



Auto Focus: The Self-Portrait in Contemporary Photography

Susan Bright

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Auto Focus features a dazzling array of self-portraits by seventy-five of the world's foremost contemporary photographers. Photography writer and curator Susan Bright provides a clear guide through this significant and dynamic genre, showing how issues of identity—whether national, sexual, racial, personal, or artistic—are key to understanding the work of many of today's leading photographers.

This lavishly illustrated, accessible survey is organized into five thematic chapters: diaristic and autobiographical images; pictures of the body; the use of masks and masquerade; the return to studio portraiture and the photographic album; and performance, both public and private. An informative illustrated introduction explains the history of the photographic self-portrait from the 1840s to the late twentieth century, providing an invaluable context for the recent surge in artists' images of themselves.

From intimate images of introspection and those that consciously challenge notions of ethnicity and sexuality to dramatic, stylized photographs of dreamlike scenarios, *Auto Focus* shows how one of the longest-established artistic genres continues to fascinate artists today.

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