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# Theaster Gates (Contemporary Artists)



## Synopsis

The first monograph of Chicago-based Theaster Gates, one of the most exciting and highly regarded contemporary artists at work today. Theaster Gates has developed an expanded artistic practice that includes space development, object making, performance and critical engagement with many publics. Gates transforms spaces, institutions, traditions, and perceptions. Gates's training as an urban planner and sculptor, and subsequent time spent studying clay, has given him keen awareness of the poetics of production and systems of organizing. Playing with these poetic and systematic interests, Gates has assembled gospel choirs, formed temporary unions, and used systems of mass production as a way of underscoring the need that industry has for the body. Gates refers to his working method as "critique through collaboration" and his projects often stretch the form of what we usually understand visual art to be. His focus is also on the availability of information and the cross-fertilization of ideas. His multi-faceted exhibitions investigate themes of race and history through sculpture, installation, performance and two-dimensional works, furthering the artist's interest in a critique of social practice, shared economies and the question of objects in relation to political and cultural thought. Gates's recent exhibition and performance venues include the Seattle Art Museum, Art Basel Miami Beach, Milwaukee Art Museum, Contemporary Arts Museum Houston, and the Whitney Biennial in New York. Gates was a participating artist in Documenta 13 in Kassel (2012) with his total-living installation 12 Ballads for Huguenot House. Other notable solo exhibitions include An Epitaph for Civil Rights at the Los Angeles Museum of Contemporary Art (2011) and My Labor Is My Protest, at White Cube Bermondsey, London (2012). Parallel to his artist career, Gates is also Director of Arts and Public Life Initiative at the University of Chicago and a board member of the city's South Side Community Center. Recently commissioned as the 2012 Armory Show Artist and a Loeb Fellow at Harvard Graduate School of Design in 2011, Gates has received awards and grants from Creative Capital, the Joyce Foundation, Graham Foundation, and the Bemis Center for Contemporary Art.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"The poster boy for socially engaged art." [ArtReview](#) [Gates] allows places of non-elitist art to become places the art world looks to for its avant-garde." [The Independent on Sunday](#)

"The book is a beautiful, well-made and oversized paperback with an attractive dust jacket. The layout, graphics and photos are excellent throughout." [New Art Examiner](#)

On the Contemporary Artists Series "The boldest, best executed, and most far-reaching publishing project devoted to contemporary art. These books will revolutionize the way contemporary art is presented and written about." [Artforum](#)

"The combination of intelligent analysis, personal insight, useful facts and plentiful pictures is a superb format invaluable for specialists but also interesting for casual readers, it makes these books a must for the library of anyone who cares about contemporary art." [Time Out](#)

"A unique series of informative monographs on individual artists." [The Sunday Times](#)

"Gives the reader the impression of a personal encounter with the artists. Apart from the writing which is lucid and illuminating, it is undoubtedly the wealth of lavish illustrations which makes looking at these books a satisfying entertainment." [The Art Book](#)

Theaster Gates is an artist whose practice includes sculpture, installation, performance, architecture and urban interventions designed to bridge the gap between art and life. Carol Becker is Dean of Faculty and Professor of the Arts at Columbia University School of the Arts. She has published numerous articles and books on cultural criticism including *The Invisible Drama: Women and the Anxiety of Change* (1987) and *Thinking in Place: Art, Action, and Cultural Production* (2010). Achim Borchardt-Hume is Head of Exhibitions at Tate Modern in London. From 2010 to 2012 he was Chief Curator at the Whitechapel Art Gallery. Lisa Yun Lee is the Director of the School of Art & Art History, a visiting curator at the Jane Addams Hull-House Museum, and a member of the Art History, Museum and Exhibition Studies, and Gender and Women's Studies faculty at the University of Illinois at Chicago.

Beautiful book.

love this book and his work.

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