

This collection of essays on anthropological approaches to art and aesthetics is the first in its field to be published for some time. In recent years a number of new galleries of non-Western art have been opened, many exhibitions of non-Western art held, and new courses in the anthropology of art established. This collection is both part of and complements these developments, contributing to the general resurgence of interest in what has been until recently a comparatively neglected field of academic study and intellectual debate.

Unlike many previous collections, the focus of this volume is resolutely anthropological. The contributors draw on contemporary anthropological theory as well as on analyses of classical anthropological topics such as myth, ritual, and exchange, to deepen our understanding of particular aesthetic traditions in their sociological and historical contexts. In addition, the cross-cultural applicability of the very concepts 'art' and 'aesthetics' is assessed.

Each essay illustrates a specific approach and develops a particular argument. Many present new ethnography based on recent field research among Australian Aborigines, in New Guinea, Indonesia, Mexico, and elsewhere. Others draw on classic anthropological accounts of, for example, the Trobriand Islanders of Melanesia and the Nuer of the Southern Sudan, putting this material to new uses.

Sir Raymond Firth's introductory overview of the history of the anthropological study of art makes this volume particularly useful for the non-specialist interested in learning what anthropology has to contribute to our understanding of art and aesthetics in general.

With its wide geographical and cultural coverage and plentiful illustrations, many of which are in colour, *Anthropology, Art, and Aesthetics* will be a valuable resource for all serious students of the subject.

'Anyone interested in the anthropology of aesthetics ought to read it, and anyone interested in aesthetics will find it interesting if they do.'

British Journal of Aesthetics

'highly admirable, and at times very exciting, collection of papers'

Times Higher Education Supplement

'... effective and outstanding contributions to the recent reconsideration of art as a subject for anthropology. . . this long-awaited collection will be essential reading for anyone concerned with art and aesthetics'

Current Anthropology

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Cover illustration: Alaskan Inuit two-face mask. Reproduced by courtesy of the Hearst Museum of Anthropology, The University of California at Berkeley.

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