



Depositions: Scenes from the Late Medieval Church and the Modern Museum (Zone Books (Mit Press))

Amy Knight Powell

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From late medieval reenactments of the Deposition from the Cross to Sol Lewitt's *Buried Cube*, *Depositions* is about taking down images and about images that anticipate being taken down. Foretelling their own depositions, as well as their re-elevations in contexts far from those in which they were made, the images studied in this book reveal themselves to be untimely--no truer to their first appearance than to their reappearances.

In *Depositions*, Amy Powell makes the case that late medieval paintings and ritual reenactments of the Deposition from the Cross not only picture the deposition of Christ (the *Imago Dei*) but also allegorize the deposition of the image as such and, in so doing, prefigure the lowering of "dead images" during the Protestant Reformation. Late medieval pre-figurations of Reformation iconoclasm anticipate, in turn, the repeated "deaths" of art since the advent of photography: that is the premise of the vignettes devoted to twentieth-century works of art that conclude each chapter of this book.

In these vignettes, images that once stood in late medieval churches now find themselves among works of art from the more recent past with which they share certain formal characteristics. These surreal encounters compel us to reckon with affinities between images from different times and places. Turning *pseudomorphosis*--formal resemblance where there is no similarity of artistic intent -- on its head, Powell explores what happens to our understanding of historically and conceptually distant works of art when they turn out to look alike.

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