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David Hammons The Holy Bible: Old Testament, 2002



The Holy Bible: Old Testament, 2002 1002pp, 225 colour plates, soft cover, leather-bound, gilt edged, gold tooling, slipcase 30 x 24 x 6 cm Edition of 165

Hammon's first published bookwork is a kind of appropriation closed circuit, taking Duchamp's assisted readymade's to the their logical conclusion. Hammon's rebound the soft-cover edition of Arturo Schwarz's 1969 book The Complete Works of Marcel Duchamp as a leather-bound, gilded edge bible with slip-case.

The work is often read as a critique, mocking the exaltation of Duchamp in the contemporary art world, and could also function as an update of Rauschenberg's patricidal Erased de Kooning (note the use of the old testament). But Hammon's work has frequently nodded to Duchamp in the past (such as Fountain and Nude Descending a Staircase in the below 1990 Untitled photograph, and 1982's Bag Lady In Flight) and the piece could certainly also function as a genuine homage.

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