



## Grafting Helen: The Abduction of the Classical Past (Hardback)

By Matthew Gumpert

University of Wisconsin Press, United States, 2001. Hardback. Condition: New. New. Language: English . Brand New Book. Classicism = cultural embezzlement? History is a love story: a tale of desire and jealousy, abandonment and fidelity, abduction and theft, rupture and reconciliation. This contention is central to Grafting Helen, Matthew Gumpert's original and dazzling meditation on Helen of Troy as a crucial emblem for much of Western thought and literature. Grafting Helen looks at classicism - the privileged rhetorical language for describing cultural origins in the West - as a protracted form of cultural embezzlement. No coin of the realm has been more valuable, more circulated, more coveted, or more counterfeited than the one that bears the face of Helen of Troy. Gumpert uncovers Helen as the emblem for the past as something to be stolen, appropriated, imitated, extorted, and converted once again. Tracing the figure of Helen from its classical origins through the Middle Ages, the French Renaissance, and the modern era, Gumpert suggests that the relation of current Western culture to the past is not like the act of coveting; it is the act of coveting, he argues, for it relies on the same strategies, the...

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