



Gordon Matta-Clark: Works and Collected Writings

By Gloria Moure

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Gordon Matta-Clark, scion and rebel, died at 35 in 1978 and has since become a cult figure of late-twentieth-century art. Born in New York and trained in architecture at Cornell, he went on to question the field's conventions in vivid projects that excised holes into existing buildings or assembled deeds to New York City alleys and curbs. As the son of the Chilean-born Surrealist painter Roberto Matta and Anne Clark, and godson of Marcel Duchamp, with whom he played a regular game of chess in the Village, Matta-Clark had grown up inside the art world, also working as an assistant to mavericks like Dennis Oppenheim and Robert Smithson. His work and words, while sophisticated enough to make him an "artist's artist," and colossal and outgoing enough to draw public attention and affection, were always also grounded in social or political convictions. He addressed not only space and real estate (in other words, housing), but the ultimate in necessity and nourishment, food. His "Pig Roast" under the Brooklyn Bridge offered passersby 500 pork sandwiches, and Food, the artist-staffed restaurant that he opened with dancer Caroline Goodden in SoHo, became a headquarters for that nascent neighborhood in the early 70s. He consistently broke the boundaries between sculpture and architecture, photography and film, performance and installation, and above all the permanent and the transitory. Once in a while he also broke the law. This book, published in celebration of the gradual opening of Matta-Clark's archives at the Canadian Centre for Architecture in Montreal, collects previously unavailable writings, including notecards and notebooks, along with interviews and more than 100 illustrations.

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