



# Metamorphoses

## Ovid and the Arts

Edited by Frits Scholten

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- A Landmark Exploration of Ovid's Influence on Western Art: This is the first major monograph to comprehensively trace the impact of *Metamorphoses* from the Renaissance to contemporary art, highlighting timeless themes of transformation and desire
- Masterpieces Across Centuries and Media: Features iconic works by Bernini, Rodin, Titian, Poussin, Rembrandt, and others, alongside modern and contemporary interpretations – offering a visually rich journey through painting, sculpture, and beyond
- International Scholarly Collaboration & Major Exhibitions: Published alongside major exhibitions at the Rijksmuseum and Galleria Borghese in 2026, with expert contributions from leading scholars including Frits Scholten and Francesca Cappelletti

### Ovid's *Metamorphoses* and its lasting impact on visual art

The Roman poet Ovid's *Metamorphoses* is among the most important works of Classical Antiquity, described in the seventeenth century as a 'Bible for artists'. The compelling epic intertwines tales of chaos and the cosmos, encounters between gods, humans and nature, and the countless transformations to which they gave rise.

For centuries, artists have drawn inspiration from these highly imaginative accounts of passion, jealousy, cunning and deceit on the part of deities, heroes and ordinary mortals. The stories have been interpreted in marble and paint, and more recently in moving pictures. This book shows the immense influence that Ovid has exerted on the visual arts – from Antiquity to the present day. It presents sculptures by Cellini, Bernini, Rodin and Bourgeois alongside paintings by Titian, Correggio, Caravaggio, Arcimboldo and Rubens.

Ovid's myths address universal human feelings, allowing them to speak as powerfully as ever to our imagination. This richly illustrated book, featuring essays by Francesca Cappelletti, Claudia Cieri Via, Bart Ramakers, Frits Scholten and Lucia Simonato, is the living proof.

This publication accompanies the exhibitions at the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam (6 February-25 May 2026) and the Galleria Borghese, Rome (22 June-20 September 2026).

**Prof. Dr. Frits Scholten** is Senior Curator of Sculpture at the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam and specializes in sculpture from the 15th to the 19th century. In addition, he holds the Rijksmuseum Chair in the Theory and History of Collecting at Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam as a professor by special appointment. **Francesca Cappelletti** is an art history professor at the University of Ferrara and the director of Galleria Borghese in Rome. She graduated from the University of Rome and where she verified the authenticity of the Caravaggio painting *The Taking of Christ* with Laura Testa while they were students. Francesca also studied at the Warburg Institute in London and the Collège de France in Paris.

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