



Madame de Pompadour: Images of a Mistress

Colin Jones

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As mistress to King Louis XV from 1745 until her death in 1764, Jeanne-Antoinette Poisson, marquise de Pompadour, was portrayed in an impressive array of paintings, engravings, sculpture, and other media. Most of these representations were made under her careful supervision and control, as she sought to maintain her place at the king's side and to develop authority and influence at the royal court and in national politics. To this end, the marquise summoned the greatest artists of the day, including Boucher, La Tour, Van Loo, Nattier, Drouais, Falconet, and Pigalle.

This beautiful book is the first scholarly biographical study of Madame de Pompadour in fifty years. Eminent historian Colin Jones places these pictures within the historical framework of art, culture, gender, and politics, considering all aspects of Madame de Pompadour's unprecedented power. He also shows how she utilized her image as a means of retaining her royal lover's affection, as her relationship with him passed from sexual infatuation to platonic friendship.

This book accompanies an exhibition at the National Gallery, London from October 16, 2002 to January 12, 2003.

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