



Art of Colonial Latin America (Art and Ideas)

Gauvin Alexander Bailey

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For over three hundred years, from the era of Christopher Columbus to the struggles for independence around 1820, Latin America witnessed an artistic flowering of enormous creativity and originality. In a unique way, the art and architecture of Aztec, Inca and Guarani civilizations blended with those of Europe, North Africa and the Far East. In particular, the Spanish and Portuguese empires in Central and South America created the climate for a flourishing, diverse and distinct version of Renaissance and Baroque culture, produced under utterly different social and geographic conditions from those found in Europe. The products of this unique culture include some of the most lavish and visually arresting works of art and architecture in the world. In this lively overview of the tremendously rich and varied artistic output of the area from southern Chile to northern California, Gauvin Alexander Bailey discusses viceregal and missionary as well as civic and rural architecture, alongside religious and secular painting, sculpture, metalwork, textiles and ceramics. But he also looks back to pre-colonial influences and concludes with an examination of how twentieth-century artists such as Diego Rivera and Frida Kahlo interpreted their artistic heritage. Even today, the art of the colonial period remains at the centre of Latin American society, culture and identity. The result is a book that provides a new and comprehensive understanding of all the influences that led to one of the most cosmopolitan artistic outpourings in the whole history of art.

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