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The Home Front



Synopsis

Ken Graves's idiosyncratic photographs capture the humour and pathos of America in the transitional era of the 1960s and 1970s. Looking in from the margins, Graves highlights the contradictions inherent in America and its culture moulded equally by idealism and decline. He simultaneously examines and dismantles those myths, and plays out the tension of the American dream against the backdrop of a gritty reality. Graves uses photography as a tool to document everyday surrealism, the improbable episodes and happy accidents which unfold before the camera. Like Garry Winogrand, Graves is concerned with building a distinct photographic language - literary in tone, and always belied by a politics of vision. In searching out public displays of Americana, Graves focuses on the simultaneity of anticipation and collision, reaching beyond the hyperreal of the fairgrounds and the holiday occasions, revealing instead the wonder, humour and strangeness of the everyday. Ken Graves was born in Oregon, US, in 1942. He is the coauthor of American Snapshots (Scrimshaw Press, 1971) with Mitchell Payne, and Ballroom with Eva Lipman (Milkweed Editions, 1989). His photographs appear in the collections of MoMA, New York; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, among others.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

To begin with, that cover you see above is just a piece of paper (the photo) pasted to the cover. The inside is even worse: the photos are done flipbook style (turning the book sideways), with no white space border whatsoever except at the very bottom. To get even a decent look at anything and see the bottoms you have to smash the book flat in a way that will probably destroy the binding in no

time, and it's still a real compromise as the images are not allowed to breathe within any space. Wait! It gets worse. There are then photos that cover both sides of the page...their effect is easily ruined by the disappearing middle. If you were able to pick up the book for 10 bucks somehow it would be well worth it because these are fantastic, amazing photos, and it's criminal and sad that their only existing availability is in this thoughtless, almost contemptuous presentation.

UNBELIEVABLY GREAT. A REAL FIND. I WANT MORE.

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