



# Culture Incorporated: Museums, Artists, And Corporate Sponsorships

*Mark W. Rectanus*

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Photographer Annie Leibowitz collaborates with American Express on a portrait exhibition. Absolut Vodka engages artists for their advertisements. Philip Morris mounts an "Arts Against Hunger" campaign in partnership with prominent museums. Is it art or PR, and where is the line that separates the artistic from the corporate? According to Mark Rectanus, that line has blurred. These mergers of art, business, and museums, he argues, are examples of the worldwide privatization of cultural funding.

In Culture Incorporated, Rectanus calls for full disclosure of corporate involvement in cultural events and examines how corporations, art institutions, and foundations are reshaping the cultural terrain. In turn, he also shows how that ground is destabilized by artists subverting these same institutions to create a heightened awareness of critical alternatives.

Rectanus exposes the way sponsorship helps maintain social legitimization in a time when corporations are the target of significant criticism. He provides wide-ranging examples of artists and institutions grappling with corporate sponsorship, including artists' collaboration with sponsors, corporate sponsorship of museum exhibitions, festivals, and rock concerts, and cybersponsoring. Throughout, Rectanus's analyzes the convergence of cultural institutions with global corporate politics and the way this shapes our culture and our communities.

Mark W. Rectanus is professor of German at Iowa State University.



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