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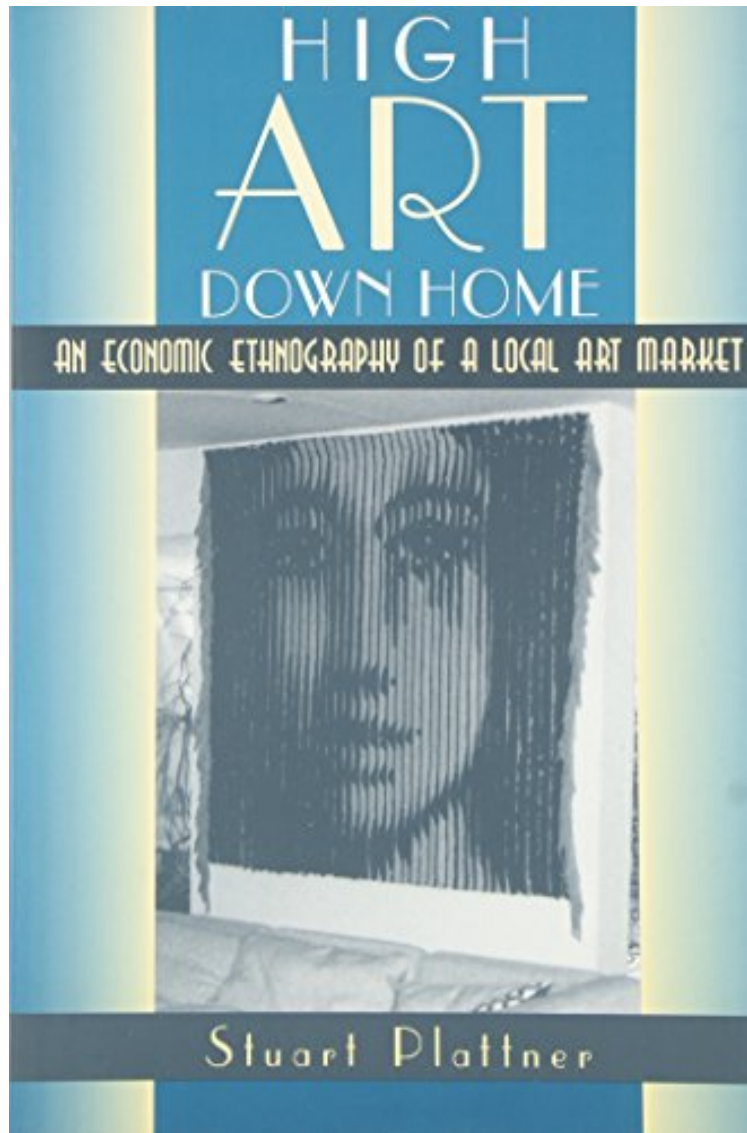
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(Download) High Art Down Home: An Economic Ethnography of a Local Art Market

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learn a lot. Very insightful!

How do artists, collectors, dealers, and curators whose lives and livelihoods are so intimately affected by the valuation of art manage to cope with such an intangible market? To answer this question, Stuart Plattner eschews the spotlights and media-hype of glitzy New York galleries, and focuses instead upon the more localized, and much more typical, world of the St. Louis art scene. What emerges is the most comprehensive description ever published of a contemporary regional avant-garde center, where noble aesthetic ambitions compete with the exigencies of economic survival. Plattner's skillful use of in-depth interviews enables the market's key participants to speak for themselves, giving voice to the many frustrations and rewards, motivations and constraints that influence their interactions with their work, the market, and each other."Plattner analyzes the social and economic factors that govern art markets outside the long shadow cast by chic New York galleries. An insightful and fascinating work."Library Journal"Explains much about the conundrums and paradoxes of the art world as a whole."Eddie Silva, Riverfront Times

From Library Journal Why is one painting worth many tens of thousands of dollars while another only a few hundred? What forces create the contemporary art market? And does such a market even exist outside the most rarefied circles of the New York art world? These are some of the questions answered in this fascinating study. Plattner, an economic anthropologist currently with the National Science Foundation, made a thorough study of the St. Louis, Missouri, art market, interviewing artists, art dealers, collectors and museum curators. Presenting his findings in the style of an economic ethnography, Plattner analyzes the social and economic factors that govern art markets outside the long shadow cast by chic New York galleries. An insightful and fascinating work that is highly recommended for both academic and public collections with an interest in art world as well as art itself.?Martin R. Kalfatovic, Smithsonian Inst. Libs., Washington, D.C. Copyright 1996 Reed Business Information, Inc. From the Back Cover There is, perhaps, no market commodity in the world whose value is so elusive as a work of art. The costs of production, materials, and labor have nothing to do with fixing its price. Although a piece of art is an archetypally symbolic good, its economic worth depends upon an extraordinarily arbitrary and ephemeral array of social and cultural actors. How, then, do the many artists, collectors, dealers, and curators whose lives and livelihoods are so intimately affected by the valuation of art manage to cope with such an intangible market? To answer this question, Stuart Plattner eschews the spotlights and media-hype of glitzy New York galleries, and focuses instead upon the more localized, and much more typical, world of the St. Louis art scene. What emerges is the most comprehensive description ever published of a contemporary regional avant-garde center, where noble aesthetic ambitions compete with the exigencies of economic survival. Plattner's skillful use of in-depth interviews enables the market's key participants to speak for themselves, giving voice to the many frustrations and rewards, motivations and constraints that influence their interactions with their work, the market, and each other. Ultimately it becomes clear that, in various and diverse ways, they are all tacitly invested - psychologically, economically, and socially - in the mystification of value of the work of art. With refreshing realism and honesty, Plattner develops a finely textured and sympathetic portrait of a unique kind of economic community, one whose very existence is staked on the paradox of art as commodity.