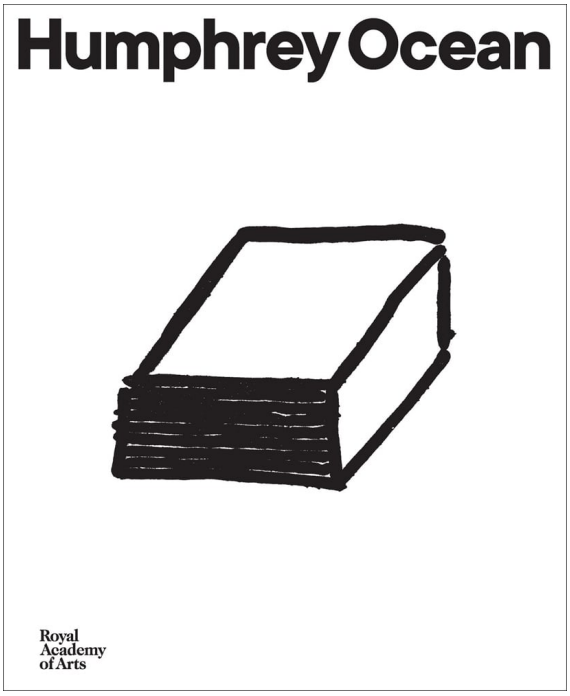
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# Humphrey Ocean

## Ben Thomas

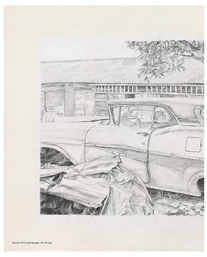
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- The first monograph to bring together works by the artist Humphrey Ocean RA from the early 1970s to the present day
- With an extensive essay by the art historian and curator Ben Thomas

Over five decades, the painter Humphrey Ocean RA's work has filtered into our national culture. This includes his series of portraits entitled *A handbook of modern life* displayed at the National Portrait Gallery in 2013; his portrait of Christopher Le Brun, President of the Royal Academy of Arts; and the cover of Sir Paul McCartney's 2007 album *Memory Almost Full*, which featured one of the *Chair* series. Ocean's practice encompasses painting, printmaking, sculpture, book-making and drawing. Of the last, he has said: 'Paper is lovely, immediate and personal. I draw as an end in itself.' In 2019 his exhibition 'Birds, Cars and Chairs' was on display at the Royal Academy of Arts. Of these subjects, he says: 'Birds, cars and chairs are, in that order, ancient, modern and intimate. Without them life would be a lot less bearable.' These works are reproduced alongside others in the book to provide a fascinating overview of Ocean's career, with an essay by Ben Thomas, which sets out to discover exactly what it is that makes Ocean's art so appealing and universal.

**Dr Ben Thomas** is Reader in History of Art at the University of Kent. He was the curator of 'Drawing Together' at the Courtauld Gallery, which combined drawings from the Courtauld's collection with works by contemporary artists, including those of Humphrey Ocean.







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