

Librería
Bonilla y Asociados
desde 1950



Título: Book Work Medium To Object To Concept To Art

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Precio: \$910.00

Editorial:

Año: 2011

Tema:

Edición: 1ª

Sinopsis

ISBN: 9780226773919

"There they rest, inert, impertinent, in gallery space_those book forms either imitated or mutilated, replicas of reading matter or its vestiges. Strange, after its long and robust career, for the book to take early retirement in a museum, not as rare manuscript but as functionless sculpture. Readymade or constructed, such book shapes are canceled as text when deposited as gallery objects, shut off from their normal reading when not, in some yet more drastic way, dismembered or reassembled." So begins Bookwork, which follows our passion for books to its logical extreme in artists who employ found or simulated books as a sculptural medium. Investigating the conceptual labor behind this proliferating international art practice, Garrett Stewart looks at hundreds of book-like objects, alone or as part of gallery installations, in this original account of works that force attention upon a book's material identity and cultural resonance.