



In the Making: Creative Options for Contemporary Art

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From the first page to the last, from Thomas Kinkaid (really!) to Matthew Barney, this book serves as a launching pad. Conclusions are perpetually delayed. Resolutions are continually postponed. The text is written for takeoff, not arrival. It is a first step for readers' explorations of current modes of art making and for their own future artistic achievements. The much-anticipated follow-up to *Art on the Edge... and Over*, Linda Weintraub's highly accessible introduction to contemporary art since the 1970s, *In the Making: Creative Options for Contemporary Art* explores essential but sometimes elusive facets of art making today. In her trademark writing style--straightforward and jargon-free--Weintraub sets out to itemize the conceptual and practical concerns that go into making contemporary art in all its endless permutations. In six clearly defined thematic sections--"Scoping an Audience," "Sourcing Inspiration," "Crafting an Artistic 'Self'," "Expressing an Artistic Attitude," "Choosing a Mission," and "Measuring Success"--Weintraub moves artist by artist, in 40 individual chapters, using each to explain a different aspect of art making. Isaac Julien makes work for a highly specific audience; Michal Rovner communicates through metaphor and symbol; Charles Ray disrupts the viewer's assumptions; Pipilotti Rist is inspired by female emotions; William Kentridge is moved by apartheid and redemption; Vanessa Beecroft epitomizes the biography of a smart, attractive, Caucasian woman; and Matthew Barney achieves success through resistance. Through a compelling combination of renowned and up-and-coming artists, Weintraub creates a complex understanding of how to make and look at contemporary art--but in a simple, easily digestible format and language. In addition to being a fine read for anyone who simply wants to understand how to look at contemporary art, *In the Making* is also an exceptional pedagogical tool, one that addresses what is fast becoming a huge gap in art education. Teaching artistic techniques no longer provides young artists with a sufficient education--a full range of conceptual issues needs to be considered in any well-rounded studio practice. Yet these very same conceptual issues are often those that are dealt with textually in art history and criticism classes. Weintraub persuasively offers a series of texts that fit squarely into this gap, addressing issues that concern anyone who is learning how to make art or how to understand it. In addition, *In the Making* includes a series of interviews in which many of the artists discuss the practical issues of their life's work. Conducted by Weintraub's students at Oberlin College, the interviews pose questions about the artists' schooling, their studio space, and how they support themselves if their main income doesn't come from their art--the kind of questions every art student has always wanted to ask the artists whose work they see on gallery walls.

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