



Della Trasportazione dell'Obelisco Vaticano (On the Transportation of the Vatican Obelisk)

By Domenico Fontana

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At the very center of St. Peter's Square in Rome, against the imposing backdrop of St. Peter's Basilica, with its huge façade and its famous dome, an obelisk of pink granite from Egypt perches with surprising lightness on the backs of four miniature bronze lions. Carved of Aswan granite in the reign of Nebkaure Amenemhet II (1992–1985 BC), the obelisk originally stood before the pylon to the Temple of the Sun at Heliopolis. It was brought to Rome in 37 AD by the emperor Caligula. In 1585, Pope Sixtus V announced that he would move the obelisk as part of his master plan for the renovation of the city of Rome. This Octavo Edition shows every page of the rare book documenting the monumental task of moving the 340-ton obelisk 260 yards to where it stands today. Commentary by Ingrid D. Rowland.

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