

GLADSTONE GALLERY

Hans Ulrich Obrist, "Art, Like it is in the Books," *Das Magazin* online, November 2, 2012.

ART, LIKE IT IS IN THE BOOKS

2. November 2012 von Hans Ulrich Obrist

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The great art books by the North American artist Cameron Jamie are like mobile exhibitions.

As a curator, I find it especially interesting when artists make books. They are portable, mobile exhibitions and are a form that has always been important in art history, from Picasso, to the surrealists and, later, to the conceptual artists of the 1960s. The idea of an art book is that the book is not something secondary in which one prints images of the works, but that it is a work in itself. Cameron Jamie, a representative of the younger generation, has taken this art form to new heights. Jamie grew up near Los Angeles and his video works often take on popular culture, such as Youtube clips and the rituals they reveal. In „Massage The History“, for example, he documented a dance in a living room, cultivated in a suburb of Montgomery in Alabama. Other expressions of his interest in ritual are sculpture, installation and masks, which remind one of cult objects. A somewhat less noted aspect of his work is his sketching, which he has done daily and obsessively since his youth. Unlike his usual work, these do not document the outside world but rather his inner life. They are what make up the material of his extraordinary books.

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He initially copied the intense, feverish sketches himself in a copy-shop. Black and white photocopies on red or green A4 paper, folded in the middle and paper-clipped. Since then Jamie has been employing independent publishers around the world, such as Sea Urchin Editions in Rotterdam or Evidence Books in Tokyo. He uses the distribution platforms of the anarchists of the 1960s, but what he sets down here in these tiny editions is not agitprop but his own individual mythology. Perhaps, then, these books also interest me so greatly because I see them as a resistance to the digitilisation of the Internet. For a long time people have been wondering if printed books will disappear. Maybe this kind of one-off, or of an individual book, is really the future.

www.sea-urchin.net

Bild: Cranium Mask (l.) and Dwarf by Cameron Jamie

Übersetzung aus dem Deutschen: Leila Rejali