

Art and Palace Politics in Early Modern Japan, 1580s-1680s (Japanese Visual Culture)

Elizabeth Lillehoj



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During the first century of Japans early modern era (1580s to 1680s), art and architecture created for the imperial court served as markers of social prestige, testifying to the enduring centrality of the palace to the cultural life of Kyoto. Emperors Go-Yzei and Go-Mizunoo relied on financial support from ruling warlordsToyotomi Hideyoshi and the Tokugawa shogunsjust as the warlords sought imperial sanction granting them legitimacy to rule. Taking advantage of this complex but oftentimes strained synergy, Go-Yzei and Go-Mizunoo (and to an unprecedented exent his empress, Tfukumonin) enhanced the heriditary prerogatives of the imperial family. Among the works described in this volume are masterpieces commissioned for the residences and temples of the imperial family, which were painted by artists of the Kano, Tosa and Sumiyoshi ateliers, not to mention Tawaraya Statsu. Anonymous but deluxe painting commissions depicting grand imperial processions are examined in detail. The courts fascination with calligraphy and tea, arts that flourished in this age, is also discussed in this profusely illustrated volume.

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