



African photography is enjoying an unprecedented degree of visibility. Amidst this befitting surge of interest, however, the true diversity of artistic approaches is often overlooked, and many postcolonial biases still prevail. The festival catalogue of this year's FotoFest Biennial in Houston – curated by British cultural historian Mark Sealy – seeks to counteract these ingrained tendencies towards generalised categorisation.

“Photographic images can only be understood within the contexts of the cultures to which they relate,” Sealy explains. “Only once we understand the cultures within which an image is made, and read, can we begin to lock down any real meaning.” The publication – which features works by more than 30 established and emerging artists – spans six decades, and includes numerous illuminating essays. For far too long, our view of Africa has been shaped almost exclusively by Western definitions. These long-held notions are now being challenged by a highly

diverse spectrum of visual artists and authors whose chosen topics range from politics, liberty and human rights to gender roles and identity.

In the course of its 37-year history, FotoFest Biennial (founded by Wendy Watriss and Fred Baldwin) has achieved great international renown. Its 18th edition had to be cut short due to the Corona crisis – making this multi-faceted catalogue an even more valuable documentation of the themes the festival set out to address.

296 pages, 218 images, 17 × 24 cm, English, Schilt Publishing (with Fotofest Biennial 2020)

AFRICAN COSMOLOGIES

PHOTOGRAPHY, TIME, AND THE OTHER



Clockwise from the top: Samuel Fosso: *Autoportrait L_002993* (Angela Davis), from *African Spirits*, 2008; Rahima Gambo: *Rukkaya and Hadiza*, Maiduguri, Nigeria, 2016, from *Education is Forbidden* (2015–16); Eric Gyamfi: *Atsu after a dance session*, from *Just Like Us*, 2016–19; Aida Muluneh: *Access*, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from *Water Life* (2018)



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