

Contents

Introduction	9
1. Art and the State: the 'Grand Manner'	15
The academic legacy	19
The hierarchy of genres and the debate on colour	25
History and mythology: allegory or Eros	31
Religious commissions	44
2. Rococo Imagination and Elegance	53
Watteau and the 'fête galante'	56
From pastoral to libertine	77
Fragonard, or a passion for painting	89
Portraiture: from the ceremonial to the informal	99
3. A New Sensibility	113
The celebration of sensibility and the birth of art criticism	116
Poetic reality: animal painting and still life	121
Chardin, or time suspended	126
Greuze and the vagaries of virtue	137
Sublime nature and ruins	148
4. The Classical Revival and the French Revolution	159
'Greek' rococo?	162
David and neo-classical heroization	168
Forging national identity	175
The revolutionary decade	181
Romantic nocturnes	195
Eighteenth-Century Taste	203