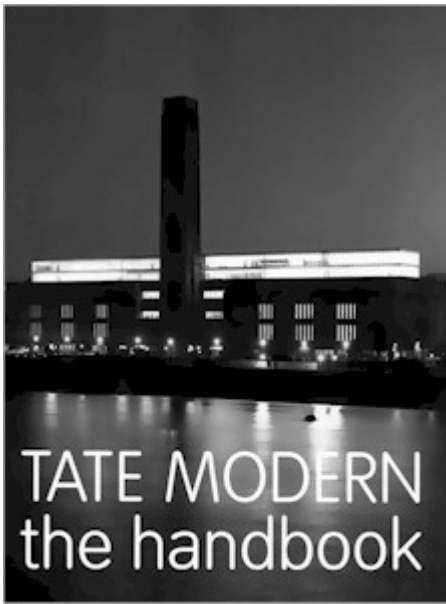


VISITOR'S GUIDE

Tate Modern



TATE MODERN: THE HANDBOOK / Edited by Iwona Blazwick and Simon Wilson.-Berkeley, CA: The University of California Press, August 2000.-245 p.:ill.-ISBN 0-520-22769-7414-0 (cl.), ISBN 0-520-22770-0 (pa.): \$40.00 (cl.), \$29.95 (pa.).

A first-rate publication celebrates the opening of the Tate Modern, whose collections of twentieth-century art are renowned. This handbook successfully provides a description of the museum's holdings, but also conveys the commitment to innovation that is reflected in the building itself, the presentation of modern and contemporary art, and the development of the collection.

In a bold move, the Tate Modern was located in London's Southwark Borough, a predominantly blue-collar, industrial section of the city, in the dramatically renovated Bankside Power Station. Both the new museum and *The Handbook*, reinterpret twentieth-century art based on four common themes: the nude, landscape, still life, and history painting. Co-editor Blazwick explains, in the essay, "Showing the Twentieth Century," that the pieces of art in the collection that are initially shown in one thematic suite of galleries can be easily shifted to another thematic suite of galleries. Therefore, this scheme allows for more fluid and multifaceted interpretations of the collection.

In addition to the many galleries included in the thematic display scheme, there are those galleries--a staggering forty-six of the museum's eighty-one--which are occupied by only a single artist in the inaugural display. *The Handbook* correctly reflects this sheer magnitude and strength of the museum's collection by including the substantial "Artists A-Z" section (consisting of 121 pages out of the total page count of 245). Here we are provided with approximately 150 color illustrations of works of art by the most influential artists of the century.

The wonderful essays, eight in all, are subdivided into two groups, with the first four focusing on the Tate Modern. Leading it off is the insightful foreword by the Director, Lars Nittve. Next, we are presented with artist and Tate Trustee Michael Craig-Martin's description of the various plans and decisions made regarding the renovations of the Bankside Power Station. Doreen Massey's essay provides an informative history of the Southwark area of London, and finally, "Showing the Twentieth Century," by Blazwick, Head of Exhibition and Displays, and Francis Morris, Senior Curator, shares many of the thoughts and choices involved in the creation of the display schemes. The second group of four essays provides further insight into the four subject themes: Landscape / Matter / Environment, Still Life / Object / Real Life, History / Memory / Society, and Nude

/Action / Body. The authors of these essays are respectively, Curators Jennifer Mundy and Paul Moorhouse; Director of Tate Collections, Jeremy Lewison; and co-editor of this volume and the Tate's Communication Editor, Simon Wilson.

Tate Modern: The Handbook serves as an important contribution to museum studies and is recommended for all collections of twentieth-century art.

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