



The Challenge of Emulation in Art and Architecture: Between Imitation and Invention (Ashgate Studies in Architecture)

David, Professor Mayernik

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Emulation is a challenging middle ground between imitation and invention. The idea of rivaling by means of imitation, as old as the Aeneid and as modern as Michelangelo, fit neither the pessimistic deference of the neoclassicists nor the revolutionary spirit of the Romantics. Emulation thus disappeared along with the Renaissance humanist tradition, but it is slowly being recovered in the scholarship of Roman art. It remains to recover emulation for the Renaissance itself, and to revivify it for modern practice.

Mayernik argues that it was the absence of a coherent understanding of emulation that fostered the fissuring of artistic production in the later eighteenth century into those devoted to copying the past and those interested in continual novelty, a situation solidified over the course of the nineteenth century and mostly taken for granted today. This book is a unique contribution to our understanding of the historical phenomenon of emulation, and perhaps more importantly a timely argument for its value to contemporary practice.

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