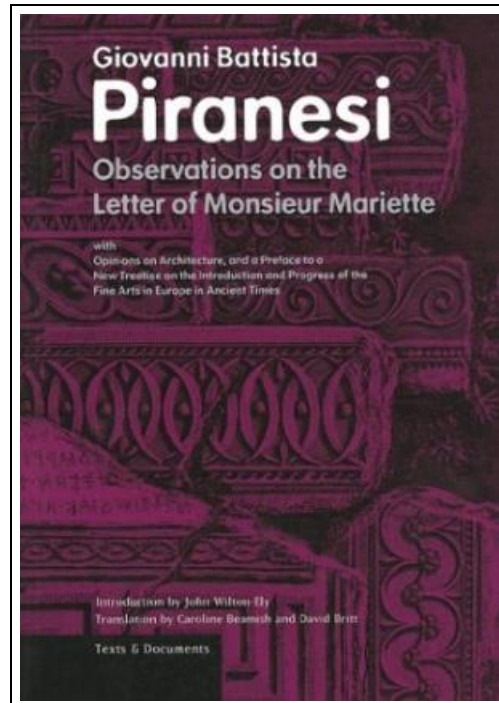


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Getty Trust Publications. Paperback. Book Condition: new. BRAND NEW, Observations on the Letter of Mariette: With Opinions on Architecture and a Preface to a New Treatise on the Introduction and Progress on the Fine Arts in Europe in Ancient Times, Giovanni Battista Piranesi, John Wilton-Ely, Caroline Beamish, David Britt, Published in 1765, Giovanni Battista Piranesi's "Osservazioni" is an impassioned defence of the superiority of Roman architectural "invention" over the "beautiful and noble simplicity" of Ancient Greece. In this three-part polemical work, the engraver and designer not only praises the structural audacity of Etruscan architecture and contends that the Etruscans - not the Greeks - were the artistic mentors of the Romans, but also argues for a Roman-inspired exuberance in design that draws freely on all forms and traditions of ancient art. Although Piranesi's essentially Baroque vision set him at odds with the austere aesthetics of Neoclassicism, his ideas were inspirational to such gifted 18th-century architects as Robert Adam, John Soane, Claude-Nicolas Ledoux, and Etienne-Louis Boullée. Piranesi's plea for imaginative eclecticism remains topical, as practitioners and theorists continue to debate the relative merits of a rational and minimal architecture versus an architecture rich in ornament and historical references.

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