

Sight and Spirituality in Early Netherlandish Painting



Sight and Spirituality in Early Netherlandish Painting examines the centrality of visual experience as a narrative and thematic concern in art of the early modern Low Countries. Bret Rothstein uses the work of Jan van Eyck, Rogier van der Weyden, and Petrus Christus to elucidate the complex and contradictory roles assigned to vision by devotional theory and imagery of the day. Discussing these roles as responses both to the demands of religious experience and to the desires of a wealthy, worldly clientele, Rothstein demonstrates how and why the act of seeing became a cultural currency to be refined and displayed by artists as well as patrons.

A scholar of visual culture in the early modern Low Countries, Bret L. Rothstein is associate professor of art history at Rhode Island College.

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. . . My eyes were faltering as they gazed ahead,
making little sense of the distance and taking a
smaller pleasure in what was near.

– FLANN O'BRIEN, *THE THIRD POLICEMAN*



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