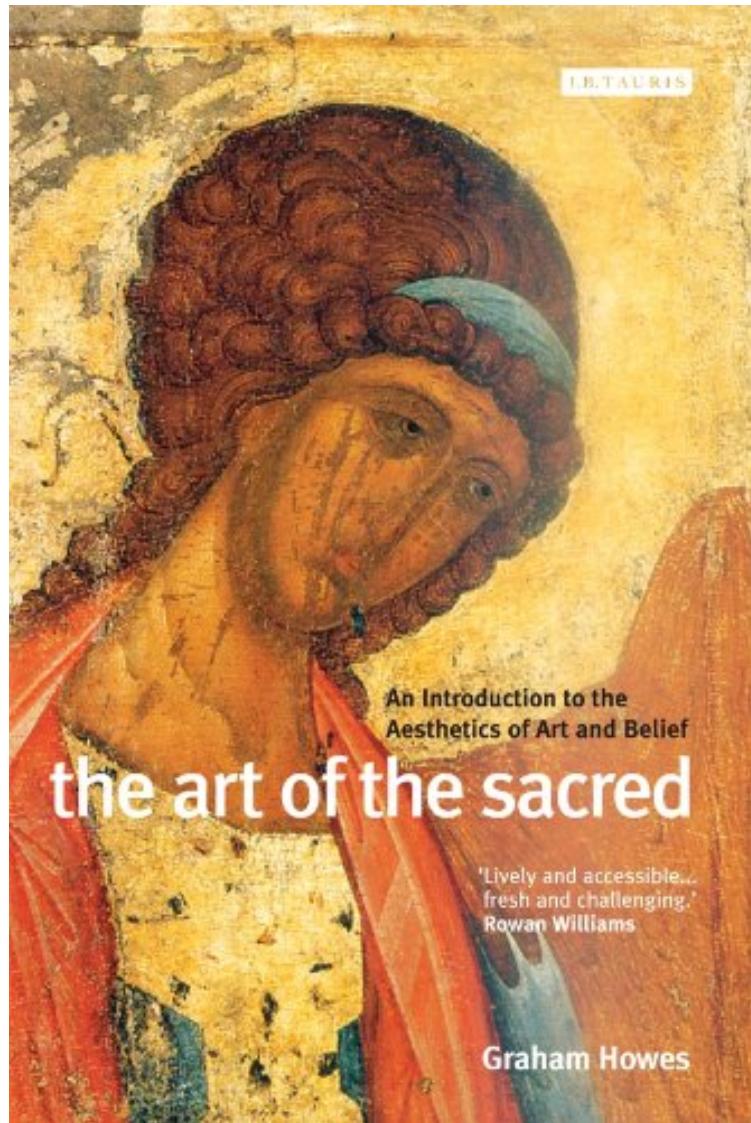


Art of the Sacred, The: An Introduction to the Aesthetics of Art and Belief

Howes Graham
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same time, his book is clear even to the non-expert reader. He goes right to the point, the complex relation between the art and the sacred, a text without mysteries. His analysis of the sacralization of art by common people open a way of reflection in the field of art as in the field of religion.

The field of 'art and religion' is fast becoming one of the most dynamic areas of religious studies. Uniquely, *The Art of the Sacred* explores the relationship between religion and the visual arts - and vice versa - within Christianity and other major religious traditions. It identifies and describes the main historical, theological, sociological and aesthetic dimensions of 'religious' art, with particular attention to 'popular' as well as 'high' culture, and within societies of the developing world. It also attempts to locate, and predict, the forms and functions of such art in a changing contemporary context of globalization, modernity, secularism and fundamentalism. The author concentrates on four chief dimensions where religious art and religious belief converge: the iconographic; the didactic; the institutional; and the aesthetic. This clear, well-organised and imaginative treatment of the subject should prove especially attractive to students of religion and visual culture, as well as to artists and art historians.

""It is sometimes said these days that art galleries are the new cathedrals, or that art is the last refuge of the sacred in our society. In this very lively and accessible book, Graham Howes explores the sense in which this might be true, and the sense in which it leaves the most important questions unanswered. He takes us with sympathy and skill through a number of case studies tracing the interweaving of creativity with patronage and wider cultural trends, and offers a fresh and challenging account of why neither religion nor visual art can finally rest in the assumption that the abstract is the ideal. *The Art of the Sacred* makes a genuinely new contribution to a vital debate." --Rowan Williams, Archbishop of Canterbury