

File ID uvapub:26736
Filename Cover
Version unknown

SOURCE (OR PART OF THE FOLLOWING SOURCE):

Type PhD thesis
Title Sumptuous Memories, Studies in seventeenth-century Dutch tomb
 sculpture
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Faculty FGw: Instituut voor Cultuur en Geschiedenis (ICG)
Year 2003

FULL BIBLIOGRAPHIC DETAILS:

<http://hdl.handle.net/11245/1.220512>

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Sumptuous Memories

Studies in seventeenth-century
Dutch tomb sculpture

Although the conditions for a flourishing art of sculpture in the Netherlands received a serious setback after the Iconoclasm and the Reformation, around 100 sculpted sepulchral monuments were nevertheless erected in the 17th century, ranging from simple memorials to completely free-standing tombs. Behind these remarkable works of art lies a world of prominent patrons and first-class sculptors, of major financial investments and costly materials, of status and personal sorrow.

The patronage of this funerary sculpture is the thread running through this book – the first detailed study of 17th-century Dutch sculpture for more than 50 years. Who ordered these monuments and why? Who were the artists involved and how did they organise their work? What were the functions and meanings of this sepulchral sculpture? What were the costs involved in erecting the tombs, and how were they viewed by the 17th-century public? These and other questions are examined from various different angles.

Frits Scholten is Senior Curator of Sculpture in the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam. He publishes regularly on Dutch sculpture from the 16th to the 19th centuries. In 2000 he was awarded the Eric Mitchell Prize for the book *Adriaen de Vries (1556-1626), imperial sculptor*.

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ISBN 90 400 9475 6



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Studies in Netherlandish Art and Cultural History