



Magnificent Entertainments: Temporary Architecture for Georgian Festivals (The Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art)

Melanie Doderer-Winkler

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A thoroughly original study of ephemeral architecture and design, *Magnificent Entertainments* examines the spectacular displays created for large-scale public and private celebrations in the Georgian period. The book focuses on a number of specific occasions - including elegant country fêtes, lavish galas, royal events and historical commemorations - that employed elaborate decorative measures to outshine all other attractions and diversions. It explores the role of leading architects Robert Adam and William Chambers as well as members of the Royal Academy of Arts in creating exceptional party settings for royalty and aristocracy, and adapting well-known public venues for one-night extravaganzas.

The author delves into the materials used for construction and embellishment throughout the period: artful applications of dyed sugar, sand, marble dust or chalk lent lustre and colour to tables and floors, whilst painted scenery and transparencies created from thousands of variegated lamps transformed existing venues into unfamiliar marvels. Spectacular stand-alone firework temples and temporary reception rooms were often crafted of little more than wood, canvas and paint.

Drawing on primary sources including personal letters, diary entries, bills and newspaper accounts, this book investigates how successful these fanciful designs were in creating fleeting moments of delight with lasting impact and popular appeal.

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