



# Set in Stone: The Face in Medieval Sculpture (Metropolitan Museum of Art)

*Charles T. Little*

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The face in medieval sculpture was an exploration in human identity, marked not only by evolving nuances of style but also by the ongoing drama of European history. The 81 magnificent sculpted heads featured in this volume provide a sweeping view of the Middle Ages, from the waning days of the Roman Empire to the dawn of the Renaissance. Each sculpture bears eloquent witness to its own remarkable history, whether it was removed because of changing tastes or for political reasons, such as being cut off the head of a king on a grand cathedral facade.

The book is organized into seven thematic sections, including “Iconoclasm” and “The Stone Bible,” which explore the process of reconnecting these works to their origins using both traditional art historical methods as well as the latest scientific technology. An essay on medieval physiognomy by the distinguished scholar Willibald Sauerländer introduces the volume.

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