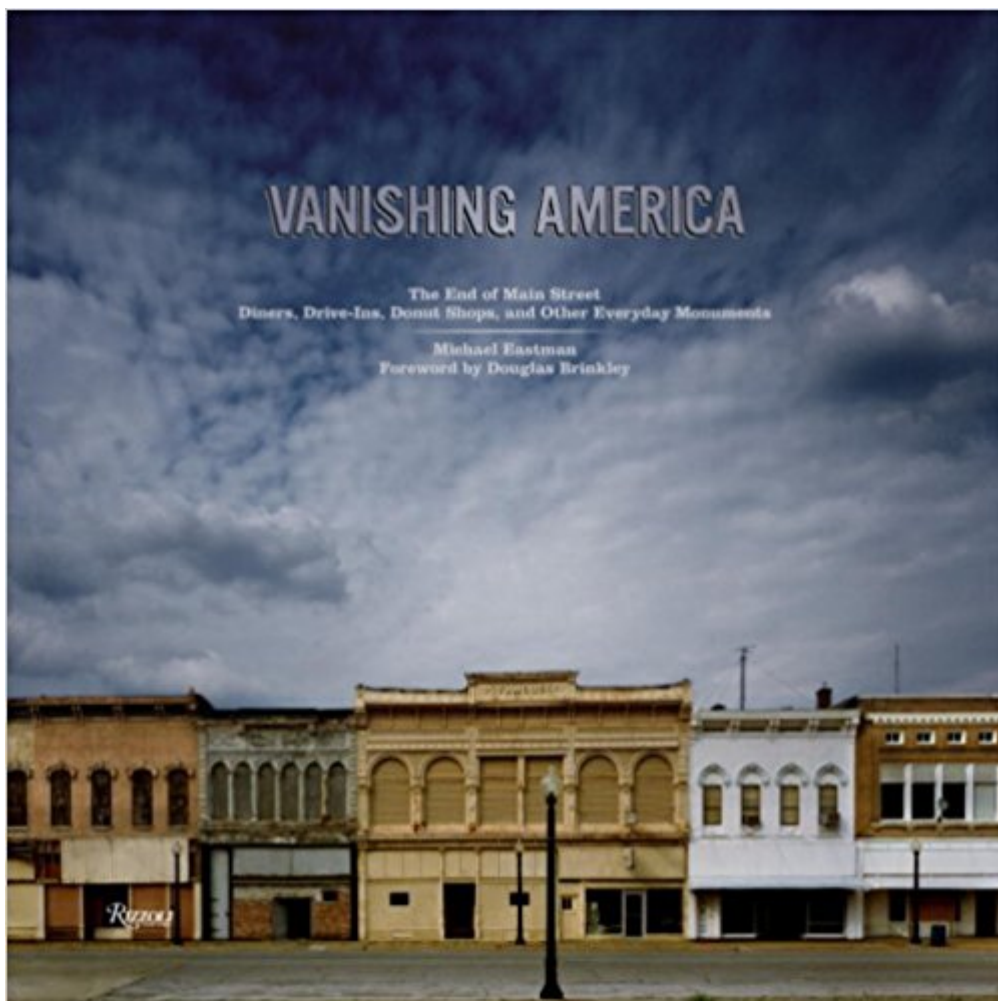




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Vanishing America: The End Of Main Street Diners, Drive-Ins, Donut Shops, And Other Everyday Monuments



Synopsis

Think of the quirky buildings you pass every day but whose quiet beauty you take for granted—the moviehouses, juke joints, soda fountains, barbershops, roadside diners, and storefront churches. You don't miss them until they're gone. As suburban sprawl and strip malls conquer the country, these vestiges of a lost way of life are falling under the wrecking ball. Here the photographer Michael Eastman has made the ultimate road trip, crisscrossing the nation dozens of times, to capture these buildings on film before they vanish. These dreamy images call us to question what we choose to let go in the wake of contemporary life, with a cool melancholy that evokes the work of Edward Hopper, Jack Kerouac, and William Eggleston. There is a wry sense of humor here as well. The book delights in the idiosyncracies of America's vernacular styles, ranging from Depression Deco to New England clapboard in random juxtapositions that accrue over time in a town's landscape. Countless visual puns arise among the book's many detailed images of signs and statuettes. *Vanishing America* catalogues great everyday American architecture and design. But it also offers a provocative portrait of the silent emptiness that has descended upon vanishing small communities everywhere.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"...a liberation from the glaring rat race of American life." ~LA Times
"Eastman's photos of fading American kitsch...are like a post-apocalyptic stage set for lost mid-century dreams." ~Print
"Texture, variety, human scale--these are what we stand to lose when these places disappear. Consider it a

call to arms." ~National Geographic Traveler"The careful excision of human life forces us to focus on what might otherwise seem unremarkable, sweeping aside the dust to expose the archaeological strata of US society that still lie there beneath the modern." ~World of Interiors"Shot without people, the photos capture the crumbling decay of movie houses, diners, drive-ins, and so on across the United States. Eastman, who has a terrific eye and knows how to stay out of the way of his subjects, photographed most of these places with an unvarnished objectivity that veers away from nostalgia toward despair." ~Su Casa Magazine

Michael Eastman's work is in the collections of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the International Center of Photography, The Art Institute of Chicago, and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. He is the recipient of a National Endowment for the Arts grant and has published two previous books of photography. He lives in St. Louis.

Product was as advertised and arrived quickly....

My husband and I bought several copies of this picture book for our friends for Christmas. Helps the older generation (that would be us!) recall the good old times across our country, long before interstates.

This book is beautiful, but not in the traditional sense. It shows well-loved and decaying mainstays of small towns all across the U.S. Not so much the "Route 66" kitschy America, but the regular, everyday sights and signs that we seldom focus on but are there, nonetheless. The photographer took pictures of what was on the other side of the street, and it is poignant and a little sad to see some of that stuff in such a state of decline. I'm glad I purchased the book and I love to remember the small town I grew up in as I flip through its pages.

This book is full of wonderful pictures - too many, in fact. It could be half as long as it is and still be worth the cover price and more. The result of such overly generous editing is that the layout is downright awful - crowded, jumbled and ugly. But that in no way diminishes the fact that there are some stunning, evocative pictures in here, pictures of the backbone of America many of us have never seen and will never see. A book to come back to again and again.

mostly orthogonal photographic records of byGone cultures should have been printed in

black&white. a couple of edwardHopper-like storeFronts & graffiti-littered venitianBlinds are notable. the DOORS chapter should have been collaged.

I really love the idea behind this book, capturing photos of a diverse assortment of buildings and businesses that truly had character. Movie houses before the advent of the Cineplex. Bowling alleys before the advent of the entertainment center. Mom and Pop storefronts before the advent of the mall. Where are these icons now? That's the kind of stuff I could look at for hours. I must say that some of the pictures in here are absolutely captivating. I look at them and immediately would love to be transported back to the times and places when these places thrived. But there are a few problems that the book fails to overcome. First, there is no commentary other than the name of the photo and the city & state it was taken in. I'd have really enjoyed reading a quote from a local resident or two that would provide a memory or a reflection about the subject whenever possible. Second, there are some photo choices that seem a bit uninspired (at least to me). A whole chapter is devoted to 'doors', many of which fall into this 'uninspired' category. And third, the book just seems too darned short. Those faults aside, a lot of what is contained in here is excellent, and able to stand on it's own merits. If you like nostalgia - mixed in with a dose of melancholy - you will like this book.

If You're a fan of Michael Eastman's fine art photography, as I am, you must get a copy of his latest book, "Vanishing America." You must get it, but you'll be disappointed in it--disappointed in the layout, particularly, but also in the reproduction. As to the layout, the photographs are given no respect. They are presented full bleed, that is, without margins. A typical two-page spread has a large picture full-bleed on the left side, and an array of smaller pictures--also full bleed and butting up against each other so it's hard to tell where one ends and the next begins--on the right. This is not a book of photographs so much as it is a book of Americana, the kind you see on the bargain racks of the large chain bookstores. As to the reproduction, I remember seeing a large (50x40 inch) print of "Shotgun House, New Orleans" at a show a few years ago. It was \$5000 framed and I wanted it, but I had neither the wall space nor the money, so I contented myself with a free, postcard-size promotional reproduction. This reproduced the colors of the larger image very well and it served as a good reminder of why I liked it. This picture is reproduced in the book, slightly cropped, for no good reason, and with a decided magenta cast, compared to my postcard copy. Looking at the picture in the book, it doesn't remind me at all of my feelings for the original print. I assume books of Americana are more profitable than books of photographs. If so, I can forgive this disappointing

book. Fine art photographers need all the support they can get.

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