

HOTSHOE



Contemporary Photography
Summer 2014

UK £9
EUR €12
USA \$18

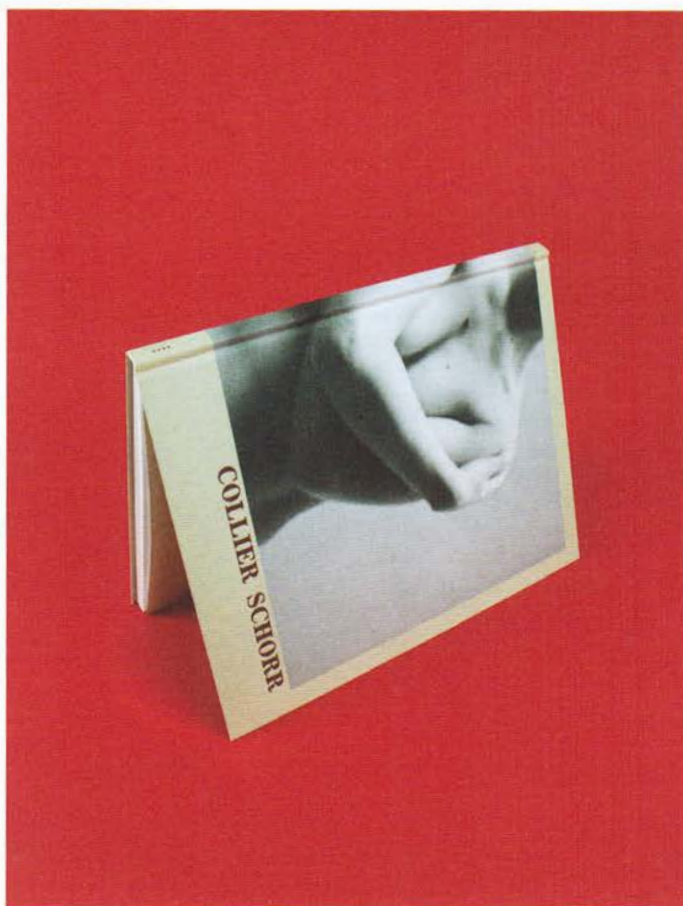


BOOKS



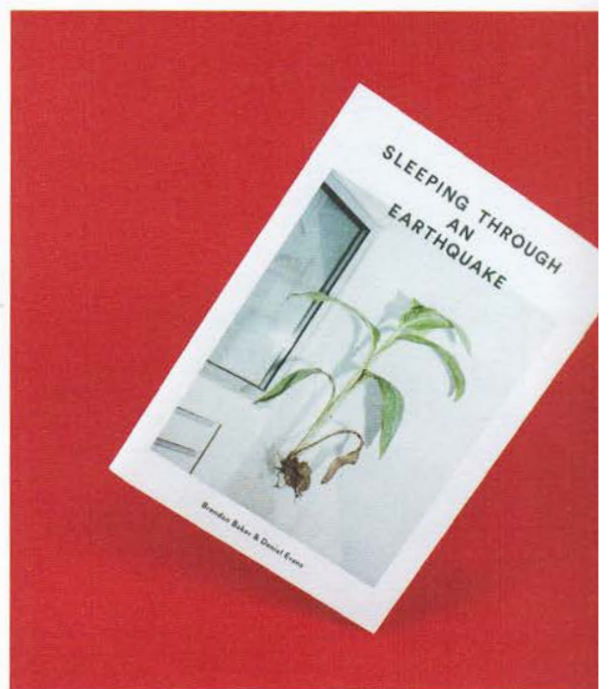
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NEW RELEASES 5—8

5 TAKING SHOTS WILLIAM S. BURROUGHS

Prestel
£30 / 160pp / January 2014
ISBN: 9783791348797

"... photographers will tell you that often their best shots are accidents... writers will tell you the same."
— William S. Burroughs, 1978

On the whole, the photography art world has bided its time to lavish attention upon William S. Burroughs, struggling as institutions sometimes do to shake off the associations of the artist's primary medium and to evaluate their "secondary" work on its own merit. Published to coincide with the show at The Photographers' Gallery earlier in the year, *Taking Shots* is a timely overview of an artist who transcended many boundaries through not only his writing, but also his photography, surrealist collage, assemblages and cut ups. The book attempts to simply open up the work, rather than define it, and the curators admit to only having access to a small percentage of Burroughs's total photographic oeuvre, with most of his archive having either been lost or destroyed. It would be interesting to know what the modest Burroughs himself would have made of his recent exposure. As David Brittain writes, in the aftermath of Szarkowski's *New Documents* show in 1967, it would have been "very unlikely that Burroughs considered his snapshots to be photographic art".

7 8 WOMEN COLLIER SCHORR

MACK
£40 / 72pp / April 2014
ISBN: 9781907946424

Collier Schorr's *8 Women* is a reflective appropriation of past works. As one of a select band of photographers to successfully traverse both fashion and art worlds, Schorr has selected these images from a 20-year archive and recycled them here in various new guises. Colour advertising shots are displayed cropped, enlarged, and later repeated, allowing the viewer to examine the physical structure of the print itself. We see a mixture of monochrome and colour, installation-esque photos of prints, and potent collage intersections of both the male and female form by which Burroughs himself would no doubt have been intrigued. One particular image of two rolled up prints acts as a self-contained diptych, with naked limbs splintering across the panes. Both the first and last faces that we see in the book are highly androgynous, and throughout the journey we are presented with a photographer who very much understands the finely nuanced dynamics at play between herself and her sitters. Interested in exploring notions of female desire and its position within a wider, post-feminist society, Schorr shows us a complex and multi-layered female gaze that is rarely seen within the larger photographic domain.

6 FLASH UP SEIJI KURATA

Zen Foto Gallery
£139 / 184pp / November
ISBN: N / A

Seiji Kurata's mid-1970s photographs of Tokyo's seedy underbelly of a nation that was, at the time, about to become one of the world's economic superpowers, have been schooled by Daido Moriyama and Ara Gino. *Flash Up* was originally released by Kurata in 1980 and is a seminal work in the history of Japanese photography. It is a world of full-body tattoos, gleaming skin, and right-wing protesters and bloodied, post-1970s journeys. We see the outfall of hedonism in the form of monochrome brothels of the city's entertainment district. The images are captioned throughout, and occasionally feel slightly trite or overly literal. As a help to add useful context. As an oversized, slipcase-protected gold slipcase, it is destined to remain a collector's item, especially given the price of just 750 copies. As an audience of 21st-century photographers looking back, Kurata addresses us directly in the text where he describes his endless night-time "compellingly thrilling ordeal" and muses upon the "sense of change, nostalgia and the gradual ironing out of erotic creases from the fabric of his scenes".

8 SLEEPING THROUGH AN EARTHQUAKE BAKER & EVANS

Waterfall
£5 / 32pp / February 2014
ISBN: 9789868972537

Sleeping Through an Earthquake is a collaboration between photographic duo Brendan Baker and Evans, and the by-product of a month spent in a remote location. Contained within its soft cover is a mixture of black and white B&W images — largely people-less and often of still lifes with precarious sculptural qualities — and interior and exterior spaces, mostly in the form of black and flash-lit. A central section switches between black and bleed colour, contrasting vivid palm trees with a white animal skull, and a gentle sunset with the stark white of a shirt. The work is very much a personal reaction to the environment, and whilst it is certainly not a genre you will immediately recognise, it is all the more compelling for it. Totalling 31 photographs, it is a modestly sized book, and hearing of the large pile of negatives taken during the trip and having seen additional images from the project online, it would have been interesting to see a slightly expanded edit. However, there is a beautiful harmony between the production values and the content itself, so perhaps the balance is just right.

JAMES D. CLARK