

ON THE SHELF

Black+White's line-up of some of the very best new photographic publications out in the bookshops or to order online.

IMAGES IN TRANSITION: WIREPHOTOS 1938-1945

David Pace / Stephen Wirtz

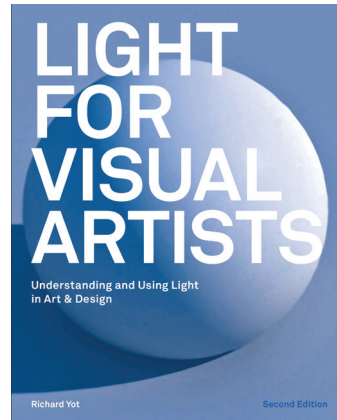
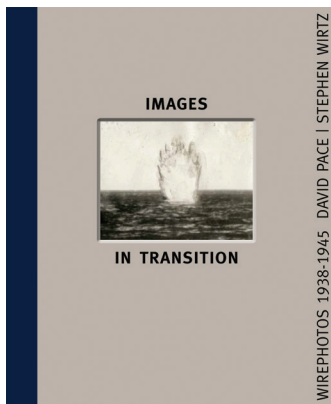
- ▣ Schilt Publishing
- ▣ Hardback, €50

Invented in the early 20th century and used widely in the 1930s and 40s, wirephotos enabled photographers to send their pictures over the telephone or telegraph wires for the first time. During World War II, in particular, newspapers were able to publish up to the minute images for their readers.

Stephen Wirtz took to collecting these images and, over a number of years, amassed a considerable collection. When he teamed up with David Pace, they started working on the pictures, cropping, enlarging and enhancing the 'defects'. The result is a completely different reading of the images from their original newsworthy meaning – thus provoking questions of authenticity and the role of propaganda in photography.

With an interesting introductory essay that opens up the subject, this is an unusual and compelling publication that might well make you question all forms of photography and art.

Elizabeth Roberts



LIGHT FOR VISUAL ARTISTS

Richard Yot

- ▣ Laurence King
- ▣ Paperback, £24.99

Now in its second edition, *Light for Visual Artists* is a surprisingly fascinating book.

I say surprisingly because we, as photographers, assume we are pretty aware when it comes to the subject of light. And so we are, but it's very good to be reminded once in a while about the crucial role light plays in representation.

Aimed at photographers, painters, animators and illustrators, the book's intent is to inform and inspire artists to use light as a tool for creating visually powerful images.

The book begins with a look at the fundamentals of light and how it works, followed by an exploration of the many ways in which you can use light to create mood and define your subject. Examples, demonstrating the points, are convincing in terms of the subtlety that can be achieved. It's all a question of awareness of what light is doing.

Light for Visual Artists is a book that is well worth a good browse through, stopping from time to time for an in-depth read.

Elizabeth Roberts

MASTERING FILM PHOTOGRAPHY: A DEFINITIVE GUIDE FOR PHOTOGRAPHERS

Chris Gatcum

- ▣ Ammonite Press
- ▣ Paperback, £19.99

Written by our own Chris Gatcum (*B+W* regular columnist), we've been looking forward to this publication for some time – and it was worth the wait.

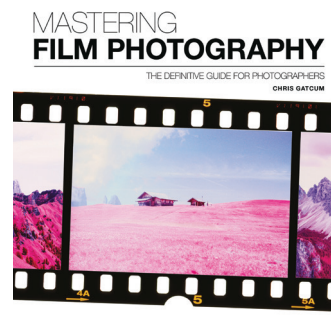
Between its covers, *Mastering Film Photography* will give you everything you've ever wanted to know about the subject, written in Chris's inimitable and highly accessible style.

From the basics of how film works and film types, to the more complex issues of exposure, processing and printing, we go on to learn about the different kinds of lenses and cameras, from the high end to lensless and toy cameras.

Interspersed throughout the in-depth technical info are profiles of film-orientated photographers, providing great inspiration and ideas.

If you've thought about dabbling with film, or you hanker after returning to the darkroom, this is a great book to get you on your way.

Elizabeth Roberts



THE POOR IN SPIRIT

Yang Yankang

- ▣ Unicorn Publishing
- ▣ Hardback, £30

Published as part of Unicorn's Chinese Artists Series that features leading

Chinese artists who are not widely known outside China, *The Poor in Spirit* investigates the role of rural Catholic communities in Chinese society.

It was in the late 1980s and 90s that documentary photography was extensively adopted in China, and its focus was mainly on marginalised groups, of which rural Catholicism was one.

As an award-winning photographer in his native country, Yang Yankang's very human photo-story draws much from the western tradition of documentary photography but is imbued with a strong sense of the cultural identity of both photographer and subject.

Yang Yankang was born into a Catholic family but later converted to Tibetan Buddhism (the subject of another major project by him) and so his world view is closely in harmony with the communities he photographed.

It is an intensely perceived body of work that at its heart has a lightness of spirit.

Elizabeth Roberts