



Piranesi: The Complete Etchings 2 volume set

By John Wilton-Ely

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Piranesi: The Complete Etchings 2 volume set By John Wilton-Ely Bibliography

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Editorial Review

From Library Journal

Piranesi, the prolific 18th-century Italian etcher, is best known for his fanciful renderings of famous ruins in and near Rome. His formidable output—over 1000 plates, each yielding roughly 4000 prints—helped spread his work across Europe and advertise the poetic grandeur of Roman antiquities. Modern collectors seek out and treasure his early architectural fantasies, particularly his "Imaginary Prisons," because of the air of mystery and the macabre that they carry. His later etchings illustrating classical decorative arts (e.g., vases, candelabras) reflect his increasing reliance on the antiquities trade as a source of income and are of less obvious interest. This expensive two-volume set is the first catalog to list systematically and describe all of Piranesi's etchings. With over 1200 pages and 1,073 illustrations, it is sure to become the definitive reference on this matter. Wilton-Ely's *The Mind and Art of Piranesi* (Thames & Hudson, 1988, reprint) is more than sufficient for smaller budgets, but his new work is a valuable addition to any art library's collection.

Douglas F. Smith, Oakland P.L., Cal.

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Users Review

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