

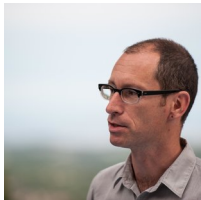
### Affinities

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Brian Dillon

Photo: Chris Dixon

## Affinities

What do we mean when we claim affinity with an object or picture, or say affinities exist between such things? *Affinities* is a critical and personal study of a sensation that is not exactly taste, desire, or allyship, but has aspects of all. Approaching this subject via discrete examples, this book is first of all about images that have stayed with the author over many years, or grown in significance during months of pandemic isolation, when the visual field had shrunk. Some are historical works by artists such as Julia Margaret Cameron, Dora Maar, Claude Cahun, Samuel Beckett and Andy Warhol. Others are scientific or vernacular images: sea creatures, migraine auras, astronomical illustrations derived from dreams. Also family photographs, film stills, records of atomic ruin. And contemporary art by Rinko Kawauchi, Susan Hiller and John Stezaker. Written as a series of linked essays, interwoven with a reflection on affinity itself, *Affinities* is an extraordinary book about the intimate and abstract pleasures of reading and looking.

Read more: <https://fitzcarraldoeditions.com/books/affinities/>

*'Brian Dillon is always invigoratingly brilliant. His sentences, his stylistic innovations, the range and potency of his intellectual adventures; he is a true master of the literary arts and a writer I would never hesitate to read, whatever his subject.'*

Max Porter, author of *Shy*

*'Dillon's discussion of these photographs forestalls this reading – close attention is one thing. Loving attention, another. And Dillon does love. That shines out from each essay. An affinity can be a relation of significance: of blood, of temporary likeness, of marriage. Dillon notes that the word also once meant a gathering of like-minded people. The images collected together in this book become, in Dillon's hands, an affinity. And, by looking at them with him, he makes an affinity of us, too. This is key ... Dillon's book is an invitation to look together. It is one of life's intimate pleasures to attend closely in the company of someone else. Done properly, it opens us to the other's world.'*

Anil Gomes, Guardian

### Brian Dillon

Brian Dillon was born in Dublin in 1969. His books include *Suppose a Sentence*, *Essayism*, *The Great Explosion* (shortlisted for the Ondaatje Prize), *Objects in This Mirror: Essays*, *I Am Sitting in a Room*, *Sanctuary*, *Tormented Hope: Nine Hypochondriac Lives* (shortlisted for the Wellcome Book Prize) and *In the Dark Room*, which won the Irish Book Award for non-fiction. His writing has appeared in the Guardian, New York Times, London Review of

Books, the New Yorker, New York Review of Books, frieze and Artforum. He has curated exhibitions for Tate and Hayward galleries. He lives in London.