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The Art of Life in South Africa

by Daniel Magaziner

Ohio University Press, Athens, Ohio. New African Histories series, 2018. 377 pp., 43 color ill., 49 b/w ill., map, notes, bibliography, index. \$34.95 paper

In *The Art of Life in South Africa*, Daniel Magaziner examines the history of art education under apartheid in South Africa. The book focuses on Ndaleni, an art school for black South Africans, and considers the travails and triumphs of its artists and their teachers under white supremacy. At Ndaleni, students and teachers were bound together in learning “the art of life”; due to lack of funds, they improvised materials for artistic production. While the school existed, between the 1950s and 1980s, about 1,000 students graduated; about 2,000 could not be admitted due to constraints of space. This shows how Ndaleni appealed to many black South Africans as one of the few places they could develop their art. According to the Bantu Education Act of 1953 (p. 3), the purpose of the school was to preserve white supremacy, the segregation between African and European education—what Oguibe (2004) refers to as “Play me the other.” The book is organized into seven chapters, with a prologue, an epilogue, and endnotes.