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Bernini: The Sculptor Of The Roman Baroque



Synopsis

Gian Lorenzo Bernini (1598-1680) was the most influential sculptor of his age. Inventive and skilled, he virtually created the Baroque style. In his religious sculptures he excelled at capturing movement and extreme emotion, uniting figures with their setting to create a single conception of overwhelming intensity that expressed the fervour of Counter-Reformation Rome. Intensity and drama also characterize his portraits and world-famous Roman fountains.

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Customer Reviews

Wittkower's (1901-71) book, first published in 1955 and updated in 1966 and 1981, derives from an Italian edition of 1900. The text, which deals chiefly with the sculptures of this multifaceted Italian artist (1598-1680), is a classic. Though some of the entries have been updated and some new plates added, the main reason for this new edition seems to be its first issuance in paperback. This, and the fact that the color plates are less than stellar, mean that all but advanced art history collections can safely pass on this edition if they have earlier ones. Avery's book takes a broader look at Bernini, covering sculpture, drawings, models in terra cotta, urbanistic projects such as fountains, and his work for St. Peter's and other Roman churches. The color photographs are better than those in the Phaidon book, where they are separate from the text; neither title offers uniformly better black-and-whites. Avery (sculpture, Victoria and Albert Museum) writes well, offers more context and comparative illustrations, and draws on material unavailable to Wittkower in shaping his text. Avery is the choice for all but the most scholarly of collections, which will want both titles. Jack Perry Brown, Art Inst. of Chicago Lib. Copyright 1998 Reed Business Information, Inc.

'First published in 1955, this volume has never been topped for its clarity of discourse or the stunning beauty of its reproductions. It is the black and white photographs of Bernini's breathtaking sculpture that best capture the timeless wonder of their precision and vitality.' (Booklist) 'Wittkower's Bernini rightly enjoys almost canonical status among studies of the artist and his age, as an elegant survey which provides deep insight and rests lightly on profound scholarship.' (Burlington Magazine)

Phaidon does something that I've not seen before with other publishers: understands that statues are made to be looked at from various angles. This superb collection does just that, showing the works of a Master Sculptor (to my taste, better than Michelangelo) in great detail. The photos are art-photos, not just catalog photos. You can feel the photographer has a good understanding of sculpture and light and brings them together in a way that does justice to Bernini. Another forte of the book is the text. Unlike other art books, where the writer floods you with professional information and likes to impress with his knowledge, the text in this book goes straight to the point: explains Bernini's life and the context in which his work came to life. Watch the video I made, it will help you get a better idea of what the book has to offer. I'm a great lover of Bernini and this is the first time I feel really close to his work, while turning the pages of a book. I've seen most of his works, as I live in Rome. So it's not little to see Bernini so well represented in a book! Kudos for Phaidon!

This book is a thorough discussion of the sculptural works of Gianlorenzo Bernini by probably the pre-eminent scholar of Baroque art. It is filled with superb photographs, mostly black-and-white. This is a scholarly work as well as being very visually appealing. My only issue with this book was the surprisingly large number of spelling and typographical errors.

This is a great book with wonderful photographs. The pictures from the original printing are in black and white and there are new color photos that are also great. The text is clear and provides good information. The catalogue at the end of the book documents all of Bernini's work and where it can be found.

I love this book. The black and white photos allow you to really admire the work. I have my color photos from my trip. Had barely heard of Bernini till we toured the Villa Borghese and now he is my favorite. This is the first art book I have ever bought so it may not be enough for scholars but I love it as a lover of Italy.

Bernini was a pure genius, an artist of the first order. I had known nothing of him until a visit to Rome last year, and even then did not appreciate his genius until I ordered this book. Beautiful pictures showing exquisite detail of his sculptures. I also recommend going to YouTube and learning more about this extraordinary sculptor and architect.

The print quality is good, but I wanted more detailed photos of Bernini's work. The composition on the photographs are bit off aesthetically.

I literally fell in love with Bernini the first time I saw his David in art history, this book has me in complete awe. The information about his works might be a little light but the imagery is fantastic. I proudly show off this book, which will remain on the coffee table to educate any visitors to my home, no matter what my wife does to "redecorate".

Needed for a term paper. was not exactly what I needed but, still a great book.

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