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Jo Ractliffe

Photographs: 1980s to now

Main description

Co-published with The Walther Collection, this book is the first to present a comprehensive selection of the work of South African photographer Jo Ractliffe. Looking back over the past 35 years, it brings together images from major photo-essays, as well as early works that have not been seen before. Described by Okwui Enwezor as “one of the most accomplished and under-rated photographers of her generation,” Ractliffe started working in the early 1980s, and her photographs continue to reflect her preoccupation with the South African landscape and the ways in which it figures in the country’s imaginary—particularly the violent legacies of apartheid. In 2007 she extended her interests to the war in Angola and published three photobooks on the aftermath of that conflict and its manifestations in the South African landscape: *Terreno Ocupado* (2008), *As Terras do Fim do Mundo* (2010) and *The Borderlands* (2015).

Biography

Born in 1961 in Cape Town, Jo Ractliffe studied at the Michaelis School of Fine Art at the University of Cape Town, majoring in photography and printmaking. In 1991 she moved to Johannesburg and took up a post at the University of the Witwatersrand, also teaching at the Market Photo Workshop, founded by David Goldblatt. Ractliffe has exhibited widely both in South Africa and abroad, including at The Walther Collection Project Space, New York; Fotohof, Salzburg; the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; and Centro Fotográfico Manuel Álvarez Bravo, Oaxaca. Her work is held in international collections including the Museum of Modern Art, New York; the Apartheid Museum, Johannesburg; Centre Pompidou, Paris; and the South African National Gallery, Cape Town. A retrospective of her photography will take place at the Art Institute of Chicago in 2020.

Bibliography

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