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BOOK INFORMATION SHEET (2.8.25)

Author (as it should appear on the book): Steve Fitch

Title: *Screen Towers*

Subtitle: *The Drive-In Theater in America*

Contributors: with an introduction by Katherine Ware

Partner: Published in association with the Center for the Study of Place

Book pages: 136

Number and type of illustrations: 42 color photographs and 34 black-and-white photographs by the author

Trim size: 12.0 x 10.5 inch landscape/horizontal

List price: \$45.00

Discount: Trade

ISBN (book): 978-1-960521-11-8

ISBNs (electronic): N.A.

Edition: Hardcover

E-book? TBD

Interactive e-book? No.

Jacket: Yes

Edition size: 1,250/1,500

Publication date: October 2025

Advances due: September 2025

To warehouse: October 2025

Printed in: Singapore or Italy

Distributor: Casemate/IPM

Bookstore categories (list three): Architecture/Americana/Photography

Audience: The same as his best-selling book, *Vanishing Vernacular: Western Landmarks*: that is, those interested in photography, Americana, the U.S. West, travel, and architecture.

Selling points (list three): (1) The drive-in theater became one of America's key cultural features beginning in 1933 and extending into the Automobile Age, and this is the first book in nearly 30 years to portray this iconic symbol of America; (2) Americana sells and this is Americana supreme; and (3) anyone interested in architecture, history, and the culture of the American drive-in theater; and (4) Steve Fitch has a large and deep following as a photographer.

Tagline: An extraordinary look back at the drive-in theater in America!

Description of the work:

Beginning in 1933 and expanding greatly after World War II, mid-century America saw a boom in the construction of large outdoor screen towers on which a projected movie image could be viewed from a parked car. This was the era of the drive-in movie theater, which saw the marriage of the automobile and the Hollywood movie. At its peak during the 1950s and 1960s more than 4,000 drive-in theaters dotted the American landscape, coast to coast.

Starting in 1971, Steve Fitch traveled throughout the United States photographing many of these theaters, concentrating on the often stunning neon and painted murals that decorated the back, street-facing side of the tower that supported the white, rectangular screen. These dramatic murals often depicted scenes that related to the local history of the surrounding community, and they could be seen from many miles away. Working with black-and-white film, he mostly photographed at dusk or night, making striking images that captured the seductive beauty of these roadside monuments.

Then, in 1980, Fitch began working in color with a large-format 8" x 10" view camera. Interested in the collecting and comparing possibilities of photography, he began to shift his emphasis to making pictures of the actual white screen itself and the inside spaces of the theater. By the early 1980s, many of the drive-ins were being abandoned or even torn down. The era of the drive-in theater was nearing its end, although today there remain about 300 operating drive-ins in America keeping alive the thrill of watching a movie outdoors, under the stars, in the comfort of one's car.

Blurbs:

[TC]

About the Author:

Steve Fitch has been a photographer since the late 1960s and has taught at the University of Colorado at Boulder, Princeton University, and, most recently, the College of Santa Fe and Santa Fe University of Art and Design. He is the recipient of two National Endowment for the Arts Fellowships (1973 and 1975) and the last National Endowment for the Arts Survey Grant, awarded in 1981. He also received the Eliot Porter Fellowship in 1999. He is the author of *Diesels and Dinosaurs: Photographs from the American Highway* (Long Run Press, 1976), *Gone: Photographs of Abandonment on the High Plains*, with essays by Merrill Gilfillan, Kathleen Howe, and Evelyn Schlatter (University of New Mexico Press, 2002), and *Vanishing Vernacular: Western Landmarks* (George F. Thompson Publishing, 2018). His work is in the collections of the Smithsonian American Art

Museum, Whitney Museum of American Art, and Yale University, among many others. His Website is stevefitch.com.

About the Contributor(s):

Katherine Ware is Curator of Photography at the New Mexico Museum of Art and has served as Curator of Photographs at the Philadelphia Museum of Art and Assistant Curator at the J. Paul Getty Museum, among other roles. She has organized exhibitions and written about the work of a range of historic and contemporary artists for more than thirty years, including *Man Ray: 1890–1976* (Taschen, 2000), *Elemental Landscapes: Photographs by Harry Calahan* (Philadelphia Museum of Art, 2001), and *Earth Now: American Photographers and the Environment* (Museum of New Mexico Press, 2011).