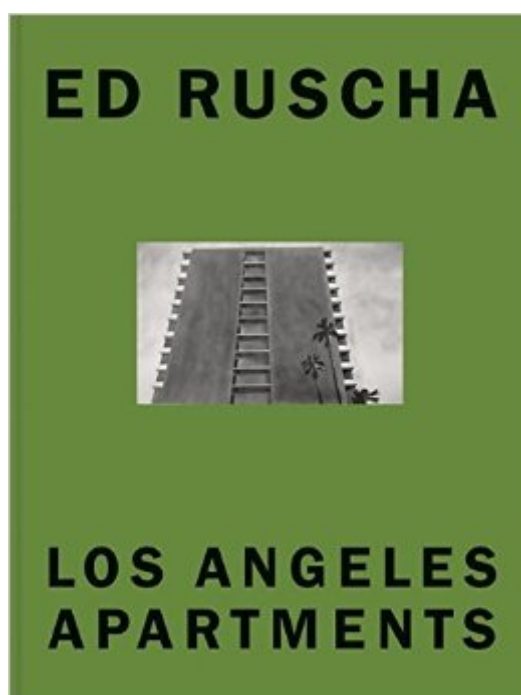


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Ed Ruscha: Los Angeles Apartments



Synopsis

This is the catalogue for Ed Ruscha's exhibition *Los Angeles Apartments*, held at the Kunstmuseum Basel in 2013. In 1965, Ed Ruscha published *Some Los Angeles Apartments*, the third of his ongoing series of photographic books, and completed a group of ten related drawings that depict examples of the ubiquitous Southern California apartment building. The exhibition showed the preparatory studies for these drawings which were recently acquired by the Department of Prints and Drawings at the Kunstmuseum Basel. They are based directly on the photographs Ruscha made of the apartment buildings. Also included are photographs from Ruscha's *Gasoline Stations* series of 1962, one of which served as a model for the painting of *Standard Station, Amarillo, Texas*, of 1963. By immediately juxtaposing preparatory studies, drawings and photographs, Ruscha's working method is clearly highlighted and the significance of photography for his passage between abstraction and realism made evident.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

'Some Los Angeles Apartments' (1965) was one of Ruscha's sixteen slim booklets produced between 1963 and 1978. They all prominently feature snapshot photos and Ruscha is quoted in the book's essay (interviewed by John Coplans in 1965): 'Above all, the photographs I use are not 'arty' in any sense of the word.' and 'I don't even look at it as photography; they're just images to fill book'. Considering how casually he dismisses his work it's amazing that these books of snaps have achieved an importance beyond their mundane appearance. The book is published in conjunction

with an exhibition of Ruscha's apartment photos at the LA Getty Museum during 2013, the year marks the fiftieth anniversary of the first booklet: 'Twenty-six gasoline stations' in 1963. Editor Virginia Heckert's illustrated essay examines Ruscha's work in relation to other location photographers like Carleton Watkins, Walker Evans, Robert Adams, Lewis Baltz, Stephen Shore, Bern and Hilla Becher and the New Topographics. She ends her essay with examples of work from photographers who have been influenced by Ruscha (and obviously other photographers) including Eric Doeringer who, in 2009, re-photographed the locations in Ruscha's original Apartments to produce an up-to-date version. The thirty-eight photos in the book reveal domestic architecture over a wide area of LA: Malibu to Rosemead to Van Nuys to Long Beach and in keeping with Ruscha's casual feel about photography they are mostly taken showing front and side, the sort of shot one would expect to see in real-estate ads though he frequently includes more road than would be necessary in a snap selling property. All of them are a long way from the formal style of images one would expect from the creative photographers I've mentioned.

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