New and forthcoming books

Otherhow

Essays and Documents on Art and Disability 1985-2024

Joseph Grigely

Joseph Grigely Otherhow: Essays and Documents on Art and Disability 1985-2024 (Primary Information)

Joseph Grigely has long been one of my favorite artists-as-writers. Maybe it's his love of fly-fishing or the fact that he lives and works in Chicago that brings Hemingway to mind when I read him. But the connection is really more about an essential clarity of thought. Grigely wrote for this magazine in 2019, a wonderful piece about making art only for oneself, in his case piling stones in remote quarries. "If things had gone a bit differently," he began, "I might have become a bricklayer instead of an artist." His writing possesses that kind of solidity. And because his subject is often communication itself (Grigely has been deaf since the age of ten), his sentences seem to perform double duty. This superb collection is the first to gather all of his writing, much of it about the complex cultural mechanics of disability. "Disability is always latent," he once observed, "always potential, and trying to get people to embrace disability means trying to get them to embrace what they fear."

-Randy Kennedy