Second Skin: Josephine Baker & The Modern Surface
Synopsis
Through the figure of Josephine Baker, Second Skin tells the story of an unexpected yet enduring intimacy between the invention of a modernist style and the theatricalization of black skin at the turn of the twentieth century. Stepping outside of the platitudes surrounding this iconic figure, Anne A. Cheng argues that Baker's famous nakedness must be understood within larger philosophic and aesthetic debates about, and desire for, 'pure surface' that crystallized at the convergence of modern art, architecture, machinery, and philosophy. Through Cheng's analysis, Baker emerges as a central artist whose work engages with and impacts various modes of modernist display such as film, photography, art, and even the modern house.

Book Information
Paperback: 256 pages
Publisher: Oxford University Press; 1 edition (June 1, 2013)
Language: English
ISBN-10: 0199988161
Product Dimensions: 8.2 x 0.5 x 5.5 inches
Shipping Weight: 14.1 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)
Average Customer Review: 5.0 out of 5 starsÂ See all reviewsÂ (2 customer reviews)
Best Sellers Rank: #1,041,227 in Books (See Top 100 in Books)  #17 inÂ Books > Arts & Photography > Performing Arts > Dance > Jazz  #220 inÂ Books > Textbooks > Humanities > Performing Arts > Dance  #297 inÂ Books > Textbooks > Humanities > Design

Customer Reviews
Intelligent, perceptive new look at the Josephine Baker story, with none of the old cliches.

Beautifully written. Even better than her first, The Melancholy of Race.

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