THE ARCHITECTURE IN Giotto’s Paintings

This book offers an analysis of Giotto’s painted architecture, focusing on issues of structural logic, clarity of composition, and its role within the narrative of the painting. Giotto was the first artist since antiquity to feature highly detailed architecture in a primary role in his paintings. Francesco Benelli demonstrates how architecture was used to create pictorial space, one of Giotto’s key inventions. He argues that Giotto’s innovation was driven by a new attention to classical sources, including low reliefs, mosaics, mural paintings, coins, and Roman ruins. The book shows how Giotto’s images of fictive buildings, as well as portraits of well-known monuments, both ancient and contemporary, play an important role in the overall narrative, iconography, and meaning of his works. The conventions established by Giotto remained at the heart of early modern Italian painting until the sixteenth century.

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To my parents, Anna Maria and Maurizio, and to my children, Nicholas and Anna Maria

Perché realizzare un’opera quando è così bello sognarla soltanto?

Pier Paolo Pasolini
Il Decameron
1971
THE ARCHITECTURE IN Giotto's Paintings

FRANCESCO BENELLI

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