



Kara Walker
A Black Hole is Everything a Star Longs to Be

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Author(s)	Maurice Berger, Aria Dean, Anita Haldemann
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A unique opportunity to encompass the celebrated and impacting universe of Kara Walker (b.1969), this publication gathers together 600+ works on paper realized by the artist between 1993 and 2020 — most of them being reproduced for the first time, as they come out from her until now zealously-guarded private archive.

Renowned for her recent monumental installations, drawing on paper remains the foundation of Walker's creative practice, offering an air of spontaneity and unfiltered emotion which make this volume an unprecedented insight into Walker's world, influences, and topics.

Many of her works on paper are executed with a brush, which lends them a flowing and open dynamic. Small sketches, studies, collages, and meticulously finished large-format works appear side by side with diaristic notes, typewritten reflections on index cards, and dream journals. The intimacy of each individual page contrasts with the stunning range of works.

Flipping through this publication, the reader effectively becomes an eyewitness to the genesis of Walker's art, observing her as she enacts her thinking on the paper and adapts, invents, and transforms figures and narratives.

Scrutinizing her own identity—as an artist, an African-American, a woman, and a mother Walker probes both its personal dimension and its social implications in the context of current events. The latter aspect is prominent in four new sensational portraits that reflect on Barack Obama's presidency and lasting influence.

Her most recent solo exhibitions include Fons Americanus, Turbine Hall, Tate Modern, London, 2019–2020; and Harper's Pictorial History of the Civil War (Annotated), Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, 2017–2018.

Designed by Gavillet & Cie, Geneva, the book features more than 700 reproductions as well as three essays by Anita Haldemann, Head of the Kunstmuseum Basel Prints and Drawings Department and show curator, cultural historian Maurice Berger, and art critic and artist Aria Dean.

Published with Kunstmuseum Basel, this publication accompanies Kara Walker touring exhibition at Kunstmuseum Basel (May–September 2021), Schirn Kunsthalle, Frankfurt (Fall 2021), and De Pont Museum, Middelheim (2022).

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