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Artists increasingly refer to "post-object-based" work while theorists engage with material artifacts in culture. A focus on "object-based" learning treats objects as vectors for dialogue across disciplines. Virtual imaging enables the object to be abstracted or circumvented, while immaterial forms of labor challenge materialist theories. This anthology surveys such reappraisals of what constitutes the "objectness" of production, with art as its focus.

Among the topics it examines are the relation of the object to subjectivity; distinctions between objects and things; the significance of the object's transition from inert mass to tool or artifact; and the meanings of the everyday in the found object, repetition in the replicated or multiple object, loss in the absent object, and abjection in the formless or degraded object. It also explores artistic positions that are anti-object; theories of the experimental, liminal or mental object; and the role of objects in performance. The object becomes a prism through which to reread contemporary art and better understand its recent past.

Artists surveyed include Georges Adéagbo, Art in Ruins, Iain Baxter, Louise Bourgeois, Pavel Büchler, Lygia Clark, Claude Closky, Brian Collier, Jimmie Durham, Fischli & Weiss, Luca Frei, Meschac Gaba, Isa Genzken, Gruppe Geflecht, Eva Hesse, Mike Kelley, John Latham, Antje Majewski, Gustav Metzger, Cady Noland, Gabriel Orozco, Adrian Piper, Falke Pisano, Eva Rothschild, Aura Satz, Kenneth Snelson, Hito Steyerl, Josef Strau, Alina Szapocznikow, Joëlle Tuerlinckx, Erwin Wurm

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