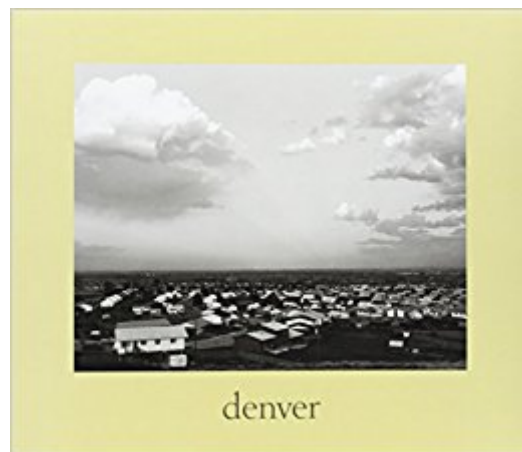




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# Denver: A Photographic Survey Of The Metropolitan Area, 1970-1974 (Yale University Art Gallery)



## Synopsis

denver and What We Bought, together with The New West, form a loose trilogy of Robert Adams's work exploring the rapidly developing landscape of the Denver metropolitan area from 1968 through 1974. In the former two books, Adams created a comprehensive document that was resolute in its avoidance of romantic notions of the American West and dispassionately honest about man's despoliation of the land. Both books demonstrate the artist at the height of his powers as a documentary photographer and a poetic sequencer of images. The photographs featured in denver and What We Bought show tract housing with mountain ranges in the distance, trailer lots devoid of people, suburban streets through generic windows, shopping mall interiors, and parking lots: subjects distinctly unspectacular, familiar, and banal. Adams's compositions are straightforward and democratic, and it is this precise turn from sentimentality that has made Adams one of the most influential figures in the history of American photography. These exquisite new editions, printed in rich tritones, celebrate this landmark work. denver also includes new and previously unpublished photographs from the project, chosen and sequenced by Adams himself.

## Book Information

Series: Yale University Art Gallery

Hardcover: 136 pages

Publisher: Yale University Art Gallery; Revised edition (June 30, 2009)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 030014136X

ISBN-13: 978-0300141368

Product Dimensions: 9.3 x 0.7 x 7.9 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.4 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 3.2 out of 5 stars 4 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #1,067,845 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #40 in Books > Travel > United States > Colorado > Denver #387 in Books > Arts & Photography > Photography & Video > Architectural > Cities #2090 in Books > Arts & Photography > Photography & Video > Individual Photographers

## Customer Reviews

"The photographs, taken together, are a small masterpiece of both intellect and vision."--Afterimage (reviewing Denver and What We Bought) (Afterimage) "Adams's work is an antidote . . . a lesson in caring about the places we live and the land we use, in all their failings and glory." "Aaron

Robert Adams (b. 1937) lives and works in northwestern Oregon. His art has been the subject of exhibitions at museums throughout the United States; a major traveling retrospective, organized by the Yale University Art Gallery, will run from 2010 to 2012. Â

Wow! I own the 1st Edition of this book and hands down the 2nd Edition (this edition) is superior. This maybe my favorite book by Robert Adams although all of R. Adams's books succeed on very high levels of discourse: "What We Bought", "Commercial/Residential", "Eden", "Missouri West", "The New West", and all the others (non are lacking). I am a product of the 60's and 70's and "Denver" achieves a level of record that perfectly matches the highest ideals of Walker Evans; I see in these pictures those things I experienced and witnessed in Rochester, NY as a kid and also long for now. Adams maybe the greatest documentary photographer of our time.

I think The New West, published in 1974, as setting the scene with chapters titled: Prairie; Tracts & Mobile Homes; City & Foothills and Adams then localizes it with his remarkable photo essay: denver (originally published in 1977). This revised edition is the perfect photo book. The five chapter's present Denver, from the perspective of four years from 1970, as a vibrant growing Western city and Adams artfully covers the expanding suburbs into the countryside with a detached eye. The commercial core, with its predictable high-rise towers is virtually ignored (summed up with just one photo). One thing that makes the book work so well is the sequencing and Adams mentions that in the original version he left some pages blank which he now thinks breaks the pace so this edition has an image on each page. I noticed that many photos tend to divide the frame into horizontal sections and nicely every few pages there is a photo where uprights are dominant. Several spreads have darker photos facing lighter images. This all contributes, perhaps unconsciously, in the viewer a feeling of satisfaction as the pages are turned. It's all very well having stunning photos but I've seen (and own) several photo books where the actual book detracts from the contents. With denver everything works perfectly. The design was by Katy Homans, who I felt contributed to the success of several Lee Friedlander titles, Thomas Palmer did the separations and you can see how good these are by looking at the sky in any of the photos. You can see clouds and texture which in many photo books just fade into the whiteness of the paper. Meridian Printing did their bit too. You don't see many books that are printed in six hundred line screen and with denver there is a spot varnish to almost lift the images of the page. A beautifully produced book of stunning images. Book

collectors are going to be in a quandary with this edition. It has twenty-six more photos than the original, better pacing and far better printing. The first edition has increased in value and I expect this one will too because it is a superior version.\*\*\*SEE SOME INSIDE PAGES by clicking 'customer images' under the cover.

Perhaps a better title would have been: denver, or somewhere in colorado, utah, wyoming, or idaho: A Photographic Survey of a Metropolitan Area, 1970-1974. It would have described what I saw when I opened the book, but I would have never bought it. Denver has changed enormously since 1970. I understand the photographer was not interested in taking beautiful photos, although some are noteworthy. So many of the photos are dull, ordinary pictures that would be representative of many areas of the US; many photos look like throwaways taken by amateurs. None are in any way specific to Denver in the '70's. I grew up in Denver, and was expecting to see photos that were obviously of the Denver area. Perhaps of old 16th Street in downtown Denver before it became the 16th St. Mall. Where is a photo of Mile High Stadium, Union Station, or Elitch Gardens? For more than a century Elitch Gardens was one of the most popular entertainment destinations in Colorado. It was unique to Denver and was nationally known for its luscious gardens; the Trocadero Ballroom; the Theatre at the Gardens, and the Twister! The photos of the suburban areas should, at least, specify the areas where they were taken. I can't imagine who would find this book the least bit interesting. Very, very disappointing.

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