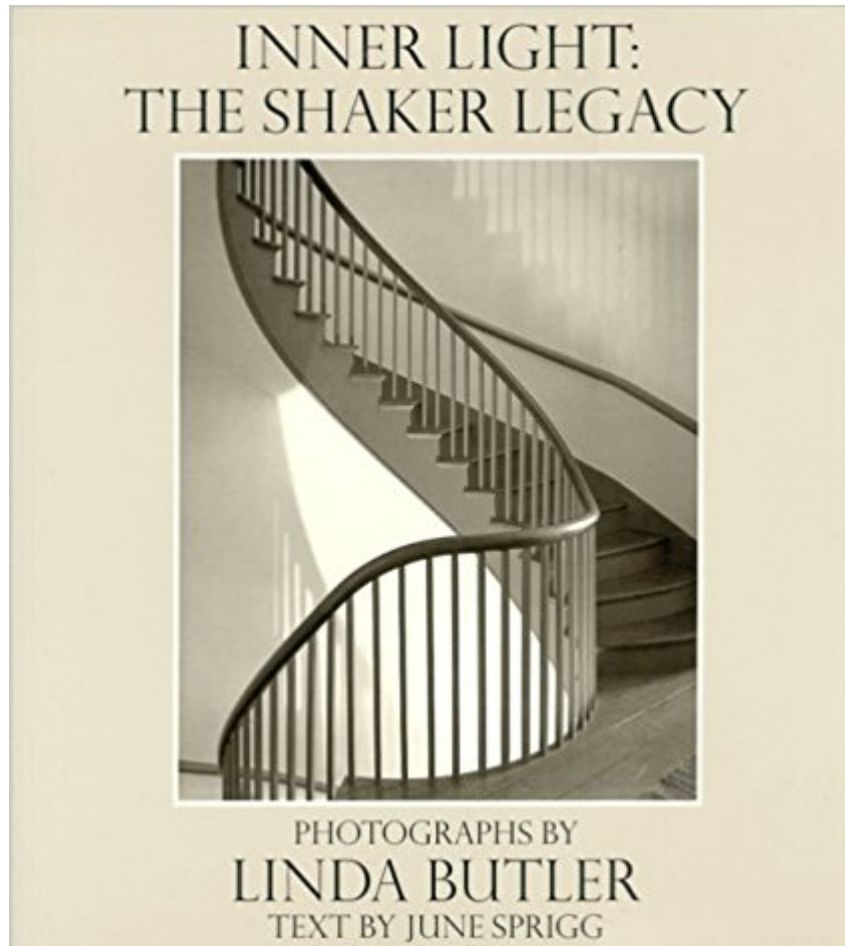




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Inner Light: The Shaker Legacy



Synopsis

Photography. Fifty-eight photographs by Linda Butler and a superb text by June Sprigg, author of *By Shaker Hands*, reveal and pay tribute to the elegance of line, the magnificent craftsmanship, the realms of stillness and light, the vision and spiritual serenity that are the Shaker legacy. The photographs range in subject from a bonnet in an oval box to a spiral staircase, a laundry room, a songbook, a cupboard, a washstand, and a cupola. In them, the quality and play of light--light endlessly altering the look of places and things--expresses the sustaining harmony and grace of the Shaker way of being. "(Butler's) exquisitely composed studies of stairways, windows, furniture, houses and field convey with loving regard and exactitude their subjects' `inner light'"--Publishers Weekly.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Very good.

At a thrift store, I recently scored a \$3 copy of this beautiful photobook, with photography by Linda Butler and text by June Sprigg. The minimalist (but very elegant) Shaker sentiment expressed through the images in this book are very special and well worth a closer look. The book immediately caught my eye because I had visited the Shaker village in central Kentucky many times, but never with a camera. As a kid, it seemed little more than a tourist attraction to me, when I lived nearby. Now that I don't live there, it seems quite a bit more exotic! Note that many of the images are from

Kentucky, quite a few are from other Shaker installations e.g. in Maine and Massachusetts. The images from the different sites combine to provide a beautiful introduction that will tempt any photographer to visit. For the curious (especially those outside North America who may not be familiar with America's Amish, Mennonite, Quaker, and Shaker communities) I will offer a very brief summary of the Shaker tradition. That tradition emphasizes simplicity, avoiding anything that obscures or clutters the physical or the spiritual sight. The Shaker tradition is also very proudly musical, and that lyricism is very clear in the architecture... and Linda Butler's photography. In the book you will find beautiful b&W prints of 8x10 images on Ilford HP5+. The compositions are exceptional, and the photographic print quality is very good, on the photographer's side as well as the publisher's. I have a few minor concerns about some masking/dodging effects evident in a few of the plates, but on the whole, the light is exceptionally well used. Page after page, Butler's photographs deliver beautiful, flowing forms that will inspire any photographer of still life and architecture. I recommend this book very highly.

Shaker objects were material expressions of prayer. These beautiful photographs capture that.

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