

## Peripheral Vision

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*Peripheral Vision* is a handsome sampling of Uta Barth's challenging photography. Accompanied by essays that delve into Barth's artistic themes and methods, its overview of Barth's work ranges from her early projects in the late seventies to her recent exhibition at the Getty Center, which utilizes the architecture of the building itself.

Barth's photographic subjects—featuring bare walls, tree branches outside a window, and empty containers on a table—may at first appear to be devoid of meaning, but by stripping away easy interpretations, they invite deeper contemplation. Photographs of the same scene taken minutes apart reveal the subtle progress of shadows. Images of magazine clippings are cropped in unorthodox ways, leaving the viewer to construct meaning from the near-abstract results. Other photographs place subjects in a scene and then remove them, leaving behind a blurry absence that compels the viewer to fill in the blanks. Barth's photography achieves a meditative effect, underscoring the fleeting, subjective nature of people's senses and responses to phenomena.

By challenging preconceptions about what a photograph should “mean” and elevating the mundane to the mysterious, Barth's work encourages viewing the world with new eyes. Both playful and thoughtful, *Peripheral Vision* is a fine introduction to an artist's oeuvre.

HO LIN (January / February 2024)

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