



Animals in Early Medieval Art

Carola Hicks

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People have always been fascinated by depictions of animals and the many beliefs which they imply. This book shows that animal ornament is a crucial element in medieval art, especially in Britain where pagan imagery from the Celtic and Germanic traditions was adapted for use in Christian art. Five chapters take the reader from the 6th to the 11th century, looking in turn at animal imagery in England, Scotland and Ireland. They describe the ways animals are depicted in sculpture, metalwork and manuscript illustration and discuss the symbolic reasons behind the use of animals as icons. A full introduction emphasizes the importance of the naturalistic tradition and of artistic links between the Picts, Anglo-Saxons and the Irish. Showing that the medieval bestiary had its roots in eighth century insular art, this book draws wider conclusions about the transmission of motifs and ideas. Illustrations accompany the text throughout.

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