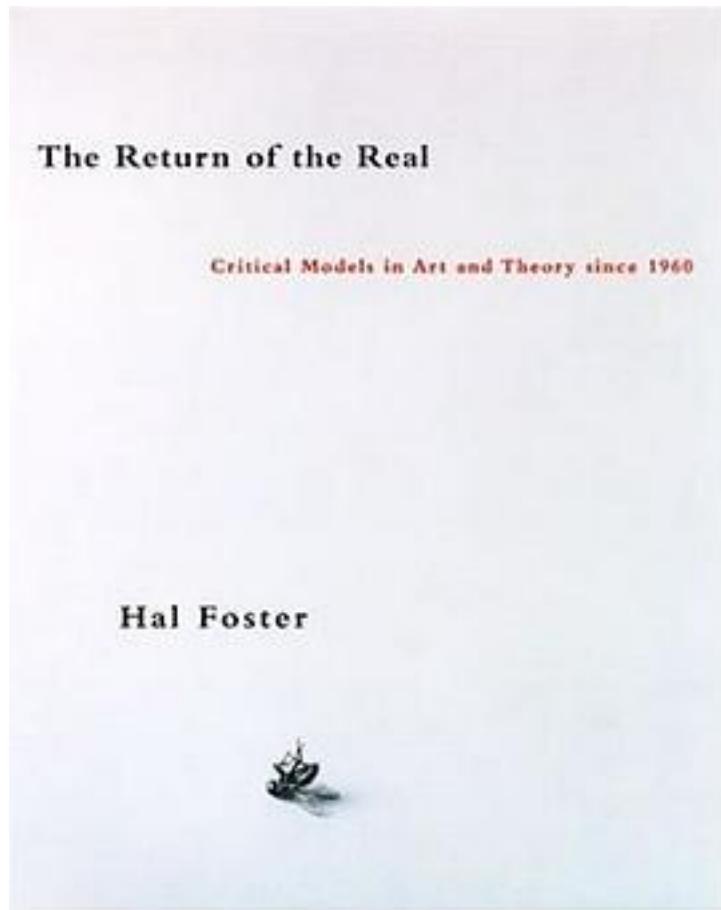


The Return of the Real



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著者:Hal Foster

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From Publishers Weekly

Dividing the century into two avant-gardes, the author passes on the one that runs from Picasso to Pollock and lays claim to another that begins with Duchamp and

continues through Warhol into the present, a new avant-garde whose praxis will be bound to theory not metaphor. Foster, who teaches art history and comparative literature at Cornell and is an editor of the journal *October*, claims for his generation of cultural theorists, who came of age in the wake of minimalist and conceptual art, the primacy of ideas with their potential connection to real political time and space over objects. Following the leads of Althusser and Lacan, he urges structuralist re-readings of radical texts (including art) for content that breaks with "our decentered relations to the language of our unconscious" and "humanist problems of alienation." A chapter on recent "abject art" (like Mike Kelley and John Miller) finds interest in its surrealist-style rebellion to be as limited as ever by adolescent anarchical antics. For more productive models, Foster advocates the work of Renee Green, Mary Kelly, Fred Wilson?artists whose interdisciplinary approach bridges art, anthropology and ethnology. Thus as the old academy of the studio is replaced by this new one of the seminar room, reading becomes a primary activity for all, including artists, critics and historians. This book, however, is heavy reading throughout, and not a sentence goes by without linguistic convolution bringing the mind to a halt and forcing a re-reading. It's a brilliant work, but outside the seminar room, most readers will quickly decide to give up the struggle.

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From Library Journal

Since the late 1950s, art and critical theory have been increasingly linked, both by artists themselves and by commentators. Editor of the journal *October*, Foster (art history and comparative literature, Cornell Univ.) discusses here a wide range of artists (including Andy Warhol, Robert Smithson, Barbara Kruger, Mike Kelley, and Cindy Sherman) to explore his ideation of the avant-garde and the regrounding of art in materiality. Focusing on art and artists active after 1960, Foster traces the movement from "art-as-text" in the 1970s, to "art-as-simulacrum" in the 1980s, to contemporary art that is moving more toward materiality. For those not conversant with the language and ideology of contemporary critical theory, Foster's discussion of developments since 1960 will be hard to follow. Recommended only for larger academic collections.?Martin R. Kalfatovic, Smithsonian Inst. Lib., Washington, D.C.

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Review

"The Return of the Real is one of the most cogent and theoretically self-aware readings of contemporary art I have seen."

—Howard Singerman, Department of Art History, University of Virginia

This examination of art and theory over the last three decades of avant-garde works considers both history and philosophy, presenting a scholarly and in-depth survey. Black and white reproductions of works by various artists pepper a survey which consider the controversies and issues of avant garde art and theory. -- Midwest Book Review

Product Description

"The Return of the Real is one of the most cogent and theoretically self-aware readings of contemporary art I have seen." -- Howard Singerman, Department of Art History, University of Virginia

In *The Return of the Real* Hal Foster discusses the development of art and theory since 1960, and reorders the relation between prewar and postwar avant-gardes. Opposed to the assumption that contemporary art is somehow belated, he argues that the avant-garde returns to us from the future, repositioned by innovative practice in the present. And he poses this retroactive model of art and theory against the reactionary undoing of progressive culture that is pervasive today. After the models of art-as-text in the 1970s and art-as-simulacrum in the 1980s; Foster suggests that we are now witness to a return to the real -- to art and theory grounded in the materiality of actual bodies and social sites: If *The Return of the Real* begins with a new narrative of the historical avant-garde; it concludes with an original reading of this contemporary situation -- and what it portends for future practices of art and theory, culture and politics.

作者介绍:

Hal Foster is Professor of Art History and Comparative Literature at Cornell University. He is the author of several books, including *The Anti-Aesthetic*, *Recording*, and *Compulsive Beauty*, and an editor of the journal, *October*.

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