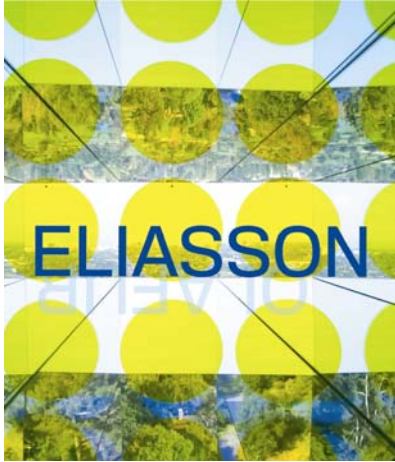


Take Your Time: Olafur Eliasson / Edited by Madeleine Grynsztejn.—San Francisco, CA: San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; New York, NY: Thames & Hudson, dist. by W. W. Norton, September 2007.—276 p.: ill.—ISBN-13: 978-0-500-09340-5: \$50.00.



Take Your Time is the most recent in a long series of meditations on the work of the contemporary artist Olafur Eliasson. The catalog's selected bibliography lists no fewer than seventy-two books from the last ten years alone, making Eliasson one of the most critically discussed artists of our time. Given this record, it is surprising to find that Grynsztejn's survey is the first U.S. publication to fully access the artist's work.

This ambitious volume documents, both in image and text, 171 projects completed between 1991 and 2006, beginning while Eliasson was still a student at Copenhagen's Royal Danish Academy of Arts. The art is formally diverse and intellectually complex, using both tangible and ephemeral materials, such as his signature elements: light, mirrors, and stream. Even through the book's 233 large and chiefly colored illustrations, it might be difficult for the reader to understand exactly what they are seeing. This is not a criticism so much as a reflection on the mercurial nature of the art itself. Still, the

book goes a long-way to demystify Eliasson's creative process.

The work is presented chronologically, interspaced with six essays written by Mieke Bal, Klaus Biesenbach and Roxana Marcoci, Daniel Birnbaum, Madeleine Grynsztejn, Pamela M. Lee, and Henry Urbach. In addition, there is an abridged transcript of a 2006 conversation between Eliasson and artist Robert Irwin, who remains one of Eliasson's most important influences.

This is a thorough reference source with a catalog and floor plan of the exhibition it accompanies (as installed at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art); a chronology of exhibitions, projects, and reviews through 2009 (including commissions already begun); selected bibliography; and index. Yet, several annoying design features make the catalog unnecessarily complicated to use, such as page numbers that are given only within the essays, leaving long sections to be navigated without assistance. Each essay fades slowly into view through text printed first in pale gray and, only after several lines, turning to black. Given the intellectual control Eliasson administers over all aspects of his work, the title, *Take Your Time*, may refer to the time he wants the reader to spend maneuvering through the book. Just as his art requires the kinetic and emotional involvement of the viewer, this catalog provokes its readers to contemplate and search for their own response to the work. It is particularly appropriate for academic libraries, where it will challenge students to think.

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