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Raymond Depardon: Manhattan Out



Synopsis

Acclaimed French photographer, filmmaker and journalist Raymond Depardon arrived in New York in the winter of 1980. He came to visit a friend who had just taken a job in the city, and to kill time he strolled around the streets with his Leica. As a self-imposed constraint, and to encourage serendipitous results, he decided to take pictures without ever using the camera's viewfinder. Working incognito throughout the nooks and crannies of New York City, Depardon amassed two or three rolls a day--but when the time came to assess the results, he was thoroughly disappointed. He never mentioned the experiment to anybody and has only now decided to unveil these "blind" pictures to his public. Reexamining the work some 27 years "after the photographs were taken, Depardon was surprised to discover that most of his subjects were aware that they were being photographed, and that consequently the images contain more artifice than he had expected. His subjects project an affect of indifference in their knowing glances towards the camera lens, thereby immortalizing the very spirit and charm of 1980s New York, a period for which there is increasing fondness and nostalgia today. With an essay by the great philosopher Paul Virilio, this monograph opens up an exciting and hitherto lost chapter in Depardon's storied career.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Manhattan Out is rich as a time capsule— it produces a cautious enjoyment, never entirely inseparable from the question of how much of this is really interesting and how much is nostalgia, which reliably tells more about the viewer and her present than an image can account for the past.

(American Suburb X)

At first glance, the (black-and-white) photos in this modest-sized book don't jump off the page. However, they constitute a very special example of (NYC) street photography from the 80's and they're a treasure.

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