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Autore	Doel Marieke van den
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Nota di contenuto	Half Title -- Series Information -- Title Page -- Copyright Page -- Contents -- Preface -- Illustrations -- Abbreviations -- Chapter 1 Art and Humanism in the Renaissance -- 1 Ficino and the Visual Arts -- 2 Historical Context -- 3 Conclusion -- Part 1 Oculus Imaginationis -- Chapter 2 'Such stuff as dreams are made on': A Brief History of the Imagination -- 1 Classical Theories -- 2 Aristotle, Aristotelianism and the Stoics -- 3 Galen of Pergamon and Galenism -- 4 Plato and the Platonist Tradition -- 5 Hermetism -- 6 Medieval Theories: Arab Thinkers -- 7 Medieval Theories: The Latin West -- 8 Conclusion -- Chapter 3 Phantasia through Ficino's Lense: Focus, Refraction and Diffusion -- 1 De Divino furore and Related Texts -- 2 De amore -- 3 Theologia Platonica, Book xiii -- 4 Melancholy and Furor: De vita sana (1480) -- 5 Ficino's Commentary on Priscian of Lydia -- 6 De vita ii and iii (1489) -- 7 Commentary on Plato's Dialogue Parmenides (1492-1494) -- 8 Imitation, Opposition and Reception -- 9 Conclusion -- Part 2 Visus -- Chapter 4 Botticelli's Primavera Interpreted -- 1 Ficino and Art from the Renaissance Onward -- 2 Botticelli's Primavera and The Birth of Venus -- 3 Interpretations of the Primavera -- 4 Warburg -- 5 Gombrich -- 6 Wind -- 7 Dempsey -- 8 Snow-Smith -- 9 Ames-Lewis -- 10 The Six Powers of the Soul -- 11 Excursus: Ficino and Images -- 12 Conclusion -- Chapter 5 Ficino's Fantasy and Michelangelo's Dream -- 1 Melancholic Genius and Its Vices -- 2 Michelangelo, the Melancholic -- 3 Michelangelo and Tommaso dei Cavalieri -- 4

Michelangelo's Platonism -- 5 Il sogno or The Dream -- 6 Ganymede, Tityus and Phaeton -- 7 A Children's Bacchanal -- 8 Archers -- 9 Conclusion -- Chapter 6 Alberti, Bartoli, Comanini: Imagination in Early-Modern Art Theory -- 1 Art Theory and Its Emancipation of Painting.
2 Routes for the Transfer of Ficino's Ideas -- 3 References to Ficino's Portraits in Art Theory -- 4 References to Ficino's Ideas in Art Theory -- 5 'Thus wrote Trismegistus to Asclepius': References to Hermes Trismegistus -- 6 Plato's Chariot: The Artistic Risks and Promises of the Imagination -- 7 Fantasie, the Bizarre and Grotesque -- 8 Furor as Part of the Artistic Process -- 9 Melancholy as a Psychosomatic Side-Effect of the Artistic Process -- 10 Conclusion -- Chapter 7 Ficino and the Imagination: Conclusion and Summary -- Bibliography -- Sources and Editions -- Studies -- Index.

Sommario/riassunto

Did the Florentine philosopher Marsilio Ficino (1433-99) influence the art of his time? Art historians have been fiercely debating this question for decades. This book starts with Ficino's views on the imagination as a faculty of the soul, and shows how these ideas were part of a long philosophical tradition and inspired fresh insights. This approach, combined with little known historical material, offers a new understanding of whether, how and why Ficino's Platonic conceptions of the imagination may have been received in the art of the Italian Renaissance. The discussion explores Ficino's possible influence on the work of Botticelli and Michelangelo, and examines the appropriation of Ficino's ideas by early modern art theorists.
