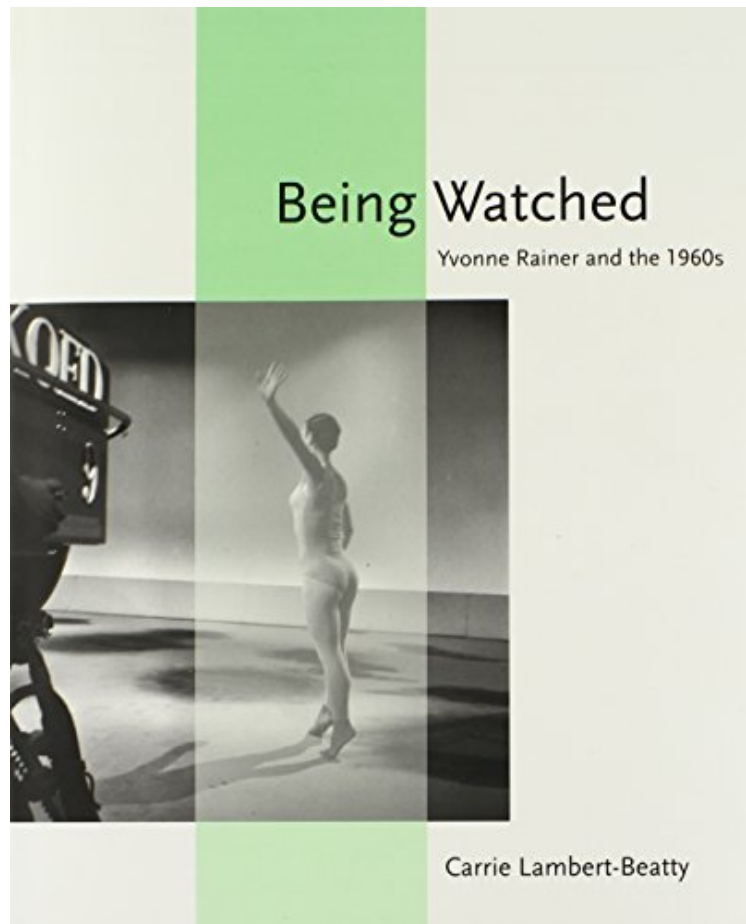


(Library ebook) Being Watched: Yvonne Rainer and the 1960s (October Books)

Being Watched: Yvonne Rainer and the 1960s (October Books)

Carrie Lambert-Beatty
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Carrie Lambert-Beatty : Being Watched: Yvonne Rainer and the 1960s (October Books) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Being Watched: Yvonne Rainer and the 1960s (October Books):

4 of 5 people found the following review helpful. FantasticBy Art Historian, Jr.If you want to read Art History with a focus on what it means to look and be looked at, this is the book. I wasn't a huge fan of dance history before reading this book, and I'm still not; this book goes beyond dance and performance history to discuss what it means to produce art in TV culture.

In her dance and performances of the 1960s, Yvonne Rainer famously transformed the performing body -- stripped it of special techniques and star status, traded its costumes and leotards for T-shirts and sneakers, asked it to haul mattresses or recite texts rather than leap or spin. Without discounting these innovations, Carrie Lambert-Beatty argues in Being Watched that the crucial site of Rainer's interventions in the 1960s was less the body of the performer

than the eye of the viewer -- or rather, the body as offered to the eye. Rainer's art, Lambert-Beatty writes, is structured by a peculiar tension between the body and its display. Through close readings of Rainer's works of the 1960s -- from the often-discussed dance *Trio A* to lesser-known Vietnam war-era protest dances -- Lambert-Beatty explores how these performances embodied what Rainer called "the seeing difficulty." (As Rainer said: "Dance is hard to see.") Viewed from this perspective, Rainer's work becomes a bridge between key episodes in postwar art. Lambert-Beatty shows how Rainer's art (and related performance work in Happenings, Fluxus, and Judson Dance Theater) connects with the transformation of the subject-object relation in minimalism and with emerging feminist discourse on the political implications of the objectifying gaze. In a spectacle-soaked era, moreover -- when images of war played nightly on the television news -- Rainer's work engaged the habits of viewing formed in mass-media America, linking avant-garde art and the wider culture of the 1960s. Rainer is significant, argues Lambert-Beatty, not only as a choreographer, but as a sculptor of spectatorship.

A brilliantly vivid description of Rainer, Judson, and art making in the 1960s, *Being Watched* sets a new scholarly standard for dance and performance studies. Combining impeccable archival work, a nuanced understanding of the drama of vision, and a lyrical sensitivity to movement, *Being Watched* is an absolute pleasure to read. In these pages, Rainer emerges as a muscular thinker, a complicated personality, and one of the most influential choreographers of our time. Great artists need great commentators and here we are fortunate to see a truly compelling duet. (Peggy Phelan, The Ann O'Day Maples Chair in the Arts, and Professor of Drama and English, Stanford University) The book is a fantastic read and an exemplary text...a highly original analysis, this study is sure to become a classic. (MJ Thompson *TDR: The Drama*) About the Author Carrie Lambert-Beatty is Assistant Professor in the Department of History of Art and Architecture and the Department of Visual and Environmental Studies at Harvard University.