

joy of painting. The authors feel that he was at his flamboyant best throughout the series, but the best details are of secondary or minor passages where you can sense the painter's brush responding to his relief in getting away from the grandiose rhetoric required in the major passages.

The text opens with brief appreciative comments on Marie and Rubens designed for popular consumption, and concludes with a more interesting and more valuable documentary history of the paintings, from a contract made in 1621 for the preliminary decoration of the original gallery in the Luxembourg Palace on through the negotiations with Rubens and then into a couple of centuries of ups and downs with the critics until we reach the inauguration of the gallery in the Louvre where the paintings were installed in 1900. It makes quite a book, altogether. Marie would have loved it.

Michael Ayrton's **GIOVANNI**

even better in black and white. This is essentially a picture book, but Mr. Itoh's introduction and the essays on each garden by three Japanese novelists — Yukio Mishima, Yasushi Inoue, and Jiro Osaragi — are clear and loving.

THE VIEW PAINTERS OF EUROPE, by Giuliano Briganti (Phaidon, \$35) is a combination travelogue and welcome summary of a group of loosely connected artists who in retrospect amount to a school. The 18th-century view painters (such as Canaletto and Guardi, to name the two best known) left records of the famous sights of Europe from Naples and Madrid to Warsaw and Petersburg. This book visits some 30 cities as shown by 33 painters in 255 pictures, prefacing each visit with extracts from letters and memoirs of travelers of the day. (Goethe is the most famous one and the most frequently quoted.) In this way remindful of "The Age of the Grand Tour" (Crown, 1967), it



From "The View Painters of Europe."

Detail from Piazza Navona by Giovanni Paolo Panini.

is of more manageable size and is much more inclusive as a compendium of the painters' work. What with comments on each of the painted views and biographies of the artists, this is a good solid book. And it has a way of growing more interesting each time you open it.

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