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Good Pictures

A History of Popular Photography

Stanford University Press A picture-rich field guide to American photography, from daguerreotype to digital. We are all photographers now, with camera phones in hand and social media accounts at the ready. And we know which pictures we like. But what makes a "good picture"? And how could anyone think those old styles were actually good? Soft-focus yearbook photos from the '80s are now hopelessly—and happily—outdated, as are the low-angle portraits fashionable in the 1940s or the blank stares of the 1840s. From portraits to products, landscapes to food pics, *Good Pictures* proves that the history of photography is a history of changing styles. In a series of short, engaging essays, Kim Beil uncovers the origins of fifty photographic trends and investigates their original appeal, their decline, and sometimes their reuse by later generations of photographers. Drawing on a wealth of visual material, from vintage how-to manuals to magazine articles for working photographers, this full-color book illustrates the evolution of trends with hundreds of pictures made by amateurs, artists, and commercial photographers alike. Whether for selfies or sepia tones, the rules for good pictures are always shifting, reflecting new ways of thinking about ourselves and our place in the visual world.

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Refracted Visions

Popular Photography and National Modernity in Java

Duke University Press A young couple poses before a painted backdrop depicting a modern building set in a volcanic landscape; a college student grabs his camera as he heads to a political demonstration; a man poses stiffly for his identity photograph; amateur photographers look for picturesque images in a rural village; an old woman leafs through a family album. In *Refracted Visions*, Karen Strassler argues that popular photographic practices such as these have played a crucial role in the making of modern national subjects in postcolonial Java. Contending that photographic genres cultivate distinctive ways of seeing and positioning oneself and others within the affective, ideological, and temporal location of Indonesia, she examines genres ranging from state identification photos to pictures documenting family rituals. Oriented to projects of selfhood, memory, and social affiliation, popular photographs recast national iconographies in an intimate register. They convey the longings of Indonesian national modernity: nostalgia for rural idylls and "tradition," desires for the trappings of modernity and affluence, dreams of historical agency, and hopes for political authenticity. Yet photography also brings people into contact with ideas and images that transcend and at times undermine a strictly national frame. Photography's primary practitioners in the postcolonial era have been Chinese Indonesians. Acting as cultural brokers who translate global and colonial imageries into national idioms, these members of a transnational minority have helped shape the visual contours of Indonesian belonging even as their own place within the nation remains tenuous. *Refracted Visions* illuminates the ways that everyday photographic practices generate visual habits that in turn give rise to political subjects and communities.

The Complete Photo Manual (Popular Photography)

300+ Skills and Tips for Making Great Pictures

Weldon Owen Photography books tend to be long, technical, and full of complicated jargon. For the amateur or pro who just wants to get quick-hitting tips and loads of inspiration, this is the book that does the job. In 355 handy, easy-to-grasp hints, this book gives you what you need to know to grasp the basics of lighting, composition, gear, working with models, and much, much more. Pro tips make this much more than a beginner's guide. Taking amazing pictures is getting easier and easier with the advances in digital photography, and *The Complete Photo Manual* is here to help you take full advantage! Organized into three useful chapters (Gear & Setup, Shooting & Composing, and Processing & Beyond), this book from the experts at *Popular Photography* magazine helps you select and use cutting-edge cameras and accessories; teaches you to see the world as a photographer does and shoot in the moment to capture great shots as they happen; and then tweak your images in photo-processing software for next-level effects. From the subtle (adjusting the color in a picture to create a different mood) to the artistic (compositions merging several photos to dramatic effect) to the downright amazing (how to photograph yourself levitating . . . it's easier than you think!), *The Complete Photo Manual* opens up a whole world of photographic possibility. Set-ups and techniques are described in detail, with easy-to-understand illustrations and diagrams, and a wealth of beautifully inspirational photography. Beginners will learn ways to quickly move into new realms of expertise, and even old pros will pick up some new tricks. Anyone who has ever looked at an amazing composition or a skillful composite and said, "How did they do that?" will find this book irresistible.