



Poe and the Visual Arts

Barbara Cantalupo

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Although Edgar Allan Poe is most often identified with stories of horror and fear, there is an unrecognized and even forgotten side to the writer. He was a self-declared lover of beauty who “from childhood’s hour . . . [had] not seen / As others saw.” *Poe and the Visual Arts* is the first comprehensive study of how Poe’s work relates to the visual culture of his time. It reveals his “deep worship of all beauty,” which resounded in his earliest writing and never entirely faded, despite the demands of his commercial writing career. Barbara Cantalupo examines the ways in which Poe integrated visual art into sketches, tales, and literary criticism, paying close attention to the sculptures and paintings he saw in books, magazines, and museums while living in Philadelphia and New York from 1838 until his death in 1849. She argues that Poe’s sensitivity to visual media gave his writing a distinctive “graphicality” and shows how, despite his association with the macabre, his enduring love of beauty and knowledge of the visual arts richly informed his corpus.

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