

1. Record Nr.	UNINA990009493580403321
Titolo	L'invenzione dell'etnia / a cura di Jean-Loup Amselle, Elika M'Bokolo
Pubbl/distr/stampa	Roma : Meltemi, 2009
ISBN	978-88-8353-604-5
Descrizione fisica	282 p. : ill. ; 20 cm
Collana	Universale Meltemi ; 46
Disciplina	305.80096
Locazione	FSPBC
Collocazione	Collez. 2166 (46)
Lingua di pubblicazione	Italiano
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Note generali	Trad. di Michela Fusaschi e Francesco Pompeo
2. Record Nr.	UNINA9910524679103321
Autore	Krieger Murray <1923->
Titolo	Poetic Presence and Illusion : Essays in Critical History and Theory // Murray Krieger
Pubbl/distr/stampa	Johns Hopkins University Press, 2019 Baltimore : , : Johns Hopkins University Press, , 1979 ©1979
ISBN	0-8018-2199-1 1-4214-3128-9
Edizione	[1st ed.]
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (xviii, 326 p. :) : ill. ;
Disciplina	801/.951
Soggetti	Criticism Literature - History and criticism - Theory, etc
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia

Nota di bibliografia

Includes bibliographical references and index.

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Sommario/riassunto

Originally published in 1979. Poetic Presence and Illusion brings together Krieger's speculation on literature and its effect on the reader. The poem, Krieger argues, is an illusionary presence and an ever-present illusion. It exists for the reader, like a drama before an audience, only within an illusionary context. But the illusion should not be taken lightly as a false substitute for reality. It is itself a real and positive force: it is what we see and, as such, is constitutive of our reality, even if our critical faculty de-constitutes that reality by viewing it as no more than an illusion. The coupling of poetic presence and poetic illusion serves to describe the relationship between poetry as metaphor and the reader's sense of personal and poetic reality. Krieger examines the workings of selected Renaissance and contemporary poems with regard to this dual nature and evaluates the work of literary critics (himself included) who have been concerned with this doubleness. Poetic Presence and Illusion allows readers who have read Krieger's earlier work to understand the development of his critical position.