



James Howell

Alistair Rider

Foreword by Nicholas Fox Weber

ISBN	9781911422211
Publisher	Circa Press
Binding	Hardback
Territory	USA & Canada
Size	10.24 in x 11.81 in
Pages	240 Pages
Illustrations	120 color
Price	\$75.00

- First monograph on a leading American Minimalist artist whose career is undergoing critical re-evaluation

The first monograph on an American abstract artist of unparalleled subtlety.

James Howell (1935-2014) was an American abstract artist who used infinite variations of the color gray to explore the fundamentals of light, space, time, and [kinesthetic] perception. He appreciated the color's mystery, softness, simplicity, and capaciousness. His precise, systematic methods, developed over many years, yielded accomplished square paintings and works on paper. Their subtle revelations — absent of illusion, narrative, and symbolic references — expand in the viewer's consciousness. In this comprehensive first monograph, Alistair Rider traces Howell's artistic evolution, from the beginnings of his career in the early 1970s through the artist's greatest achievement — the group of abstractions called Series 10, which occupied the last two decades of his life. Rider's multi-faceted essay also chronicles Howell's biography, including his early studies and accomplishments in architecture, and offers several interpretive frameworks for Howell's oeuvre, notably a connection to East Asian philosophies. The beautifully produced book presents dozens of full-color plates of artworks and exhibitions, and Rider's essay is thoroughly illustrated with archival images and documents from the James Howell Foundation. This publication makes a critical contribution to the reevaluation of an artist whose studies of light into shadow have for many years been in a dynamic conversation with recognized trends in contemporary art.

Alistair Rider is Senior Lecturer in the School of Art History at the University of St Andrews, in Scotland. He writes about European and North American art from the 1950s to the present day, and has a special interest in abstraction, particularly minimal art. He is the co-editor of an anthology of writings on Carl Andre from 2008, as well as a book-length study of the artist, *Carl Andre: Things in their Elements*, from 2011. He is currently preparing a study on long-term artists' projects since 1960.

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