

HARRY GRUYAERT – 40 years in the making, photographer's book reveals the 'boundaries that hover just beyond our sight', by Kenneth Dickerman on www.washingtonpost.com on October 9th, 2019

40 years in the making, photographer's book reveals the 'boundaries that hover just beyond our sight'



The Washington Post

By [Kenneth Dickerman](#)

Harry Gruyaert's photographs are gorgeous, complex tableaus meditating on the theatricality of life, whether that be in an immaculately colorful street scene or a calmly set out oceanscape. Or, sometimes, like in his new book, "Edges," (Thames and Hudson, 2019) both of these things are combined.

Gruyaert is known for his mastery of color photography. He has displayed that in many ways over the span of his career, from the abstract and somewhat dystopian compositions of photographing television sets ([TV Shots](#)) to his landmark work, taking over a period of decades, in Morocco.

Gruyaert's "Edges" takes us to the shorelines where humans meet oceans, seas and rivers. It is a book some 40 years in the making. Over 144 pages and 89 photographs, Gruyaert takes us around the world, including to such places as France, Belgium, Ireland, Spain, Morocco, Egypt, the United States and South Korea. The photographs show us, among other things, the Dead Sea, the Niger River and the Atlantic Ocean. It is a visual feast.

In an introduction to the book, the American sculptor Richard Nonas gives a fuller, more eloquent summation of Gruyaert's work:

"Harry Gruyaert ignores the grammar of center and edge, finds the blurred boundaries of overlapping life, the places where one thing has begun to be another thing. . . . He photographs, transmits worlds made numinous by the perfect confusion of edge and center, the perfect juxtaposition of culture and nature, the crossed voltages of immediate singular presence, the highly refined languages of art. . . . He photographs the boundaries that hover just beyond our sight too, the shadows of an actual reality too blurred, too confused, too nuanced for any language to hold. He captures it whole. He holds it. As powerful art. As heart wrenching beauty. As the overwhelming mystery of ungrammatical silence."



County Kerry, Ireland, in 1988. (Harry Gruyaert/Harry Gruyaert/Magnum Photos)



Fort-Mahon-Plage, Bay of Somme, France, in 1991. (Harry Gruyaert/Harry Gruyaert/Magnum Photos)



Ostend, Belgium, in 1988. (Harry Gruyaert/Harry Gruyaert/Magnum Photos)

EDGES

HARRY GRUYAERT



The cover of "Edges" by Harry Gruyaert. (Courtesy of Thames & Hudson/Courtesy of Thames & Hudson)