

Conscientious

Conscientious - Jörg Colberg's weblog about fine-art photography (and more)

Review: Topologies by Edgar Martins

[Edgar Martins' Topologies](#) is a product of [Aperture Foundation's](#) "First Book Initiative", which aims at publishing "new work by emerging artists", and it contains what one might call photographs of landscapes. I do not know what it is that often makes artists somewhat reluctant to call such photographs what they are: landscapes. I do suspect that using the word "landscape" might maybe pre-set the viewer's mind to something not desired. But then what effect does "topologies" achieve? After "typologies", we now got "topologies"?

Of course, it would take away from the book to put too much emphasis on its title. [Topologies](#) contains some of the most interesting photographs of landscapes produced recently, namely Martins' beaches underneath a pitch-black sky (named "The Accidental Theorist" - is one to discern a pattern here?). For me, these photos show what an ingenious photographer can achieve - after what to some people already feels like an infinite history of landscape photography. No, we have not seen everything there is, quite on the contrary! And yes, the good old landscape, now so ubiquitously reduced to visual kitsch in magazines and on decorative posters, still offers so much for anyone just willing (and able!) to look and to record.

Martins' "Accidental Theorist" photographs contain contemporary photography at its strongest: A seemingly effortlessly achieved look at our world in such a way that we are forced to have another look at it. Note how easily this combines the "new" with the "old". As an art form, photography is constantly changing and evolving, but just like any other art form, it has to create connections between the new and the old. In these times, it has become an accepted fad to embrace the new, rejecting everything that has been done before - a true folly, for reasons that are becoming ever more obvious (provided one is willing to notice this).

"Approaches" - photographs of airports at night - is another one of [Topologies'](#) highlights - for the same reason as those spelled out above. With the addition of other photography shot by Martins over the past few years, [Topologies](#) provides a nice overview of the work of young photographer whose work we're sure to see more of over the next years.

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