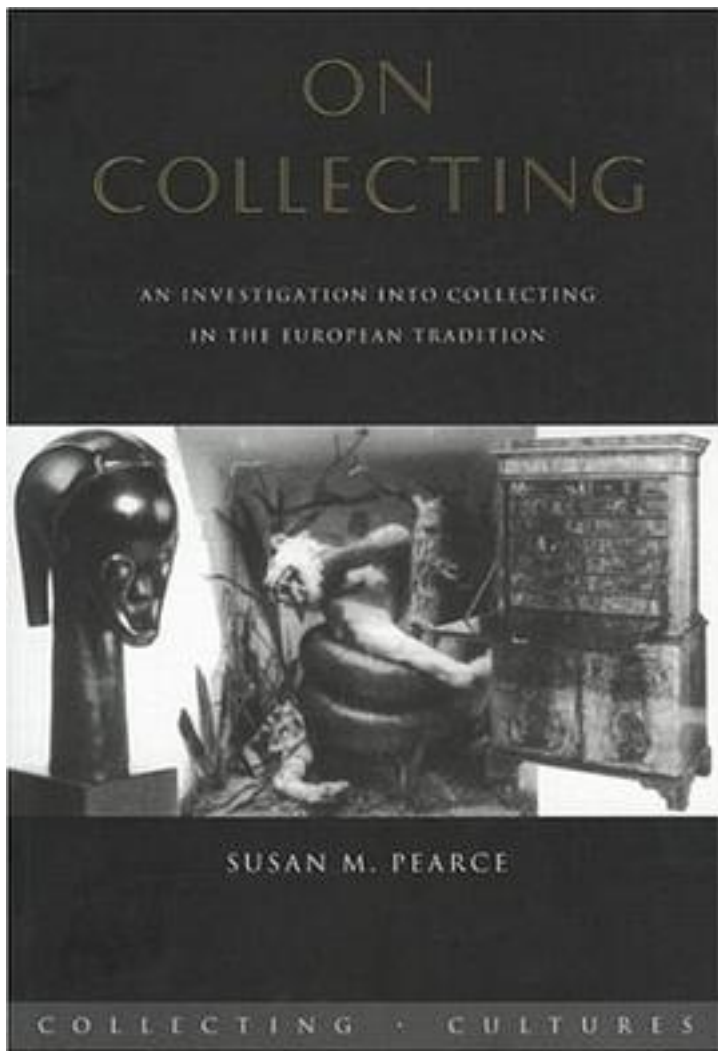


# On Collecting



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The movement of a work of art from artist's studio to gallery, to collector, and to curator sometimes follows a clear and distinct route, easily discernable from start to finish. In other cases, the trail twists and turns, traveling a number of byways before arriving at its destination. The details of negotiations surrounding the acquisition of a collection, the purchase or commission of art from individual artists, and sales involving dealers are usually arranged quietly, out of the public's view. In this collection of essays, the Museum of International Folk Art and, in particular, the Diane and Sandy Besser Collection of folk and tribal art serve as touchstones for understanding the journey of an artwork from its place of origin to a private collection, and finally to a museum that conserves, presents, and interprets its collections for the benefit of the public. Each essay examines the collecting process from a different perspective: collector, dealer, artist, curator, museum director, or lawyer. Writing from these varied viewpoints, the authors share their experiences, using examples drawn from their personal and professional lives. The volume's contributors offer readers a glimpse behind the scenes into the roles and relationships that influence the transfer of private collections. "On Collecting" is illustrated with images of the Besser collection, which includes ceramics, textiles, beadwork, miniature bronzes, masks, bultos (three-dimensional wood-carvings of saints), and retablos (painted devotional images) from New Mexico, as well as intricately carved dagger handles, slingshots, ceremonial objects, curing dolls, and jewelry from around the globe. The book contributes to a greater understanding of the collecting process and the convoluted courtship rituals involving collectors, donors, museum staff, and board members. These essays illuminate the challenges faced by museums of all sizes that engage in the complex ethical, legal, emotional, and intellectual process by which privately held collections are transferred to the public trust. Joyce Ice was the director of the Museum of International Folk Art in Santa Fe, New Mexico from 1999-2008. Other contributors are Sandy Besser, Daniel H. Cook, Susannah Evans, Arthur Lopez, Tey Marianna Nunn, Carmella Padilla, and Luis Tapia.

作者介绍:

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