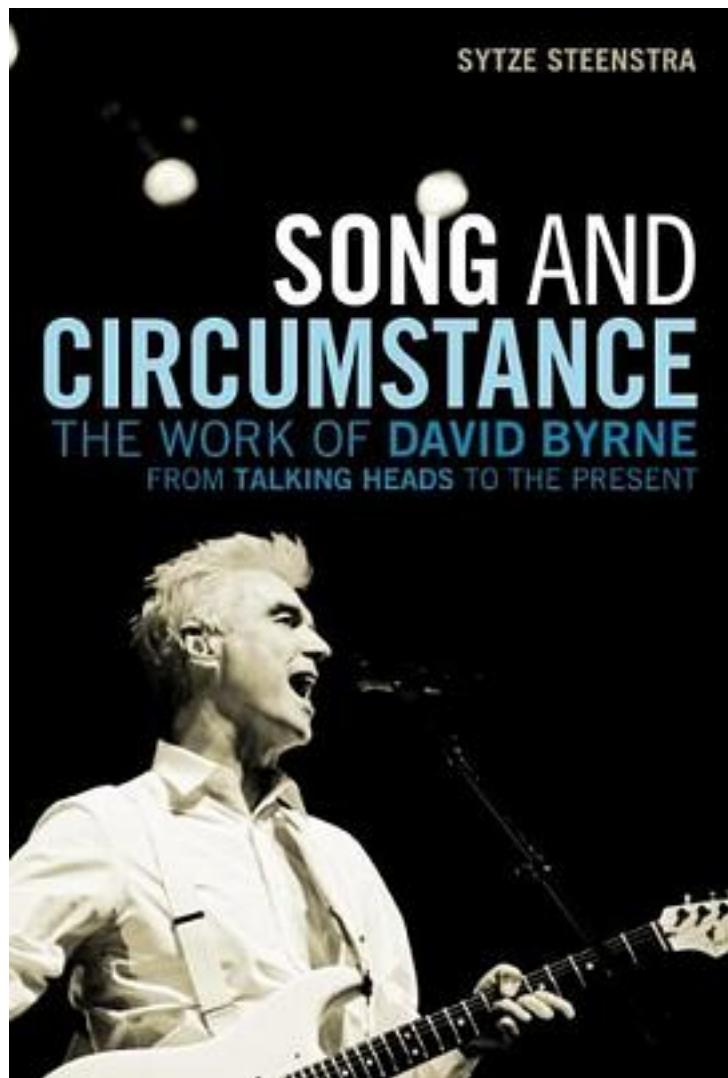


Work of David Byrne



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出版者:Continuum International Publishing Group

出版时间:2010-03-15

装帧:Hardcover

isbn:9780826445599

This is the first book to offer a full account of Byrne's sprawling artistic portfolio. The account of Byrne's career, while told in roughly chronological order, is ordered by choosing a specific abstract approach, or a combination of two approaches, for each chapter, discussing the parallels and contradictions between such approaches to benefit the interpretation of Byrne's art. This is the first book to offer a full account of Byrne's sprawling artistic portfolio. David Byrne's work functions almost completely through the mass media - in popular music, experimental theatre, film, television, fine art and writing. The underlying connection is a conceptual approach to both high and popular art. Byrne has always accompanied his work with a stream of conceptual reflections, by developing a loose theoretical patchwork of ideas on music, ritual, culture and myth, reading widely in anthropology, socio-biology, neurology, ethnomusicology, art theory, media theory, comparative mythology and more. Based on the fame he gained with his band Talking Heads (1977-circa 1989), Byrne is able to enter into collaborations with many artists, some of popular fame - Brian Eno, Jonathan Demme - many known best in more specialized artistic circles - Joseph Kosuth (conceptual artist), Caetano Veloso (Brazilian singer/songwriter of Tropicalismo fame). The map of collaborations, including the casual and incidental ones, reveals an ongoing effort to combine avant-gardism with popular appeal. While Byrne developed his career in a pragmatic way, grasping opportunities for collaboration when they presented themselves, this theoretical patchwork is a constant factor. The account of Byrne's career, while told in roughly chronological order, is ordered by choosing a specific abstract approach, or a combination of two approaches, for each chapter, discussing the parallels and contradictions between such approaches to benefit the interpretation of Byrne's art. As a result, the fertile conceptual brew that characterizes Byrne's way of making art is present from the beginning, while each chapter adds to a thorough insight.

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