

MATT MULLICAN

RUBBINGS



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CATALOGUE 1984-2016

One of Matt Mullican's central and most consequential inventions, the so-called "Rubbings," are a kind of "frottages," a technique the artist uses to produce specific pictures.

From the beginning of his career, Mullican looked for pictures that would not be paintings; thus, he used banners, the traditional carriers of signs, posters, and, in 1984, he realized his first "Rubbing." He used a cardboard plate on which the canvas was placed; by rubbing with an oil stick the cardboard reliefs, forms became visible on the canvas. This way, Mullican was able to transfer complex representations onto canvas; the result is a picture of something that is not present, it is a form of copy. The cardboard plates may be used for other works and so the imagery can reappear in different configurations. Each "Rubbing" is a single work and at the same time a reproduction, like a print, part of a sequence which contains picture elements from different sources.

Following the "Rubbings" from 1984 to recent times, it becomes visible that they represent the motives and themes the artist worked with over the years. The sequence of the "Rubbings" appears therefore like a diary of Mullican's work.

The book presents a catalogue of the "Rubbings" on canvas from 1984 to 2016. It comprises around 500 works,

documented by images and catalogue entries. The book also contains an essay by Dieter Schwarz.

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