

**FURUKAWA, Moe**

**“Giorgio Vasari and the Cappella dei Pittori: The Statues' Gaze and Commemoration of the Deceased”**

This essay considers the interior decoration of the Chapel of St. Luke, known as the Cappella dei Pittori, attached to the northwest side of the Basilica della Santissima Annunziata in Florence. The chapel interior, created from 1570 through 1575, consists of sculptures arranged in 12 wall niches and three paintings. The author has reconstructed the chapel's original decorative scheme, which was greatly altered during major 19th century restorations, and reconsiders the chapel's function within the historical context of its time.

The author makes particular note of the fact that this chapel was the focus of activities for the Accademia delle Arti del Disegno that was established in 1563 and centered on the painter, architect and author Giorgio Vasari. The Compagnia di San Luca, the predecessor to the Accademia delle Arti del Disegno, had declined around the middle of the fifteenth century, and the Accademia carried on the important role of providing suitable funerals and burial sites for the deceased Compagnia members that could not be fulfilled by the earlier group. The author strongly asserts that the Cappella dei Pittori was the site for these ceremonies. This assertion both considers that the mourning for artists was mentioned in both the first edition (1550) of Vasari's *Lives* and in the second edition published in 1568, while also indicating that the portraits adorned with decorative frames that were added to the second edition, could be seen as “memorial stele honoring the artists.” She then considered that the Cappella's interior decoration program that was begun two years after the publication of the second edition could be seen as a physical form of the book's commemorative stele on paper, thus suggesting the possibility that Vasari actively contributed not only to the production of the interior work but also to its planning stages. Of particular note is the author's flexible sensibility in considering the creative intentions that goes beyond what at first appear to be different expressive media.

Next the author considered the contemporary historical materials that record the composition of funerals held in the Cappella, noting the stimulating hypothesis that the sculptures' “sharp gaze,” noteworthy even in today's chapel space, is directed at the Accademia members listening to funerary orations. The author develops a series of carefully thought-out observations based on the historical situation of the period, such as the fact that the paintings in the Cappella all have complex compositions while also indicating that compared to its predecessors, such as the Medici Chapels in the Basilica di San Lorenzo, the sculptures' gaze gives the impression that it is “relatively simple and direct,” which the author indicates is related to the connection with the Council of Trent which ended in 1563, and sought clearer artistic expression.

This essay with its careful composition and scrupulous argument is highly finished. Its research methodology and superbly sensible analysis based on an accurate awareness of history gained through textual and visual historical materials will stand as a model even for those in other specialties.

For these reasons we honor the accomplishments of Furukawa Moe and award her the Bijutsushi Prize.