



Unnatural Wonders: Essays from the Gap Between Art and Life

By Arthur Coleman Danto

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An Incisive Account of the Bizarre, Often Bewildering Art World of Today

Arthur Danto's new collection finds him, and the art world, at a point when the art world has become pluralistic, even chaotic-with one medium as good as the next-when the moment for "next things" has passed.

Since 1984, when Danto-already an eminent philosopher--became *The Nation's* art critic, he has been one of the foremost theorists of contemporary art's history and evolution, and at the same time the most incisive and illuminating critic of new work. In his view, the historical development of art reached a kind of zenith in the pop period, most famously with Warhol's Brillo Boxes. Danto's five volumes of review essays (all published by FSG) form a kind of chronicle of the art world since the Brillo moment, and a running appraisal of the great variety of significant work made since then. In this new book, he shows how work that bridges the gap between art and life is now the definitive work of our time: Damien Hirst's arrays of skeletons and anatomical models, Barbara Kruger's tchotchke-ready slogans, Renee Cox's nude portrait of herself at the Last Supper. To the obvious question--is this stuff really art?--Danto replies with an enthusiastic yes, explaining, with a philosopher's clarity and an art lover's sense of delight, how these "unnatural wonders" show us who we are.

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