



Renaissance Perfected: Architecture, Spectacle, and Tourism in Fascist Italy (Buildings, Landscapes, and Societies)

D. Medina Lasansky

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Mussolini's bold claims upon the monuments and rhetoric of ancient Rome have been the subject of a number of recent books. D. Medina Lasansky shows us a much less familiar side of the cultural politics of Italian Fascism, tracing its wide-ranging efforts to adapt the nation's medieval and Renaissance heritage to satisfy the regime's programs of national regeneration. Anyone acquainted with the beauties of Tuscany will be surprised to learn that architects, planners, and administrators working within Fascist programs fabricated much of what today's tourists admire as authentic. Public squares, town halls, palaces, gardens, and civic rituals (including the famed Palio of Siena) were all "restored" to suit a vision of the past shaped by Fascist notions of virile power, social order, and national achievement in the arts. Ultimately, Lasansky forces readers to question long-standing assumptions about the Renaissance even as she expands the parameters of what constitutes Fascist culture.

The arguments in *The Renaissance Perfected* are based in fresh archival evidence and a rich collection of illustrations, many reproduced for the first time, ranging from photographs and architectural drawings to tourist posters and film stills. Lasansky's groundbreaking book will be essential reading for students of medieval, Renaissance, and twentieth-century Italy as well as all those concerned with visual culture, architectural preservation, heritage studies, and tourism studies.

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