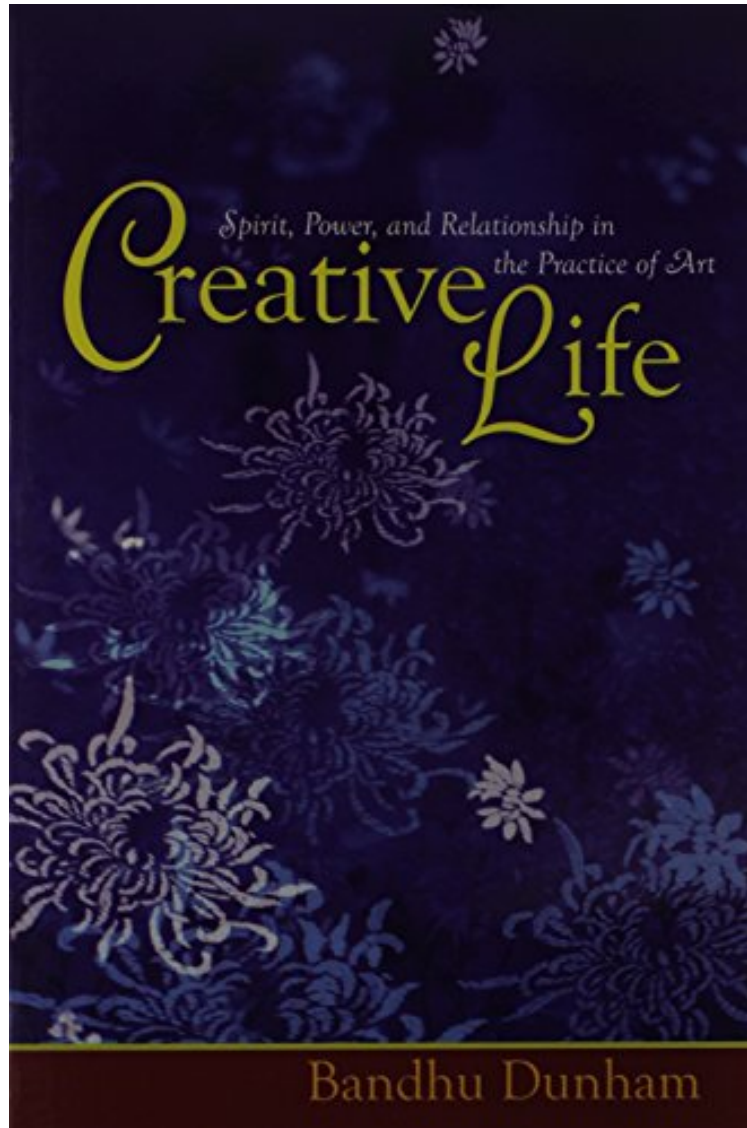


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Creative Life: Spirit, Power and Relationship in the Practice of Art

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Bandhu Scott Dunham, Bandhu Dunham : Creative Life: Spirit, Power and Relationship in the Practice of Art before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Creative Life: Spirit, Power and Relationship in the Practice of Art:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Accessible Psych for HumanitiesBy CustomerThis is a decent book - easy to read and absorb. It provokes thought on how we see the world and art and gently challenges our concepts.

Is contemporary art undermining the sacred roots of human culture? Is art meant for a noble purpose, greater self-

knowledge, and entry to a deeper dimension of life? In sharp, streetwise language, this artist, a skateboarding punk meditator, presents practical ways serious artists can use their lives to develop greater clarity, dignity, generosity, and insight. He discusses: how generosity transforms the artist's natural isolation; how creative people subconsciously sabotage their success; how unrecognised self-indulgence obstructs creativity; how artists can use meditation to deepen insight and creativity; shamanistic and sacred visionary traditions as sources of creative power; and the consequences of manipulating creativity.

About the Author Bandhu Dunham is an internationally-recognized glass artist. After Princeton, he apprenticed under American and European masters at Urban Glass, the Pilchuck Glass School and the Penland School of Crafts. Since 1975, he has also been a practitioner of meditation, as well as the editor of two small magazines on spiritual life and punk culture. Excerpt. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved. It seems that everyone wants to be an artist these days, although the process of becoming an artist is less attractive. The difference says a lot about our society. There is an inherently conflicted attitude about creative life in this consumer culture. While we naturally value creativity, it is hard to bottle; it cannot be summarized or packaged neatly. Although it is freely transmitted and exchanged between people, it is impossible to quantify or assign an objective value. This inherently subjective quality is both a blessing and a curse for the creative practitioner. Of the many snares and pitfalls to be negotiated along the path of creative practice, a healthy (or unhealthy) percentage can be attributed to our lack of clarity in this area. When we approach creativity as if it were something tangible to be obtained and consumed, we sideline ourselves from the creative process itself. Success in most fields is referred to as having made it, but if we operate creatively, we know that there is really no such thing; success is never permanent, and resting on one's laurels usually leads to stagnation and decline. Creativity is in constant motion, and what outsiders label advancement or success is really just operating at a higher level of risk or as Werner Erhard put it, upgrading to a higher level of problem. Nothing is really secure in a creatively engaged position, and when things become too secure, creativity can dry up. Crossing the finish line is anticlimactic because it means we are no longer in the race. In our culture, notions of having made it are often tied in with consumerist fantasies and assumptions that have nothing to do with creative work. While creativity itself cannot be packaged, there is a package of ideas about the creative life that is regularly sold to the general population. Standard marketing hooks such as glamour, prestige, comfort, leisure and expertise are attached to the romanticized, bohemian artistic lifestyle, contrasting it with the grinding work-a-day existence of the average Joe. These intangible values can then be assigned to physical objects or performances, giving them a higher perceived worth than could be obtained from their material components and other direct costs. The artist's output can therefore be neatly fit into an economic system based on added value and the exchange of tangible goods. Unfortunately, there is an inherent lack of realism to this trade in images.