



Theaster Gates

Carol Becker, Achim Borchardt-Hume

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Theaster Gates Carol Becker, Achim Borchardt-Hume

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' 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

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