
Continuing the trend toward catalogues raisonnés produced for living artists, this is the first of five volumes planned for publication over the next seven years to document the paintings and sculptural works of the well-known and widely collected German artist Gerhard Richter (b. 1932). Issued as a bilingual German and English edition, this volume is edited by Dietmar Elger, former studio assistant to the artist and current director of the Gerhard Richter Archive at the Dresden State Art Collections.

Covering the years 1962–1968, this series will supersede a number of earlier efforts: Richter's self-published Bilderverzeichnis of 1969 (an editioned print that was updated in 1972 as an illustrated list), Elger's production from 1986, and another Hatje Cantz edition that was published in 1997. Building upon Richter's diligent documentation, some of the idiosyncratic organizational systems created by the artist himself are evident while the volume as a whole is a product of the editor's own meticulous research. Artworks that used photographs as a starting point are detailed with Richter's original source material, and many entries also include published comments by the artist discussing the individual works. Although this volume does not feature any lengthy discussion of the body of work as a whole, the condensed introduction does paint a cogent picture of this span of years in Richter's life from both the personal and art-making angles. Following the included 385 artwork entries, it is completed with listings for biography, exhibitions, and bibliography, which are each comprehensive in scope.

The comprehensiveness of the supporting documentation, along with the evidence of Richter's ability to work in a variety of styles even in this early body of work, make this first volume valuable as a stand-alone for libraries concerned with the investment cost of the complete series. Museums and universities with Richter works in their holdings will require this for their library collections, while educational institutions should also strongly consider it for its potential as a research resource for art historians and scholars, and a source of inspiration for artists.

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