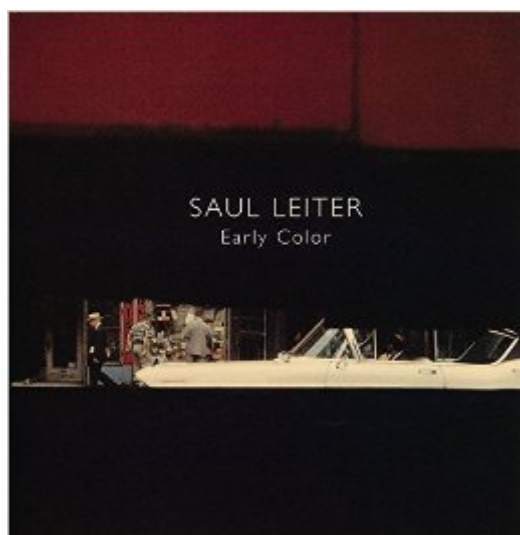


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Saul Leiter: Early Color



Synopsis

This is a reprint of the immensely successful *Early Color* (2008), which presented Saul Leiter's remarkable body of color work to the public for the first time in book form. Although Edward Steichen had exhibited some of Leiter's color photography at The Museum of Modern Art in 1953, it remained virtually unknown to the world thereafter. Leiter moved to New York in 1946 to become a painter, but through his friendship with Richard Pousette-Dart he quickly recognized the creative potential of photography. Leiter continued to paint, exhibiting with Philip Guston and Willem de Kooning, but the camera remained his ever-present means of recording life in the metropolis. None of Leiter's contemporaries, with the partial exception of Helen Levitt, assembled a comparable body of work: subtle, often abstract compositions of lyrical, eloquent color.

Book Information

Hardcover: 158 pages

Publisher: Steidl; First Edition edition (January 15, 2006)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 3865211399

ISBN-13: 978-3865211392

Product Dimensions: 8 x 1 x 8.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.7 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.7 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (34 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #103,293 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) [#4 in Books > Arts & Photography > Photography & Video > Equipment, Techniques & Reference > Color](#) [#67 in Books > Arts & Photography > Photography & Video > Travel](#) [#76 in Books > Arts & Photography > Photography & Video > Collections, Catalogues & Exhibitions](#)

Customer Reviews

Don't get me wrong: this little book of photographs --and it is little (8" x 8" square)-- is quite lovely. Personally I would like for it to be larger in format...and yet Saul Leiter's work is in itself quiet and understated, and therefore the book's small size seems to reflect something important about the artist and his aesthetic. HOWEVER, if you are at all concerned about such things, or a serious collector of photography books, you should know that .com is NOT currently selling 2008/First Editions (as described in both the "Book Description" and "Product Details" areas above). The 2008 First Edition of this Steidl book sold out long ago, and what is currently shipping is the 2013/Fourth Printing edition of the book. I tried to bring this to the attention of .com staff via their customer

service channels, but they seem incapable of understanding the crucial difference between a "First Edition" and a "Fourth Printing," and have therefore neglected to change the product information here on the site. Consider yourself warned!

Saul Leiter's photography reveals an urban world of rich, yet understated colours and abstract shapes. In some photos, he focuses on a reflective surface or the layer of condensation on a window, causing the objects or people behind them to appear fluid, disjointed or overlaid with a mosaic or other pattern. His black and white work explores juxtapositions, shapes and overlaid surfaces. I was apprehensive about buying this slim volume of Leiter's work, having recently purchased a copy of another collection of his photos: 'Early Color'. My concern was that there would be too much overlap. I need not have worried. Although about a third of the works in this collection of 64 photos also appear in 'Early Color', the entire book is superb. Moreover, about 25 of the images are of his black and white photos, with which I was entirely unacquainted. So, what should you do if you are mainly interested in Leiter's colour photography and are hesitating between this and 'Early Color'? If money is no object (and if 'Early Color' is still available, for I do not expect it to remain in print forever), I would recommend choosing 'Early Color'. Although the reproductions in this Photofile book are good, the slightly less bright paper of 'Early Color' better suits Leiter's muted colours. However, if you are budget-conscious or are looking for a selection that includes his monochrome work, this book would be the obvious choice. And if you already own 'Early Color' and are considering another volume of Leiter's wonderful photography, do not hesitate -- this book is a gem.

I was surprised at how small this book was when it arrived (of course, had I checked the Product Details I would have seen that it's about eight inches square) but now having looked through the pages several times I can see why Steidl published it this size. Photographers like Crewdson, Gursky or Shore require a large page because their work is saturated with detail. Here, these wonderful photos are a sliver of city life and presenting them about postcard size is perfect. Leiter gives us an intimate look at the everyday in what seems to me an almost unique vision. Fred Herzog's color work during the fifties and early sixties in Vancouver does seem slightly similar especially the vibrant reds that appear in both their work (Fred Herzog: Photographs). Leiter's photos though, capture the small fragments of color and shape on the street which he cleverly takes further by using reflection, shadow and soft focus to make an image that could be considered a sort of photo/painting. I liked the way he uses commercial street signage (as does Herzog) to provide

small areas of bright color amongst the dark hues and shadows so prevalent in any city. I doubt any of the photos were taken in bright sunlight and even a few that include snow still have a dark hue to them. The book has a hundred photos printed with a 175 screen on a matt art, one to page, except for two spreads and opposite each photo there is the briefest of caption: location and date. The first edition came out in 2006, second in 2007 and this one to coincide with an Amsterdam exhibition of Leiter's photos. The publication of this edition should bring the high prices of earlier copies down to a more realistic level. All three editions seem identical except for some type changes on the imprint page. This is one of those books whose size works in harmony with the contents and really helps to bring Leiter's intimate city photos to life. ***LOOK INSIDE THE BOOK by clicking 'customer images' under the cover.

This monograph was suggested by a friend of mine who is a very talented designer and photographer -- he thought it would be a good touchstone for my work. The book is a smallish format (8 x 8 inches) with color plates, one per page of about 100 images. It was published in conjunction with a show at New York's Howard Greenberg Gallery. Leiter was best known as a painter who exhibited alongside Philip Guston and Willem de Kooning in the 1950's, but his real talent may have been as a photographer. Focusing on urban street scenes in New York, Leiter creates a highly layered visual sensibility -- not a translation of abstract expressionism to photography, but a style uniquely his own that defines the photographic medium in a new way. Many of the images look forward to the digital montage styles that are gaining currency today, but with a lyrical beauty and rhythm that speak to the humanity and drama of the street. It is unfortunate it took the world 40 years to appreciate this visual genius and rediscover what he saw. A must have photobook.

This is an undiscovered treasure! This book is a good intro to his work. Most people will know of his studio work for magazines, but this book unlocks the sense of color of the 50' and 60'. It is up there with Hass, Callahan and Outerbridge. You will be very happy with this book.

Long overdue, this give this long over-looked artist a place to shine. The color reproductions are marvelous and have a wonderful bygone era quality about them.

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