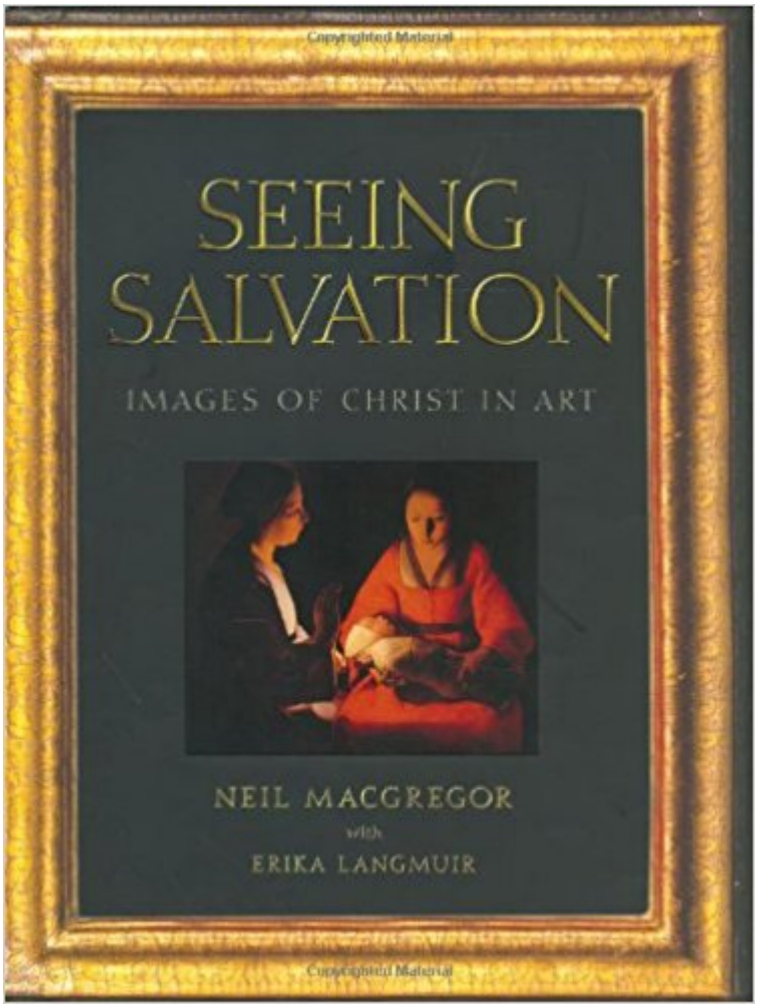
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Seeing Salvation: Images Of Christ In Art



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Synopsis

Without contemporary accounts of Jesus' appearance, artists through the ages have been free to create many images of him--images that sometimes reflect the spiritual world of the artist and other times the desires of the patron or the needs of the spectator. In this magnificently illustrated book, Neil MacGregor traces the life of Christ and the development of Christian culture in the work of artists from different times and diverse cultures. Copublished with the National Gallery, London

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

None of Jesus' contemporaries made written descriptions of his appearance. Nevertheless, his image is among the most frequently and variously rendered--and perhaps the most instantly recognizable--of all the characters of Western history. Seeing Salvation: Images of Christ in Art is a richly illustrated survey of the ways that artists have imagined Jesus' appearance. Brief essays by Neil MacGregor, director of London's National Gallery, and Erika Langmuir Obe, a noted art historian, elaborate the following notion, from the book's introduction: "The greatest artists, in representing the life of Christ, did something even more difficult: they explored the fundamental experiences of every human life. Pictures about Jesus's childhood, teachings, sufferings and death are--regardless of our beliefs--in a very real sense pictures about us." Seeing Salvation offers pointed insights regarding the relationship between artists' representations of Christ and the evolution of Christian culture. This sweeping account of centuries' worth of history is enlivened by a wealth of detailed observations--such as MacGregor's essay about the ways that Michelangelo's several sculptures of the pieta record the artist's personal evolution of faith and doubt. Still, the most

extraordinary things in Seeing Salvation are not its arguments but its beautifully printed illustrations of paintings and sculptures in galleries, private homes, catacombs, market stalls, and churches around the world. --Michael Joseph Gross

This is no run-of-the-mill coffee-table book; art historian and critic MacGregor not only offers a rich feast for the eyes through lavish illustrations, but also shows how art reflects the church's development over the last two millennia. MacGregor traces through art, for example, the church's shift in attention from the Adoration of Christ to his birth, noting that the observance of Epiphany gradually became less important than the celebration of Christmas. MacGregor ascribes this change largely to St. Francis of Assisi, noting that "the impact of [his] teaching on the art of Europe can hardly be exaggerated." MacGregor documents a related shift away from depictions of Mary swathed in royal garments holding a stiff, miniature adult Jesus, to portrayals of a "vulnerable and helpless baby, dependent on his mother." MacGregor also credits the humble St. Francis with the evolution of images of Jesus as a suffering lamb. Following Franciscan theology, artists after the 13th century abandoned the "triumphant apocalyptic Lamb of Revelation" for the meek, crucified Lamb of God, Jesus the paschal sacrifice. In a compelling epilogue, MacGregor suggests that although the 20th century has seen depictions of Christ replaced with "photographs of real people and real events," the image of the Christ Child remains "universally valid

Beautiful book, excelent service, Thanks!

A beautiful book with explanations of each art piece. High quality materials, a very good buy.

One of the best books of Christian art I've ever read--and I have many!

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