



Imponderable: The Archives of Tony Oursler

By Jordan Bear, Karen Beckman, Branden Joseph, Fred Nadis, Stephanie O'Rourke, Jim Steinmeyer, Christopher Turner

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Now in an English-only edition published for two parallel exhibitions at The Museum of Modern Art and Bard College, *Imponderable* features highlights from the incredible magic and occult collection of New York-based artist Tony Oursler (born 1957). Since the late 1990s, Oursler has been amassing a vast personal archive of objects and ephemera relating to magic, the paranormal, film, television, phantasmagoria, pseudoscience and technology. For Oursler, the archive functions as an open visual resource, historical inquiry and?most intriguingly?a family history. One of the collection's many digressions records the friendship between the artist's grandfather Charles Fulton Oursler (a famous early 20th-century author and publisher) and magician and escapologist Harry Houdini, and a historic interaction with Arthur Conan Doyle, who, beyond his Sherlock Holmes series, was an important advocate for spiritualism and the paranormal.

This beautifully produced publication features up to 1,500 objects from Oursler's collection, including photographs, prints, historic manuscripts, rare books, letters and objects. Additional topics include stage magic, thought photography, demonology, cryptozoology, optics, mesmerism, automatic writing, hypnotism, fairies, cults, the occult, color theory and UFOs. Thirteen essays by renowned art historians, science specialists and international scholars provide a deep insight into this unique material.

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- Rank: #336027 in Books
- Brand: Ingramcontent
- Published on: 2016-07-26
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 10.90" h x 1.60" w x 8.30" l, .0 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 520 pages



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Editorial Review

Review

offers a dialectical view into a twilight world both distant and familiar, an archaic domain . . . and one whose UFO and seance photos could be lifted from sci-fi and horror films (Albert Mobilio *Bookforum*)

About the Author

Beatrix Ruf is director of Amsterdam's Stedelijk Museum and was director of Kunsthalle Zurich from 2001 to 2014.

Tony Oursler a obtenu son baccalaureat en arts visuels au California Institute of the Arts de Valencia en 1979. Sa production artistique fait appel a une multitude de techniques: video, sculpture, installation, performance et peinture. L'oeuvre d'Oursler a ete exposee dans des etablissements prestigieux tels le Walker Art Center de Minneapolis, les documenta VIII et IX de Cassel, le Museum of Modern Art et le Whitney Museum of American Art de New York, le Centre Georges-Pompidou de Paris, le Carnegie Museum of Art de Pittsburgh, Skulptur Projekte de Münster, le Museum Ludwig à Cologne, le musee Hirshhorn de Washington et le Tate Liverpool. Oursler vit et travaille a New York.

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