

GAGOSIAN

The New York Times

A Spotlight on the Season's Top Photography Books

Luc Sante

Sally Mann's **REMEMBERED LIGHT: Cy Twombly in Lexington (Abrams/Gagosian Gallery, \$50)** demands exactly the opposite form of attention: extended quiet contemplation. Mann shared a hometown in Virginia with her painter subject (1928-2011) — a member of the tribe of Southern-born artists who came of age in the 1950s and also included Jasper Johns and Robert Rauschenberg — who spent half the year in Italy but always came back to yard sales, Walmart and the studio that is the principal setting of these pictures. Twombly himself does not appear, except metonymically: in his works, his marks, his drips, his paint-saturated rags, his objets d'art, his slippers. But as the title indicates, Mann seeks his essence primarily in light, a warm, honeyed, Southern light that pours in through windows or leaks through Venetian blinds and that persists as a trace of the artist even after he has died and his studio has been emptied and repainted. The light is palpable, seems to possess mass and weight, and if you knew nothing of the context of the photographs you'd still want to give the light partial credit for the wonderful paintings and sculptures it slides across.