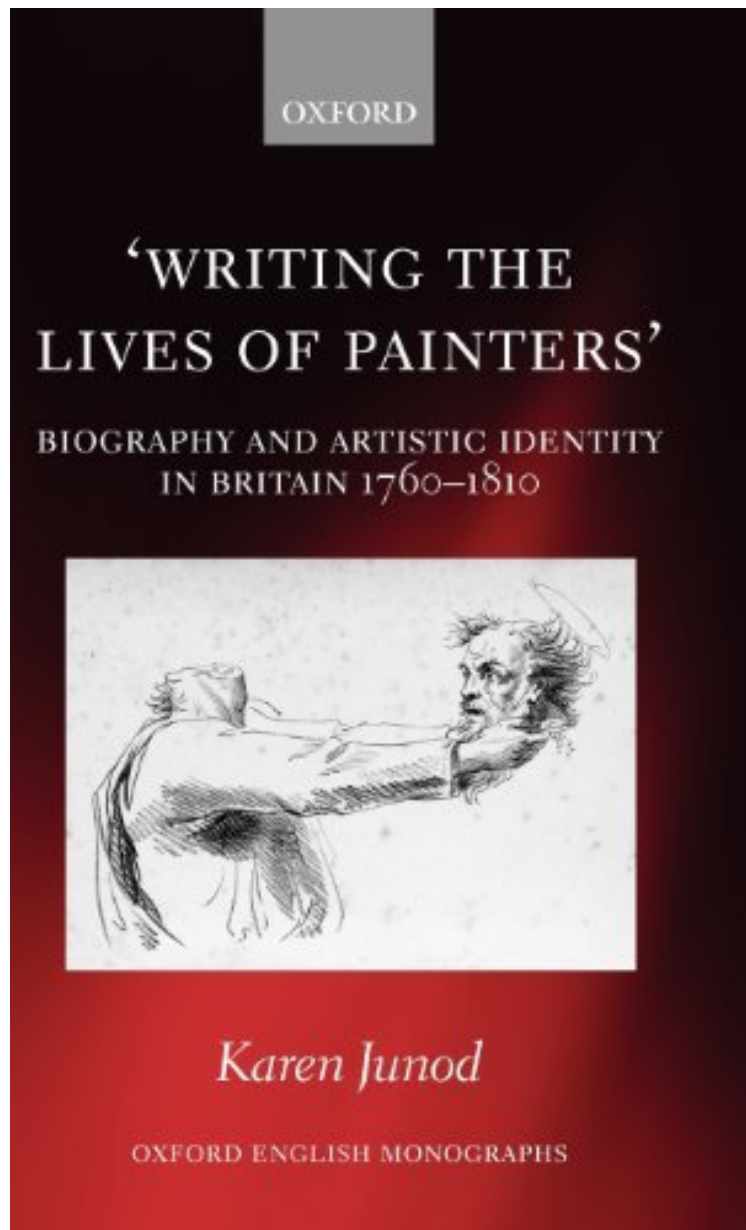


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Writing the Lives of Painters: Biography and Artistic Identity in Britain 1760-1810 (Oxford English Monographs)

Karen Junod

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Karen Junod : Writing the Lives of Painters: Biography and Artistic Identity in Britain 1760-1810 (Oxford English Monographs) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised

Writing the Lives of Painters: Biography and Artistic Identity in Britain 1760-1810 (Oxford English Monographs):

Writing the Lives of Painters explores the development of artists' biographies in eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century Britain. During this period artists gradually distanced themselves from artisans and began to be recognised for their imaginative and intellectual skills. The development of the art market and the burgeoning of an exhibition culture, as well as the foundation of the Royal Academy of Arts in 1768, all contributed to redefining the rank of artists in society. This social redefinition of the status of artists in Britain was shaped by a thriving print culture. Contemporary artists were discussed in a wide range of literary forms, including exhibition reviews, art-critical pamphlets, and journalistic gossip-columns. Biographical accounts of modern artists emerged in a dialogue with these other types of writing. This book is an account of a new literary genre, tracing its emergence in the cultural context of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. It considers artistic biography as a malleable generic framework for investigation. Indeed, while the lives of painters in Britain did not completely abandon traditional tropes, the genre significantly widened its scope and created new individual and social narratives that reflected and accommodated the needs and desires of new reading audiences. Writing the Lives of Painters also argues that the proliferation of a myriad biographical forms mirrored the privileging of artistic originality and difference within an art world that had yet to generate a coherent 'British School' of painting. Finally, by focusing on the emergence of individual biographies of British artists, the book examines how and why the art historiographic model established by Giorgio Vasari was gradually dismantled in the hands of British biographers during the Romantic period.

"Adds substantially to our understanding of biography as conceptualized during a formative period in art's history. This is an urgently needed scholarly contribution, made all the more welcome through its carefully delineated argument and elegant prose...This excellent book deserves a wide readership." --Eighteenth-Century Fiction
About the Author
Karen Junod is a Lecturer in English literature at the University of Fribourg (Switzerland). She studied at the Universities of Neuchatel (Switzerland) and Oxford. She was a James Osborn Postdoctoral Research Fellow at the Beinecke Library, Yale University (2005-2006) and a British Academy Postdoctoral Fellow at Lincoln College, Oxford (2006-2008).