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The Spaces That Never
Were in Early Modern Art

Jelena Todorović

Throughout history, the research of space has always been an issue of great interest. Since classical Antiquity, the physical space itself and its imperfect double, the illusory space used in the visual arts, have been one of the perpetual obsessions of man. However, there are very few studies that question the reality of represented space, and deal with those liminal phenomena that exist on the blurred boundary between reality and imagination. Such spaces were never defined by carefully drawn borders, they were usually outlined by the ephemeral and ever changing barriers.

For that very reason, liminal spaces describe those curious worlds confined in gardens and collections, they underpin all those dreams of ideal societies, and construct visions of unobtainable and distant shores. Liminal spaces are the territories not usually found on maps and in science, they are not subjected to laws of perspective and elude the usual representations. They are always beyond and behind the established depiction of space. Often, they possess yet another layer of signification, that transforms a mere image of nature into a political manifesto, the lines on precious stones into the shapes of vanished cities, and private art collections into a dream of absolute power.

This book explores different representations and forms of liminal spaces, that on the one hand, deeply influenced the history of the early modern imagination, and, on the other, established the models for our own understanding of liminal spatial phenomena.

Professor Jelena Todorović received her BA in the History of Art from the Faculty of Philosophy at the University of Belgrade, Serbia, before obtaining her MA and PhD degrees from University College London, UK. She is currently a Full Professor and Vice-Dean for International Cooperation at the University of the Arts in Belgrade. For the past ten years, she has been a Keeper of the State Art Collection in Belgrade. Although an art historian by training, her research interests are more directed towards early modern cultural history. Her publications include *Catchup of the State Art Collection of the Royal Compound in Belgrade (Volume One)* (2014), *Of Mirrors, Roses and Nockings: The Concept of Time and Transience in the Baroque Culture* (2012), *An Ordained Pastoral Book in the Eisenberg Empire - Gaborcs Ophthalmitis Pastore Greeting XIX of Mojstje Putnik in 1727* (2006), and "The Borrowed Space: Transgression, Possession and Utopia in the Political Spaces of the Archdiocese of Kalocsa" in *Die Entwicklung des Raumes: Konstruktion, Imagination, und Darstellung von Räumen im Barockzeitalter* (edited by Karin Friedrich, 2014), among others.

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AN EXPLORATION OF EDGES AND FRONTIERS

Jelena Todorović