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Photobook Phenomenon



Synopsis

As the photobook becomes increasingly broadly recognized as a genre with its own rich history, canon and critical culture, Photobook Phenomenon surveys the views of those who have played a leading role in defining this genre: Martin Parr, Gerry Badger, Markus Schaden and Frederic Lezmi, Horacio Fernández, Ryuichi Kaneko, Erik Kessels, Irene de Mendoza and Moritz Neumüller. In addition, it features various contemporary artists who have contributed a genuine vision to the medium and who discuss the creative processes involved in producing a photobook: Laia Abril, Julián Barón, Alejandro Cartagena, Jana Romanova, Vivianne Sassen, Thomas Sauvin i Katja Stuke and Oliver Sieber. Photobook Phenomenon also explores the challenge of displaying a photobook through a number of interactive systems that make it possible to look through and experience the book and photography from diverse viewpoints.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

The authors of the selection of works are precisely some of the central protagonists of this movement, figures of the stature of Martin Parr, Gerry Badger, Horacio Fernandez, Ryuichi Kaneko, and Markus Schaden. With its wide range of subject matter and fully engaged approach, the volume offers an indispensable, multifaceted introduction to the world of the photobook.

The 'book' relates to an exhibition of photobooks at Barcelona's Centre for contemporary culture. The 'book' is actually eight lose sixteen page booklets and a fold-out poster (one side has all the

title's credits) in a sealed cardboard box. You have to tear off one side of the box to access the booklets which have their cotton binding showing (it's as if they were printed but instead of binding them into a book they were left as individual sections and put in a box). I found the contents a rather mixed bag of essays. Worth reading is Moritz Neumuller and Lesley Martin's overview of photobooks from the last few decades. Martin Parr looks at fifty seven books basically as detailed captions under a photo of each title. Markus Schaden and Frederic Lezmi have a go at a typographic interpretation of Klein's 'Life is good & good for you in New York' by enlarging various words in an attempt to capture the visual pacing in Klein's title. Gerry Badger makes some good points in his essay on propaganda versus protest books. The other four books I thought somewhat elitist. Perhaps all these illustrated essays would have more credence if they were actually presented as a proper book rather than unbound and in a sealed box. This unorthodox production is no more than a bit of designer whimsy and rather expensive, too.

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