



17 x 24 cm, 116 pp.
48 colour and 8 b/w illustrations
softcover
Italian edition
ISBN 978-88-7439-095-3
€16.95

BERNARDINO LUINI

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This new monograph on Bernardino Luini rewrites much of the life and career of the Lombard artist on the basis of the latest research.

The painter's work is modelled on Leonardo's paintings and develops as a permanent dialogue with his peers Gaudenzio Ferrari, Cristoforo Solari, and Giovan Angelo del Maino. New attributions are suggested and other works hitherto attributed to Luini that have not been identified in contemporary sources have in turn been removed from the catalogue.

Now that his oeuvre has been reliably reconstituted, Bernardino Luini is revealed as one of the most important and most popular painters in Milan, at least in the ten years between 1516 and 1525. Luini enjoyed the patronage of members of the highest Francophile aristocracy. When Charles V seized power in the Duchy of Milan and the Spanish began their extensive purges, many of Luini's protectors disappeared and the painter himself faded into a sort of oblivion. Unchallenged masterpieces by Luini are now to be found in the major museums of the world, including the Louvre, the National Gallery of Art in Washington, DC, and the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna. Most of the artist's works are still located in Lombardy (in the Cathedral of Como, the shrine of Beata Vergine dei Miracoli in Saronno, the Church of San Magno in Legnano, and the parish church of Maggianico, Lecco). The monastery of San Maurizio Maggiore, in Milan, boasts one of the most complete fresco cycles of the sixteenth century. Luini also obtained commissions outside Italy, notably in the Church of Santa Maria degli Angeli, in Lugano, which contains his famous fresco of the Crucifixion.

Maria Teresa Binaghi Olivari worked for the Milan office of the Ministry of Cultural Heritage for many years. She has contributed to the discovery of several important Renaissance works in Lombardy, including frescoes by Bramantino and wooden sculptures by Giovan Angelo del Maino.