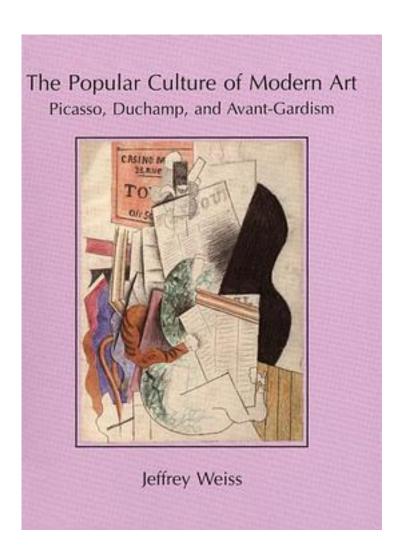
The Popular Culture of Modern Art



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著者:Jeffrey Weiss

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In this fascinating book, Jeffrey Weiss explores the deeply ambiguous relation between modern art and popular culture, focusing on the work of Picasso and Duchamp in

France in the first two decades of this century. Analyzing art, criticism, and popular culture of the period, he shows that the elements of parody and irony that emerged throughout the avant-garde movement greatly influenced public perception—and miscomprehension—of new art.

Weiss links Picasso's innovations in Cubist collage to the puns and topical jokes of the music hall and the theatrical revue, while linking Duchamp's readymades and Large Glass to hoaxes in the daily papers. He also shows that Cubist and Futurist styles were put to parodic use in caricature, advertising, stage design, and other forms of popular visual culture and were often interpreted in the press as examples of flagrant self-publicity. The cultural assimilation of avant-garde art, not often considered in histories of modernism, ultimately mirrors the role of the comic in Picasso and Duchamp.

Weiss's narrative vividly recreates the prolific cultural development and communication from which the complex and controversial art of the early twentieth century emerged. His study is a compelling exploration of the significance of the "popular" in avant-garde art and of the avant-garde in popular culture.

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Jeffrey Weiss is research associate at the National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.

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