



Our Sacred Signs: How Jewish, Christian, and Muslim Art Draw from the Same Source (Icon Editions)

Ori Soltes

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The art of the three Abrahamic religions—Christianity, Judaism, and Islam—has a tangled, interwoven history. Symbols cross back and forth among the three faiths, adapted to reflect that faith's specific spiritual needs. And much of this symbolic language predates any of the Abrahamic faiths entirely. In *Our Sacred Signs*, Ori Soltes traces the interconnectedness of religious symbols such as the Star of David, which isn't, it turns out, exclusive to Judaism at all. He shows that the various ways that Jesus is portrayed on the cross recall an artistic tradition that is in no way unique to Christianity. And he shows that religious architectural conventions as simple as the dome represent early "pagan" traditions. The narrative—essentially a series of overlapping stories—moves through the halls of museums and off to the holy sites of the three religions, tracing the millennia-long artistic trail that has endured even as the West moved toward secularization in the last three hundred years. Soltes shows us how art has long been used as an instrument to take us where words cannot follow. *Our Sacred Signs* is a breathtaking and revelatory journey through human history, its gods, and its art.

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