

IMAGE
THE UNNECESSARY

Preface

The Un/Necessary Image is a volume of works by artists who are concerned with the "public image" generated by mass media, advertising and communication systems.

The title alludes to an existing dichotomy between public and personal significance, insofar as the meaning of the public image ultimately depends on the context in which it is presented. Determinations of what is "necessary" and "unnecessary" are based on cultural, socio-political, and economic factors, as well as individual value and use.

Historically, the reciprocal influences of modern art movements on styles of advertising, and mass culture's effect on contemporary art forms is well documented. Rather than reiterating these formal similarities, the emphasis of this book is art which deals with the content and meaning of public information.

Utilizing methods ranging from critical analysis and commentary to forms of direct appropriation and deconstruction, the artists offer readings and re-readings of commonly recognizable information in the public domain. As a consequence, these works provide new ways of looking at ourselves within the context of mass culture.

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