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Diana Thater: The Sympathetic Imagination,
Edited by Lynn Cooke, Christine Y. Kim, and Lisa
Gabrielle Mark/LACMA/DelMonico/Prestel, 2015
224 pp./\$65.00 (hb)

The sumptuous *Diana Thater: The Sympathetic Imagination* was published as a catalog companion to the mid-career retrospective exhibition of Thater's work at LACMA. Covering over two decades of the artist's projects, this text is a must-have for anyone remotely interested in Thater's work or video installation in general. It more than holds its own as an experiential text regardless of whether one has seen the exhibition.

The catalog opens with a biography of Thater and moves on to an interview discussion between her and curator Lynn Cooke, setting the stage for the reader by exploring motivation and methodology. Quotes that have inspired the artist introduce the individual projects, and included are a story each by Franz Kafka and Angela Carter that have been important touchstones for Thater's work. Offering them to the reader here demonstrates the commitment of the publishers to realizing Thater's full vision. Four essays that probe and position her work into historical and theoretical contexts add depth and insight. The catalog's beautiful design by Lorraine Wild and Xiaoqing Wang emphasizes the importance of color to Thater's work, employing it with bold restraint throughout. Their generous use of video stills and installation shots with multiple views helps the audience visualize Thater's complex installations. The gorgeous onsite photography of Fredrik Nilsen elevates this tome beyond the ordinary. His wide-angle, full-color images illustrate the visceral nature of the work, often by including exhibition visitors surrounded by and experiencing the work in the galleries.

Although still in the works at the time of this writing, the book offers an online digital supplement.¹ For those unable to visit the exhibition during its stops at LACMA or the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago, this catalog might be the next best thing.

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NOTE 1. The digital supplement to *The Sympathetic Imagination* can be found at <http://di-anathater.delmonicobooks.com>.