



The Gates of Paradise: From the Renaissance Workshop of Lorenzo Ghiberti to the Restoration Studio

Anna Maria Giusti, Gary M. Radke

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This is a superbly illustrated account of the history, importance, and painstaking restoration of Lorenzo Ghiberti's "Gates of Paradise". After nearly thirty years of restoration, the gilt bronze doors that Lorenzo Ghiberti made for the Florence Baptistery between 1425 and 1452 are once again on show for the world to see. This masterpiece of 15th-century sculpture, which Michelangelo called the Gates of Paradise, has found a new home in the Museo dell'Opera di Santa Maria del Fiore in Florence. This book presents the first images of the fully restored Gates, traces their long history, and offers a careful look at the Old Testament scenes on the bronze panels. The doors were conceived in the extraordinary creative climate that characterized early 15th-century Florence, where humanism, art, technical mastery, organizational skills, and wealth joined hands. The results were universally admired for centuries, but the fact that the doors were outdoors subjected them to the wear of time and attack by pollutants until they were removed and taken to safety in 1943 to protect them from bombing raids during World War II. The restoration by the Opificio delle Pietre Dure has brought to light the full beauty of the "Gates of Paradise" and made them legible again, allowing scholars and experts to re-examine their overall structure and re-evaluate the place of the "Gates of Paradise" in the development and progress of fifteenth-century art.

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