



Camera Obscura

By Abelardo Morell, Luc Sante

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Abelardo Morell, author of last year's award-winning *A Book of Books*, makes magical camera obscura images in darkened interiors. The deceptively simple process--he blacks out all of the windows leaving just a pinhole opening in one of them--produces photographs of astonishing, complex beauty. Due to the nature of refracted light, the world outside his darkened room is projected, upside-down, onto the interior space within which he works, converting the room, in effect, into the interior of a camera. Morell then photographs the results with a large-format view camera, often requiring exposures of eight hours or more. Locations around the world were chosen for the interesting details and juxtapositions they would elicit--the Empire State Building lies across a bedspread in a midtown Manhattan interior; the Tower of London is imprinted on the walls of a room in the Tower Hotel; the countryside in rural Cuba, Morell's birthplace, plays across the walls of a crumbling interior that is rich with the patina of its own history. Every image is full of surprises and revelations.

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Editorial Review

From Scientific American

As the world of photography grows ever more digitized, Morell offers a glorious and surprising reminder of its classical roots. The well-known Cuban-born photographer essentially turns a room into the interior of a camera. He blacks out the windows, leaving a pinhole opening in one of them. Because of the nature of refracted light, the scene outside the window is projected upside down into the dim room. Morell then captures the room on film with a large-format view camera; exposures can take eight hours or more. The juxtapositions in the book's 60 duotones are eerily beautiful: New England clapboard houses hang serenely on the walls of a child's bedroom strewn with toy dinosaurs; Times Square throws a patchwork over the walls and bed of a Manhattan hotel room; the cityscape of Havana spreads across the crumbling interior wall of an apartment.

Editors of Scientific American

Review

"Morell is a virtuoso of the camera obscura." -- *Mark Singer, The New Yorker*

From the Publisher

Abelardo Morell makes enchanting camera obscura images in darkened interiors. The deceptively simple process—he blacks out the windows, leaving just a pinhole opening in one of them—produces photographs of astonishing, complex beauty. Due to the nature of refracted light, the world outside his darkened room is projected, upside down, onto the interior space within which he works, converting the room, in effect, into the interior of a camera. Morell then photographs the results with a large-format view camera, often requiring exposures of eight hours or more.

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Users Review

From reader reviews:

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