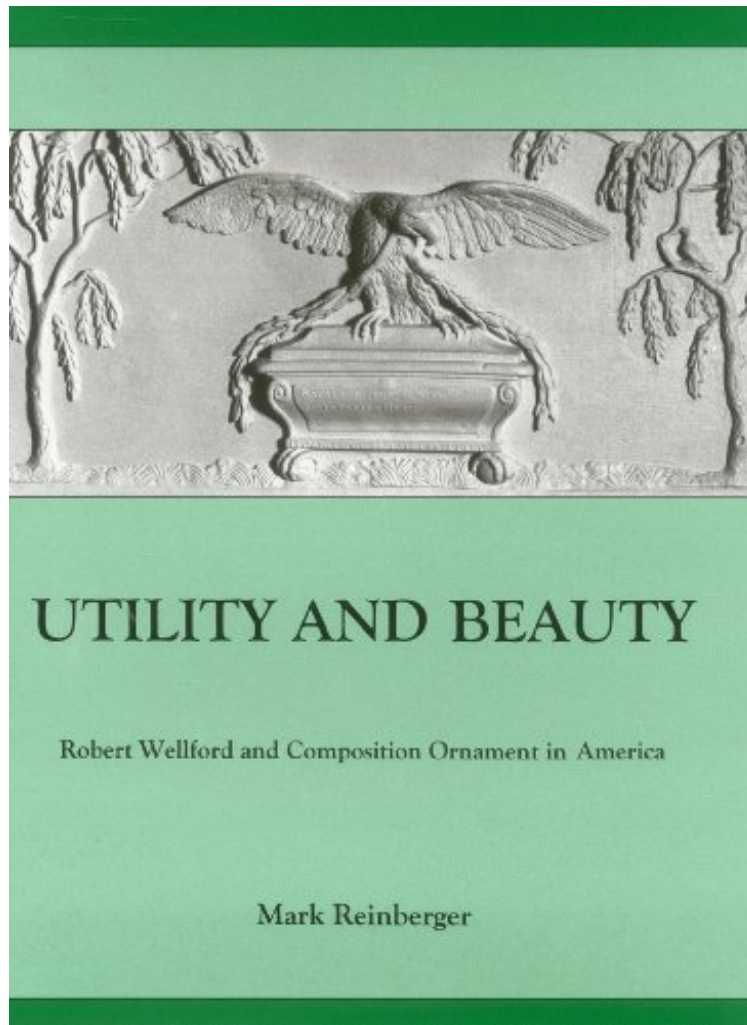


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Utility And Beauty: Robert Wellford and Composition Ornament in America (Studies in Seventeenth- and Eighteenth- Century Art and Culture)

Mark Reinberger

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Mark Reinberger : Utility And Beauty: Robert Wellford and Composition Ornament in America (Studies in Seventeenth- and Eighteenth- Century Art and Culture) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Utility And Beauty: Robert Wellford and Composition Ornament in America (Studies in Seventeenth- and Eighteenth- Century Art and Culture):

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OrtadoI found this book to be the best reference for my composition ornament restorations. Mark Reinberger helped me to identify historic Wellford ornament in several of my projects that architects had wrongly attributed to Robert Adams.4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. early American architectural ornamentationBy Henry BerryUTILITY AND BEAUTY - Robert Wellford and Composition Ornament in America by Mark Reinberger. U. of Delaware Press, Newark, DE/Associated Univesity Presses, London, United Kingdom. 2004. 190 pp. \$65.00 hardcover/8-1/2" x 11", ISBN 0-87413-760-8. photographs, illustrations, map, appendices, notes, bibliography, index. In the early 1800s in America, composition--or "compo"--was a plaster-like material pressed into intricately carved, detailed ornaments for interior woodwork in homes and buildings, particularly mantelpieces. Robert Wellford (1775-1844) of Philadelphia was the leading maker of compo in the U. S. during this period. The neoclassical flourishes, forms, and mythological and other figures of composition along with patriotic imagery became popular in well-to-do homes along the coast from South Carolina to New Jersey because of the sense of elegance it added to rooms, but also because it was affordable by not having to be imported. Reinberger gives a full account of this American decoration which became prevalent in the early decades of the new nation. His account complemented with many photographs of varying detail deals with the manufacture of the composition, its different styles, the spread of it, and the fading of this "feminine" art form with the coming to favor of the "masculine" style of decoration modeled on the Doric Greek classical style. Wellford's career as a talented and ambitious businessman is also covered. This is a thorough work for architects, decorators, historians, and artists on the relatively brief period of a few decades when compo was the ornamentation of choice in buildings along the East Coast and embodied ideas about high style and desirable expression of the virtues and ideals of the new democracy. Reinberger is an associate professor in the College of the Environment and Design at the U. of Georgia. Historic preservation is one of the courses he teaches.

Made of a synthetic paste and forced into finely carved moulds, composition ornament graced mantels and other woodwork in American buildings between 1790 and 1820. Robert Wellford of Philadelphia was the foremost American practitioner of the art. This book presents Wellford's life, craft, business, and ornament, as well as the work of his competitors, from New England to the deep south.