Inigo Jones’s ‘Roman sketchbook’

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Abstract

This two-volume work is the definitive account of Jones's most important surviving illustrated manuscript, the so-called ‘Roman Sketchbook’ at Chatsworth. The first volume consists of a new account of Jones's early life, patronage and subsequent reputation, an introduction to the manuscript, a complete transcript of the text, a commentary on the sketches, footnotes, comparative figures and a full bibliography. Volume two consists of a complete facsimile of the manuscript. By careful analysis and dating of Jones's text and drawings I argue that although the notebook was indeed acquired in Rome in 1614 when Jones was acting as cicerone to the Earl and Countess of Arundel, he only used it briefly before abandoning it for some two decades; taking it up once again when he was consulted as a connoisseur of painting by Charles I and others. This edition also suggests that Jones may have had posterity in mind when he filled in the gaps in what is in fact more of a commonplace book than a true sketchbook. He may even have intended us to believe that his drawings were produced earlier and in some cases dal vivo in Rome, whereas it can be shown that they were in fact produced after prints in London. Sunday Telegraph ‘Book of the Year’ 2007. It has also been very enthusiastically reviewed in the May 2007 issue of Apollo by John Harris, in the 17 May 2007 issue of the Time Literary Supplement by Kerry Downes, and in the Print Quarterly of June 2007 by Antony Griffiths. Similarly enthusiastic reviews have appeared in the Burlington Magazine (John Bold) and The Court Historian (Gordon Higgott)

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