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Jessica Winegar

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The Egyptian art world is the oldest and largest in the Arab Middle East. Its artists must reckon with the histories of ancient Egypt, European modernism, anti-colonial nationalism, and state socialism-all in the context of a growing neoliberal economy marked by American global dominance. At this crucial intersection of culture, politics, and economy, Egypt's art and artists provide unique insight into current struggles for cultural identity and sovereignty in the Middle East.

This book examines the heated cultural politics in today's Arab world, and tells how art-making has become an unexpectedly central part of that. It offers a lively analysis of the battles between artists, curators, and audiences over cultural authenticity, cultural policy, public art in a changing urban Egypt, and the new global marketing of Egyptian art. The art world it shows powerfully exemplifies how people in the Middle East reckon with global transformations that are changing how culture is made in societies with colonial and socialist pasts.

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