

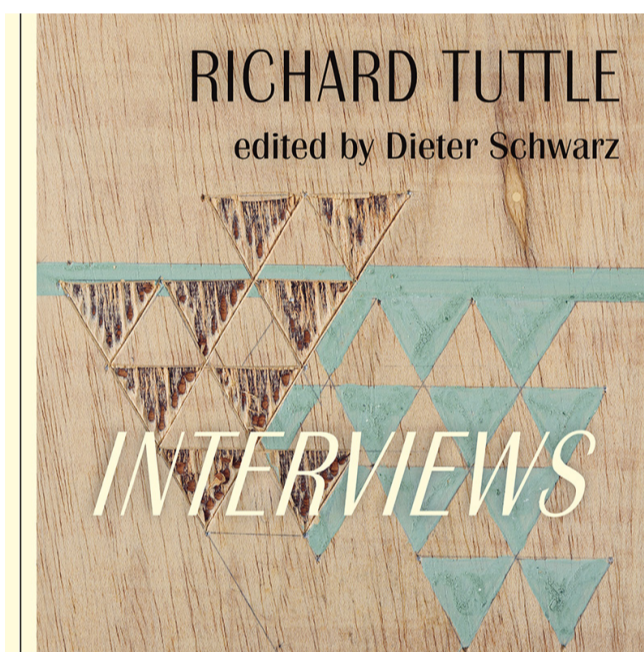
September 2024

Richard Tuttle: Interviews

In 2019 the collected writings of Richard Tuttle, entitled *A Fair Sampling*, were published by Verlag der Buchhandlung Walther König in Cologne. This book, designed by the artist, was presented in the course of Tuttle's exhibitions in Cologne, New York and Zurich. While I was compiling the texts, I also came across numerous interviews. I filed them separately, as at first, it was not clear whether we wanted to classify them as writings too. It soon became evident that there were far too many interviews to add them to the writings collection. An even more important consideration, however, was that the interviews have a different linguistic status compared to the writings, as they are worded not only by Tuttle, but also shaped by the people who conducted them and who transcribed them in their own manner.



If Tuttle avoided direct communication of information in his writings and developed instead a poetic self-referential form of expression, in the case of the interviews he was confronted with someone aiming to get first-hand information out of him and communicate this to their readers. Usually, there was some particular reason for an interview, such as an exhibition that brought the artist into contact with an art audience, awakening a desire to know more about the artist as a person and his work. One such occasion was indeed the publication of the interviews; instead of writing a preface, I made an interview with Tuttle myself, in which I questioned him about the interview as a format. As our communication was by email, Tuttle was not obliged to formulate his answers directly; his responses tended to become renewed questions, which brings us back to his writings: "If we take the word, 'interview', and break it into two parts—'inter' 'view'—I think it says pretty much what it is: a view of something between something. If that were the first dream and a completed work, for example, the interviewer could find many questions. 'Between' is another way of thought: what happens between you and your art?"



The book that is being published this September was also designed by Tuttle himself—the cover, endpapers, and a marking made up of coloured rectangles varying in shape and lines that serve as an opening design for each interview. It contains 52 interviews from over 50 years, which not only took place in the USA, but also in England, France and Switzerland, in Korea and Japan. In the 1970s and 1980s, Tuttle was seldom asked for an interview; but from that time on, the number of interviews surged, reaching a peak in the last decade with the exhibitions at Tate Modern and the Pace Gallery. The forms of the interviews are diverse: the first one dating from 1970 is an account of a conversation during a studio visit Robert Pincus-Witten paid to the artist. An article by Michael Kimmelman in the New York Times, dated 1999, about a visit with Tuttle to the Metropolitan Museum is in a similar vein: Tuttle tells the journalist about his first encounters with artworks in this collection, comments on individual artists and draws connections between his work and art history. In contrast, there is the dry back and forth in the Q&A published by Art Newspaper; Tuttle was a skilled player at this game. Often, the interviews turned into lengthy conversations, with the interviewer's empathy encouraging Tuttle to go beyond the immediate occasion and supplement remarks on his works and shows with personal reminiscences; these would then be placed in a sweeping historical and philosophical context.



The first book presentation will take place on September 26, 2024 on the occasion of Richard Tuttle's exhibition *A Distance From This* at 125 Newbury in New York.

Dieter Schwarz