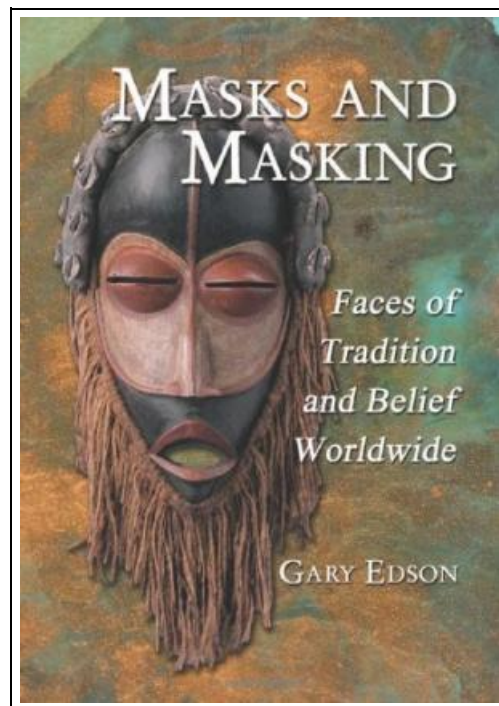


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McFarland & Co Inc. Paperback. Book Condition: new. BRAND NEW, Masks and Masking: Faces of Tradition and Belief Worldwide, Gary Edson, For at least 20,000 years, masking has been a mark of cultural evolution and an indication of magical-religious sophistication in society. Ancient cave paintings depict figures with animal masks; early Egyptians left images of humans with animal 'heads'; and Incan burial chambers contained masks of gold to cover the faces of the dead. Ancient people wore masks to survive the elements, succeed in combat, confirm their identity, attract spouses, celebrate important events, and venerate their personal and collective gods. Current literature suggests an early association between masking and pietistic practice. These and many other uses of masking are an important part of the record of human existence, shedding light on the origins of belief systems and spiritualism in the earliest human societies. Placing the mask in the broader context of the evolution of humanity, this book argues that the mask itself should not be assessed in the service of any single function. Instead, the chapters integrate all functions to provide a comprehensive understanding of the mask as a powerful cultural phenomenon - a means by which individual communities attempted to communicate their dignity and sense of purpose, as well as to establish a continuum between the natural and supernatural worlds. The book addresses the distinctive environments within which masks flourished, and the mask is analyzed as a manifestation of art, ethnology and anthropology. The discussion is augmented by more than 100 illustrations of masks chosen for what they reveal about fundamental emotional and spiritual perspectives, as well as for their different styles, shapes, and designs.



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