

KELLEY WALKER

DIRECT DRIVE



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CATEGORIES: [Books](#), [Monographs & Artists' Books](#)

SPECIFICATIONS:

English

Publication: November 2016

ISBN: 978-3-03764-495-9

Hardcover, 272 x 204 mm

Pages: 160

Pictures B&W: / Color: 90

Price: CHF 42, EUR 35, GBP 28, USD 45

NEW MONOGRAPH

Since the early 2000s, Kelley Walker (b. 1969, lives in New York City) has developed a body of work that alters and subverts some of the most ubiquitous cultural, political, and social signifiers of our contemporary society. Using the potency of advertising strategies, his work interrogates the ways a single image can migrate into a number of cultural contexts, how meaning constantly shifts, and how everything and everyone is subject to reinvention—just as the iconic recycling symbol he uses in numerous manifestations might ironically suggest. He explores authorship and authenticity, the manipulation and repurposing of images and material from the public domain in order to destabilize issues of identity, race, class, sexuality, consumerism, and politics. Production, transaction, analogue/digital conversion, and distribution processes are central to his practice: “I am working with a very complex way of producing objects that conflates and compresses and deflates all different types of modes of production in one object.” Often using such technologies as 3-D modeling software and laser cutting, Walker works in a variety of media, including photography, painting, printmaking, collage, and sculpture. Referencing the heritage of artists such as Andy Warhol, Jackson Pollock, and Sigmar Polke, “he combines printing techniques and digital manipulations. His work thus collapses the digital and the physical into a compressed space of representation—a new space for painting in the digital age,” Christophe Cherix observed in 2016. In an era of digital reproduction, Walker’s work draws attention to

popular culture's perpetual consumption.

This comprehensive monograph is published as the editorial sequel to Kelley Walker's "Direct Drive" solo exhibition at the Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis (Fall 2016). Designed by NORM (Zurich), it features Walker's different bodies of works to date (the "Black Star Press," "Brick Paintings," "Recycling Signs," and "Schema" series among others) alongside his most recent pieces. Edited and introduced by Jeffrey Uslip, Direct Drive exhibition's curator, it brings together new essays by MoMA's Chief Curator of Drawings and Prints Christophe Cherix, Le Consortium's Co-Director Anne Pontegnie, and University of Southern California's Professor Suzanne Hudson.