



Creative Spirituality: The Way of the Artist

Robert Wuthnow

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Creative Spirituality: The Way of the Artist Robert Wuthnow

In a provocative book that explores the fascinating link between the creative and the sacred, Robert Wuthnow claims that artists have become the spiritual vanguard of our time. Drawing on in-depth interviews with painters, sculptors, writers, singers, dancers, and actors, Wuthnow includes the spiritual insights of accomplished artists who have gained prominence as Broadway performers, gospel singers, jazz musicians, poets, Native American painters, weavers, dancers, and installation artists. He profiles such national figures as novelist Madeleine L'Engle, playwright Tony Kushner, photographer Andres Serrano, sculptor Greg Wyatt, dancer Carla DeSola, and woodcarver David Ellsworth.

Situating these artists' reflections in the context of wider cultural ferment, Wuthnow argues that spirituality is coming increasingly to focus on the inherently ineffable character of the sacred—what artists refer to as divine mystery. As growing numbers of Americans doubt the adequacy of religious creeds in defining the sacred, they are turning to artists who seek a more intuitive sense of the sacred through symbols and imagery.

These artists provide rich insights into the social and cultural problems of our time. Many have been shaped by the growing ethnic, racial, and religious diversity of the United States. Many are at the cutting edge of new thinking about body, mind, and spirit, and many are seeking ways to integrate their understandings of spirituality with interests in nature and preserving the environment. For readers interested in exploring contemporary spirituality or engaged in spiritual pursuits of their own, this engaging, elegantly written, and erudite book will answer many questions about the changing moral and spiritual role of creativity and the arts.

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