

[DOWNLOAD] Stones of Florence, The

## **Stones of Florence, The**

*Mary Mccarthy*

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**Mary Mccarthy : Stones of Florence, The** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Stones of Florence, The:

51 of 51 people found the following review helpful. A City of Age-old Contradictions and the Great RenaissanceBy C. EbelingThere are several reasons to go for Mary McCarthy's THE STONES OF FLORENCE. You are about to go to, are in or have been to Florence, Italy; you enjoy the literature of travel; you appreciate a well-written book. I fall into the latter two categories and thoroughly enjoyed this idiosyncratic work. McCarthy wrote this in the very early 1960's when the very nature of Tuscany's chief city couldn't help but attract tourists at the same time it seemingly did everything to discourage them. She swiftly dispenses with the contemporary city and spends the book peering back into its Renaissance soul, primarily the 14th through the 16th centuries when Florence was the Western center of intellectual activity. What emerges is the picture of the greats-Dante, Giotto, Brunelleschi, Donatello, Fra Angelico, della Robbia, Botticelli, Da Vinci, Machiavelli, Michelangelo, Cellini, and various Medici to name a few-functioning amidst social, political and occasional natural upheaval. As she suggests about one artist, perhaps the productivity was inspired by the need to make order out of chaos. That and no doubt the fact that the Florentines used and valued art in their daily lives in ways that it is not today. That science, engineering, architecture and art were closely aligned offered cross disciplinary assistance is also key-without the mathematicians, for instance, would artists have been able to as easily co-opt perspective and volume?THE STONES OF FLORENCE is both direct and impressionistic. McCarthy's prose moves right along, never bogged down by a "perhaps" or the need to recite contemporary opinion. Her progress from the 14th to the 16th century is zig-zaggy, so that most of the Renaissance is spoken of as if on a continuum.

There is a sly wit at work (in the personality contest, the score is Leonardo 10, Michelangelo 0) and McCarthy presents a strong spine-she is unequivocal about the decline of the Renaissance in the 16th century as the major players moved away from Florence and the populace fell into a "gee-gaw" mentality. This is a travelogue and, after a fashion, an art history catalogue, and yet there are no pictures (in this edition). That and its not too chronological organization would suggest an abstract mess but it is nothing of the kind. I became very much aware of how much of the Renaissance was covered in my early education as every reference brought up old lessons and visits to museums out of the tar pits of memory. I felt at home, not at a loss. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. This is a wonderful book. How she could know so much and ...By Owen This is a wonderful book. How she could know so much and be so much clearer than any scholar I know is a mystery. She is a masterful writer. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Essential if going to Florence By E. Shlimovich McCarthy writes with wit about the history, current conditions (1964, when the book was published) and tourist attractions in Florence. Her advice is invaluable for finding little-known churches, and her descriptions of life in the city, and advice on when to go and where to stay, are vivid and helpful for any traveler in Italy.

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