

## REVIEWS

# Library Journal



## Southern Accent: Seeking the American South in Contemporary Art

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From Kara Walker's unsettling silhouettes depicting nightmares of agrarian home life to a wide array of photographic images by William Eggleston, Carrie Mae Weems, Sally Mann, Spider Martin, Richard Misrach, Danny Lyon, and others, highlighting diverse themes as far-ranging as rural life, consumerism, the open road, drug use, domesticity, and segregation, it's abundantly clear that culturally, spiritually, or even geographically, there is no one definitive American South but many. It's no surprise, then, that the work in this wonderful catalog comes from many perspectives, often grappling with the subtexts of race, religion, class, and loss. Curators and exhibition organizers Lash (Speed Art Museum; *Photorealism: Beginnings to Today*) and Schoonmaker (Nasher Museum of Art; *Wangechi Mutu: A Fantastic Journey*) have assembled a marvelous group of artists, writers, curators, pundits, and musicians to address the question of Southern identity and the Southern experience, creating a grand pastiche of visual art, writing, and music. Covering touchstones such as Andy Warhol's appropriations of civil rights documentation and the classic lightning rod of polemic imagery, the Confederate battle flag, there is plenty of grist for controversy and a deep emotional well to plumb. **VERDICT** A powerful collection and compelling guide to an outstanding exhibition. Well done.—**DAN MCCLURE, SEATTLE, WA**