



Holy Children and Liminality in Early Modern Art

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DESCRIPTION:

Children play a key role in the visual cultures of early modern Europe. On the one hand, they are central figures because of the Christian belief in a divine embodiment as a child; on the other, since children were assigned with values of mediation and transitions between different worlds, liminality became one of the ideas that structured the extensive spectrum of their roles in premodern imaginations. By fostering a conversation between art historians from different backgrounds and specializations, this volume departs from the conventional focus on representations of children as evidence for inquiries into childhood to explore their status as (normative) images. Starting from the ancient putto and liminal representations of children, before moving on to holy children, the Christ Child or child martyrs at the crossroad of religious conflict, the eight essays in this book seek to grasp the many different ambiguous meanings carried by objects representing children and the ways in which artists and viewers reflected on the concepts of childhood and liminality between the fourteenth and the nineteenth centuries across different European trajectories: from Ravenna to Sarajevo, from Milan to Mechelen, and beyond.

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