



Sculpture and Enlightenment

Erika Naginski

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This pioneering book chronicles the transformation of public art in eighteenth-century France. As royal and ecclesiastical authority waned under the rule of Louis XV, there emerged nascent democratic institutions, a new metaphysics, and a radical political consciousness—a paradigm shift that profoundly marked the forms that commemorative sculpture and architecture took. As a French Catholic heritage gave way to more civic-minded and secular views of posterity, how was the monument reinterpreted? How did works by Clodion, Jean-Antoine Houdon, Augustin Pajou, Marie-Joseph Peyre, and Jacques Germain Soufflot, among others, speak to the aesthetic philosophies of Denis Diderot, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, and Voltaire? Analyzing an extraordinary range of artistic projects—from unrealized plans for a Bourbon memorial to the sculptural program for the Pantheon—Erika Naginski appraises how the Enlightenment art of *res publica* intersected with historical forces, social movements, and continental philosophies that brought Western culture to the cusp of modernity.

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