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Theatre of Space Vol 2

Wanderings in Central America

Nigel Grierson

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- Described by Gerry Badger as 'the classic street photographer' (Best Face Forward), this book is a must for all those interested in an alternative and poetic approach to documentation, that captures mystery and intrigue as well as fact.
- There's something of the spirit and mythology, of Central America contained in the work, as if by chance (or by the powers of light and shade alone), while being completely absent of obvious visual metaphors, or symbolism

Photographs taken during Grierson's wanderings in Mexico and Guatemala in the late Eighties, and Nineties. While continuing his preoccupations, from where he'd left off several years earlier (his RCA work), Grierson was now met with a different reality, and a fresh challenge. Would the post modernist, formalist playfullness, in his earlier work, continue within this new third world environment? We are always ultimately shaped by our environment, but within the work, the environment is also shaped by both the photographer's own subjectivity and the medium itself. *'Grierson indeed is a particular kind of witness and his work is as much about the medium as the world'*, (Gerry Badger).
Putting away his flash gun (which had characterised much of his earlier work), in respect for the indigenous people, he wanders through Central America, recording his interactions on b/w film. The resulting emotive images, have a strong sence of humanity, but they are never sentimental, and their power still owes much to Grierson's formalist eye, and the subtle, yet visceral connections between the objects and people, within each frame.

Nigel Grierson is best known for the album sleeves and posters he designed and photographed (with his then partner Vaughan Oliver under the name 23 Envelope) in the '80s and early '90s, for the now legendary 4AD label (The Cocteau Twins, This Mortal Coil, Dead Can Dance etc.). The work has since appeared in many international exhibitions and periodicals and has been acclaimed by the likes of Rick Poyner and Catherine McDermott as among the most important and influential design of the Eighties. In the Nineties, Nigel went on to work with such artists as Tori Amos, Nine Inch Nails, Black, David Sylvian, and Lisa Gerrard, and he also began concentrating on the moving image. Around 2000, after a successful career directing music videos and TV commercials in both Europe and America, Grierson returned to his first love, photography. A series from his colour project *'The Transparency of Matter'* was exhibited at The Craig Krull Gallery in Los Angeles, Spring 2007 and at Photo LA the same year. An overview of his work was published in the highly acclaimed monograph simply entitled *Photographs* (Dewi Lewis Publishing) in December 2014, followed by two more books, *Lightstream* and *Passing Through* in 2021, published by Lost Press. His most recent projects challenge our preconceptions about the medium, pushing further into abstraction and the spiritual realm. Nigel's work has been exhibited in Europe, Japan and America, and is in the V&A collection in London.

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