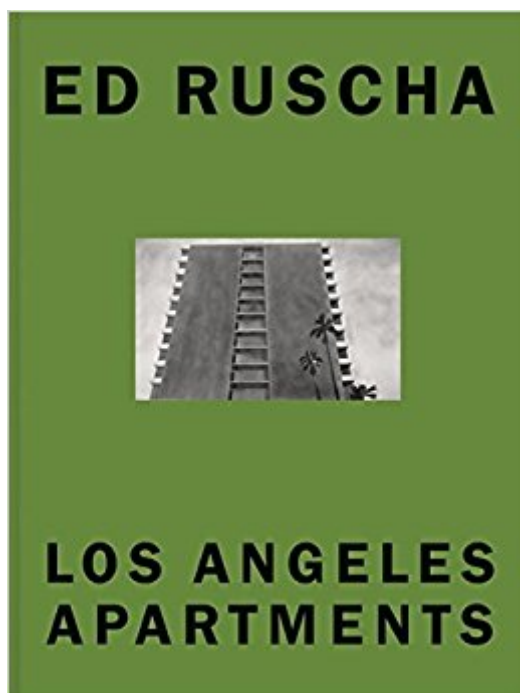


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# Ed Ruscha: Los Angeles Apartments



## 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

Beautiful book. The linen binding/cover is really gorgeous on the coffee table too.

Perfect for admirers of Ed Ruscha.

'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 Rusha'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 Rusha'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 Rusha (and obviously other photographers) including Eric Doeringer who, in 2009, re-photographed the locations in Rusha'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 Rusha'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. The photos are one to a page with generous margins and to bulk out the book there are twelve blank pages mixed in with the thirty-eight. Printing is with an impressive three hundred screen on a silky matt art (surely making them some of the best printed snapshots ever). The book is an interesting example of Rusha's on going influence, the Getty has an exhibition related to one booklet and earlier this year the MIT Press published *VARIOUS SMALL BOOKS: Referencing Various Small Books* by Ed Ruscha, which looks at how seventy-three photographers produced their own Rusha style books.

I was hoping to see some photographs of the really beautiful, old apartment buildings, but I should have known from the artist that his eye would be drawn to those simple ones of that fifties, sixties era.

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