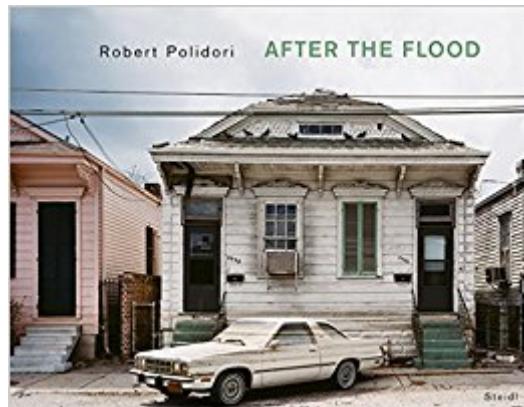


The book was found

# Robert Polidori: After The Flood



## Synopsis

In late September 2005, Robert Polidori traveled to New Orleans to record the destruction caused by Hurricane Katrina and by the city's broken levees. He found the streets deserted, and, without electricity, eerily dark. The next day he began to photograph, house by house: "All the places I went in, the doors were just open. They had been opened by what I collectively call 'the army,' of maybe 20 National Guards from New Hampshire, 15 policemen from Minneapolis, 20 firefighters from New York... On maybe half of them or a third of them that I went in, I think that the occupants had been there prior. And some of them did leave certain funeral-like mementos before they left. Maybe right after the waters receded they had the chance to just--to go back to their place and just see, and realize there's nothing worth saving." Amidst all this, Polidori has found something worth saving, has created mementos for those who could not return, documenting the paradoxically beautiful wreckage. In classical terms, he has found ruins. The abandoned houses he recorded were still waterlogged as he entered and as he learned (by trial and error, a process that including finding a dead body) the language of signs and codes in which rescue workers had spray-painted each house's siding. He sees the resulting photographs as the work of a psychological witness, mapping the lives of the absent and deceased through what remains of their belongings and their homes.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

With only a brief introduction, photographer Polidori plunges the reader into hurricane Katrina's

wake of destruction across the Gulf coast. Oversize photos capture the stark reality: whole neighborhoods under water and later in shambles, and close-ups of sodden bedrooms, mud-scoured kitchens and painterly mold spores. As the more than 500 photos taken between September 2005 and April 2006 progress, destruction eventually gives way to temporary trailers, which appear next to the rubble. The poignant absence of humans and short captions give the collection a powerful austerity, though some viewers may find it relentlessly clinical. (Nov.)

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Photographer Robert Polidori... immediately understood the impact the Category 3 storm had on the city he had once called home... While he didn't get to meet many of the home owners, he did gain an understanding of them through their belongings. (Sarah Jacobs Business Insider)

"After the Flood", the latest book by French Canadian Photographer, Robert Polidori, about the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina is also his largest and most powerful. It is as if his books on Havana and Chernobyl were mere foretastes to this exceptional and moving work, and certainly anyone who has seen these two books came away with a feeling of the power and storytelling that Polidori's images can convey. Polidori has the gift of the detailed eye that can simultaneously give the viewer images of beauty and revulsion in objects and textures. These alone tell the stories. There are no images of people necessary. It is as if he is capturing the tracks and shadows that humanity has left behind. He was able to show this in the urban decay of Havana and of the horrors of the rapid evacuation and subsequent reclamation of nature in Chernobyl. In "After the Flood", he presents us with an almost encyclopedic presentation of the aftermath of the hurricane, flooding, wind, water and mud damage showing the fragility of our cities and the power of nature. The book contains at least 400 images, which have been carefully arranged. The first images show parts of the city still under water and the receding water. The next group shows the destruction caused by water inside the houses. Furniture has been picked up by the flood and re-arranged and we see the effects of water on different materials and soon notice the tell-tale brown lines on the walls, sometimes over six feet high, showing the high water mark. Succeeding groups of images show the effects of mud, water and wind on buildings and cars that have been tossed around at random like toys. Sometimes cars rest against houses in bizarre angles and sometimes the houses are laying on top of the cars. Several pages show smaller images of streets where every house was damaged and abandoned. The last set of images shows the clean up. Mounds of refuse in front of houses, temporary trailers, houses being cleaned and repaired. The effect is very powerful as we see how the lives of hundreds

of thousands were affected and how many must have lost everything. The book can only give a taste of the incredible detail the images contain. In a recent exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum of Art they could be seen as the original prints, each at about 40" by 54". They were taken with a large camera and according to Polidori with no lighting, as there was no electricity available at the time the shots were taken and lighting would have been to cumbersome in cramped and sometimes dangerous conditions. Only time exposures could show the incredible detail, which Polidori refers to as the "process of revelation". He call his work "a constant learning process", and anyone who looks at this book will not only learn, but will also ask questions as to how a disaster of this magnitude was possible, and to our place on this earth and our future here. Review by Walter O. Koenig

Ridiculous amazing amount of detail from this 8x10 photographer. Big fan of this work. Although maybe needs a little editing? There are literally tonnes of images. Still I'd rather have more. Not a book to look through in one go. One to go back to bit by bit. Exhaustive, but brilliant.

These high quality photos come without captions. As a "viewer" (not "reader") you are left to fill in the details of the family who lived in each dwelling, and the small, everyday items captured in many of the photos. It's too much to look at in one sitting; you will need to put it down until you have the heart to go on, and then pick it up again.

Robert's photos are AMAZING. I loved the photos when I first saw some of them on display at the Modern Museum of Art in NYC. When I realized he made a book of them, I wanted to own it. I was so moved by the images, particularly one that I saw at the show. I was shocked that the image that I remember most was not in the book. There are likely a thousand awesome photos in the book, but not the one I remember from the exhibition.

This book captured the aftermath of the storm to its precise destruction. No words needed to be written because the pictures would have sufficed kudos to Robert Polidori

The best photographic essay of New Orleans after the flood.

The Best Book!

I bought this book as a gift for my sister-in-law. The book is beautiful! The photography exqisite...I

am so happy I bought this book for her.

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