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Andrew Moore: Dirt Meridian
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#DirtMeridian

To preview a PDF of the book & all Press Enquiries contact Courtney Forrest, courtney@courtneyforrest.com

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"It may not be pretty, but it’s beautiful if you know how to look at it."– Ken Haruf, *Dirt Meridian*

No longitude in the United States carries the weight of the 100th Meridian. It’s the dividing line that bisects the country almost exactly in half between the green fertile east and arid lands of the west. It’s also a geographic place, a land of invisible histories where there is much more than meets the eye. Within the context of the nation, it is the very middle of America. Moreover, it is a historical reference to the “Dirty Thirties” era of the Dust Bowl, and also a literary one, as in Cormac McCarthy’s “Blood Meridian”.

Yet today, it remains most commonly known as “Flyover Country”.

Photographer Andrew Moore brings this land to life in *Dirt Meridian*, interlacing its storied past to a vital but uncertain future. Having worked this line since 2005, Moore combines aerial and traditional large-format photography to depict the restrained, almost elusive, terrain, and the stories of families defiantly connected to the challenging landscape along the area west of the 100th Meridian in North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Colorado, Texas and New Mexico. *Dirt Meridian* is in part about the legacy of the settler’s ambition and failure on these arid high plains, as well as the evolving story of this region of the country.

In a time when climate change, drought and energy exploration are increasingly at the forefront of national concerns, *Dirt Meridian* speaks of a land subject to extreme weather conditions, where water and resources have always been scarce. But in the hardness of the land also lies its vast and sublime emptiness.

"Perhaps the greatest challenge in making these photographs was how to depict that emptiness but not make vacant images,” explains Moore. "As best I could, I have tried to place the subjects in this book in relief, not only against the backdrop of human events, but also in relation to the physical and transcendent dimensions of emptiness. Emptiness as a necessary presence, as if growing up in this landscape cultivates a certain kind of seeing, one that can register the subtlety of what is not there, the degree to which land liberates or binds.”

Moore’s images sit squarely at the intersection of two lines – the invisible vertical of the 100th Meridian set against the insistent level of the horizon. To capture the expanse of the landscape with an effortless yet exact facility, Moore took to the air in a low-flying plane, using a specially modified, high-resolution digital camera mounted under the wing and controlled from a laptop in the cockpit.

Flying close to the ground allowed a perspective in which the intimate seemed conjoined with the infinite. From above, the land is like one endless unpunctuated idea—sand, tumbleweed, turkey, bunch stem, buffalo, meadow, cow, rick of hay, creek, sunflower, sand—and only rarely does a house or a windmill or a barn suddenly appear to suspend the sense of limitlessness. These isolated sites are used both directly and indirectly to address such motifs as drought and plenty, hope and despair, the eternal and the ephemeral—themes so redolent along this overlooked dividing line of America.

*Andrew Moore: Dirt Meridian* will be released in the fall of 2015 and accompany an exhibition of the same title at the Joslyn Museum of Art in Omaha in 2016. For more details and additional exhibitions, please visit [www.andrewlmoore.com](http://www.andrewlmoore.com).
Andrew Moore
American photographer Andrew Moore (born 1957) is widely acclaimed for his photographic series, usually taken over many years, recording the effects of time on the natural and built landscape. Moore is best known for his large-format photographs of Cuba, Russia, Times Square, Detroit, and most recently, the American High Plains.

He graduated from Princeton University in 1979 where he studied with the esteemed photographer Emmet Gowin as well as the photo historian Professor Peter Bunnell. Moore’s photographs are held in the collections of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Whitney Museum of American Art, the Yale University Art Gallery, Museum of Fine Arts Houston, the National Gallery of Art and the Library of Congress amongst many others. His publications include Cuba (2012), Detroit Disassembled (2010), Russia; Beyond Utopia (2005), Governors Island (2004) and Inside Havana (2002). He currently teaches a graduate seminar in the MFA Photography Video and Related Media program at the School of Visual Arts in New York City.

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