

January Book Bag: from Marina Abramović's instructions for rebooting your life to Paul Nash's little-known design work

Gareth Harris : 3-4 minutes : 1/11/2022

Paul Nash, Designer and Illustrator, James King, Lund Humphries, 216pp, £35 (hb)

Paul Nash's achievements as a painter have been recognised but his work in design and illustration has never received its due. This survey of the life and work of the early the 20th-century UK artist fills the gap, offering "a fresh interpretation of Paul Nash's career through the lens of his design and illustration work", according to the publishers. Inspired by Giorgio de Chirico, he experimented with Surrealist techniques in the 1920s. But Nash's design output was prolific, encompassing posters, set design pieces, pattern papers, fabrics, glass, and ceramics. Chapters cover topics such as "Fine and Applied Arts", "Vast Primitive Things" and "The Artist Outside the Theatre".

Faith Ringgold: American People, edited by Massimiliano Gioni and Gary Carrion-Murayari, Phaidon and the New Museum, 240pp, £59.95, February (hb)

This extensive survey accompanies a Faith Ringgold exhibition at the New Museum, New York (17 February-5 June), spanning six decades of the US artist and activist's prolific career, featuring works created in response to the civil rights and the second-wave feminist movements along with autobiographical pieces that tell stories of the Harlem Renaissance. Ringgold, aged 91, is known for her piecwork quilts and paintings that recount Black histories and examine racial and gender hierarchies in the arts. The book features 11 essays by art historians, curators, and artists, who offer insight into Ringgold's influence, including by former Tate curator Mark Godfrey and the artist Diedrick Brackens.

The Marina Abramović Method: Instruction Cards to Reboot Your Life, Katya Tylevich and Marina Abramovic, Laurence King, 30 cards, £16.99, February

Improve your life, the Marina Abramović way. The Belgrade-born godmother of performance art reveals her tips "for reaching a higher consciousness and confronting life's challenges" on a series of 30 instruction cards, which include directions such as "complain to a tree", "walk backwards with a mirror" and "drink a glass of water as slowly as you can". Key works by Abramović include *Rhythm 5* (1974), where she lay in the

centre of a burning five-point star and *The Artist Is Present* (2010) when she sat and locked eyes with hundreds of visitors to the Museum of Modern Art in New York.

A Pound of Pictures, Alec Soth, Mack, 156pp, €70 (hb)

The US photographer Alec Soth presents a new body of work made between 2018 and 2021 during one of his many meanderings across the United States, capturing the odder aspects of life across both Biden's and Trump's America. Soth's documentary images depict a wide range of subjects from Buddhist statues and birdwatchers to sun-seekers and busts of Abe Lincoln. Soth says that the pictures are "about going into the ecstatically specific world and creating a connection between the ephemeral (light, time) and the physical (eyeballs, film)". An accompanying exhibition runs at Sean Kelly Gallery, New York (14 January-26 February).