

# **Mark Cohen's *Frame: A Retrospective*: A Comprehensive Exploration of a Street Photography Pioneer**

## **Introduction**

Mark Cohen, a seminal figure in American street photography, is renowned for his distinctive approach that captures the raw essence of urban life. His 2015 publication, *Frame: A Retrospective*, offers an extensive overview of his prolific career, presenting over 250 images, with approximately 100 previously unpublished photographs.

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## **A Glimpse into Cohen's Methodology**

Cohen's technique is characterized by his use of a wide-angle lens and flash, often shooting from the hip without looking through the viewfinder. This method results in tightly cropped, high-contrast images that focus on fragments of the human form—hands, feet, torsos—capturing spontaneous moments with an almost intrusive intimacy. His work predominantly documents the streets of Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, his hometown, providing a gritty portrayal of small-town America.

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## **The Significance of *Frame: A Retrospective***

Published by the University of Texas Press, *Frame* is the first comprehensive retrospective of Cohen's career. The 304-page volume includes both black-and-white and color photographs, spanning from the 1960s to the present. The collection features images taken not only in Pennsylvania but also in locations such as Paris, London, Mexico City, and various American cities, reflecting the evolution and breadth of Cohen's work.

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## Critical Reception

*Frame* has been lauded for its design and curation, providing a sophisticated repository for Cohen's images. Critics have noted that the volume sets a new standard for photographic retrospectives, offering a masterful and superbly curated collection that encapsulates Cohen's unique vision.

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## Conclusion

*Frame: A Retrospective* serves as a definitive compilation of Mark Cohen's work, showcasing his innovative approach to street photography. The book not only highlights his contributions to the art form but also provides insight into the everyday life of small-town America through his lens. For enthusiasts of street photography and contemporary art, *Frame* is an essential addition to their collection.