



The Publications Committee

of The Book Club of California

Announces a Major Photography

Publication

WILLIAM REAGH A Long Walk Downtown

Photographs of Los Angeles & Southern California, 1936–1991

With an Introduction by Patrick Reagh and an Essay by Michael Dawson

Contesting Erasure: *William Reagh &*

Other Documentary Photographers of Urban Los Angeles,

1936–1991



Window Shopping on Broadway, 1939

This special collection of photographs

by the Los Angeles documentary photographer William Reagh examines and showcases his work from the mid-to late twentieth century. The text was typeset and printed letterpress, and the photographs were reproduced by tritone offset. The 130 photographs were selected by Patrick Reagh and Michael Dawson. As a child, Patrick often accompanied his father on excursions to the train yards, beaches, streets, and parks of Los Angeles, sometimes sacrificing the first inning of a baseball game so that his father could capture a particular cloud formation over City Hall, or whatever else happened to catch the peripatetic photographer's attention. The selections reflect an intimate regard for his father's perspective on urban renewal and change in Los Angeles during this period. There are views of Angels Flight, Bunker Hill, Pershing Square, Broadway, Grand Avenue, Hill Street, and Main Street. There are images of architecture (old and new), Wrigley Field, Chavez Ravine, Dodgers Stadium, and people, lots and lots of people. Many of the photographs from earlier decades are juxtaposed with photographs from later decades, taken from exactly the same location and vantage point. In these, it becomes clear how dramatically the city changed over the years, and Reagh's documentation of that change becomes all the more profound.

In his essay that provides valuable historical, socio-political, and artistic context for Reagh's work, Michael Dawson observes, 'In the Chavez Ravine and Bunker Hill communities, in particular, every trace of the former landscape and way of life was systematically destroyed. Before that obliteration, William Reagh and a few other photographers fortunately sensed what was going to happen, and they made a visual record of neighborhoods before they were demolished—a record that has been preserved and is crucial for understanding what had been before.' The photographs reproduced in this book establish 'an unarguably identifiable tradition of urban documentary photography that worked to contest the erasure of portions of the urban core of Los Angeles, in that [they] substantially helped develop a collective memory of urban communities that had been made to disappear.' Significant for their historical interest, visual strength, and social statements, all of the photographs in this collection capture a unique sense of place and humanity, and are critically important to understanding what happened to Los Angeles and particular groups of people as the city was redeveloped.

The Book Club of California is proud to offer this chronicle of a city over time, a gift from a photographer with an endlessly fascinated sensibility, for all who should wish to revisit Los Angeles in the future.

The photographs

were selected by Patrick Reagh and Michael Dawson, and were printed under the supervision of Ken Coburn of Global Interprint. The book design and letterpress printing were done by Patrick Reagh in Sebastopol, California. The text was set in Monotype Janson and foundry Grottesque Number 9. The text of the edition of 350 copies was printed letterpress on Somerset and the photographs were printed in tritone offset on acid-free dull gloss paper. The slipcase and book are bound in linen over boards. The book is in landscape format, measures 12½ x 9¾ inches, and consists of 140 pages. Included are 130 photographs by William Reagh and twelve photographs by other documentary photographers, reproduced within Michael Dawson's essay. The price of each book is \$225 (plus applicable sales tax and shipping). Requests by Book Club of California members for second copies will be honored in order of receipt, should copies remain after all first-copy orders have been filled.

A limited number of books (50) are available with an additional silver-gelatin photograph printed from an original negative selected from the William Reagh archive at the California State Library, and authenticated with a stamp printed and signed by Patrick Reagh. The cost of this special selection is \$325.

Orders may be placed online (www.bccbooks.org) or by phone (800 869-7656).

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