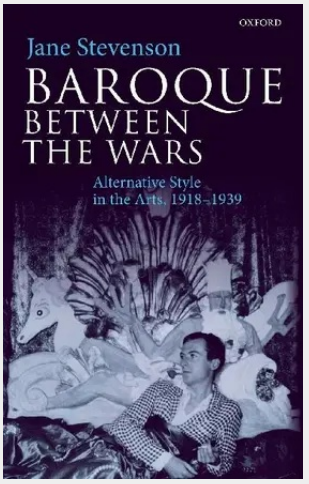
Stevenson

Baroque Between the Wars

Alternative Style in the Arts, 1918-1939

Baroque between the Wars is a fascinating and new account of the arts in the twenties and thirties. We often think of this time as being dominated by modernism, yet the period saw a dialogue between modern baroque - eclectic, playful, camp, open to influence from popular culture yet in dialogue with the past, and unafraid of the grotesque or surreal - and modernism, which was theory-driven, didactic, exclusive, and essentially neo-classical. Jane Stevenson argues that both baroque and classical forms were equally valid responses to the challenge of modernity, by setting painting and literature in the context of 'minor arts' such as interior design, photography, fashion, ballet, and flower arranging, and by highlighting the social context and sexual politics of creative production. Accessibly written and generously illustrated, the volume focuses on artists, artefacts, clients, places, and publicists to demonstrate how baroque offered a whole way of being modern which was actively subversive of the tenets of modernism and practised by the people modernism habitually defined as not worth listening to, particularly women and homosexuals.

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