



Image on the Edge: The Margins of Medieval Art (Reaktion Books - Essays in Art and Culture)

Michael Camille

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What do they all mean – the lascivious ape, autophagic dragons, pot-bellied heads, harp-playing asses, arse-kissing priests and somersaulting jongleurs to be found protruding from the edges of medieval buildings and in the margins of illuminated manuscripts? Michael Camille explores that riotous realm of marginal art, so often explained away as mere decoration or zany doodles, where resistance to social constraints flourished.

Medieval image-makers focused attention on the underside of society, the excluded and the ejected. Peasants, servants, prostitutes and beggars all found their place, along with knights and clerics, engaged in impudent antics in the margins of prayer-books or, as gargoyles, on the outsides of churches. Camille brings us to an understanding of how marginality functioned in medieval culture and shows us just how scandalous, subversive, and amazing the art of the time could be.

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