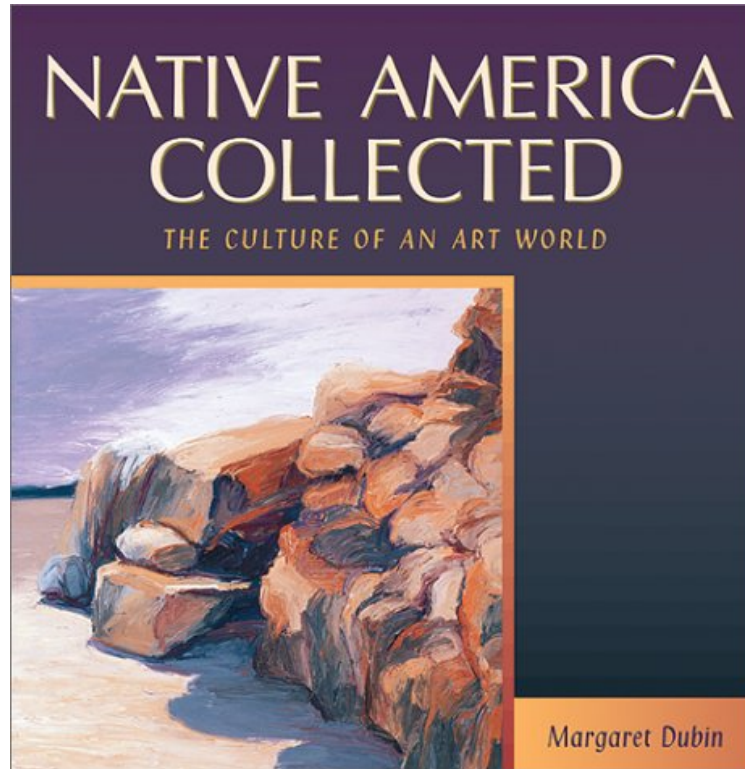


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*Margaret D. Dubin*

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## **Native America Collected: The Culture of an Art World**

**Margaret D. Dubin : Native America Collected: The Culture of an Art World** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Native America Collected: The Culture of an Art World:

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Publishers Weekly on Native America CollectedBy A Customer"Berkeley lecturer Dubin deserves congratulations for even attempting a clear overview of her thorny subject--the history and present state of the collecting and exhibiting of the objects created by the world's indigenous peoples of North America. That she has to a great degree succeeded is gratifying, so vast are the potential pitfalls. Dubin moves between the worlds of anthropology and modern art with equal confidence and does not mistake evenhandedness for blandness. Thus, for example, the naive collectors of "Indian Art" looking for a fix of authenticity are not isolated and condemned, but placed within a broad historical and cultural framework. . . . "Dubin's knowledgeably poised book is an invaluable contribution to cultural studies."-Publishers Weekly

"I argue for a history of Native American art that is politically informed," Margaret Dubin writes, "and for a criticism of contemporary Native American fine arts that is historically founded." Integrating ethnography, discourse analysis, and social theory in a careful mapping of the Native American art world, this insightful new study explores the landscape of 'intercultural spaces' -- the physical and philosophical arenas in which art collectors, anthropologists, artists, historians, curators, and critics struggle to control the movement and meaning of art objects created by Native

Americans. Dubin examines the ideas and interactions involved in contemporary collecting, in particular, to understand how marketplace demands have homogenised Western perceptions of 'authentic' Native American art. In doing so, she reveals the power relations of an art world in which Native American artists work within and against a larger system that seeks to control people by manipulating objects.

From Publishers Weekly Berkeley lecturer Dubin deserves congratulations for even attempting a clear overview of a thorny subject: the history and present state of the collecting and exhibiting of the objects created by the world's indigenous peoples of North America. That she has to a great degree succeeded is gratifying, so vast are the potential pitfalls. Dubin moves between the worlds of anthropology and modern art with equal confidence and does not mistake evenhandedness for blandness. Thus, for example, the naïve collectors of "Indian Art" looking for a fix of authenticity are not isolated and condemned, but placed within a broad historical and cultural framework. Indeed, it is the changing nature of that "authenticity" of the West's mercurial requirements of its cultural Other that Dubin records (with 26 half-tones of relevant works), as it has occurred in both the marketplace and the museum. Other essays deal with the history of the surprisingly pervasive government control of the trade in indigenous art as well as the often awkward fit between the style of Native art and Western criticism. Most interesting are Dubin's accounts of the works and views of a number of contemporary artists of native descent such as Harry Fonseca, Edgar Hachivi Heap of Birds and Lawrence Paul Yuxweluptan, who incorporate "traditional" elements into often powerfully critical works of contemporary art.

Dubin's knowledgeably poised book is an invaluable contribution to cultural studies. (Oct.) Forecast: To generate browser interest beyond specialists, a possible shelving partner for Dubin's book is 1001 Curious Things: Ye Olde Curiosity Shop and Native American Art, a fond account of a Seattle store, which has, for more than a century, sold a huge and bewildering variety of goods, including a king's ransom of native art (shown in 125 bw illustrations).

Arizona State professor of art Kate C. Duncan is content to chronicle rather than critique an admittedly fascinating cabinet of Northwest life and trade. (Univ. of Washington, \$35 288p ISBN 0-295-98010-9; July) Copyright 2001 Reed Business Information, Inc. "Dubin's knowledgeably poised book is an invaluable contribution to cultural studies." About the Author Margaret Dubin