



The Peaceful Liberators: Jain Art from India

Pratapaditya Pal

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Jainism (together with Hinduism and Buddhism) is one of the three major world religions to have emerged in India. It has been continuously practised since at least the 6th century BC and currently has a following of some six million people. Over the course of two millennia the Jains have produced a diverse and vital range of art which has hitherto been little known in the West. Illustrated with examples from all ages, it provides a comprehensive introduction to the art of the Jains and an insight into the practices, principles and beliefs of the religion. In a detailed introduction Pratapaditya Pal, presents a history of Jainism and describes the different forms of art produced in each period: decorated temples and shrines; images of wood, stone and bronze; illuminated manuscripts; cloth paintings; architectural reliefs and votive tablets - all bearing their own religious significance. The volume also includes an examination of Jain ritual and philosophical thought, an account of the Jain pilgrimages, and illuminating overviews of Jain cosmological painting and manuscript illustration. It is published to accompany a travelling exhibition of Jain art which will be shown at the Victoria and Albert Museum in November 1995.

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