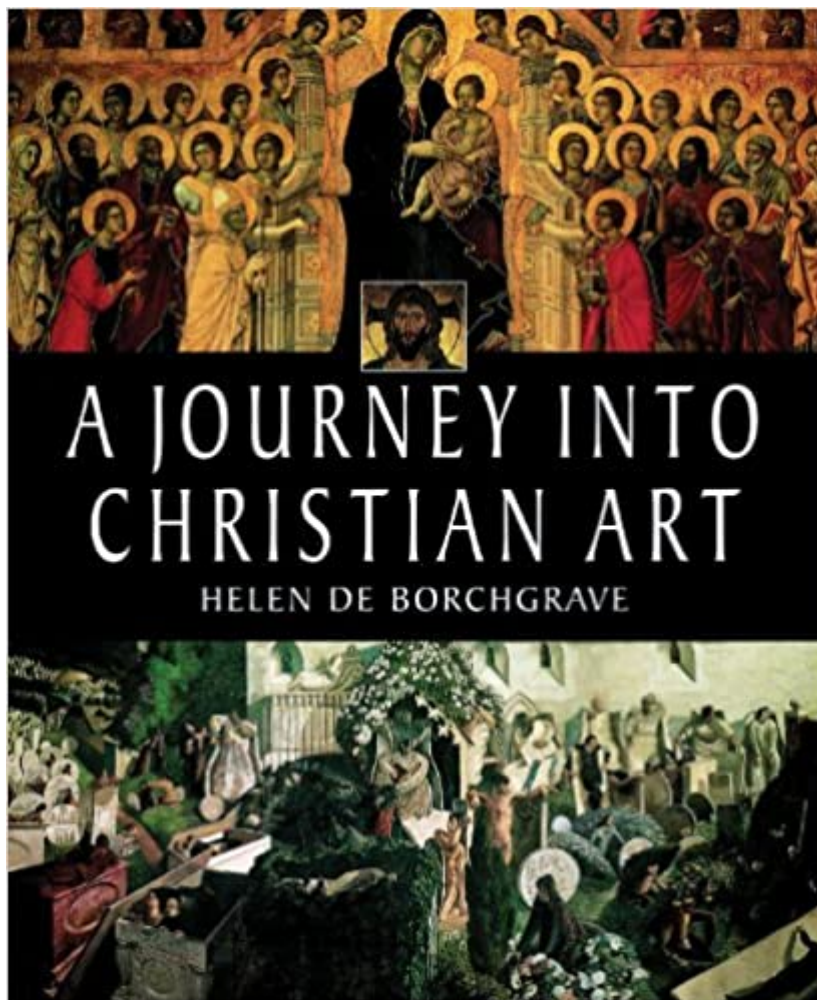


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A Journey Into Christian Art



Synopsis

A Journey into Christian Art is a tour of Christian art through two millennia. We visit churches and museums and see how the fusion of Christianity and art has produced sublime paintings and sculptures in a rich variety of styles. We glimpse, through the work of artists of faith, reflections of the spiritual and cultural climate of their day. Some, such as Michelangelo, are among the greatest geniuses the world has ever seen; others are virtually unknown. Yet whether experience persecution or spiritual revival, war or peace, political repression or freedom, they have all been inspired by the person and message of Christ and his church to make visible the invisible in mosaic, paint and stone; to enrich the mind, touch the heart, and feed the soul. This richness of life is in danger of death in our contemporary culture of facts and figures, where time is money, speed drives us, and noise blocks out the inner voice. This book has been written in the hope that it will stir the imagination, encourage contemplation, and stimulate wonder and praise.

Book Information

Paperback: 224 pages

Publisher: Lion Hudson (August 24, 2001)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0745950884

ISBN-13: 978-0745950884

Product Dimensions: 7.5 x 0.7 x 9.5 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.6 pounds

Average Customer Review: 4.8 out of 5 stars 9 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #176,573 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #58 in [Books > Arts &](#)

[Photography > History & Criticism > Themes > Religious](#) #1029 in [Books > History > World >](#)

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Customer Reviews

A Journey into Christian Art. . . achieves] a balance between text and picture which opens the doors of perception and feeds the imagination. -- Richard Chartres, Bishop of London --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Helen de Borchgrave is a fine art conservator and consultant. She trained at the Byam Shaw School of Art and with Professor Ruhemann of The National Gallery in London. As well as cleaning and

restoring paintings for museums, churches and private collections, she leads art tours in Europe for various tour companies. She is a member of the Association of International Art Critics, and has contributed reviews and features to a wide range of publications.

Came with a ticket to an art museum event in England! Wish we could go! The book is beautifully illustrated!

Gorgeous reproductions of Christian paintings (especially, of course, classic paintings), sculptures, mosaics, and more. I would have preferred more images and fewer words (giving three illustrations to each of the Old Masters, for example, instead of the book's usual two illustrations for each). But the words are erudite and inspiring. I'm just learning about the history of Christian art, and I found the history very helpful. Early paintings and sculptures most often depicted Christ as a shepherd, I learned, and only later did images of the cross predominate. The most common image in the history of Christian art is Mother Mary with Baby Jesus, and the book is appropriately generous with such images in reproduction.

There is only so much you can read about Christian art, and I have been reading for over 50 years about it. I had forgotten a lot of the material in this book; it was a good reminder.

We were very pleased!

Received as expected. Thank you!

Beautiful Christian art compiled in one large book.

This is a very detailed book on the beautiful art which was created to honor the Christian Faith. It is a very well made book, heavy pages, beautiful graphics.

As the book itself states, 'A Journey into Christian Art' is lavishly illustrated - Helen de Borchgrave's text is accompanied by over a hundred full-colour-process, large-size reproductions of major paintings, as well as stunning photographs of frescos, mosaics, statues and other works of art. Hardly is there a two-page spread throughout the book that does not have a primary image dominant - art is not merely something to be talked about, but something to be experienced, and in

a useful way, this book helps the reader accomplish this goal. This is no simple survey of art, however; it concentrates primarily on the art of Christendom, which is the major portion of the post-Roman Empire artistic tradition of the West until the Enlightenment and post-Enlightenment artistic streams headed in additional directions not directly tied to Christianity. de Borchgrave's purpose here is to do an historical survey simultaneously developing the idea of art with the idea of the spirituality of the artists involved - we as the readers do not simply see the paintings, etc. and admire the handiwork, but are drawn into discussion about the inspiration of the artists, and the hope of the artists in what they mean for their art to inspire. Beginning with largely anonymous works from late antiquity, de Borchgrave quickly advances into the period where we have names associated with the works (as it is difficult, although not impossible, to get deeply into the spiritual biographies of the anonymous). She explores the images of Christ in different settings during the first thousand years, and sees a division between East and West in different ways - she quotes Chesterton, who said 'the East was the land of the cross and the West was the land of the crucifix.' The issue of symbolism versus realism was one early parting of different artistic streams, which would often flow back across each others' paths. Key artists such as Giotto, Fra Angelico, Piero, Bosch, Michelangelo, Caravaggio, Rembrandt, and van Gogh are included among lesser-known figures (or persons whose names are less famous perhaps than their works). Workers in media other than painting are included - Durer's etchings and Henry Moore's sculptures, for example. 'Art, as the eastern church discovered through icon painting, can be a force that takes us beyond knowledge and into prayer,' de Borchgrave writes. This idea is woven throughout the text - she writes about the modern painter Roger Wagner as someone who sat in the same spot where Fra Angelico, centuries before, 'had prayed his frescoes into life'. This is a truly beautiful book, not just in appearance, the 'look and feel' of it, but also in its text and the message, that art and the spirit are deeply connected, and that the artistic sensibility is both heightened by and heightens in turn the spiritual/religious aspects of Christian experience. The crucifixion and resurrection can be drawn in many different ways, yet always remain the same. The image of Christ takes on many varying characteristics, both realistic and symbolic, and yet always remains a powerful guide to the faithful, leading them to new insights and discoveries of something already familiar. Helen de Borchgrave is herself an art restorer and a leader of art tours throughout Europe. This book is a good tour for those who are more of the arm-chair traveler variety. It is a great gift for others, and a great treat for oneself.

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