



Camera Solo

Patti Smith , Susan Lubowsky Talbott (Editor) , Erin Monroe (Editor)

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This captivating selection of 70 intimate black and white photographs conveys Patti Smith's singular experience as a photographer as it relates to many facets of her fascinating life and career. Exquisitely designed and produced, *Patti Smith: Camera Solo* accompanies the first museum exhibition of the artist's photography in the United States.

Using either a vintage Land 100 or a Land 250 Polaroid camera, Smith photographs subjects inspired by her connections to poetry and literature as well as pictures that honor the personal effects of those she admires or loves. In the catalogue's interview, conducted by Susan Lubowsky Talbott, the artist talks about her "respect for the inanimate object" as well as the talismanic qualities of things in her life. We see, for instance, a picture of Mapplethorpe's slippers or a porcelain cup that belonged to her father, and are drawn into their intimacy and quiet power. Moreover, these images reveal how the camera has proven to be a means for Smith to retreat—undisturbed—to "a room of my own."

From her explorations as a visual artist in the 1960s and 70s and her profound influence on the nascent punk rock scene in the late 1970s and 80s, to *Just Kids*, her National Book Award-winning memoir of life with her beloved friend Robert Mapplethorpe, Smith continues to make an indelible mark on the American cultural landscape.

Camera Solo Details

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Cassandra says

I adore Patti Smith and I'm sure I'm slightly biased with my five-star rating but even if you're not a mega fan like myself, her stunning photographs are sure to win you over. Patti Smith is a gorgeous poet, an incredible musician, a beautiful writer of fiction and non-fiction, and now as I've learned, a talented photographer. Is there anything this woman can't do? She photographs some interesting and some obscure things and places such as Tolstoy's home in Moscow, Woolf's bedroom, Rimbaud's utensils, Robert Mapplethorpe's slippers, Susan Sontag's grave, her father's talismanic cup, among other things. A beautiful collection of photographs from the wonderful Patti Smith.

Jen Sexton says

Fantastic. Inspiring.

Erin Fahy says

As a huge Patti Smith fan, I was ecstatic when our city's art gallery got her photo exhibit. I was not disappointed, her choice of photos and the quality of the work shows how much time and care she puts into her photography, not just a hobby or something she picked up from her long time collaborator, Robert Mapplethorpe. Most photos were of places she's been to or things belonging to people she admired. I loved the exhibit and this book has prints of many of the photos. Closest thing I'll get to ever owning a print of hers. A must get for Photography and Patti Smith fans!!

Ian "Marvin" Graye says

[*a possession, a relic, a fragment* (hide spoiler)]

Greg says

A collection of Smith's photography from around the world.

Mary says

beautiful catalog and interview. Polaroid black and white photos by Patti Smith. Just lovely.

Marie says

I purchased this book at the Detroit Institute of Arts after seeing Patti's Camera Solo exhibit. Photos and artifacts tell totem-like stories of her influences, experiences, friendships. The book is an excellent companion to the exhibit. Recommended.

Susan Trezins says

This book accompanies a photography exhibition of Smith's work from the the last twenty years. The first section is an interview between Smith and Susan Talbott, which explores Smith's transition to photography and her influences. The photography show has recently been shown in Detroit and Toronto.

Jack Cheng says

A short catalog of photos from after Just Kids. Patron Sam Wagstaff had been a curator at the Wadsworth.

Thuraya says

I loved the opening interview between Susan Lubowsky Talbott & Patti Smith ... and I enjoyed the photographs oriented toward self-portraits and her life in New York in the 60s (the hands of Robert Mapplethorpe) ... but overall - underwhelmed and unaffected by the majority of the collection.

Benja says

Patti Smith's collection of Polaroids - 77 black-and-white snapshots - is presented as are the miniatures of William Blake: squarely framed in each blank page, their content cryptic and richly detailed. Is the comparison reaching for too much? In the opening interview Smith cites Blake's *Songs of Innocence* as fueling early on her artistic temperament; Blake's death mask is also the subject of one of her pictures. But, if anything, Smith's pictures come across as more mellow and elegiac than frenzied and prophetic.

In all fairness I was less moved by the form and content of the pictures than by their talismanic significance (Virginia Woolf's bed! Rimbaud's spoon!). Patti Smith may have a point there. Most pictures boil down to still life, candid photos of her buddies, the occasional touristy snapshot of a grave or a monument and details of other works of art such as paintings and sculptures. I liked the weirder pics, rarefied by the angle and the lightning. I won't deny that there is a total effect in the collection and the way it's presented, but otherwise no picture really stands out to memory. Or is that another one of Patti's points?

Maurice Funken says

Camera Solo accompanied Patti Smith's museum exhibition of the same name at Wadsworth Atheneum in

2011/2012. The catalogue documents all of the show's photographic exhibits. In an abridged version of an interview conducted with Smith, she recalls some memories about the pictures taken and her artistic practice in general. For more details on some of the photographs, listen to the audio tour guide, still available online on the website of Wadsworth Atheneum, while running over the pages of the book.

David Schaafsma says

"I never thought of myself as a celebrity. I am a worker." –Patti Smith

NY Times review of Camera Solo which you can look at even for just a minute to see some of the photographs, all done in Polaroid and reproduced for an exhibition and in this cool book at original size.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2012/01/22/nyr...>

Gotta read the interview with Smith that opens the volume, that explains her interest in photography. Beautiful at helping gain some insight into her approach, her style, her voice. She doesn't claim technical skill, though she has learned more about her various cameras's need for light. She speaks of gaining aesthetic awareness over a lifetime that she hopes to bring to her craft. She's inspiring. She's an artist, not a celebrity. She works hard, she improves, she reaches into her heart and into yours.

Smith speaks of her love for Rimbaud, Blake, Mapplethorpe, inanimate objects she sees as talismanic—slippers, cups, forks and spoons, beds, statues—emblems of a person's life. She also likes the tools of various artists's craft, brushes, guitars, and so on. She sees her photography as for herself, whereas music is for other people.

"Their Objects Were the Only Way I Could Invoke Them"--Smith

She was a visual artist before she was a musician. There's a certain intimacy to these photographs that make them special. I love her photograph of Robert Mapplethorpe's slippers, which she coveted at one time, and eventually came into her possession. I read this because I just recently read *Just Kids*, so thought it would be right to see some of her work. I know: it is tempting to say she was just trailing at the coattails of her love Robert Mapplethorpe, and people have said that. But look at the photographs, hear her voice. She's an artist in all she does. A worker in the ways of beauty and remembrance.

katjackson says

thought provoking and uncluttered. You wouldn't pick up this book for the quality of the photography in the same way you wouldn't listen to her music for the clarity of singing. Some very human messages and emotions, I hope the collection comes to the UK.

Jane says

Some beautiful photographs - I particularly liked Woolf's bed obvs but also Rimbaud's cutlery! Can I please have a job taking photos of famous people's stuff??

