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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.
