Abstract

Sienese art was very deliberately shaped and sustained by the patronage of powerful and wealthy families, such as the Petrucci, Piccolomini and the Spannochi, to provide an artistic language for an ambitious city. These commissions drew on Siena's famed decorative traditions and introduced the influences of foreign artists, such as Signorelli, Pintorichio and Raphael. Rarely enslaved to the emerging naturalistic convention, a direct line can be traced from Sienese artists such as Vecchietta and Francesco di Giorgio to Matteo di Giovanni, Neroccio de’ Landi, Pietro Orioli and Beccafumi. These artists combined exquisite colour, decoration, sinuous line and delicate beauty, with ambitious compositions and figure style. This beautiful catalogue reveals Sienese painting, drawing and sculpture as one of the most distinctive, elegant and moving schools of Italian art, created during a period of fascinating power shifts within the city itself.
Historiographical issues strongly underlie Renaissance Siena. Art for a City, the catalogue produced to accompany the exhibition of the same name held at the National Gallery in London on 24 October, 2007 to 13 January, 2008. This period saw intense political factionalism in Siena, especially among the city's ruling parties, or monti. In the face of such institutional fracture, the catalogue explores the ways in which "a common civic ideology," forged in the late Middle Ages, was maintained and further promoted by the church, religious orders, the city government, and individuals and their families (12). Sienese art was very deliberately shaped and sustained by the patronage of powerful and wealthy families, such as the Petrucci, Piccolomini and the Spannochi, to provide an artistic language for an ambitious city. Author Biography. Luke Syson is Curator of Italian Paintings 1460-1500 and author of Pisanello (Yale). Alessandro Angelini is Associate Professor of Modern Art at the University of Siena. Philippa Jackson is an independent historian. Fabrizio Nevola teaches at the University of Siena and is author of the forthcoming Siena: Constructing the Renaissance City (see previous page). Key Fe For the first time in Britain, a major exhibition will show Renaissance painting and sculpture in the artistic, cultural and political contexts of the volatile last century of the Sienese Republic. Renaissance Siena: Art for a City will bring together around one hundred beautiful exhibits, including paintings, sculptures, drawings, manuscripts and ceramics. Major loans from private and public collections across Europe and America will be displayed alongside the exceptional Sienese paintings in the National Gallery's own collection several specially cleaned and restored for this show. Cove