

Sundials: History, Art, People, Science



Sundials are arguably the oldest of all scientific instruments. Their beauty is often a reflection of great craftsmanship, as well as a design statement that is highly ordered and rational. As objects that perform a function, yet require no power and perform indefinitely, they are a powerful symbol of endurance and permanence. This copiously illustrated book charts the evolution of sundials around the world from the earliest neolithic rondels and stone circles, such as Stonehenge, to the present day. This history is in effect the story of Mans understanding of the heavens, and his own place in the cosmos. Rich in cultural and religious significance, sundials represent the coming together of art and astronomy. Mark Lennox-Boyd describes in detail the main types of sundial, describing important historical examples, such as Emperor Augustuss Sundial on the Campus Martius in Rome, Syrian, Indian and Chinese sundials, and showcasing a range of stunning modern sundials that have been inspired by them. The story has a colourful cast of characters, including artists, alchemists, two emperors, a maharajah and the founding President of the United States of America. Sundials combines images of inspirational designs with a fascinating historical narrative. It includes a glossary of terms, bibliography and an appendix explaining some of the theory and mathematics.

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