



Charles Sheeler: Modernism, Precisionism and the Borders of Abstraction

Mark Rawlinson

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Charles Sheeler was the stark poet of the machine age. Photographer of the Ford Motor Company and founder of the painting movement Precisionism, he is remembered as a promoter of--and apologist for--the industrialised capitalist ethic. This major new rethink of one of the key figures of American modernism argues that Sheeler's true relationship to progress was in fact highly negative, his "'precisionism'" both skewed and imprecise. Covering the entire oeuvre from photography to painting and drawing attention to the inconsistencies, curiosities and "'puzzles'" embedded in Sheeler's work, Rawlinson reveals a profound critique of the processes of rationalisation and the conditions of modernity. The book argues for a re-evaluation of Sheeler's often dismissed late work which, it suggests, may only be understood through a radical shift in our understanding of the work of this prominent figure.

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