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Charles Ray



Synopsis

Ever since the early 1970s, sculptor Charles Ray's protean practice has yielded some of the most memorable objects and experiences in contemporary art, causing us to confront, as Peter Schjeldahl has written, "elegant, deadpan fabrications that flip wild switches in our minds." In 1987's "Ink Line," for example, he sent a single stream of ink flowing to the middle of a gallery's floor in a slender column; outside the 1993 Whitney Biennial he parked a massive replica of a toy fire engine. His recent work is just as alluring and unsettling: a steel sculpture of a handheld bird, a poster of an ominous pumpkin, an intricate cast aluminum sculpture of a tractor. Charles Ray surveys the work the artist has made in the past dozen years; an interview by Michael Fried and an essay by John Kelsey complement texts written about each work by Ray himself.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Published to accompany a mid-career retrospective traveling from New York to Los Angeles to Chicago in the coming months, this is the first comprehensive look at the 45-year-old Ray, a quietly influential figure in the art world for over a decade. While Ray, who early on moved from performance to sculpture as his primary means of expression, has produced a limited output, we can now stand back and appreciate his body of work as a whole. The mostly explanatory text complements the simple eloquence of the pieces themselves, but curator Schimmel does find a trail of Freudian abnormalities and psychological concerns throughout the conceptual artist's productions. This oversized book (11" x 14") does a good job of capturing the play with scale that is central to many later works; early performances (such as "Plank Piece," during which Ray draped

himself over a board against a wall) are well documented in photographs within the essays.

Recommended for all libraries that collect works on contemporary artists. ?Doug McClellmont, New York Copyright 1998 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an alternate Hardcover edition.

Still, after all these years, the best publication on Charles Ray's work. Oversize and with good reproductions. And best of all, inexpensive.

An interesting and comprehensive survey of Ray's work throughout the 70's, 80's, and into the 90's. The interview with the artist is funny and informative and the reproductions of his work here are beautiful.

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