



IMAGING HEAVEN



ARTHUR BECKER

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- Three centuries of illusionist celestial realms, documented here, demonstrates a continuity in the public desire to still be enthralled by ever changing visual conditions
- An immersive exploration of the illusionistic ceiling frescoes that emerged out of Italy and expanded into Catholic Europe, the book traces the evolution of a stylistic mode defined by its embodiment of the diametrical opposition between illusion and reality
- Italian Art – Tiepolo, Caravaggio, Correggio, Cerruti, Sebastian Ricci

In this compelling photographic journey Arthur Becker captures the intensity and power of the ceiling frescoes of the Renaissance and Baroque periods. Vividly presented here in all of their diversity and splendour, these illusionistic ceilings, mainly located in the churches and palaces of 16th to early 18th century Italy but also found in Austria, Germany, and Spain, are revealed as dazzling examples of Italian artistic imagination by some of the major figures of the period, including Mantegna, Melozzo da Forlì, Michelangelo, Correggio, Tintoretto, the Carracci, Caravaggio, Guercino, Guido Reni, Giovanni Battista Gaulli, Andrea Pozzo, Sebastiano Ricci, and the Tiepolo dynasty.

These images, many of which represent turning-points in the history of art, are accompanied by an in-depth introductory essay placing them in context by the art and architectural historian Daniel Sherer, who teaches at the Princeton University School of Architecture, concise descriptions by Brian Kish, a well-known expert on Italian art and design, and a postface by Martin Kemp, the renowned scholar of Renaissance and Baroque art and science of Oxford University. Bringing together in one place these remarkable frescoes for the first time, this book will be indispensable for art historians, connoisseurs of photography, and all those interested in Renaissance and Baroque art.

Arthur Becker's formal exploration of the arts began at Bennington College in 1972, where he earned a degree in ceramics and photography, fostering his captivation of antiquity. Taking a hiatus from the art world to traverse into meditation, architecture practices, business school, and serving as CEO of two technology companies, Becker resumed his photographic work in the late 1990s. **Brian Kish** is an Italian architecture and design expert specialising in production from the High Renaissance and 20th century. He is the curator of the first US exhibition on *Gio Ponti: A Metaphysical World* (Queens Museum of Art, NY, 2001) and a contributor to *Entryways of Milan* (Taschen, 2017), *Gio Ponti Archi-Designer* (M.A.D. Paris, 2018, and *Gio Ponti* (Taschen, 2021). **Dan Sherer** is a professor of architectural history and theory at Princeton School of Architecture. He received his PhD from the Harvard University Department of the History of Art and Architecture in 2000 and his BA from Yale University in 1985. He has previously taught at Columbia, Cornell, Harvard, Yale, University of Venice, and others on the interaction of architecture, art, and design across various stylistic eras, including Italian Modernism, Italian Renaissance, and Baroque architecture. He has been published in numerous European and American journals as well as curated exhibitions related to these research interests. **Martin Kemp** was appointed as the Professor of the History of Art Department at the University of Oxford in 1995. As the leading Leonardo da Vinci scholar, Kemp's work has stressed the work of the artist as a modeller and empirical investigator of the world. Professor Kemp has been Emeritus Professor of the History of Art since 2008.