

The Year in Art Books: Our Critics Pick Their Favorite Titles

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Co-Chief Art Critics Johanna Fateman and John Vincler share the books that sustained them this year.

Contextures

By Linda Goode Bryant and Marcy S. Philips

Pacific / Primary Information

This new edition of the book, first published in 1978 by the gallery Just Above Midtown, takes the form of a facsimile of the original: a slender volume with black-and-white reproductions, a Senga Nengudi image on its otherwise orange cover. Only its tender afterword is new, written by Thomas (T.) Jean Lax, curator of the fantastic 2022-2023 MoMA exhibition “Changing Spaces,” which focused on the historic exhibition space led by Goode Bryant. Expository, scholarly, and visionary, the authors’ vintage text on postwar Black abstraction, meant to be catalogue for a major survey that never came to pass, remains both a primer and a trenchant theorization of a movement and a moment, whether it’s called Contextualist or not.

—*Johanna Fateman*