

The pictures before us were made between 2009 and 2018, a span of ten years in the life of Ari Marcopoulos. By the time this book is in hand, another five will have gone by. He has surely amassed even more pictures: Ari, an artist who is never done. Picture-making for him must be a necessity, an aspect of being alive, of holding on to people and places. This, of course, is an impossibility, though surely one of the key factors in its pursuit. Any number of those who inhabit these pages are gone—Vito Acconci (who famously followed strangers in the street as a work), Robert Frank (who gave us the photographic landmark, *The Americans*, 1958), and the artist/poet John Giorno (pictured, appropriately enough, before his work, *Life Is a Killer*, 2017). There are those who appear in pictures within pictures, often posters in a teenager's room, or on a t-shirt, embodied—Jean-Michel Basquiat, Jim Carroll, Kurt Cobain, Michael Jackson, Heath Ledger (as the Joker), Wendy O. Williams of the Plasmatics. We see a couple now uncoupled—Sonic Youth's Kim Gordon and Thurston Moore. Ari is certainly someone who understands that it is art and music and literature that live on. In these pictures, as much as a person or a place seen, is it the impossibility inherent in photography, life held, that he represents? Why does his now decades' long activity amount to a persistent record-keeping of it? The time stamps on these pictures identify the day, month, and year, reminding us that images and art objects may serve as markers in time. Among these photographs, a newspaper's front page appears with some frequency, time's passage in the larger sense. This is a visual diary, life as a life sentence—written, spoken, erased, reinscribed—in Ari's case, with its subject, vibe, and complement. Bob Nickas

Ari Marcopoulos

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