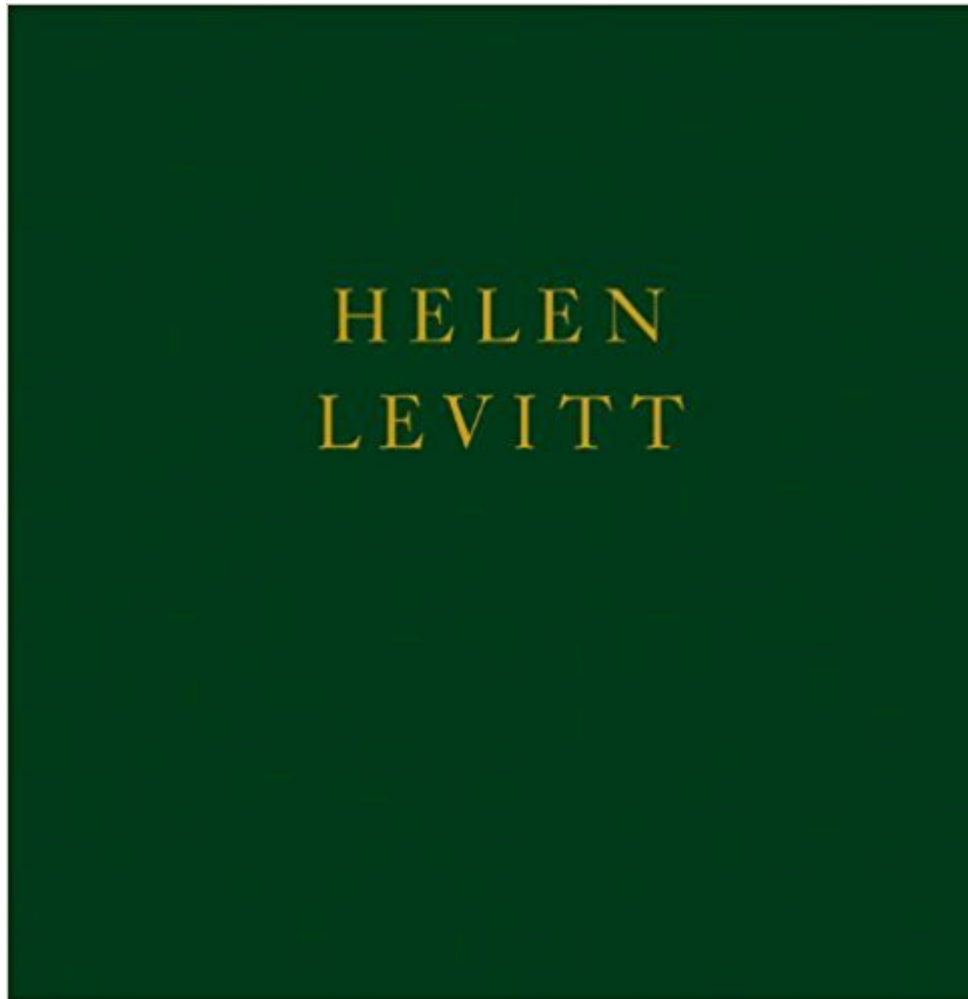




The book was found

# Helen Levitt



## Synopsis

As if ever anyone was born to be a photographer, Helen Levitt was. Looking at these pictures triggers that tingling feeling you get from photographs by artists like Lartigue, Kertész, and Cartier-Bresson: a feeling that the camera is less an expertly operated tool than the seamless extension of a mind and body that are preternaturally alert to the world. • "The New York Times" Levitt's photographs, like her city, though occasionally they rise to beauty, are mostly too quick for it. Instead, they have the quality of frozen street-corner conversation: she went out, saw something wonderful, came home to tell you all about it, and then, frustrated, said, "You had to be there," and you realize, looking at the picture, that you were. • "Adam Gopnik, The New Yorker" Helen Levitt, the visual poet laureate of New York City, published her magnum opus *Crosstown* in 2001 to great acclaim. The book immediately sold out, never to be reprinted, making it a classic volume of street photography for the cognoscenti. Levitt went on to author two smaller volumes, *Here and There* and *Slide Show*, her first monograph exclusively featuring her little-known color work, which have garnered her accolades from around the globe. Most recently, she was named the 2008 recipient of the SPECTRUM International Prize for Photography of the Foundation of Lower Saxony, an honor previously bestowed on such luminaries as Robert Adams and Sophie Calle. Her final book: *Helen Levitt*, was released in conjunction with a retrospective exhibition at Germany's Sprengel Museum Hannover, the exhibit included her most iconic works, intermixed with never-before-seen color work. Combining seven decades of New York City street life with her seminal work in Mexico City, Helen Levitt's self-titled compilation features the master works of an incomparable career.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"If ever anyone was born to be a photographer, Helen Levitt was."

Helen Levitt (1913-2009) had her first solo exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art, New York, in 1943. Levitt's photographs appeared in Edward Steichen's landmark 1955 show *The Family of Man* and in more recent exhibitions of great importance, including MoMA's *Photography Until Now* and the National Gallery of Art's *On the Art of Fixing a Shadow* in Washington, D.C., both celebrating the invention of photography. She has been the subject of numerous retrospective exhibitions at the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the International Center of Photography, New York; the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; and the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art. Levitt's reputation as New York City's master street photographer was further cemented in 2001 when her photographs were featured in the opening sequence of Ken Burns's acclaimed PBS documentary series, *New York*. The author of the critically acclaimed, best-selling monographs *Crosstown*, *Here and There*, and *Slide Show* (powerHouse Books, 2001, 2004, and 2005), Levitt lived and worked in New York City, naturally. Walker Evans (1903-1975) is one of history's most celebrated photographers. Best known for his Depression-era work for the Farm Security Administration, Evans is responsible for some of the most iconic images of the twentieth century, having created a documentary style whose influence continues to be felt. Born in 1903 in St. Louis, Missouri, he briefly studied literature before falling in with the New York art scene and taking up photography in the early 1930s. Over the next several decades he traveled across America on assignment and on his own, creating such venerated series as *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* and *Many Are Called* (both of which were published alongside essays by James Agee). His work was widely exhibited, and he served on the staff of *Time* and *Fortune* as a photographer, writer, and editor. In 1965 he became a professor of Photography and Graphic Design at the Yale School of Art and Architecture, a position he maintained until his death in 1975.

I love the photography of Helen Levitt. She captures everyday city life so precisely that it feels as though she's in your head. She finds all those amazing and mundane vignettes you fleetingly see daily on the streets of any city and she forever captures them in her lens and then on paper. Her photos show absolutes and contrasts - old - new, clean - dirty, happy - sad, young - old, and a

million nuances of all things urban and alive. Looking at her pictures, you can almost hear the sounds, smell the odors and feel the air. This book holds a large variety of her work spanning several decades, some in color, some black and white. It is printed on heavy, quality paper. Still, it isn't a complete collection and lacks some of my favorites, so I wish this were a series of books, so I could easily collect all her photographs without duplication, and so superbly done. The format is simple: It is a picture book without captions. A short forward hardly tells you anything about her, but it doesn't need to. You can spend the day in her picture city know her intimately through her photographs.

Great book

Helen Levitt is deeply respected among photographers. Her work is collected by museums and shown in galleries. I wish she were more widely known. Her street photographs of New York in the '40's are pure art. She had an incredible eye, sense of humor and intuitive sense of the space between the documenter and what is being documented. Her prints were created with great attention to tones of black and white that enhance subject matter and never overwhelm it. This is a beautiful collection. In a world now inundated with manipulated images, spend some time with this book and appreciate this woman's genius for presenting a place in time with simplicity, directness and respect for craft.

Well, if you're looking at this book, you probably know who Helen Levitt is and you can probably imagine the amazing photographs that are in this book. Helen Levitt was one of the pioneers of street photography, a self taught photographer who eventually began working with Cartier-Bresson, another pioneer of street photography. Mind you, these two photographers represented REAL street photography, not the (pardon my language) crap we see today from the college kids running around with their \$6,000 Leica that Mommy or Daddy bought them. Street photography, unfortunately, has become WAYYYYYYYYYY overdone and destroyed by people with no true "eye" for it. Now we just see photo after photo of homeless people, stray animals, homeless people with stray animals, etc. etc. Anyway, sorry to get off topic a bit there. My point is, BUY THIS BOOK. This is REAL street photography where talent and hard work are demonstrated through these beautiful prints. And if you truly want to learn what real street photography is all about, this book is a great starting point.

I ordered 5 copies of this book! It was such a pleasure to see all the new images that have never

been published. I love Evans forward (brief but articulate), and to see the genius of Levitt through the years makes this my favorite book to date in 2008! I couldn't recommend it more!

Book Arrived in time in excellent condition. The mention of Walker Evans name in conjunction with the book is a little deceiving. There is only a short quote from him. I do like the simplicity of the book, no verbose self-important essays and keeping the photographs chronological history to a minimum.

... of HL's street photography (mainly). Well produced. The Walker Evans contribution is about one paragraph.

Always thought Helen Levitt's photography was excellent, so I ordered this book. Upon receiving it I found two pages to be bent back at the corners, badly crimped. So, I returned it asking that a second copy be sent along with the reason I was returning it. When the second copy arrived, it also had pages damaged & bent. Both had still been in the shrinkwrap, so it was something that apparently had happened during the production process of the book itself. After the second copy was also damaged, I just asked to credit me back a refund. It's a hassle packing the book up twice, printing out return labels on the computer twice, taking it down to the post office twice (gas is \$3.18 a gallon). One might think if really cared about customer service they would have taken a look at the second copy before shipping it to me, knowing the first copy was damaged. I'll pick one up at a bookstore. Ron Evans / Charlottesville, Virginia

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