



The Rococo Interior: Decoration and Social Spaces in Early Eighteenth-Century Paris

Katie Scott

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This work offers an account of the forms and functions of interior decoration in Parisian domestic architecture during the first half of the 18th century - the period generally known as the rococo. It charts the rapid and sometimes dramatic changes in both the style and the imagery of the art of that time, and explores the relationship between social status and the consumption and display of decoration in public and private interiors. The book is divided into three parts. In the first, Katie Scott looks beneath the surface of decorative schemes in order to understand how they came into being. Approaching rococo decoration from the perspective of the workshop, she provides an examination of the technologies developed for the manufacture of decorative materials, of the institutional structures - guilds and academies - that governed their production, and of the organizational arrangements that co-ordinated their development on site. In the second part, the relationship between the meanings of decoration, both as the embellishment of a thing or place and as the acknowledgement of the prestige of the patron or client, is investigated, and the ways in which decoration came to represent and describe a certain type of noble status are traced. In the final part, Scott looks at how rococo decoration variously articulated shifting ideological positions. By focusing on the genres of the grotesque, the pastoral and mythological, she is able to explore the nobility's changing relationship with the absolutist state. In the last two chapters, the orientation of her exploration changes: she considers the effect on the rococo of an increasingly aggressive commercial culture by first, examining how the nobility responded to pressures from below, and, then, by assessing the impact of the printing press and the rise of public exhibitions.

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