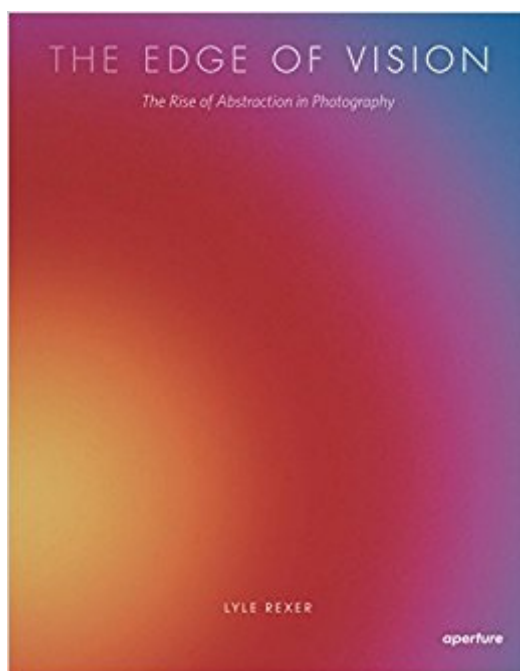


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# Lyle Rexer: The Edge Of Vision: The Rise Of Abstraction In Photography



## Synopsis

From the beginning, abstraction has been intrinsic to photography, and its persistent popularity reveals much about the medium. Now available in an affordable paperback edition, *The Edge of Vision: The Rise of Abstraction in Photography* is the first book in English to document this phenomenon and to put it into historical context, while also examining the diverse approaches thriving within contemporary photography. Author Lyle Rexer examines abstraction at pivotal moments, starting with the inception of photography, when many of the pioneers believed the camera might reveal other aspects of reality. *The Edge of Vision* traces subsequent explorations—from the Photo-Secessionists, who emphasized process and emotional expression over observed reality, to Modernist and Surrealist experiments. In the decades to follow, in particular from the 1950s through the 1980s, a multitude of photographers—Edward Weston, Aaron Siskind, Barbara Kasten, Ellen Carey and James Welling among them—took up abstraction from a variety of positions. Finally, Rexer explores the influence the history of abstraction exerts on contemporary thinking about the medium. Many contemporary artists—most prominently Penelope Umbrico, Michael Flomen, and Adam Broomberg and Oliver Chanarin—reject classic definitions of photography’s documentary dimension in favor of other conceptually inflected possibilities, somewhere between painting and sculpture, that include the manipulation of process and printing. In addition to Rexer’s engagingly written and richly illustrated history, this volume includes a selection of primary texts from and interviews with key practitioners and critics, such as Alvin Langdon Coburn, László Moholy-Nagy, Gottfried Jäger, Silvio Wolf and Walead Beshty.

## Book Information

Paperback: 292 pages

Publisher: Aperture (September 30, 2013)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1597112429

ISBN-13: 978-1597112420

Product Dimensions: 8 x 0.9 x 9.9 inches

Shipping Weight: 2.6 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.1 out of 5 stars 16 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #511,980 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #161 in Books > Arts & Photography > Photography & Video > Criticism & Essays #520 in Books > Arts &

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## Customer Reviews

The only English-language book to chronicle the history of abstraction in photography.

Though approaches to photographic abstraction are varied, the end results all deny the viewer a discernible reference to reality, defying the most conventional norm in photography. [The New Yorker](#)

Lyle Rexer is a New York-based independent writer and critic. His previous books include [Photography's Antiquarian Avant-Garde](#) (2002) and [How to Look at Outsider Art](#) (2005); he contributed an interview with Chuck Close and Bob Holman to [A Couple of Ways of Doing Something](#) (Aperture, 2006), and is the author of [Edge of Vision](#) (Aperture, 2010.)

I found the text and illustrations extremely interesting, although the text may sometimes be abstruse. Having to use one's brain, or a dictionary, from time to time is not a bad thing. An interest in the subject of abstract photography, or in the author's words, "undisclosed photography", "a vision of things that have not yet been seen", certainly makes the effort worthwhile. Could the same points have been made more simply? Yes. That would not have been a bad thing either. Writing this review, I find that I want to read the book again and spend more time with its images. The book offers a fresh approach to the history of photography, one that I think is important as art photography meets the digital age.

Very interesting. One can read this as a series of essays, rather than having to read from front to back. Trust me it can be hard going at sometimes, but many books about academic photography and its evolution can be tough hills to climb. Reducing Abstraction in anything to coherent words is a tough task. Slow and easy will win the day, and its worth it!

This is a beautiful and informative treatment of abstract photography and i highly recommend it to you. The author does a good job of explaining the unusual photo processes and neatly tracks the developments of abstract photography from the beginning of art photography up to the present. i especially loved that the book grants considerable space to 21st century photographic works and the frontier of digital photography. i was glad to learn of several compelling current artists. the prints

are beautiful and broadly representative. i find myself thumbing through often. a terrific piece of work for the academic and the casual enthusiasts.

A very nice retrospective look at the importance and nature of abstraction in creating meaning that transcends the obvious.

Exceptional instructions and techniques. Excellent book.

Interesting.

As an artist who flirts with abstraction and an educator who tries to open up a discussion with students on the nature of abstraction and representational images in photography, I ate this book up. I loved Lyle Rexer's Photography's Antiquarian Avant-garde and I love this book, not just for the collected images but the writing. Thank you Mr. Rexer for a new resource.

"The Edge of Vision" by Lyle Rexer is a truly comprehensive, focused and informative treatment of modern abstract photography. This reprinted paperback version I have is highly recommended by me for all the serious photography lovers.

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