



Nollekens and his Times: Comprehending a Life of that Celebrated Sculptor, and Memoirs of Several Contemporary Artists (Cambridge Library Collection - Art and Architecture) (Volume 2)

John Thomas Smith

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The sculptor Joseph Nollekens (1737-1823) was famed for his portrait busts of leading figures of his day. While working in Italy in the 1760s, he established contacts among a group of aristocratic British patrons, going on to become London's most fashionable sculptor upon his return to England in 1771. The draughtsman and antiquary John Thomas Smith (1766-1833) had been at one time a pupil of Nollekens. It is believed that this anecdotal two-volume biography, first published in 1828, was written as an act of revenge. Having been promised a considerable legacy in the sculptor's will, Smith was disappointed to receive only an executor's fee. The work contains little analysis concerning the sculptor's art, relating instead much gossip and anecdotes of a personal nature. Nonetheless, it presents a vivid picture of the London art world at that time. Volume 2 covers the infamous will and provides biographical sketches of Nollekens' contemporaries.

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