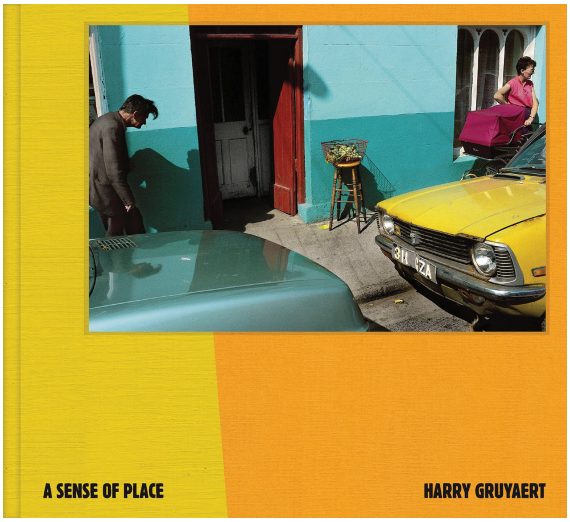
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Harry Gruyaert – A Sense of Place

Edited by Géraldine Lay

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- Solo exhibition 'Harry Gruyaert - Sense of Place' during Rencontres d'Arles 2026
- The first monographic volume dedicated to the work of Harry Gruyaert since 2015
- Harry Gruyaert is a member of Magnum Photos since 1982, he has photographed extensively in the United States, Morocco, Europe, and India
- Rencontres d'Arles July 6, 2026 - October 4, 2026: : https://www.rencontres-arles.com/en/expositions/2026/harry-gruyaert-1

Artist Harry Gruyaert invites us on a sweeping journey through the city, freed from the usual geographic markers that structure travel. His gaze moves freely through the streets of New York, Paris, Tokyo, Moscow, Antwerp, Mumbai and Zanzibar—ultimately, the destination matters little. What unites his photographs is not their subject but the way the world presents itself to him: the vibrant intensity of color, the sharp cuts of shadow, urban geometries that punctuate space like a phrase of jazz.

Yet this movement—echoing the works gathered under the title *A Sense of Place*, reveals another dimension of his oeuvre: a chronicle of urban life. The city becomes a stage where social interactions shape identities, where each person negotiates, in a single movement, both individuality and belonging to a collective. While his compositions and mastery of color have often been celebrated, less attention has been paid to the place his passage through the city gives to the anonymous city dweller.

In a café, on a street corner, leaning against a wall, his figures are captured in the apparent insignificance of everyday life. Nothing extraordinary drives his gaze except a curiosity free of any social hierarchy. The visual power then arises from the reconfiguration of reality through color and composition. Social rituals, architecture and muted light, caught in the moment, become strange, tender or subtly ironic. The ordinary becomes theatrical. And his immersion in familiar territories—Belgium, France—further sharpens his vision.

The body of work can thus be read as a vast inquiry into modern life, conducted over more than fifty years across the globe. In doing so, it captures what unfolds within the image, while also revealing a vital energy that extends beyond the frame fixed by the photographer's eye. – Géraldine Lay

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