



## The Passion of Artemisia: A Novel

By Susan Vreeland

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### **The Passion of Artemisia: A Novel** By Susan Vreeland

Recently rediscovered by art historians, and one of the few female post-Renaissance painters to achieve fame during her own era, Artemisia Gentileschi led a remarkably "modern" life. Susan Vreeland tells Artemisia's captivating story, beginning with her public humiliation in a rape trial at the age of eighteen, and continuing through her father's betrayal, her marriage of convenience, motherhood, and growing fame as an artist. Set against the glorious backdrops of Rome, Florence, Genoa, and Naples, inhabited by historical characters such as Galileo and Cosimo de' Medici II, and filled with rich details about life as a seventeenth-century painter, Vreeland creates an inspiring story about one woman's lifelong struggle to reconcile career and family, passion and genius.

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## **The Passion of Artemisia: A Novel** By Susan Vreeland **Bibliography**

- Sales Rank: #180010 in eBooks
- Published on: 2002-12-31
- Released on: 2002-12-31
- Format: Kindle eBook

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### Editorial Review

#### Amazon.com Review

Like her bestselling debut, *Girl in Hyacinth Blue*, Susan Vreeland's second novel, *The Passion of Artemisia*, traces a particular painting through time: in this case, the post-Renaissance painter Artemisia Gentileschi's violent masterpiece, "Judith." Although the novel purports to cover the life of the painter, the painting serves as a touchstone, foreshadowing Artemisia's rape by Agostino Tassi, an assistant in her father's painting studio in Rome; the well-documented (and humiliating) trial that followed; the early days of her hastily arranged marriage; and her eventual triumph as the first woman elected to the Accademia dell' Arte in Florence. Although Vreeland makes a bit free with her characters (which she admits in her introduction), attributing some decidedly modern attitudes to people who would not have thought that way at the time, her book is beautifully researched and rich with casual detail of clothing, interiors, and street life. She deftly works history and politics into the background of her canvas, keeping her focus on Artemisia and her family. Beyond the paintings Artemisia left behind, Vreeland's vision may be as close as we can come to understanding the anger and ambition that kept this talented woman at the doors of the Accademia, demanding entrance, in a time when respectable women rarely left their homes. --*Regina Marler*

#### From Publishers Weekly

Vreeland follows up the success of *Girl in Hyacinth Blue* with another novel delving into the themes of art, history and the lives of women. Narrated in the wise, candid first-person voice of Italian painter Artemisia Gentileschi (1593-1653), the novel tells the story of Gentileschi's life and career in Renaissance Italy. Publicly humiliated and scorned in Rome after her participation as defendant in a rape trial in which the accused is her painting teacher (and father's friend) Agostino Tassi, Artemisia accepts a hastily arranged marriage at the age of 18 to Pietro Stiatessi, an artist in Florence. Her marriage, while not a love match, proves at first to be affectionate, and the arrival of a daughter, Palmira, strengthens the bond with her husband. But rifts soon develop as Artemisia begins to have some success: she wins the patronage of the Medicis and is the first woman to be elected to the Accademia dell'Arte before her husband. Studio and home become the battlefields of Artemisia's life, and Vreeland chronicles 20 years of the painter's struggles while raising her daughter alone. Details and visuals abound in the book; readers who loved the painterly descriptions of *Girl* will be spellbound in particular by the scenes in which Artemisia is shown at work. While some threads in the story are frustratingly dropped and the narrative concludes before the end of Artemisia's life, the underlying themes of familial and artistic reconciliation are satisfactorily developed. Forthright and imaginative, Vreeland's deft recreation ably showcases art and life. Agent, Barbara Braun. (Jan. 14) Forecast: Fans of *Girl in Hyacinth Blue* will be pleased with *The Passion of Artemisia*, which reprises many of the themes of its predecessor. Published to coincide with an exhibition of the works of Gentileschi and her father in New York City and St. Louis, the book will also be promoted by Vreeland's 12-city author tour, and has been named Book Sense's #1 pick for January/February. Expect happy sales. Rights sold in Denmark, England, Finland and Germany.

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#### From Library Journal

Vreeland's second novel (after *The Girl in Hyacinth Blue*) is fact-based fiction at its best, a stunning look at 16th-century painter Artemisia Gentileschi as seen through and interpreted with a 21st-century lens. Because she is the first woman admitted to the Accademia dell' Arte del Disegno in Florence, her story is filled with intrigue and drama. Betrayal, redemption, sexual violation, and jealousies all are woven into Vreeland's tale.

While many of the social mores that limit Artemisia are rooted in the 1600s, her refusal to be stymied by misogynist sensibilities makes her a timeless heroine. Vreeland palpably captures Artemisia's joy as she blends colors and watches her artistic imaginings take shape. Whether creating a portrait or painting "Judith Slaying Holofernes," Artemisia's passion is evident. Although her final confrontation with her father, artist Orazio Gentileschi, feels forced, the novel brilliantly captures the life of an extraordinary artist. Released to coincide with an exhibit of Artemisia's and Orazio's works at New York's Metropolitan Museum, this book is highly recommended and essential reading for all art fans.

- *Eleanor J. Bader, Brooklyn, NY*

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Why? Because this The Passion of Artemisia: A Novel is an unordinary book that the inside of the reserve waiting for you to snap it but latter it will shock you with the secret this inside. Reading this book next to it was fantastic author who write the book in such amazing way makes the content inside of easier to understand, entertaining method but still convey the meaning completely. So , it is good for you for not hesitating having this nowadays or you going to regret it. This book will give you a lot of benefits than the other book include such as help improving your proficiency and your critical thinking technique. So , still want to hesitate having that book? If I ended up you I will go to the reserve store hurriedly.

**Christopher Hendrick:**

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