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Hans Abbing

The Changing Social Economy of Art

Are the Arts Becoming Less Exclusive?

- **Written for both scholars and students, and professional artists and those working in art and culture. A tool for research and further debate.**
- **Generates criticism and opposing opinions from both academics and practitioners.**
- **Uses an artist alter-ego interspersed throughout the text to illustrate arguments and let readers think of own encounters with art and artists.**

Is art for everybody? Why do art lovers attach so much value to authenticity, autonomy and authorship? Why did the arts become so serious in the first place? Why do many artists reject commerce and cultural entrepreneurship? Crucially, are any of the answers to these questions currently changing? Hans Abbing is uniquely placed to answer such questions, and, drawing on his experiences as an economist and sociologist as well as a professional artist, in this volume he addresses them head on. In order to investigate changes in the social economy of the arts, Abbing compares developments in the established arts with those in the popular arts and proceeds to outline key ways that the former can learn from the latter; by lowering the cost of production, fostering innovation, and becoming less exclusive. These assertions are contextualized with analysis of the separation between serious art and entertainment in the nineteenth century, lending credence to the idea that government-supported art worlds have promoted the exclusion of various social groups. Abbing outlines how this is presently changing and why, while the established arts have become less exclusive, they are not yet for everybody.

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