



Robert Adams: Why People Photograph: Selected Essays and Reviews

By Robert Adams

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A now classic text on the art, *Why People Photograph* gathers a selection of essays by the great master photographer Robert Adams, tackling such diverse subjects as collectors, humor, teaching, money and dogs. Adams also writes brilliantly on Edward Weston, Paul Strand, Laura Gilpin, Judith Joy Ross, Susan Meiselas, Michael Schmidt, Ansel Adams, Dorothea Lange, and Eugène Atget. The book closes with two essays on "working conditions" in the nineteenth- and twentieth-century American West, and the essay "Two Landscapes." Adams writes: *At our best and most fortunate we make pictures because of what stands in front of the camera, to honor what is greater and more interesting than we are.*

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

Adams, a noted photographer of the American West, dislikes words that describe pictures. In this collection of poetic, thought-provoking and highly original essays, he examines Paul Strand's devotion to America and analyzes the origins of his art; he looks at the contradictions in Ansel Adams' life and work, and comes to his own conclusions. He writes movingly not only of people but of place--his beloved West--and his belief that "we live in several landscapes at once, among them the landscape of hope..."

Review

"At our best and most fortunate we make pictures because of what stands in front of the camera, to honor what is greater and more interesting than we are."

-Robert Adams

From the Back Cover

In 1981 Robert Adams published a volume of essays entitled *Beauty in Photography*, in which he suggested that art is too important to confuse with interior decoration or an investment opportunity. Its real use, he contended, is to affirm meaning and thus *to keep intact an affection for life*. *Why People Photograph* gathers a selection of Adams's writing since then. His subjects vary, but again he questions accepted prejudice, this time not only the view that art is trivial but that artists are separate. He demonstrates that many understand themselves to be bound to the world by complex and important obligations. Adams's writing is free of academic jargon. Readers will also appreciate his attention to common experience (he talks about trying to earn an income), his enjoyment of the unorthodox (one essay concerns dogs and photography), and above all his conviction that art matters. Photographers *may or may not make a living by photography*, he writes, *but they are alive by it*.

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Billie Duran:

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Raymond Blalock:

Playing with family in a very park, coming to see the ocean world or hanging out with good friends is thing

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Alberto Alvarez:

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