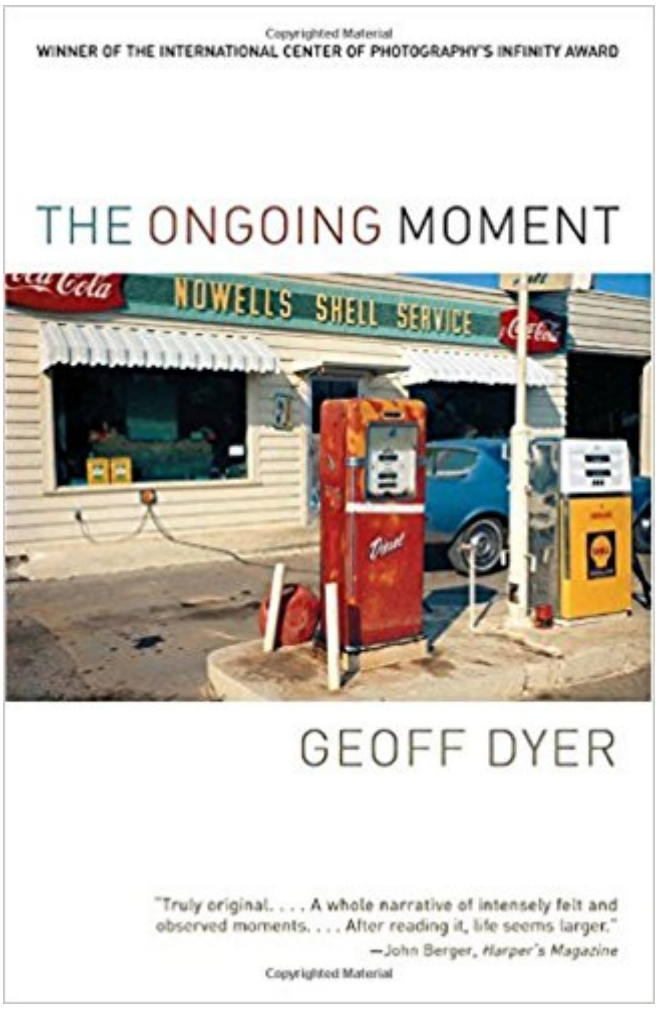
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The Ongoing Moment



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Synopsis

Great photographs change the way we see the world;Ã Â The Ongoing MomentÃ Â changes the way we look at both.Focusing on the ways in which canonical figures like Alfred Stieglitz, Paul Strand, Walker Evans, AndrÃƒÂ© KertÃƒÂ©sz, Edward Weston, Dorothea Lange, Diane Arbus, and William Eggleston have photographed the same thingsÃ¢â ¬â •barber shops, benches, hands, roads, signsÃ¢â ¬â •award-winning writer Geoff Dyer seeks to identify their signature styles. In doing so, he constructs a narrative in which these photographersÃ¢â ¬â •many of whom never metÃ¢â ¬â •constantly encounter one another. The result is a kaleidoscopic work of extraordinary originality and insight.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Having already tackled jazz (But Beautiful) and D.H. Lawrence (Out of Sheer Rage), cultural critic Dyer now turns his intelligent and discriminating eye to photography. Essentially a fast-moving series of highly focused "close readings," his volume zeros in on the way "certain photographs serve as nodes, places where subjects initially considered distinct converge and merge." Thus Paul Strand’s "Blind Woman, New York, 1916" leads Dyer not only to other photographs of the blind by Lewis Hine and Gary Winogrand, but also to a survey of different portraits of blind author Jorge Luis Borges and to a consideration of Walker Evans’s SX-70 photographs. Like the great English critic John Berger (Ways of Seeing), whom Dyer wrote about in Ways of Telling, the author has a lively and dramatic sense of provocation. He declares, for instance, that William Eggleston’s photographs

look "like they were taken by a Martian who lost the ticket for his flight home and ended up working at a gun shop in a small town near Memphis." He also has a loose-limbedÃ¢â ¬â •and mostly surefootedÃ¢â ¬â •ability to balance a number of elements into a functioning whole. In an overcrowded field, Dyer's book is distinguished by an idiosyncratic and infectious enthusiasm. 8 pages color illus. not seen by PW. (Oct. 4) Copyright Ã Â© Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

A self-styled "scholarly gatecrasher," Dyer has written with equal fervor about D. H. Lawrence, military history, and jazz. Here he turns to photography, with the caveat "I make no claim to being an expert in this or any other field." Indeed, he confesses, "I don't even own a camera." The resulting book is a curious encyclopedia, purposefully eclectic and incomplete. The images are taken mostly from the canon of American twentieth-century photography, but Dyer arranges them in unexpected clusters—blind accordionists here, vacant benches there. He imagines William Eggleston's pictures to be the work of a Martian, stranded in Middle America, who keeps looking for his lost ticket home, "with a haphazard thoroughness that confounds established methods of investigation." The Martian is an apt stand-in for Dyer, a flÃƒÂ¢neur in the world of photography, who bypasses the famous sights in favor of back alleys and side streets. Copyright Ã Â© 2006 The New Yorker --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

I give the Kindle version three stars because it does not include the 12 color plates found in the book's hardcopy. Further, hyperlinks to and from the footnotes are very difficult to use and require numerous attempts in order to function. Otherwise, the content is quirky and fascinating and definitely worthy of five stars.

This is the view of photography from a writer not an art critic or photographer. Dyer gives his unique insight into several prominent photographers by speaking of particular photographic images that have a common thread that links them all. It is an intriguing viewpoint that is very enlightening, entertaining and educational.

The association of one photo to another is interesting. The photos selected are all well discussed with true or fabricated stories behind. However, there are two inadequacies. One is the undivided trunk of text which makes reading lack of rhythm. I would rather prefer books with chapters or sections to make chewing easier. The other more important inadequacy is the omission of all colour

plates in the Kindle version. It is grossly unfair to readers, especially for books of photography where seeing the photos is the essence.

I have read it twice, and I believe this is the kind of book that I will enjoy re-reading every few years. Not the least, Geoff Dyer reconciles us with the idea that it does not matter how a subject, even a thing, has been photographed before, in and of itself no deterrent to shoot it again.On the contrary, one could feel invited to add one's photographic interpretation to those of the past, even relish in doing so, guiltlessly.Goeff doesn't claim that his book is about photography as a whole, it is just about photographs, a whole bunch of them, and the photographers who made them.So that in the end, we, as readers, might find that after all, this may be the best book we have read, about photography.The style is engaging, the ideas both original and entertaining, the author's wit and perspicacity matched by the depth of the insights, and a sure-footed intellectual engagement. It's fun to read, while we are given a lot to reflect upon.For someone who claims not to take pictures, Geoff Dyer knows a lot about photos. Highly recommended.

Here is a man who thinks about what he sees. Many interesting comments on well-known and not so well known photographer-artists. You'll be introduced to some you've never heard of and of course, you'll think of some he apparently doesn't know but that's the fun of it. A very intriguing mixture of insight and gossip. There aren't many books on photography that criticizes a Steiglitz photograph of Georgia O'Keefe's genitalia because it doesn't show enough detail! I strongly recommend this book for all photographers, particularly those many who look without seeing. Rating would have been 5 stars if it weren't for indifferent reproduction of photos plus omission of some images discussed in the text. Apparently some artists (or their estates) are possessive to the point of paranoia.

Good for people interested in photography. Geoff Dyer writes amusingly on other subjects. I don't often laugh out loud.

Was expecting to see more images. Overall, an interesting look at photography from a alternate perspective.

Some very good perceptions; some dross too

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