

## P O R T F O L I O

**P**urely as an object and as a publishing event, this massive project—a comprehensive overview of Peter Beard's photography, collages, and diaries—encompasses a dizzying number of special features. The 2,250 copies of The Art Edition printing have been individually numbered and signed by Beard. It comes in a clamshell box, with a specially made wood book stand. The book consists of two separate volumes, one with 200 pages of Beard's diaries and another with 294 pages of collages, plus five fold-out spreads. But wait, there's more: The Collector's Edition, an imprint of 250, the first 125 copies of which are accompanied by an original signed 16x20-inch gelatin-silver print. It comes with a leather cover, packaged in a velvet-lined wooden shipping crate.

For all but a few photographers this kind of production would be overkill, and possibly downright obscene in its elaborate dimensions. Given Beard's artistic expansiveness, though, the whole crazy thing makes sense. Viewing Beard's collages, and especially his intricate, multimedia diaries, is like looking into the maelstrom of pure creativity itself. Born in 1938 and educated at Yale University, Beard developed an interest in Africa after reading the work of Isak Dinesen. He documented ecological disaster, shot fashion for *Vogue*, collaborated with Andy Warhol and Francis Bacon. And it never seems to be enough.

His artwork is obsessively detailed, riotously packed within the boundaries of this book. There is plenty of sizzle in this feast of imagery (as there has been in his life); but in the end the meal is nutritious. —DAVID SCHONAUER

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**Peter Beard** Edited by Nejma Beard et al.  
Taschen; 616 pages; more than 400 images;  
Art Edition, \$2,500; Collector's Edition: \$6,500

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FULL  
BEARD