



Aperture Releases Issue No. 263: “Secrets”

New York, June 4, 2026—This summer, *Aperture* magazine presents “Secrets,” an issue exploring the hidden forces that shape our lives and what we see—from state control and intelligence-gathering to voyeurism and coded gestures.

What power does a secret hold in an age of relentless visibility, when we’re pressured to perform and share our lives constantly? “Secrets” abounds with clues, even if disclosure isn’t always the end game. In Mexico City, Iñaki Bonillas casts a gimlet eye on the nooks, crannies, and closets of the Estudio Barragán, exploring how memory becomes embedded in architecture and art. Estelle Hanania documents European costuming traditions, exploring the ritual catharsis of transforming oneself through monstrous disguise. And in Los Angeles, John Divola searches for truth on the empty sets of *The X-Files*.

“I’ve never been looking to expose, I’ve been looking carefully to understand,” Taryn Simon says in a career-spanning interview conducted ahead of her major retrospective this fall at the Guggenheim Museum in New York. Simon—whose work has consistently pulled back the curtain on the invisible structures that shape everyday life—speaks to how photographs have always existed in a kind of gap between revelation and concealment.

Yechen Zhao contributes an essay on the work of Li Zhensheng, who documented the Cultural Revolution while hiding thousands of negatives beneath his floorboards to evade state confiscation. Emily LaBarge writes on the legacy of voyeurism in photography, looking particularly at artists, including Sophie Calle and Merry Alpern, who have pushed the boundaries of public and private life. And in Milan, Chiara Bardelli Nonino profiles the fashion photographer Szilveszter Makó, a fast-rising star whose private worlds have become a viral sensation. The issue also features previously unpublished work by Sarah Charlesworth and Alix Cléo Roubaud, who both left behind enigmatic bodies of images shrouded in open-ended questions.

An exclusively commissioned series by the London-based photographer Polly Brown documents secret hand gestures used across professions, from waiters to royals. The cover features *Stag Do*, a photograph of a signal British airline stewardesses use to warn colleagues that a bachelor party is on board.

In an age of oversharing and eroded privacy, a well-guarded secret takes on a new currency, a means of opting out of a system that wants to know everything about you. The photographers featured in this issue show how secrets can forge intimacy, create solidarity among workers, become a form of play, propel a riveting whodunit, or resist language altogether.

Press Release

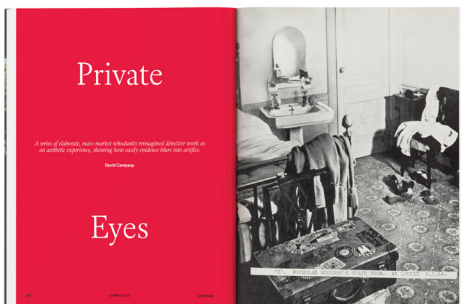
For Immediate Release

Press contact:

Lauren Van Natten
+1 212.946.7151
publicity@aperture.org

Aperture

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About Aperture

Aperture is a nonprofit publisher that leads conversations around photography worldwide. From its base in New York, Aperture connects global audiences and supports artists through its acclaimed quarterly magazine, books, exhibitions, digital platforms, public programs, limited-edition prints, and awards. Established in 1952 to advance “creative thinking, significantly expressed in words and photographs,” Aperture champions photography’s vital role in nurturing curiosity and encouraging a more just, tolerant society.

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