigh (or cancel out) his appreciation of the aesthetic. A similar notion is echoed by Norman K. Farmer, Jr., in *Poets and the Visual Arts in Renaissance England*: discussing Donne's recurrent use of the image of the "eyes of the soul" in his *Sermons*, he states that "at this late stage in his career, the motif expresses a theological rather than a painterly idea."[6] This either/or distinction between the theological and the aesthetic, however, glosses over what Donne is actually doing in his use of the "eyes of the soul" and other visual metaphors in the *Sermons*. Milgate comments that "Donne shows no special predilection for imagery based on the art of painting."[7] While this may be largely true for his poetry, in the *Sermons* Donne uses a variety of painting metaphors, which show not only his appreciation of painting but also his knowledge concerning specific painterly techniques. In a sermon preached at Whitehall in February 1628, for example,

---

[3]All quotations from Donne's poems (except the Holy Sonnets) are from *The Complete Poetry of John Donne*, ed. John T. Shawcross (Garden City, NY: Doubleday Anchor Books, 1967) and will be cited parenthetically.

[4]Semler, *The English Mannerist Poets and the Visual Arts* (Madison and Teaneck, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press; London: Associated University Press, 1998), p. 47.

[5]Milgate, p. 319.

[6]Farmer, *Poets and the Visual Arts in Renaissance England* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1984), p. 19. "Eyes of the soul" as a category of Donne's imagery comes from Winfried Schleiner, *The Imagery of John Donne's Sermons* (Providence, RI: Brown University Press, 1970), pp. 137–156.

[7]Milgate, p. 319.

Donne refers to Pliny's "Chapters on Art" from his *Natural History*, in the context of a discourse on duty and posterity:

> *Plinie* delivers us the history of al the great Masters in the art of painting: He tells us who began with the extremities and the out lines at first, who induc'd colors after that, and who after super-induc'd shadows.[8]

And towards the end of the same sermon Donne develops an analogy based on the specific techniques of engraving:

> Bee pleased to remember that those Pictures which are deliver'd in a minute, from a print upon a paper, had many dayes, weeks, Moneths time for the graving of those Pictures in the Copper; So this Picture of that dying Man, that dies in Christ . . . was graving all his life; All his publique actions were the lights, and all his private the shadowes of this Picture. And when this Picture comes to the Presse, this Man to the streights and agonies of Death, thus he lies, thus he looks, this he is.
>
> (8:190)

In these two excerpts Donne is clearly aware both of classical art criticism and also of the technical aspects of the production of works of art. Lucy Gent highlights the "explosion of literary allusions to Pliny's anecdotes of painters" in the late sixteenth century, pointing out that English writers seemed more comfortable with classical models of art criticism than with the burgeoning contemporary Italian art criticism, partly because the classical model was closer to the art they had seen.[9] As Semler and Ann Hollinshead Hurley suggest, however, Donne was probably also familiar with contemporary treatises on art, for example Richard Haydocke's

---

[8] *The Sermons of John Donne*, ed. Evelyn M. Simpson and George R. Potter, 10 vols. (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1954), 8:178. Further citations from the *Sermons* will be to this edition and will be cited parenthetically by volume and page number.

[9] Gent, *Picture and Poetry, 1560–1620: Relations between Literature and the Visual Arts in the English Renaissance* (Leamington Spa, Warwickshire: James Hall, 1981), pp. 34–36.

translation of Lomazzo's *Trattato dell'Arte* (1598) and Nicholas Hilliard's *The Art of Limning* (1598–1603).[10] Donne uses his knowledge of art and painting to visualize and explain theological mysteries. In order to demonstrate how this works, I will move from Milgate's reconstruction of Donne's own art gallery to a more virtual gallery, first evoked by Donne in a sermon of 1619. The image of the internal gallery is one to which he returns several times in his sermons, and it also, I will argue, echoes concerns about the visual relationship between man and God in his earlier divine poetry, both "Goodfriday, 1613. Riding Westward" and the Holy Sonnets.

In his "Sermon of Valediction at my going into Germany," given on 18 April 1619, Donne exhorts his listeners to

> go to thine own memory; for as St *Bernard* calls that the stomach of the soul, we may be bold to call it the Gallery of the soul, hang'd with so many, and so lively pictures of the goodness and mercies of thy God to thee. . . . And as a well-made, and well-plac'd picture, looks alwayes upon him that looks upon it; so shall thy God look upon thee, whose memory is thus contemplating him. . . . If these be too large pictures for thy gallery, for thy memory, yet every man hath a pocket picture about him, a manuall, a bosome book, and if he will turn over but one leaf, and remember what God hath done for him even since yesterday he shall find even by that little branch a navigable river, to sail into that great and endless Sea of Gods mercies towards him, from the beginning of his being.
>
> (2:237–238)

This does not answer Milgate's question about Donne's aesthetic perception, but although the point of his sermon and of his metaphor is religious, he uses some technical knowledge about painting as the vehicle of his metaphor. Donne's reference to a "well-made and well-plac'd picture" suggests that he knows what a well-made picture might be. Semler proposes a line from the Hilliard treatise as a possible source for Donne's knowledge: "Howe to make the picture seeme to looke one in

[10]Hurley, *John Donne's Poetry and Early Modern Visual Culture* (Selinsgrove: Susquehanna University Press, 2005), p. 30; Semler, p. 47.

the face which waie soe ever he goe or stand."[11] Yet the source of Donne's knowledge and his application of the metaphor may, rather, be Nicholas of Cusa's *De Icona* (1453). Nicholas introduces this theological treatise by explaining to his addressees, a group of monks in Tegernsee, that he is sending them a painting and instructs them to:

> [s]et it up somewhere, for example on the north wall. You, brothers, place yourselves at equal distance from it and look at it: from whatever side you may examine it each of you will have the experience of being as it were the only one to be seen by it. . . . If he fixes his eyes on it and walks from west to east, he will discover that the image continually keeps its gaze fixed on him and that it does not leave him either if he walks in the opposite direction. . . . He will see that this gaze watches with extreme care over the smallest creature as over the largest and over the totality of the universe.[12]

The trope of the painting that "looks always upon him that looks upon it" recurs three more times in Donne's *Sermons*, although not always developed at such length.[13] The gallery image, however, seems to be Donne's own extension of the idea. Nicholas of Cusa's comparison has one painting being watched in wonder by multiple spectators, whereas Donne furnishes his gallery with "so many, and so lively pictures" but mentions only one witness. In both metaphors, God is the picture. Man contemplates God; but in Donne's version he contemplates God in multiple examples. Yet the entire metaphor depends on reciprocity. The picture, or God, looks back, but only if one looks at it. It is this aspect of the metaphor to which Donne returns in his sermons: three times out of four he uses the image to illustrate the value of keeping one's eye on God.[14] The act of looking is double, and man's look is mirrored in God's return gaze.

---

[11]Semler, p. 52.

[12]Nicholas of Cusa, *De Icona* (or *De visione Dei sive De icona*), cited by Michel de Certeau, "The Gaze of Nicholas of Cusa," *Diacritics* 17.3 (1987): 11–12. I am very grateful to Piers Brown for drawing this passage to my attention.

[13]See also 4:130; 5:299; 9:368.

[14]In one instance the metaphor is used quite differently, to illustrate the applicability of a biblical story to any number of situations (5:299).

Hurley describes this as an instance of Donne's "characteristic internalisation of the material, his use of the visible to locate and track the invisible."[15] His use of internal images, both sacred and profane, has been widely commented on, as has his transference of the Petrarchan trope of the lover's picture engraved in the heart to the domain of the sacred in the Holy Sonnet "What if this present were the world's last night."[16] The internal gallery exploits the same idea on a different scale. In many ways it resembles Marvell's later and better-known exploitation of a similar idea, "The Gallery" (1648–1649), which is widely celebrated as an original and creative development of the Petrarchan commonplace:

> Clora come view my soul, and tell
> Whether I have contrived it well.
> Now all its several lodgings lye
> Composed into one gallery;
> And the great arras-hangings, made
> Of various faces, by are laid:
> That, for all furniture, you'll find
> Only your picture in my mind.
> (1–8)[17]

Marvell's biographer, Pierre Legouis, celebrates Marvell's ability to "renovate the hackneyed metaphor by enlarging it. His imagination reveals itself spacious without strain," while Jean Hagstrum, in *The Sister Arts*, praises Marvell's originality in adapting Giambattista Marino's "largely literal" *Galeria* (1619–1620) "into a psychological metaphor; Marvell's gallery is in the soul."[18] Such praise for scope and invention applies equally to Donne's gallery, which predates Marvell's by about

---

[15]Hurley, p. 142.

[16]See, for example, David Anderson, "Internal Images: John Donne and the English Iconoclast Controversy," *Renaissance and Reformation/Renaissance et Réforme* 26.2 (2002): 23–42.

[17]*Andrew Marvell: The Complete Poems*, ed. Elizabeth Story Donno (London: Penguin, 1972), pp. 40–41.

[18]Legouis, *Andrew Marvell: Poet, Puritan, Patriot* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965), p. 31; Hagstrum, *The Sister Arts: The Tradition of Literary Pictorialism and English Poetry from Dryden to Gray* (Chicago and London: Chicago University Press, 1958), p. 114.

thirty years, and is virtually contemporary with Marino's poem.[19] All the pictures in Marvell's gallery of the soul are images of the same woman; in Donne's gallery they are all images of God's goodness. Donne's gallery, like Marvell's, extends the possibilities of the internal image, and groups his images of God in a safe place, where memory replaces the eye. Donne even provides the possibility, should the gallery prove too large or cumbersome for travel, of a "pocket picture . . . a bosome book," a postcard, one could say, to provide a small and portable image of God's mercy.

The second time Donne uses the metaphor of the picture-that-looks-back in a sermon, on Easter Monday 1622, the "picture" comes to mean more than simply God's mercy. It occurs near the end of a long sermon, and follows a discussion of the *imago dei*, the image of God in man. Donne describes the *imago dei* in very physical terms:

> God hath sealed himself in Clay, in the humane Nature; but yet in Wax too, in a person ductile, pliant, obedient to his will. . . . *The light of thy countenance*, that is, the image of thy self, *is sealed*; that is, derived, imprinted, upon us, that is, upon our nature, our flesh.
>
> (4:124)

The image of the seal, and related vocabulary of imprinting, impressing and engraving to describe the *imago dei* recurs throughout the *Sermons*, most notably perhaps in Donne's most extended treatment of the *imago dei*, in the second of two sermons on Genesis 1:26, "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness," preached to the King at court in 1629.[20] But in the 1622 sermon the seal soon blends into the same picture metaphor that we saw in the sermon of 1619:

> see him in that seal which is a copy of him, as he is of the father; see him in the Sacrament. Look him in the face as he

---

[19]Marino's *Galeria* was translated into English by Samuel Daniel in 1623 (Hagstrum, p. 114).

[20]". . . this Image is in our soule, as our soule is the wax, and this Image the seale. The Comparison is Saint *Cyrills*, and he addes well, that no seale but that, which printed the wax at first, can fit that wax, and fill that impression after. No Image, but the Image of God can fit our soule" (9:80).

> lay in the manger. . . . Look him in the face, in the Temple . . . . Look him in the face, as he look'd upon Friday last; when he whose face the Angels desire to look on . . . was so marr'd more than any man . . . and then look him in the face again as he look'd yesterday . . . raised by his own power. . . . Look him in the face in all these respects, of Humiliation, and of Exaltation too; and then, as a Picture looks upon him, that looks upon it, God upon whom thou keepest thine Eye, will keep his Eye upon thee.
>
> (4:130)

In *The Imagery of John Donne's Sermons*, Winfried Schleiner devotes a sub-chapter to the seal image and the *imago dei*, but while he comments on "the system of seals and pictures" that Donne builds up, he does not go into detail about the difference between the image of the seal imprinted in wax, and the painted picture in the gallery.[21] The vertiginous shifts in perspective in this passage, from the contemplation of the imprinted internal seal, through the repeated exhortation to "Look [Christ] in the face" at the various stages of his life, to the picture that "looks upon him, that looks upon it" perhaps highlight the difficulty of keeping one's eye on God. To see him in the seal is not the same as to look upon the picture of God; the two metaphors, although both visual, work in very different ways. The seal image is more physical in its emphasis on the irreversible impression on the soul. But a seal cannot appear to look back in the way that a painting can. The shift to the metaphor of painting renders the trope more fluid, especially since Donne seems to be interested not only in the fixed and final painting that hangs in the gallery, but also in the very process of painting. In a sermon of 1624, preached to the Earl of Exeter, there is a similar collapsing of seal and painting which enacts what is happening in Donne's subtle mixing of metaphors. First comes the seal image, but very quickly the wax image is overwritten, as it were, by the painted picture:

> First God sealed us, in imprinting his *Image* in our soules. . . . The *wax*, the matter, is in his conception, the seale, the forme is in his quickening. . . . worldly men draw *other pictures* over this picture, other images over this image: The *wanton* man

[21]Schleiner, p. 112.

> may paint *beauty*, the *ambitious* may paint *honour*, the *covetous wealth*, and so deface this image, but yet there the image is, and even *in hell* it selfe it will be, in him that goes down into hell. . . .
>
> (6:158–159)

In the seal metaphor for the *imago dei*, God is the maker, the one who imprints his image, though he is also the stamp that gives form to the wax. But the shift to the metaphor of painting allows man to paint too: inferior, iconoclastic pictures that deface the image of God.

Donne develops the notion of God as painter in his recurrent use of the metaphor that man is "God's Master-piece," an image used in the sermon preached at the funeral of Sir William Cockayne, 1626 (7:259), in a verse letter "To the Countesse of Bedford" (33), and finally in "Death's Duell" where he describes himself as "the Masterpeece of the greatest Master" (10:232).[22] Yet in the second of the two 1629 *imago dei* sermons, Donne uses the "masterpiece" trope differently again, and once more evokes the context of a gallery:

> We should wonder to see a man, whose Chambers and Galleries were full of curious master-peeces, thrust in a Village Fair to looke upon sixpenny pictures, and three farthing prints. We have all the Image of God at home. . . . The master-peece is our own, in our own bosome; and we thrust in countrey Fairs . . . to possesse lower Pictures; pictures that are not originalls, not made by that hand of God, nature; but Artificiall beauties.
>
> (9:80–81)

These lower pictures recall the inferior and profane pictures painted over the *imago dei* in the 1624 sermon, but here man has become the purchaser of paintings, expanding again the number of roles associated with the production and distribution of images. The metaphor here depends on connoisseurship: if man has the ability to recognize (and

[22]The term "masterpiece" begins to be used in English in the early seventeenth century: "in early use often applied to man as the 'masterpiece' of God or nature" (*OED*). Cf. Francis Quarles, "Man is heav'ns Masterpeece" (*Emblemes* [1635], 2.6.87).

own) a "curious master-peece,"[23] then why would he waste his time on "lower pictures" which are not even "Originalls"? The 1629 image of the "masterpeece" that man carries within himself, and has "at home" in his chambers or galleries is remarkably similar to the original gallery metaphor from 1619.

Many aspects of Donne's gallery metaphor are prefigured in "Goodfriday, 1613. Riding Westward," a poem written six years before his first use of the gallery image in his sermons. The image in the *Sermons* is ultimately reassuring—so long as you keep your eye on God, he will keep his eye on you, and with this knowledge, "it is impossible we should doe any foule, any uncomely thing in his presence" (9:368). Yet in the poetry, the context is far less certain. There is grave doubt as to whether man will be able to look at God, and whether God will recognize man. The speaker of "Goodfriday 1613" "durst not looke" at the image of Christ on the cross, or even "upon his miserable mother." Yet what he says is very similar to the internal gallery of the sermons:

> Though these things, as I ride, be from mine eye,
> They'are present yet unto my memory,
> For that looks towards them; and thou look'st towards mee,
> O Saviour, as thou hang'st upon the tree.
>
> (32–36)

As in the gallery, the memory replaces the eye, and the almost chiasmic structure of line 35 illustrates the reciprocal looking of the sermon. The lack of a perfect chiasmus, in fact, shows the imperfection of sinful man's attempt to contemplate God. Rather than *him* keeping his eye on *God* (cf. 4:124), the act of looking is strangely deferred: "that" (his memory) looks towards "them" ("these things," images of God). God's gaze is much simpler and more direct: "*thou* look'st towards *mee*," and yet the speaker seems to be in some doubt as to whether God will "know" him (42).

The last four lines of "Goodfriday 1613," and the injunction to God, "Restore thine Image" (41) make it clear that the "Image" referred to in

---

[23]"Curious" was a term commonly used in the late sixteenth century to "indicate the art associated with Dürer, or Michelangelo, or Hilliard . . . Haydocke translates 'trattato dell'arte della pittura' as 'the art of curious painting'" (Gent, p. 36).

the penultimate line of the poem is not the image of "Christ on the Crosse" referred to earlier, but specifically the *imago dei*. The speaker fears that the image of God in him may be so corrupt that God will not recognize it, and therefore asks God to "burne off [man's] rusts and [man's] deformity" (40) to restore the image to its pre-lapsarian state. There is, however, a clear connection between the two different categories of "image" in the poem. It is as if the speaker, by dwelling on his own inability to contemplate the image of Christ, becomes concerned about the state of his own soul, which he describes in both physical and visual terms. The theme of reciprocal looking allows him to conceive of both God and himself as images and because "a picture will always look upon him, that looks upon it," he becomes worried about the state of the image of God within him. Conceptualizing God as an internal image thus leads, through Donne's logic, to the idea of the *imago dei*.

The physical, and indeed painterly, imagery used to describe the *imago dei*, which recurs throughout Donne's preaching, is, unsurprisingly, also important in the Holy Sonnets, whose speaker displays an obsessive concern for himself and his relation to God. The idea of the *imago dei* frames the Holy Sonnets. The first sonnet in the Original Sequence begins "Thou hast made me, and shall thy worke decay?" (*HSMade*, 1) and the final sonnet of that sequence ends "'Twas much that man was made like God before, / But that God should be made like man, much more" (*HSWilt*, 13–14), neatly moving from the *imago dei* to the related notion of Christ as "image of the invisible God" (Colossians 1:15).[24] Man as God's masterpiece, made by his hand, opens and closes the sequence and is reinforced by the recurrent idea of images both made and decaying throughout the sonnets. In the second sonnet of the sequence the "made

[24]I am concentrating only on the "Original Sequence" as established by the editors of the *Variorum Edition of the Poetry of John Donne, Volume 7, Part 1: The Holy Sonnets*, ed. Gary A. Stringer et al. (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2005), pp. 5–10. The emphasis in the "Original Sequence" is more on art and creation, whereas, as Theresa DiPasquale has pointed out, in the "Revised Sequence" the focus shifts to legal ownership. This is partly because of the framing sonnets which I mention above. In the revised sequence *HSMade* does not appear, and *HSWilt* is the penultimate rather than the ultimate sonnet. "A Tale of Two Sequences: Reading the Variorum Edition of the Holy Sonnets," Presidential address, Twenty-Second Annual John Donne Society Conference, Baton Rouge, 17 February 2007.

/ decay'de" rhyme in the first quatrain emphasizes the point: "first I was made / By thee . . . and when I was decay'de" (*HSDue*, 2–3), just as the "little World, made cunningly" of the seventh sonnet, "must be burnt" (*HSLittle*, 1; 10). Sinful man has tarnished God's image within him, which is why, like the speaker of "Goodfriday 1613," the speaker of the Holy Sonnets must beg for the restoration of the *imago dei*, so that it will be recognizable to and acceptable to God.

As in "Goodfriday 1613," however, the idea of man as God's image in the Holy Sonnets occurs in the context of the reciprocal looking which is so important in the gallery image, with all the anxiety attendant upon it. The first sonnet in the sequence is the speaker's plea for God to look at him. But the idea of the speaker as God's work of art, albeit in need of repair, is complicated in the second quatrain by the idea of the speaker as looker, or would-be looker, because, like the speaker of "Goodfriday 1613," he does not dare to look:

> I dare not moue my dimme eyes any way,
> Despaire behind, and Death before doth cast
> Such terrour, and my feebled flesh doth wast
> By sinne in it, which it t'wards Hell doth weigh;
> Only thou art aboue, and when t'wards thee
> By thy leaue I can looke, I rise againe. . . .
> (*HSMade*, 5–10)

Surrounded by images of despair and death, the speaker of the first sonnet finds his vision paralyzed. The looking which is crucial to the relationship between man and God in the gallery image is no longer a given, because he fears what he might see. He maps out his location in relation to his fears: "Despaire behind, Death before . . . towards Hell . . . only thou art above," a succession of prepositions which recalls the more profane spatial orientation: "Behind, before, above, between, below" of "Elegy 15: On his mistris going to bed." "Between" is the missing term in the first Holy Sonnet, but that is exactly where the speaker finds himself, between despair and death, heaven and hell. There is only one direction in which it would be safe to look, which is up, but the speaker (like the speaker of the Goodfriday poem) doubts his ability to do so. This paralyzed spectator in the first sonnet of the sequence announces that the Holy Sonnets are an attempt to see God, to picture God, a negotiation

between the earthly space in which the persona finds himself and the divine image he aspires to.

The images of death and despair which surround the speaker place him, like the man in Donne's sermon, in the center of a gallery of images, but, unlike the gallery of the sermon, it contains images which he fears to contemplate. To pursue this analogy, it could be possible to read the Holy Sonnets as an art gallery of "well-made, and well-plac'd picture[s]." Although Donne famously compares the sonnet to a "well wrought urne" ("The Canonization," 32–33), it could equally be seen as a well-made picture. And as the editors of the Variorum edition of the Holy Sonnets have shown, Donne's concern with the order of the sonnets revealed by his revision of the sequence (p. ci) means we can legitimately call them "well-plac'd." Many of the sonnets, as I have argued elsewhere, can be read visually, and correspond iconographically and spatially to traditional Christian religious painting.[25]

According to the logic of the gallery metaphor, if the sonnets are well-made and well-placed pictures in the gallery of the soul, by looking at them the speaker will open up a channel to God, since the picture will "always look on him that looks on it." However, as we have already seen, looking is problematic from the very first sonnet onwards. Looking up towards God depends on some kind of permission: "when t'wards thee / By thy leave I can looke" (*HSMade*, 9–10), and the speaker's eyes are often obscured, usually by tears. The "dimme eyes" of the first sonnet are reinforced by the "shoures of rayne / Mine eyes did wast" in the "Idolatry" of the third sonnet (*HSSighs*, 5–6), and the reiteration of "Idolatrous Lovers" who "weepe and mourne" in sonnet ten (*HSSouls*, 9). The tears can also serve to cleanse the eyes, as in the seventh sonnet: "Pour new seas in mine eyes" (*HSLittle*, 7) and the ninth: "teares make a heav'nly Lethean floud / And drowne in it my sinnes blacke memory" (*HSMin*, 11–12), but even in these cases the cleansing does not seem to lead directly to vision. The speaker desires to look at God and be recognized, as in the Goodfriday poem, but that moment remains

[25]Stirling, "'Imagined corners': Space, Time and Iconoclasm in John Donne's Last Judgement Holy Sonnets," *Word and Image* 21.3 (2005): 244–251; and "Lutheran Imagery and Donne's 'picture of Christ crucified,'" *John Donne Journal* 26 (2007): 55–71.

shrouded in doubt: "Or presently (I knowe not) see that face" (*HSScene*, 7).[26]

The reciprocal gaze of the well-made picture is a simple and reassuring metaphor in the sermons, but in the poetry it opens up to reveal a wealth of anxiety. The internal galleries conjured up by Donne's metaphor allow a new perspective on the quandary in which the sinful speaker of the Holy Sonnets finds himself. Donne's ownership of and attitude to actual images will remain a matter for speculation, particularly when considered in the light of seventeenth-century Calvinist attitudes to images, but his painterly knowledge works to illuminate complex theological ideas like the *imago dei*, by means of which he is able to design a whole gallery of ways of describing man's relationship to God.

University of Lausanne

[26]The version of this line in the Revised Version of the Holy Sonnets is one of the key substantial variations between the two sequences. The Revised Version has: "But my'ever-waking part shall see that face" (*HSScene*, 7; *Donne Variorum*, p. 13). The doubt about seeing in the Original Sequence version of this line reinforces the image of the paralyzed spectator in *HSMade*, and contributes to the clear difference between the two sequences regarding visual and artistic perception.