



Blondell Cummings - Dance as Moving Pictures

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The first monograph dedicated to the pivotal work of African American postmodern dancer, choreographer & video artist Blondell Cummings.

A foundational figure in American dance, Cummings bridged postmodern dance experimentation & Black cultural traditions. Through her unique movement vocabulary, which she called "moving pictures," Cummings combined the visual imagery of photography & the kinetic energy of movement in order to explore the emotional details of daily rituals & the intimacy of Black home life. In her most well-known work *Chicken Soup* (1981), Cummings remembered the family kitchen as a basis for her choreography; the dance was designated an American Masterpiece by the National Endowment for the Arts in 2006.

Drawing from Cummings's personal archive, the book includes performance ephemera & numerous images from digitized recordings of Cummings's performances & dance films; newly commissioned essays by Sampada Aranke, Thomas F. DeFrantz & Tara Aisha Willis; remembrances by Marjani Forté-Saunders, Ishmael Houston-Jones, Meredith Monk, Elizabeth Streb, Edisa Weeks & Jawole Willa Jo Zollar; a 1995 interview with Cummings by Veta Goler; & transcripts from Cummings's appearances at Jacob's Pillow & Wexner Center for the Arts. Bringing together reprints, extended biography, a chronology of her work, rarely seen documentation & new research, this book begins to contextualize Cummings's practice at the intersection of dance, moving image, & art histories. Edited by Kristin Jurez, Rebecca Peabody & Glenn Phillips, accompanying the exhibition co-organized with Getty Research Institute & Art + Practice.

With design by Vivian Sming

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