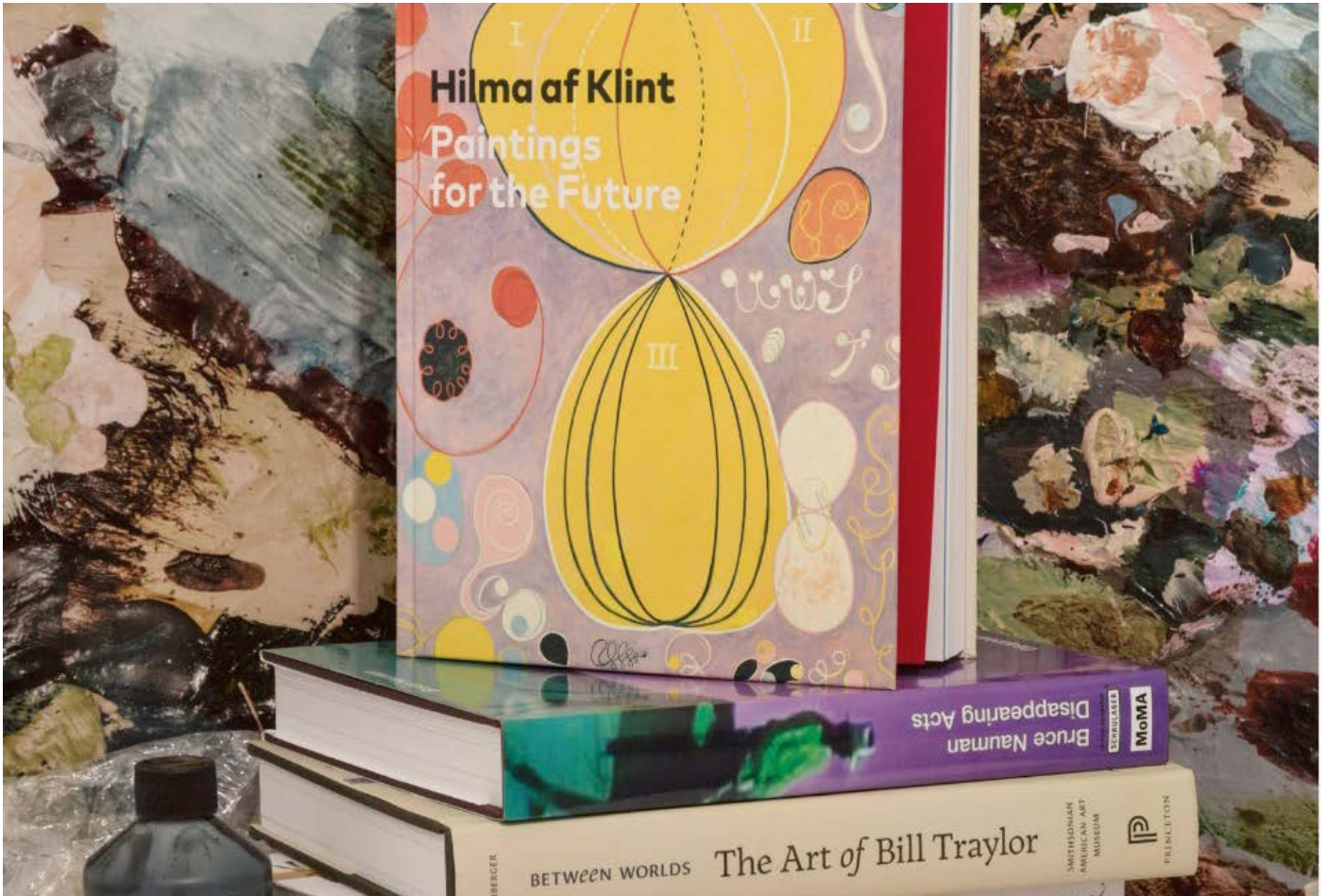


The Best Art Books of 2018

The Times's art critics select some of their favorite art books and books related to art of the year.



By Roberta Smith, Holland Cotter and Jason Farago

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From a catalog that sheds new light on black models of mid-19th-century French painting to a collection of mid-1980s art criticism by the novelist and playwright Gary Indiana, the best art books of the past year provided a balm for turbulent times. Below, the New York Times's art critics choose some of their favorites. — *Nicole Herrington, Weekend Arts editor*

‘MASAHISA FUKASE’ Edited by Tomo Kosuga (Éditions Xavier Barral). A virtuoso of obsession and abandonment, Fukase was one of the signal photographers of postwar Japan. This 400-page volume introduces English-speaking audiences to Fukase's art — from grainy Tokyo reportage and witty staged family portraits to his magnum opus, “Ravens,” an otherworldly conjuring of black birds and snow haunted by the memory of his ex-wife and his childhood in northern Japan. In 1992, a blitzed Fukase fell down the stairs of his favorite Tokyo bar; he lapsed into a coma and never recovered. Until his death in 2012 his photos were largely inaccessible, and this book is still missing some important works, as Fukase's ex-wife refused to provide necessary image rights. Even so, it's a landmark — a first step, though not the last, in the rediscovery of one of the greatest artists of the 20th century. ([Read more about this and some of the year's other best photography books.](#))