



Painting and Sculpture in France, 1700-1789 (The Yale University Press Pelican History of Art)

Michael Levey

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Genius and talent combine to render both brilliant and varied the image of painting and sculpture in France in the last years of the ancien régime. The outpouring of creative activity and of inspired patronage, both public and private was then unparalleled elsewhere. Gifted exponents of sculpture include the Coustou, Michel-Ange Slodtz, and Caffieri, besides the better-known Falconet, Pigalle, and Houdon: their often monumental work provides a salutary reminder of the seriousness of intention in an age often still stereotyped as frivolous and lightweight. In painting, Restout, Vernet, Oudry and others were appreciated at least as much as Boucher, and portraiture, genre, and still life were all well served. The era may have opened with Watteau and the fete galante, but it closed with a revival of history painting, and with an artistic revolutionary in the person of David. Bringing new insights and information to bear on the work of the great French artists and sculptors of the eighteenth century, Levey has created a book that is at once beautiful and instructive.



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