The Ruins of Renaissance Art: The Poetics of Ruins in Renaissance Literature

Jonathan Kramnick's Paper Minds examines the critical role played by the contemplation of ruins in Renaissance thought and practice. The book begins with an analysis of the eighteenth-century notion of 'haptic vision' and moves on to explore the literary forms that have been used to explore the relationship between mind and environment. Paper Minds explores the intersection of art and philosophy in the Renaissance with the aim of understanding the way in which the contemplation of ruins can illuminate our understanding of the human condition.

The theme of ruins has long been a source of inspiration for artists and writers. From ancient times, ruins have been a source of fascination and mystery, and their appearance in Renaissance literature and art has been a reflection of the intellectual and cultural climate of the time. In Paper Minds, Kramnick examines the different ways in which the concept of ruins has been used in Renaissance literature, from the description of antique ruins in sixteenth-century poetry and fiction, to the more complex representations of ruins in contemporary literature.

The book begins with an analysis of the eighteenth-century notion of 'haptic vision,' which refers to the way in which the touch of ruins could be used to evoke the past. Kramnick then explores the literary forms that have been used to explore the relationship between mind and environment, and how these forms have been used to explore the concept of ruins.

Kramnick's analysis of the concept of ruins in Renaissance literature is informed by a close reading of a range of texts, from sixteenth-century poetry and fiction, to contemporary literature. He shows how the concept of ruins has been used to explore a range of themes, from the relationship between art and nature, to the role of ruins in shaping the cultural landscape.

Paper Minds is a rich and thought-provoking exploration of the concept of ruins in Renaissance literature and art. It is a must-read for anyone interested in the history of art and literature, and for anyone interested in the way in which the contemplation of ruins can illuminate our understanding of the human condition.
century to the twenty-first century, in which a building is designed, occupied and imagined as a ruin. This design practice conceives a monument and a ruin as creative, interdependent and simultaneous themes within a single architectural project, addressing temporal and environmental questions in poetic, psychological and practical terms, and stimulating questions of personal and national identity, nature and culture, weather and climate, permanence and impermanence and life and death. Conceiving a building as a dialogue between a monument and a ruin intensifies the already blurred relations between the unfinished and the ruined and envisages the past, the present and the future in a single architecture. Structured around a collection of biographies, this book conceives a monument and a ruin as metaphors for a life and means to negotiate between a self and a society. Emphasising the interconnections between designers and the particular ways in which later architects learned from earlier ones, the chapters investigate an evolving, interdisciplinary design practice to show the relevance of historical understanding to design. Like a history, a design is a reinterpretation of the past that is meaningful to the present. Equally, a design is equivalent to a fiction, convincing users to suspend disbelief. We expect a history or a novel to be written in words, but they can also be delineated in drawing, cast in concrete or sown in soil. The architect is a ‘physical novelist’ as well as a ‘physical historian’. Like building sites, ruins are full of potential. In revealing not only what is lost, but also what is incomplete, a ruin suggests the future as well as the past. As a stimulus to the imagination, a ruin’s incompleteness and broken forms expand architecture’s allegorical and metaphorical capacity, indicating that a building can remain unfinished, literally and in the imagination, focusing attention on the creativity of users as well as architects. Smashing the symbiotic relations between nature and culture, a building designed, occupied and imagined as a ruin acknowledges the coproduction of multiple authors, whether human, non-human or atmospheric, and is an appropriate model for architecture in an era of increasing climate change.

The Book of the Courtier
Baldassare Castiglione 2012-03-07 An insider’s view of court life during the Renaissance, here is the handiwork of a 16th-century diplomat who was called upon to resolve the differences in a war of etiquette among the Italian nobility.

Siddhartha
Hermann Hesse 2008-08-07 This edition has a new introduction by Paulo Coelho. Siddhartha is perhaps the most important and compelling moral allegory our troubled century has produced, integrating Eastern and Western spiritual traditions with psychoanalysis and philosophy, this strangely simple tale, written with a deep and moving empathy for humanity, has touched the lives of millions since its original publication in 1922. Set in India, Siddhartha is the story of a young Brahmin’s search for ultimate reality after meeting with the Buddha. His quest takes him from a life of decadence to asceticism, from the illusory joys of sensual love with a beautiful courtesan, and of wealth and fame, to the painful struggles with his son and the ultimate wisdom of renunciation. This edition is a translation by Neville Bowsen, with an introduction by Paulo Coelho.

From Antique to Modern

Futures & Ruins
Nina L. Dubin 2010 In this timely and provocative study, Hubert Robert’s paintings of urban ruins are interpreted as manifestations of a new consciousness of time, one shaped by the uncertainties of an economy characterized by the dread-inducing expansion of credit, frenzied speculation on the stock market and bold ventures in real estate. As the favored artist of an enterprising Parisian elite, Robert is a prophetic case study of the intersections between aesthetics and modernity’s dawning business culture. At the center of this lively narrative lie Robert’s depictions of the ruins of Paris—macabre and spectacular paintings of fires and demolitions created on the eve of the French Revolution. Drawing on a vast range of materials, Futures & Ruins understands these artworks as harbingers of a modern appetite for destruction. The paintings are examined as expressions of the pleasures and perils of a risk economy. This captivating account—lavishly illustrated with rarely reproduced objects—rehabilitates the cult of ruins in the mid-eighteenth century and recovers the critical significance of the eighteenth century cult of ruins and of Robert’s art for our times.

Broken Cities
Martin Devecka 2020-09-01 Drawing on literature, legal texts, epigraphic evidence, and the narratives embodied in monuments and painting, Broken Cities is an expansive and nuanced study that holds great significance for the field of historiography.