



Sculptors and Design Reform in France, 1848 to 1895: Sculpture and the Decorative Arts

Claire Jones

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Challenging distinctions between fine and decorative art, this book begins with a critique of the Rodin scholarship, to establish how the selective study of his oeuvre has limited our understanding of French nineteenth-century sculpture. The book's central argument is that we need to include the decorative in the study of sculpture, in order to present a more accurate and comprehensive account of the practice and profession of sculpture in this period. Drawing on new archival sources, sculptors and objects, this is the first sustained study of how and why French sculptors collaborated with state and private luxury goods manufacturers between 1848 and 1895. Organised chronologically, the book identifies three historically-situated frameworks, through which sculptors attempted to validate themselves and their work in relation to industry: industrial art, decorative art and objet d'art. Detailed readings are offered of sculptors who operated within and outside the Salon, including Sévin, Chéret, Carrier-Belleuse and Rodin; and of diverse objects and materials, from Sèvres vases, to pewter plates by Desbois, and furniture by Barbedienne and Carabin. By contesting the false separation of art from industry, Claire Jones's study restores the importance of the sculptor-manufacturer relationship, and of the decorative, to the history of sculpture.

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