



Double Desire: Transculturation and Indigenous Contemporary Art

Ian McLean

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Double Desire challenges the tendency of critics to perpetuate an aesthetic apartheid between Indigenous and Western art. The double desire explored in this book is that of the divided but also amplified attractions that occur between cultural traditions in places where both indigenous and colonial legacies are strong. The result, it is argued, produces imaginative transcultural practices that resist the assimilation or acculturation of Indigenous perspectives into the dominant Western mode and open contemporary art beyond its conventional limited Western trajectory. The essays, by fourteen experts in the field, discuss Indigenous contemporary art practices and their artworld reception in different locales in Australia, America and Africa, from metropolitan centres to regional and remote communities. Postcolonial theories of transculturation, globalism and relational art practices that galvanize current theories of contemporary art provide the main frames for this discussion. Ian McLean introduces key terms and tropes in the histories of Indigenous contemporary art. He also contributes two essays that examine indigeneness as a key concept in Western art, and the challenges facing Indigenous contemporary art in mainstream artworld discourses of postcolonialism, globalism and diaspora. Double Desire's remaining thirteen chapters are divided into three sections, each containing chapters that focus on specific case studies. "Relational Agencies" examines four different types of exchanges between Indigenous and Western ways of thinking, through collaborations between Indigenous artists and non-Indigenous artists, art managers and anthropologists. "Postcolonial Histories" consists of five case studies of individual Indigenous artists who have directly engaged with Western art traditions and colonial histories in transcultural ways that develop an Indigenous contemporaneity, either from within the institutions of the Western artworld or on its margins. "Artworlds" investigates the recent artworld reception of Indigenous contemporary art across three continents by both Indigenous and non-Indigenous critics and curators.

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