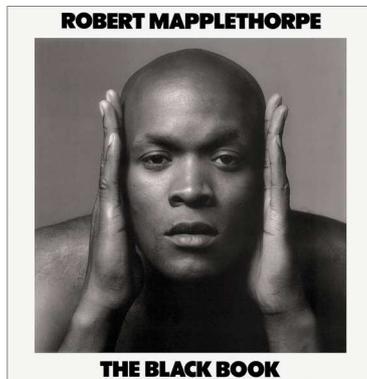


Munich, March 2014

PRESS RELEASE



## Major Robert Mapplethorpe Retrospective in Paris Starting March 26 in the Grand Palais “*The Black Book*” and “*Flowers*”

His two most beautiful books are now available from Schirmer/Mosel and retailers

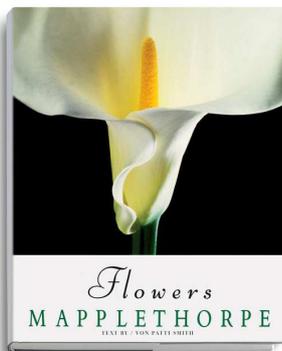
Robert Mapplethorpe (1946-1989) was considered one of the most innovative masters of contemporary art photography even before his premature death from Aids. With his highly stylized and highly erotic nude portraits he sparked intense controversies about the freedom of art.

*The Black Book* – a spectacular anthology of, at the time shocking, nude photographs of African American men with in some cases full-frontal depictions of their genitals, became the target of public prosecutor investigations and was suspected of being pornographic when it appeared in 1986. Today, the book forms part of the classic canon of 20<sup>th</sup> century photo books. On the occasion of the Paris retrospective, Schirmer/Mosel is republishing it as a hard cover edition. The photographs it contains have long since become worthy of being displayed in a museum. For students and interested observers of all ages and both sexes they are works of art and hence worthy of aesthetic consideration. Twenty-five years after Robert Mapplethorpe’s death, his homage to the black male body remains one of the most influential visual contributions to the discussion on beauty, sensuality and sexuality in 20<sup>th</sup> century photography.

*Flowers*, the first book published by Mapplethorpe’s estate a year after his death, could not have been any less puzzling – at least, at first glance: color photographs only, and blossoms, of all things. Yet from the outset still lifes of flowers had always played a firmly established role in Mapplethorpe’s world of motifs, albeit a less spectacular one. In a similar vein to that of his black and white nudes and portraits, they also embody Mapplethorpe’s search for aesthetic perfection. Under Mapplethorpe’s gaze, flowers lose their innocence, sexuality is stylized in still lifes. In *Flowers* one finds both: the erotic drama and the absolute clarity of the composition – the poles and the quintessence of Mapplethorpe’s work. With their colored stagings and mannered blossoms – a plant’s equivalent of genitals – Mapplethorpe’s *Flowers* almost seem to exude an even more erotic radiance than the nude photographs in *The Black Book*.

Patti Smith, Mapplethorpe’s girlfriend and the muse of his early artistic flourishes, has written a poignant poem for *Flowers*.

**Robert Mapplethorpe**  
*The Black Book*  
With a text by Ntozake Shange  
108 pages, 96 duotone plates  
ISBN 978-3-8296-0460-4  
(German/English)  
New edition  
€ 39.80, US \$ 49.95, GBP 39.95



**Robert Mapplethorpe**  
*Flowers*  
Color photographs 1980-1989  
With a text by Patti Smith  
108 pages, 50 color plates  
ISBN 978-3-8296-0678-3  
(German/English)  
€ 29.80, US \$ 39.95, GBP 29.95

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