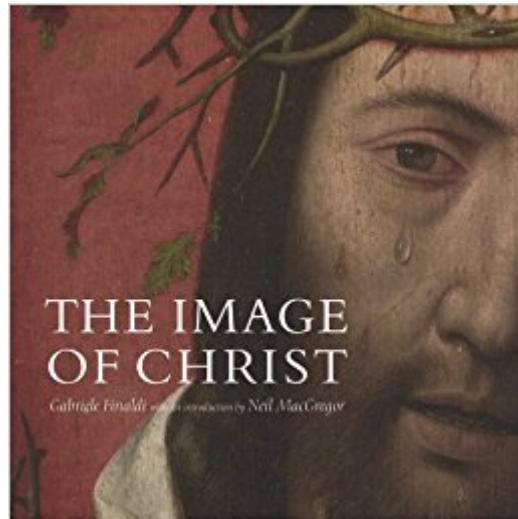




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The Image Of Christ



Synopsis

The Image of Christ expresses the view that modern secular audiences can engage with the masterpieces of Christian art at an emotional as well as a purely aesthetic or historical level. This book aims to help the viewer understand these pictures by focusing attention on the purpose for which they were made, and explores what they might have meant to their original viewers. The authors trace how a recognizable image of Christ evolved, starting with the earliest symbols and metaphorical images such as the Shepherd, the Lamb and the Vine. They trace the emergence of a "true likeness," emphasizing the importance of the Veronica, the "miraculous portrait" said to have been imprinted on the cloth held out to Jesus on the way to Calvary. They describe how artists conveyed the paradox of Christ's dual nature—human and divine, weak and powerful, victim and victor—in portrayals of his infancy. They also show how images of Christ's suffering during the Passion were intended to convey a cosmic, not just a personal significance. Artists have attempted to put extremes of suffering and despair into an overall context of hope—a vein of hope that runs from the catacombs to Hiroshima and beyond. These are images that speak, even to those who do not hold Christian beliefs. Artists had to make it clear that in representing the life and death of Jesus they were offering a continuing truth; we the spectators have to become eyewitnesses to an event that matters to us now. As a result, the different moments and aspects of Christ's life become, in the hands of great artists, a reflection of all human experience. The Virgin nursing her son expresses the feelings of love every mother has for her child. Christ mocked in innocence beset by violence. Christ risen and appearing to Mary Magdalene is a universal reaffirmation that love cannot be destroyed by death. Beyond their obvious religious significance, these are paintings that have a universal meaning.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

The Image of Christ by Gabriele Finaldi is a beautifully illustrated, colorful history of how Christ has been portrayed by artists from the early church to the present. It is not, however, a life of Christ told in pictures. Instead, the book explores the challenges Christian artists have faced as they have tried to imagine what Jesus looked like. Since no eyewitness descriptions of Jesus' physical appearance survived, the earliest artists' depictions of Christ played on the symbols and images that he used in his parables--such as the Good Shepherd, the Light, and the Vine. Later, artists became concerned with capturing Christ's true physical likeness, based on miraculous relics such as the cloth that Saint Veronica offered him on his way to Calvary, which was believed to be imprinted with an image of his face. These stages in the history of Christian art are described by several art historians in brief essays, each of which is lavishly illustrated. The book, which was inspired by Seeing Salvation: The Image of Christ, an exhibition at the National Gallery, London, will be treasured by secular and believing readers alike. A deeper understanding of the religious context of these works will sharpen viewers' experience of their universal relevance. The dozens of pictures, paintings, and sculptures reproduced here bear profound witness not only to the events of Jesus' life, but also to the enduring power of a mother's love for her children, the suffering of innocents, and love's triumph over death.

--Michael Joseph Gross --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Published to accompany an exhibition at the National Gallery in London, this gorgeous exploration of the image of Christ throughout two millennia deserves high praise for its determination to discuss nearly 200 works of art in their religious context. Recognizing that the Gallery's increasingly diverse (or secular) museumgoers often lack an understanding of Christian theology, Finaldi and other contributors seek to "put some of the Gallery's religious pictures in a new context, not as in other exhibitions beside works by the same artist or from the same period, but in the company of other works of art which have explored the same kinds of questions across the centuries." What should Jesus look like? How might Christ's human and divine nature both be represented artistically in the same work? Could his crucifixion be depicted simultaneously as the death of one man and the opportunity for eternal life for others? Although it features the earliest etched symbols of the Christian Church (fish, cross-anchor and 20th-century paintings by William Holman Hunt and Salvador Dalí, the collection is strongest for Renaissance-era works. Some unusual pieces capture

the imagination, including two gilded 15th-century cradles for Christ child dolls. The collection is culled most heavily from Western sources but also features some remarkable Eastern Orthodox iconography. This is a beautifully designed, theologically sensitive journey through Christian art. (May) Copyright 2000 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Two problems. See an attached photo.(i) Suprised to see the photo of the cover of a book I receiced was absolutely different. The title is the same "The Image of Chirist".(ii) The book arraigned full of creases. Incredible for such a beautiful photobook.

This book is beautitul. It is more thank I expected. Love it and have been enjoying it. Thank you

Tutto ok. grazie mille.

I bought this because I wanted to find out what Neil MacGregor and others were up to while Director at the National Gallery. As I am learning, he and his team were up to quite a bit, all of which turned out to be of great value, have meaning far beyond what words can convey.

specialized reading

The Image of Christ was used for a theology class in college. The book has high quality images that show how Jesus was portrayed throughout different centuries and artistic styles. The book has too much text but it was helpful for the class.

This book is equivalently the catalog of an art exhibit at the National Gallery London from February to May, 2000 on how Christ has been portrayed in art from a fourth century Good Shepherd statue to Stanley Spencer's 1926 Resurrection, Cookham. The magnificently illustrated 79 items in the show are supplemented with photographs of 52 additional pieces of art that develop the theology out of which each set of images arose. It is a thing of beauty and pleasure, useful for prayer and theology, and the sort of thing needed in today. Too many postmodern art students have lost contact with the Christian symbols of the western world and are unaware of the depths of their own cultural heritage. This book will be very informative for them and even for the already theologically educated.

The focus of this book is the Collection in Trafalgar Square but is not exclusive to it. It contains works of art that either picture a representation of Christ or allude to Him. I found my reading to be a delightful and awe-inspiring theological journey. Each chapter deals with a different aspect of how Christ is perceived. Several authors have compiled brief descriptions of the works that explain their significance and meaning. The book traces its course through predominately Catholic art. This may have been done mostly out of necessity because the plethora of art from the 13th to 20th centuries is largely by Catholics. However, it would have been nice to see some more Protestant imagery to complete the representation of Christ in art.

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