GROTESQUE AND PERFORMANCE IN THE ART OF AUBREY BEARDSLEY

Evanghelia Stead Cambridge, OBP collection "Visual Arts", 2024 EAN : 9781805113454 292 pages Prix : 29,95 en poche, 40,95 relié, et open access Paru le 14 novembre 2024

Présentation

“If I am not grotesque, I am nothing.”

This insightful study illuminates previously unexplored aspects of Aubrey Beardsley’s relationship to the grotesque and his use of media, particularly his manipulation of the periodical press. For the first time and with keen intelligence, Evanghelia Stead fully reveals the aesthetic importance of Beardsley’s Bon-Mots vignettes, as well as the relationship between Darwinism, his innovative foetus motif, and Decadence itself.

Beautifully illustrated throughout, the book calls on histories of culture and aesthetics to show how the artist reworked traditional imagery and manipulated it beyond recognition—revealing for instance the influence of cathedral grotesques on Beardsley’s own grotesque performances. Stead also demonstrates his major impact on Italian, French, American and German creative minds through the periodical press.

Rich in original thought and detailed, comparative analysis, this book is an invigorating and enlightening read for scholars of Aubrey Beardsley, as well as for anyone interested in nineteenth-century visual culture, art history, art criticism, print culture, illustration, grotesque iconography, and cultural history.

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"Si je ne suis grotesque, je ne suis rien."

Cette étude éclairante met en lumière des aspects jusqu'ici inexplorés de la relation d'Aubrey Beardsley au grotesque et de son utilisation des médias, en particulier sa manipulation de la presse périodique. Pour la première fois et avec intelligence, Evanghelia Stead révèle l'importance esthétique des vignettes que Beardsley a créées pour les trois volumes des Bon-Mots (1893-1894), ainsi que la relation entre le darwinisme, son emploi novateur du motif du fœtus et la Décadence elle-même.

Abondamment illustré, le livre fait appel à l'histoire de la culture et de l'esthétique pour montrer comment l'artiste a retravaillé l'imagerie traditionnelle et l'a manipulée au point de la rendre méconnaissable : il dévoile par exemple l'influence des grotesques et es gargouilles des cathédrales sur les propres performances grotesques de Beardsley. Stead montre également l'influence majeure de Beardsley sur des créateurs italiens, français, américains et allemands par le biais de la presse périodique.

Riche en idées originales et en analyses comparatives détaillées, ce livre est une lecture vivifiante et éclairante pour les spécialistes d'Aubrey Beardsley, ainsi que pour tous ceux qui s'intéressent à la culture visuelle du XIXe siècle, à l'histoire de l'art, à la critique d'art, à la culture de l'imprimé, à l'illustration, à l'iconographie grotesque et à l'histoire de la culture.

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Linguist, literary translator and honorary Fellow of the Institut Universitaire de France, **Evanghelia Stead** is Professor of Comparative Literature and Print Culture at the Université de Versailles-Saint-Quentin (UVSQ Paris-Saclay). In 2023 she brought the TIGRE seminar on literature, visual and print culture to UVSQ, which she had been running in Paris at the École Normale Supérieure (Department of the Arts) since 2004. She has been honoured internationally with visiting professorships at Marburg and Verona Universities, and won numerous sponsored research fellowships (CNRS, EURIAS/FRIAS, IUF, Beinecke). She has published extensively on fin-de-siècle culture, periodicals, history of the book, literature and iconography, Greek and Latin myths in modern literature, and the literary tradition of ‘the Thousand and Second Night.’ A well-known specialist on fin-de-siècle art and culture, she has also developed methodologies for periodical studies, expertise on reading books as cultural objects, reading with images, and through literature-related visual art.