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America



Synopsis

Poised to be the most important photography book of the year, Zoe Strauss's *America* shines a light on the often unseen people and places in the United States today. Once in a great while, a photographer and their photographs break new ground and people sit right up and take notice. Zoe Strauss is such a photographer. The Philadelphia native who has brought us searing images of that city's marginalized people and places on the fringe of society, has taken her no holds barred, up close and personal style of photography to the roads less traveled across America. At times witty, touching, poetic, and downright shocking, Zoe Strauss's photographs capture the beauty and struggle of everyday life and resonate as a social document of our time, and as sheer and powerful art. Zoe Strauss picked up a camera on her 30th birthday, but in only eight years, has generated a huge body of work that has been exhibited in the Whitney Biennial, and has garnered her a United States Artists grant.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This new book by Whitney Biennial alumna Zoe Strauss is going to be a classic. She has a strong, unique vision, showing the side of America that people don't always want to look at. At the same time, there's a lot of wry humor. When you see her images, you realize she's captured the essence of the past four years -- its surreal patriotism, greed, and the people left behind in the boom. It's one of my favorite photography books ever.

Not too many works by modern photographers are destined to be classics or great but this is one of them. This is a more intimate view of America than Robert Frank's "The Americans" but it is just as we'll seen and brutally honest. Anyone who loves photography will be thrilled to have this book.

Just okay. Some of the pictures throughout the book were just mediocre and lame. Nothing distinct about some of the pictures that were taken that distinguishes them according to the geographic area in which they were taken.

America is a wonderful collection of color 'street' photography showing the beautiful and gritty side of the U.S. There are plenty of photos to look at and if there's one complain it's that the paper seems a little thin. But the work itself is fantastic so well worth a look.

Strauss is an inspiration and a master of the medium - I don't mean that in the oldschool zone system silver printing sense, I mean that she seems to have an instinctive (and finely crafted) understanding of what photography is for - seeing. Her images are curated from life so particularly, but seem to perfectly normal and instantly recognizable as real at first glance. They deserve a heart-racing quick readthrough followed immediately by hours of careful consideration.

Zoe Strauss takes us into her world with each frame. You don't really ease into her work, you have to jump in, both feet, into the abyss; but you won't be disappointed. Her color work across the United States from Philadelphia to Las Vegas (and she's traveled more since) shows us the similarities we all share. From the denizens of Philly's Kensington to Katrina ravaged Biloxi to Chicago's Cabrini Green to the edge of a forest in the Pacific northwest, we're all the same no matter what you might think. Strauss demonstrates this time and time again as you flip from page to page. The book itself is a nice, big book too, landscape, roughly 8"x10". Apart from seeing her annual I-95 show (last one in 2010), this book is a wonderful way to get to know her work.

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