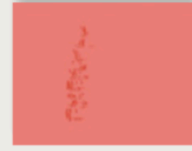


## Reviews by Philippa Kelly, Ravi Ghosh and Diane Smyth



### Fugue

Lydia Goldblatt

Geoff Books, £45

"Photographing became a lifeline, a way of weaving past through present," Lydia Goldblatt recalls of the months following her mother's death. It was a time when the photographer was slowly returning to image-making, having been unable to create after becoming a mother herself. Something about her loss had prompted Goldblatt to pick up a camera again. Focusing on her family and immediate surroundings, she explored loss, grief and love over the next four years, taking in its claustrophobia, rage and intimacy. These conflicting emotions can be felt throughout the pages of *Fugue*, which collects images from this turbulent period for the first time.

Named, in part, after a state often characterised by lessening self-awareness, the book also takes an immersive and unapologetic journey through new motherhood. "I wanted to be honest about what I was struggling with," Goldblatt says, "these are feelings so often hidden by mothers, so often silenced as unacceptable." This determination can be sensed in the volume's accompanying texts, in which the photographer seems to swing between poetic longing and feverish frustration.

The word *fugue* also has another meaning, the musical interweaving of repeating elements, through which to create a complex narrative. This repetition can be felt in the rhythmic depictions of domestic life, while the complexity comes through the emotions and family dynamics searing through them. Tender moments of reflection dance alongside youthful joy and quiet pain.

In thinking about the transformations associated with motherhood, Goldblatt has created works that will speak to many women. But by exploring caregiving in the past and present throughout her wider family, she has made something that will also speak to others. "I hope that this work gives voice to a story that is both individual and collective," she concludes. 📖

geoffbooks.com

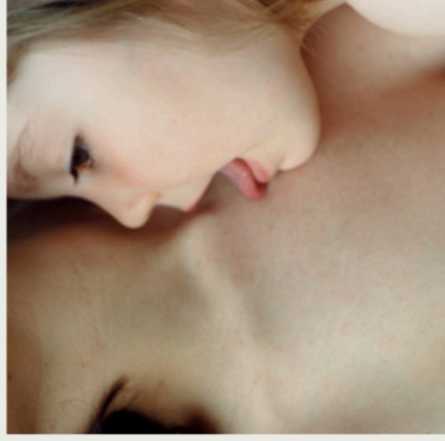


Image from *Fugue* © Lydia Goldblatt.

### American Glitch

Andrea Orejarena & Caleb Stein

Geometric Book, £42

Andrea Orejarena and Caleb Stein spend a lot of time on Reddit, combing through threads on which people discuss the origins, peculiarities and possible meanings of thousands of photographs and screengrabs. The artist duo are on the hunt for glitches - moments of visual peculiarity, coincidence or discordance, which can occur anywhere from suburban driveways to Disneyland. Their focus is the US but in reality, these images have circulated globally, following the paths of our internet activity. Glitches are essentially "a digital update of the uncanny" which situate "the internet as a collective subconscious", Stein says.

*American Glitch* is the pair's response to this visual abundance, an artist book and separate text publication combining found images with Orejarena and Stein's "restagings" of them. They rephotographed first on a four-month US road trip to the few glitch sites they could identify, and then on shorter visits to locations requiring complex access planning - particularly places used by the US military.

Examples include Fort Irwin, California, and the Greater Binghamton Airshow in New York, but California City is where the militarised glitch finds its strangest clarity. The city feeds the Edwards Air Force Base, an example of the functional urban planning which can also seem profoundly eerie - particularly in this case, as it has been subject to several property development scandals leaving parts of

it unfinished. The secrecy and remoteness of military infrastructure makes it perfect for imagining and conspiracy theories, Stein explains. The book itself bears the informational hallmarks of glitched images. Constellations of found images - the original glitches saved as JPEGs - surround the pair's upshotographed shots, while all pictures are accompanied by mostly meaningless file names. Everyday

glitches include eggs with the whites and yolks inverted, or people wearing exactly the same outfits but taking no notice. Towards the back of the book, full-page spreads show the video game glitches from which we draw the majority of our glitch understanding, while the insanity of US politics is alluded to in David Company's essay.

But *American Glitch* is not just a commentary on information overload or the relationship between photography and veracity. Orejarena says. It is something more speculative, and therefore also includes written responses from academics, artists and curators in a separate booklet. Glitch can mean error but it can also have spiritual connotations, gesturing towards atypical or arcane knowledge systems hidden from view. Real-world glitches are the starting point, but it is online where this visual and discursive abundance really multiplies. It is not about sorting or understanding this condition, but finding meaning in the irony and messiness of today's visual reality. 📖

geometricbook.com



Image from *American Glitch* © Andrea Orejarena & Caleb Stein.

# Bookshelf