

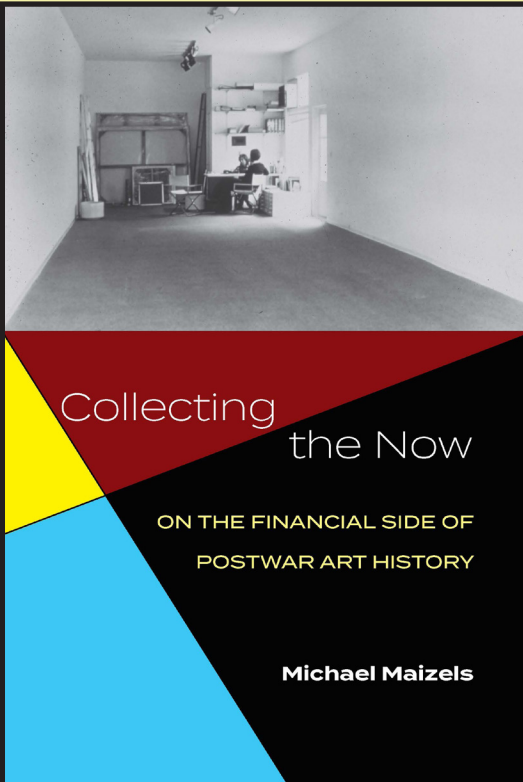
Collecting the Now

On the Financial Side of Postwar Art History

Collecting the Now offers a new, in-depth look at the economic forces and institutional actors that have shaped the outlines of postwar art history, with a particular focus on American art, 1960-1990. Working through four case studies, Michael Maizels illuminates how a set of dealers and patrons conditioned the iconic developments of this period: the profusions of pop art, the quixotic impossibility of land art, the dissemination of new media, and the speculation-fueled neo-expressionist painting of the 1980s.

This book addresses a question of pivotal importance to a swath of art history that has already received substantial scholarly investigation. We now have a clear, nuanced understanding of why certain evolutions took place: why pop artists exploded the delimited parameters of aesthetic modernism, why land artists further strove against the object form itself, and why artists returned to (neo-) traditional painting in the 1980s. But remarkably elided by extant scholarship has been the question of how. How did conditions coalesce around pop so that its artists entered into museum collections, and scholarly analyses, at pace unprecedented in the prior history of art? How, when seeking to transcend the delimited gallery object, were land artists able to create monumental (and by extension, monumentally expensive), interventions in the extreme wilds of the Western deserts? And how did the esoteric objects of media art come eventually to scholarly attention in the sustained absence of academic interest or a private market? The answers to these questions lie in an exploration of the financial conditions and funding mechanisms through which these works were created, advertised, distributed, and preserved.

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