
PDF generated on 26 February 2021

Note: British Art Studies is a digital publication and intended to be experienced online and referenced digitally. PDFs are provided for ease of reading offline. Please do not reference the PDF in academic citations: we recommend the use of DOIs (digital object identifiers) provided within the online article. These unique alphanumeric strings identify content and provide a persistent link to a location on the internet. A DOI is guaranteed never to change, so you can use it to link permanently to electronic documents with confidence.

Published by:

Paul Mellon Centre
16 Bedford Square
London, WC1B 3JA
https://www.paul-mellon-centre.ac.uk

In partnership with:

Yale Center for British Art
1080 Chapel Street
New Haven, Connecticut
https://britishart.yale.edu

ISSN: 2058-5462
DOI: 10.17658/issn.2058-5462
URL: https://www.britishartstudies.ac.uk

Editorial team: https://www.britishartstudies.ac.uk/about/editorial-team
Advisory board: https://www.britishartstudies.ac.uk/about/advisory-board

Produced in the United Kingdom.
The Medieval Choir Screen in Sacred Space: The Dynamic Interiors of Vezzolano and Breisach, Jacqueline E. Jung
Abstract

In their later medieval heyday, choir screens were pivotal centerpieces and focalisers of their sacred environments. Embellished with figural imagery; outfitted with platforms, pulpits, and altars; and rendered visually porous by the presence of large doors and windows, screens at once defined liturgical zones and provided a unifying bridge between them. This presentation offers an analysis of two extant screens: the early thirteenth-century structure in the abbey church of St Maria in Vezzolano, and the late fifteenth-century example in the church of St Stephen in Breisach. Though very different in format and decoration, both screens act as mediators – physical, visual, and conceptual – between the functional spaces and pictorial programmes in the apses (eastern ends) and exterior thresholds (western ends) of their respective churches. This presentation seeks to reveal the dynamic, mutually reinforcing relations among choir screens, the spaces they inhabited, and the liturgical objects that animated those zones.

Authors

Associate Professor in the Department of History of Art at Yale University

Acknowledgements

Travel to the sites discussed here was made possible with grants from the Griswold Fellowship Fund at Yale University. An early version of this presentation was given at a workshop of the Bild/Evidenz research group at the Freie Universität in Berlin in summer 2015, and thanks go above all to Reindert Falkenburg for the kind invitation and many helpful remarks at (and beyond) that event. The author is also grateful to Gregory Bryda for helping her think through issues of materiality and vision with regard to altarpieces, and to Mitchell Merback for the great travel adventure that brought us to Vezzolano in the summer of 2013. Additional thanks go to the editorial staff at British Art Studies for helping this piece take shape, and above all to Jude Breidenbach of Yale Broadcast Studios for his patient and expert fine-tuning of the multimedia presentation.
Watch Video

Figure 1.

Bibliography

Licensing

The Publishers of *British Art Studies* are committed to supporting scholarship on British art and architecture of all periods. This publication is made available free of charge at https://www.britishartstudies.ac.uk. We ask users to identify the use of materials made available through this website and to provide an appropriate credit to the to the author and the publication, so that others may find and use our resources.

Except where otherwise noted, this work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 2.0 UK: England & Wales Licence (CC BY-NC 2.0 UK). To view a copy of this license, visit https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/2.0/uk/ or send a letter to Creative Commons, PO Box 1866, Mountain View, CA 94042, USA.

The Publishers fully support the protection of intellectual property and are committed to complying with, and strictly adhering to, all applicable copyright law. In many cases, copyright or other proprietary rights may be held by individuals or entities other than, or in addition to, the Publishers. If a work or a photographic image is still protected by copyright, you must cite the relevant copyright information when using the image and comply with all other terms or restrictions that may be applicable to that material.

In some cases, exceptions to copyright that permit limited use of protected works without the permission of the copyright owner may have be applied. We are confident that we have carried out due diligence in our use of copyrighted material as required, but we apologise for any inadvertent infringement of rights.

Digital copies of resources are made accessible for research for one of the following reasons:

- they are in the public domain;
- the rights are owned by the Publishers;
- we make them accessible under an exception or limitation to UK copyright law, as outlined in the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 (as amended);
- we have permission to make them accessible;
- or, there are no known restrictions on use.

If you believe that we have made a mistake and wish for your material to be removed from our site, please contact us at copyright@paul-mellon-centre.ac.uk.

Please include the following information with your request:

- Name and contact information, including email address and phone number.
- Identification of the resource for consideration of removal. Providing URLs in your communication will help us locate content quickly.
- The reason for the request.

The Publishers respond promptly, normally within 21 business days. We may remove the resource from our site while we assess the validity of the request. Upon completion of the assessment, we will take appropriate action and communicate that action to you.