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Arrivals & Departures: The Airport Pictures Of Garry Winogrand



Synopsis

If Garry Winogrand photographed everything, all the time, as he is famous for having done, his pictures of airports convey the many still very familiar sights and spaces and sensations attached to air travel. Arriving at an airport, checking baggage, watching other travelers amble, walk and sometimes rush by, luggage trailing and flailing and neatly rolling along, passengers waiting forever on those long rows of attached seats, friends and relatives greeting each other and saying goodbye: everything that happened and stills happens in these vast public spaces. Winogrand's airport photographs were taken over a period of 25 years, with the first frame shot around 1958 and the last in 1983, just months before his death. In Winogrand's archive at the Center for Creative Photography at the University of Arizona in Tucson, there are hundreds of contact sheets containing airport images, and over 1,100 prints of airplanes and airports that Winogrand made during his lifetime. Edited by Alex Harris, one of the first to publish selections from this body of work, in DoubleTake magazine in 1996, and longtime friend and colleague Lee Friedlander, *The Airport Pictures of Garry Winogrand* assembles 86 of the photographer's most compelling, never-before published images of travelers, flight attendants, airport waiting rooms, airplanes on runways and all the people and places in between.

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Customer Reviews

Born in 1928 in New York, Garry Winogrand began photographing while in the United States Air Force. His first one-man exhibition was held in 1960 in New York, and he was given a solo showing

at the Museum of Modern Art, New York, just three years later; landmark group exhibitions in which he took part include *Toward a Social Landscape* and *New Documents*. Winogrand received a Guggenheim fellowship in 1964, which led him to photograph extensively in California and the American Southwest; another, in 1969, began a period of work concerned with the effect of the media on public events. Published portfolios of his work include *The Animals*, *Stock Photographs: Fort Worth Fat Stock Show and Rodeo*, and *The Man in the Crowd*. Garry Winogrand died in 1984.

On the strength of seeing twenty-five of his airport photos in the excellent 'Winogrand: Figments from the real world' I bought a copy of 'Arrivals & Departures'. Certainly it contains some remarkable photos but I am not convinced that it is a great book of images, good yes. 'Figments from the real world' works for me because of the huge number of photos, just over two hundred. So many that I've found it best to look at three or four chapters at a time. 'Arrivals' has eighty-six photos selected and edited by Alex Harris and Lee Friedlander from hundreds of contact sheets and prints (mostly unpublished) in the Winogrand archive at the University of Arizona. Obviously the choice of what to include was personal to them but I thought there were too many bland photos mixed in with the greats. In all of the photos the feel of an airport is captured and interestingly though there are more than ten featured you would be hard pressed to identify them. One is clearly the Eero Saarinen's TWA terminal in New York, a stunning architectural shot and my favorite in the book. Turning over the pages I was conscious of so many photos that looked like they were taken in a hurry and included because Harris and Friedlander thought they best represent the feel of an airport. The book's production is in the usual photo book format: one photo to a page with generous margins and 250+ screen though it has the usual annoyance of having the brief captions at the back of the book and rather oddly the page numbers are printed near the gutter rather than on the outer margin of each page. I would put 'Arrival & Departures' with Winogrand's 'Public Relations', both of them celebrate a great American photo journalist but I thought each has too many average images. ***SEE SOME INSIDE PAGES by clicking 'customer images' under the cover.

I was a photography student at the University of Texas at Austin in 1971 to 1975. Garry Winogrand taught there and I took two semesters of his photography classes. The photos in this book are precisely the type of photos Garry took in Austin. He was famous even then. I believe he was a Guggenheim Fellow at UT. Here are a couple of tidbits about Garry. He was passionate about photography but he was unwilling to talk about it very much. He was concerned about the conflict between form and content but unable to verbalize what he was looking for. Each class was about

"the work on the walls." There were about 30 people in the class, and many would contribute their work and put it on the walls for discussion. If Garry called a photograph "interesting" that meant he gave it highest praises. If any student attempted to ask a question or comment in any way other than "Interesting" Garry would brusquely cut them off in that typical New Yorker way. Garry had his groupies, people who wanted to photograph things exactly the way he did. One evening there was a pep rally for the UT football team. Garry was there with his Leica and his powerful flash. Several students were copying him and each one would move forward to take almost identical photos of the cheerleaders and the crowd. I'm not sure any "interesting" work resulted from the event. Garry was working the sidelines of a UT football game when he was hit by a big player and broke his leg. His health wasn't the same after. One girl brought some photo work for the walls. She had shaved her head to resemble a soccer ball. Her photos were pictures of her breasts scrunched up under a piece glass. I don't know if Garry thought they were interesting, or even if they made it to the wall. One evening I was in the photo lab when Garry was processing some of his photos. He brought in hundreds of negatives and made many, many 11x14 full frame prints of his photos for reviewing purposes. He was in a hurry to print as many pictures as he could. It was fun being there in the lab with him in a relaxed setting. He had a real problem relaxing. I remember him as always "on" and never really sitting around shooting the bull with the students. But in the darkroom he could relax and be himself. He told jokes and had lots of fun, even though many thought he was not very approachable. He died of cancer and tried to escape it by going to Mexico for apricot pit treatments.

It's just wonderful to see the comings and goings of ordinary people candidly portrayed by a photographer as skilled as Garry Winogrand. The photographs date from the 1950s to the 1980s with most from the 1970s and 1980s. My how airports and styles have changed. Most of the photographs are of people in U.S. airports but you'll also see Paris and Marseilles. Among U.S. airports, the majority are from NYC but also Salt Lake City, San Francisco and Los Angeles among others. One of my favorite photographs is of a business man in suit and an old style business hat speaking with obvious pleasure on a pay phone (remember pay phones?). Winogrand also seems to favor attractive women -- whose beauty seems to transcend the fashion of the times. The images of people standing in line are also interesting. Some things never change. The reproduction quality is very good. Highly recommended.

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