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Painting In Spain, 1500-1700 (The Yale University Press Pelican History Of Art)



Synopsis

El Greco, Ribera, Velázquez, Murillo--these are but a few of the great sixteenth- and seventeenth-century artists of Spain's golden age of painting. In this authoritative and handsome book, an enlarged, extended, and revised version of his *Golden Age of Painting in Spain*, eminent Spanish art scholar Jonathan Brown surveys the development of painting in Spain during this fascinating period. Focusing on the interaction between art and the socioeconomic and political conditions that prevailed in Spain's golden age, this book offers information about religious beliefs, social attitudes, the activities of patrons and collectors, and how these were absorbed and interpreted by painters. The author sets the history of Spanish paintings within a European context and explores Spain's contact with artistic centers in Italy and the Netherlands. He discusses not only Spanish artists but also such non-Spanish painters as Titian, Ruben, and Luca Giordano, who either worked in Spain or influenced other artists there. Brown also examines the collections of foreign paintings that Spanish noblemen and prelates assembled and how these collections affected the production of art and the social status of the Spanish artist. In this up-to-date and innovative analysis of two hundred years of Spanish painting, Brown describes a country that brilliantly transformed the artistic impulses it received from abroad to fit the needs of its own society.

Book Information

Paperback: 290 pages

Publisher: Yale University Press (1998)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0300064748

ISBN-13: 978-0300064742

Product Dimensions: 8.4 x 0.7 x 11.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 2.8 pounds

Average Customer Review: 3.8 out of 5 stars 2 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #500,465 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #50 in [Books > Textbooks >](#)

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Customer Reviews

Jonathan Brown is Carroll and Milton Petrie Professor of Fine Arts at the Institute of Fine Arts, New York University. He is the author of many books on Spanish art, including *The Golden Age of Painting in Spain* and *Velázquez: Painter and Courtier*, and coauthor of *Velázquez: The*

Technique of Genius, all published by Yale University Press. Brown was awarded the Medalla de Oro de Bellas Artes by the government of Spain for his contributions to the history of Spanish art and culture.

This is more a history of art patronage and politics than an analysis of Spanish painting during this period. It reduces art criticism to tracing a uni-dimensional causality: why who commissioned whom. There is very little analysis of the paintings themselves, the painters' distinct artistic personalities or the intellectual milieu which shaped these works, most notably trends within Counter-Reformation piety. The book does cover the major painters (and many minor and best forgotten ones) in the major centers of artistic production in the peninsula. The pictures many in black and white are ample and well-reproduced.

I am delighted with this book. It is ideal for teaching university students. It not only provides fresh insights into the social milieu as well as the the paintings themselves, it also has an excellent updated bibliography of the literature on the subject. For the past two decades I have lamented the fact that the Kubler-Soria Pelican book on Art and Architecture in Spain had become first increasingly outdated and then out of print. This book fills that gap splendidly - although I do wish it had been possible to include sculpture in the book as well: the interactions between these two art forms is very important. One other minor criticism: the book emphasizes the importance of the regional schools of painting in the 16th century, yet nowhere in the book is there a map of Spain showing those regions! Next edition of the book, I hope one is included.

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