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The Death of Authentic Primitive Art: And Other Tales of Progress

By Shelly Errington

University of California Press, United States, 1998. Paperback. Book Condition: New. 224 x 152 mm. Language: English . Brand New Book. In this lucid, witty, and forceful book, Shelly Errington argues that Primitive Art was invented as a new type of art object at the beginning of the twentieth century but that now, at the century s end, it has died a double but contradictory death. Authenticity and primitivism, both attacked by cultural critics, have died as concepts. At the same time, the penetration of nation-states, the tourist industry, and transnational corporations into regions that formerly produced these artifacts has severely reduced supplies of primitive art , bringing about a second death . Errington argues that the construction of the primitive in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (and the kinds of objects chosen to exemplify it) must be understood as a product of discourses of progress - from the nineteenth-century European narrative of technological progress, to the twentieth-century narrative of modernism, to the late- twentieth-century narrative of the triumph of the free market. In Part One she charts a provocative argument ranging through the worlds of museums, art theorists, mail-order catalogs, boutiques, tourism, and world events, tracing a loosely historical...



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