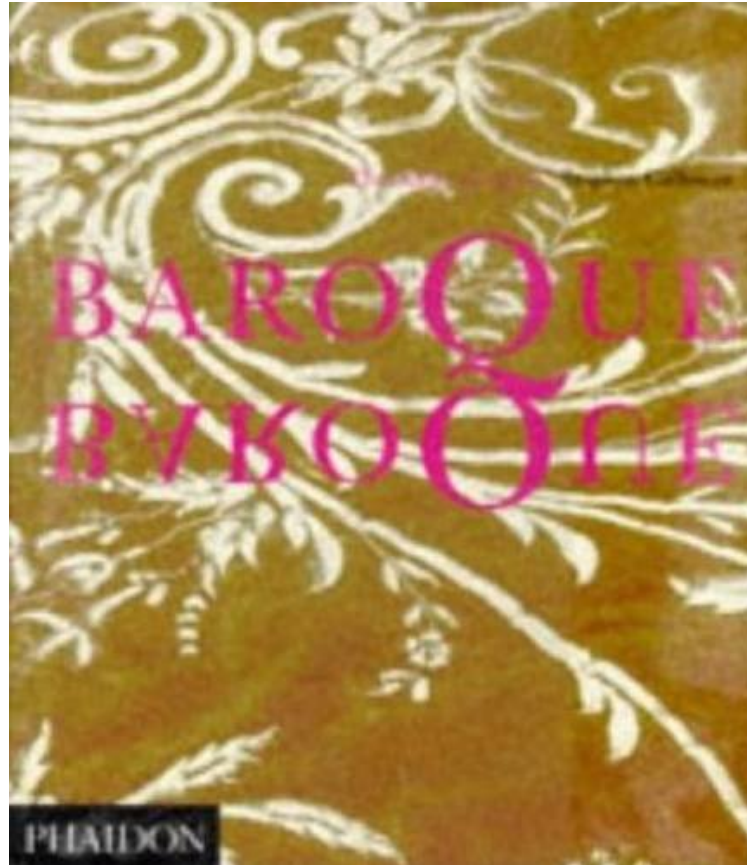


Baroque Baroque

Stephen Calloway

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Stephen Calloway : Baroque Baroque before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Baroque Baroque:

8 of 8 people found the following review helpful. A Treasure...By C. T. Northrup After over ten years in my collection, this book continues to inspire and enthrall me. I was originally lured in by the book's physical beauty (gold and hot pink...who could refuse?), but the text, too, keeps me coming back. It is highly imaginative by way of subject, but also by way of concept and design. With this book Mr. Calloway introduced me to a whole world of seemingly "obscure" artists, designers, photographers and filmmakers that I may not have discovered and enjoyed quite so soon in my life (for this I say THANKS!). I was an art history student in college at the time, and I certainly wasn't learning about this sort of "Baroque", while studying Bernini. My favorite "discoveries" from this book include: Jean Cocteau (J'adore!), Elsa Schiaparelli, Cecil Beaton, Angus McBean, Derek Jarman, Pierre et Gilles, Edith Sitwell and Clough Williams-Ellis' Portmeirion in Wales. It set me on path in my life searching for the overlooked, the strange and gorgeous things that Calloway's British perspective and knowledge helped bring to my attention. If the lives and works of these figures interest you, then this "dandy" of a book is for you. Explore the obscure, enjoy the sublime, dream the dreams of kings...beauty will never die, only inspire us to survive. 13 of 16 people found the following review helpful. all about

20th century's taste for decorative flamboyancy
By A Customer
The book is about the decorative arts and tendencies in fashion, portraiture, photography, and in cinema. As such, it covers the entire ten decades of the 20th century, with a heavy emphasis on the British stuff -- Cecil Beaton's very "gay" sensibilities for the theatre and later, of course, Peter Greenaway's Caravaggioesque obsessions in film. Some very elegant and justifiably famous photographs are reproduced here, including those shot for Dior and Co. Also valuable are some rare photo-stills taken from cinema. But, on the whole, the book relies on the idea that the "Baroque" is a state of mind, therefore anything flamboyant goes. The book does well showcase the fundamental difference between the works done during the high Baroque period and the 20th century obsession for the bizzare. While the former almost always bore the virility of taking delight in excess, the latter appears to be decidedly Narcissistic, regurgitative and effete. The book shows to what extent the European sensibility has become "Chinese" in modern times with its incessant wistful harking back to a fixed style of pre-conceived form of elegance and behavior.

This book examines the culture of excess in all its 20th-century manifestations. Fashion, film, photography, design and decoration: all feature in Stephen Calloway's sweep through the colourful, the opulent and the theatrical. The author examines the early forays into the visual possibilities of Baroque excess - by the Sitwells, Cecil Beaton, Angus McBean and others - as well as the emotionally darker investigation of the Baroque spirit by the wartime Neo-Romantics or film-makers such as Fellini and Jarman. Tracing the Baroque tendency into the 1990s, he demonstrates how ideas have cross-fertilized down the century, providing links between such unlikely bedfellows as Leon Bakst and Luis Bunuel, Coco Chanel and Nigel Coates, Liberace and Lacroix. Illustrated with a wealth of photographs taken from all areas of the arts and the media, this book provides a celebration that is truly Baroque in its richness and variety.

"The most provocative and stimulating style book of the year."-The New York Times
"Baroque Baroque is a carefully written and wonderfully illustrated book... It helps to define the notion of Englishness itself."-The Times
"The sort of book that could itself become a landmark in taste."-Country Life
About the Author
Stephen Calloway is a writer, journalist, lecturer, designer and consultant on historic interiors. He was formerly Curator of Paintings at the Victoria Albert Museum, London.