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Art Of Colonial Latin America (Art And Ideas)



Synopsis

For over three hundred years, from the era of Christopher Columbus to the struggles for independence around 1820, Latin America witnessed an artistic flowering of enormous creativity and originality. In a unique way, the art and architecture of Aztec, Inca and Guarani civilizations blended with those of Europe, North Africa and the Far East. In particular, the Spanish and Portuguese empires in Central and South America created the climate for a flourishing, diverse and distinct version of Renaissance and Baroque culture, produced under utterly different social and geographic conditions from those found in Europe. The products of this unique culture include some of the most lavish and visually arresting works of art and architecture in the world. In this lively overview of the tremendously rich and varied artistic output of the area from southern Chile to northern California, Gauvin Alexander Bailey discusses viceregal and missionary as well as civic and rural architecture, alongside religious and secular painting, sculpture, metalwork, textiles and ceramics. But he also looks back to pre-colonial influences and concludes with an examination of how twentieth-century artists such as Diego Rivera and Frida Kahlo interpreted their artistic heritage. Even today, the art of the colonial period remains at the centre of Latin American society, culture and identity. The result is a book that provides a new and comprehensive understanding of all the influences that led to one of the most cosmopolitan artistic outpourings in the whole history of art.

Book Information

Series: Art and Ideas

Paperback: 447 pages

Publisher: Phaidon Press; 1st edition (February 1, 2005)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0714841579

ISBN-13: 978-0714841571

Product Dimensions: 6.3 x 1 x 8.8 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.8 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

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Customer Reviews

The book Art in Colonial Latin America cover dates ranging from 1492 all the way to 1820. This book is perfect for those who are interested in Latin American art in South America as well as the southwest United States. Bailey has a way of capturing the reader right from the beginning. His book starts with the first encounters and then takes you through how both the native people and the Spanish respond to the mix of cultures, he does an amazing job at telling both sides of the story. The reader really gets a true sense of the difficulties the natives faced with their new encounters. Bailey does a tremendous job on making the indigenous people the foreground of this new change. In chapter two his introductory statement shows just that "Until quite recently, historians of the conquest of the Americans focused almost entirely on the actions of the European conquerors and settlers. They treated the indigenous people as a silent backdrop to their Spanish and Portuguese protagonists, and paid scant attention to their cultures after the fall of the great pre-Hispanic civilizations." Bailey's book not only has very valuable history but along with it he has some wonderful images that are able to express exactly what points Bailey is trying to get across. For example when Bailey is discussing a type of life style such as colonial mansions he pairs the text with a beautiful full page image (page 324-325) so the viewer/reader can really connect with what aspects Bailey is discussing. Bailey's book is very well done with the information and the images; however the one weakness that I find is in the layout of the book. When I first picked this book up I found the front cover to not only be boring but very uninviting to read.

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