

09/2019

Mitch Epstein
Sunshine Hotel

Main description

America, as a place and an idea, has occupied Mitch Epstein's art for the past five decades. With the first photographs he made in 1969 at 16-years-old, Epstein began confronting the cultural psychology of the United States. Although he started working in an era defined by the Vietnam War, civil rights, rock and roll, and free love, he responded hardily to each radically different era that followed—from Reaganomics to surveillance after 9/11, to the current climate crisis and resurgence of white supremacy. More than a single era or issue, it is the living organism of American culture that engages Epstein; no matter how much the country changes, he describes something mysteriously and persistently American.

Conceived of and sequenced by Andrew Roth, *Sunshine Hotel* assembles 175 photos made between 1969 and 2018—more than half previously unpublished. Yet the book is not simply a retrospective. It traces both the evolution of an artist and the development of a country, revealing Epstein's formal and thematic shifts in tandem with America's changing zeitgeist and landscape. *Sunshine Hotel* is a visual immersion that forgoes linearity and a classical layout, as it sets forth Epstein's evolving understanding of his country's pathologies and promise.

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Biography

A pioneer of 1970s color photography, Mitch Epstein has photographed for half a century how we engage with our landscape. Epstein has won numerous awards including the Prix Pictet, the Berlin Prize and a Guggenheim Fellowship. His work is held in collections including the Museum of Modern Art and Tate Modern, and in 2013 the Walker Art Center commissioned a theatrical rendition of his "American Power" series. Epstein has conveyed the cultural and physical evolution of the United States from 1973 to the present in his Steidl books *Family Business* (2003), *Recreation* (2005), *American Power* (2011), *New York Arbor* (2013) and *Rocks and Clouds* (2017).

Bibliography

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