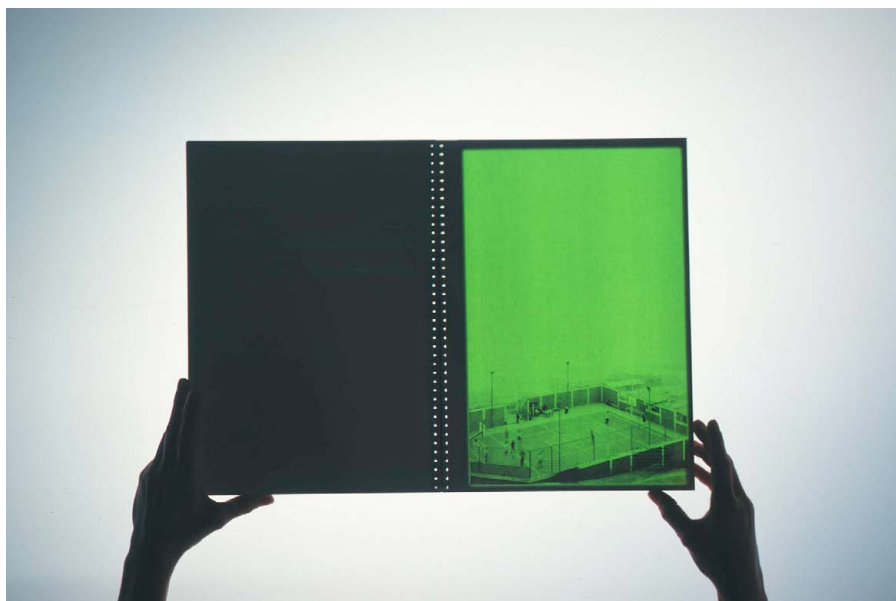




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Philippe Parreno  
*Fade to Black*

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# Philippe Parreno

## *Fade to Black*

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\*Obligatory mention : © Vera Kotaji pp. Michèle Didier

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### About *Fade to Black* by Philippe Parreno

*Fade to Black* is the generic title for a series of artistic projects that were triggered by Philippe Parreno since 1995. The artist is the initiator, but he pursues such projects sometimes alone, sometimes in collaboration with other artists such as Liam Gillick or Rirkrit Tiravanija. We could see *Fade to Black*'s images on display in poster format, at the Biennale of Lyon of 2003 and at Munich's Kunstverein, in early 2004, in the exhibition titled *Fade Away*. As time goes by, *Fade to Black* appears as a polymorphic sum, always apt at modifying itself.

*Fade to Black* gathers eleven titled images, which are detachable. Each of them documents an artistic proposal. Each image constitutes the footprint, the testimony to an action or ephemeral installation by Philippe Parreno. For instance we find the "Ice Man" image, a snowman man sculpted in an ice block, placed by the artist in a Tokyo garden, and replaced every day once the ice had melted. Or two dummies made in the image of Parreno and Tiravanija which, once animated by a ventriloquist, allow the two artists to exchange words and talk through the other. *Fade to Black* pictures them in a both farcical and disturbing fashion. Or this photograph of the entrance to an amusement park in South Africa, themed on "reality", where one can read "Welcome to Reality Park" written on a rock in giant letters.

*Fade to Black* is a "bedside book" that can only be browsed in the dark\*. The images inside are printed with phosphorescent ink and must be first "exposed" to light to become visible. This very light, stored within the matter itself, frees itself up in the obscurity and then reveals the image. It is however doomed to disappear as the quantity of reflected light is limited to its time of exposure. A specific time lapse is thus associated with the existence of the image. For Philippe Parreno, time constitutes an artistic material of choice, as also shown by this document testifying that in 1993, Rirkrit Tiravanija gave him one month of his life...

The printing process itself echoes Philippe Parreno's artistic approach, based on the mode of interactivity, and there is something playful in the way of reading and discovering the book's contents. On the other hand, Parreno's "poetic insight" creates a close intimacy between the reader and the object, forcing him to expose the work to light before deciphering it in a dark corner.

*Fade to Black* therefore exists without being visible at that – it is an evanescence that finally materializes it, and with a tongue in cheek...

Vera Kotaji pp. Michèle Didier\*

### Note

\*In order to read the book, open it and choose a page to suit you. Expose this page to natural or artificial light for a few minutes in a dark place, the image will shine and disappear again, gradually.

# The Specific Object Publication Award for 2005

Philippe Parreno, *Fade to Black*, 2005



## Announcing the *Specific Object 2005 Publication of the Year Award*

Given to **Philippe Parreno and mfc-Michèle Didier** for the publication **Fade to Black**

Specific Object is pleased to announce that it has named Fade to Black, by Philippe Parreno, the Specific Object 2005 Publication of the Year.

Published by mfc-Michèle Didier, Fade to Black is a compendium of eleven sly artists' proposals in the form of a uniquely crafted artists' book, that literally fades through the use of a photosensitive, phosphorescent, "glow-in-the-dark" ink.

Characterized by the publisher as a "'bedside book' that can only be browsed in the dark." Fade to Black parlays temporal projects by Parreno into the material space of a book, which in turn fade to black in the ephemeral space of a reader's mind. A clever full circle that is underlined by the collaborative nature of Parreno's own environments, situations and spaces.

Parreno, a French artist born in Algeria in 1964, works have been described by Giorgio Verzotti in Artforum, as "...having always called on the collective imagination and the behavioral modes to which it gives rise, and, as always, it is irony that lends his presentations a critical edge." Fade to Black, like a fine wine, a great film, or a stunning piece of music, accumulates, lingers than dissipates. In the tradition of the *Specific Object Publication of the Year Award* the book itself is a beautiful formal object too, but on some level that's irrelevant - it's a great book. Plain and simple.

Fade to Black's cover is printed by four-color offset, while its contents are screenprinted with a photosensitive, phosphorescent ink with subtle and succinct texts printed in black. A spiral binding allows the book to lie flat, freeing the pages to be viewed individually. Additionally the pages are perforated for easy removal from the book's spine allowing for display of the pages as a print portfolio. Fade to Black has been produced in an edition of 520 unsigned and unnumbered copies, and an additional 60 signed copies and 20 Artists' Proofs.

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**Specifications**

- 34cm x 24cm
  - 32 pages
  - Paper: Multi-Offset 170 g
  - Cover: Carboard CKB 360 g
  - Wire-0 binding
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- Coordination of printing and binding by Arte-Print, Brussels
  - Silk screened by Screen Group, Brussels
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- Photographs by Philippe Parreno

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**Production**

- Limited to 520 copies, 60 signed copies and 20 A.P.

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Produced and published in 2005 by mfc-michèle didier

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