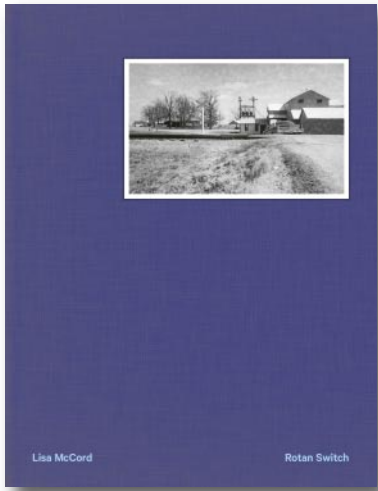


NEW RELEASE 2024

Lisa McCord *Rotan Switch*

Texts by Alexa Dilworth, Lonnie Graham,
Lisa McCord, Aline Smithson
Designed by Caleb Cain Marcus (Luminosity Lab)
Cloth hardcover with 2 tipped-in plates
23 x 29,9 cm
204 pages
25 color and 55 tritone illustrations
English
ISBN 978-3-96900-151-6
Euro 58,00 / US\$ 65,00



A heartfelt portrayal of Southern life on an Arkansas Delta cotton farm, exploring home through intimate spaces and connections.

Rotan Switch is the first monograph by Lisa McCord, documenting life on her grandparents' cotton farm in the Arkansas Delta community of Rotan. It takes its name from the community's central landmark—the railroad switch where farmers loaded their cotton bales onto trains headed out of the Delta. Although it has not been used in years, it remains a potent symbol of the complex intersections of industry and agriculture, of racism and injustice. Collected over the last forty-four years, these images and stories are a reflection on the people and places that have taught McCord the meaning of the word home. Constructed from McCord's analog photographs, family snapshots and ephemera, including monochrome photographs, color polaroids, and recipes, this long-term project is also a self-exploration into her inherently complicated role in this community, as the granddaughter of a landowner.

From the text *Mississippi County, Arkansas* by **Alexa Dilworth**:

» *This collection of photographs is distinct in that it is made by a woman in the company of other women in private spaces.* «

From the text *A Southern Family, Arkansas* by **Aline Smithson**:

» *The book is a personal collection of a life lived, a scrapbook that contains the dichotomy of two worlds: the innocence of circumstance and the visual acknowledgment of colliding cultures, that include race and privilege. The artist simply documented her world and the people in it.* «

In 1978, Lisa McCord embarked on a profound visual exploration, capturing life on the cotton farm: a photographic journey that goes beyond mere imagery, delving into the rich complexities of community, identity, and the deeply rooted concept of home.

The Arkansas land and its people form the essence of the photographer's sense of belonging. The images unfold a narrative enmeshed with the socioeconomic structures of the US-American rural South. This blend of personal memories and reflections transcends the role of simple documentation, creating a living record of Rotan's tale, a unique story entwined with the photographer's family history in a place where historical inequities persist.

The roots of Rotan trace back to the early 1930s when the photographer's maternal great-grandfather played a pioneering role in purchasing and clearing the land. However, the family legacy carries the weight of participation in the social and economic injustices prevailing in the rural South. The echoes of love, resilience, and transformation embedded in these images serve as a testament to the multifaceted story of Rotan. McCord not only captures the evolution of a place but grapples with her own role in perpetuating societal structures as a white observer within a predominantly Black community. *Rotan Switch* prompts reflection on the intricate threads weaving the fabric of a community, the evolution of a landscape, and the resilience transcending generations.

Lisa McCord is a US fine art and documentary photographer. Her work is in the permanent collections of the Arkansas Museum of Fine Arts. It has been exhibited in venues internationally, including the Leica Gallery LA, and featured in numerous publications. She was a Critical Mass Finalist in 2015, 2016, and 2021. Explore her work on Instagram (@lisamccord) and the website lisamccordphotography.com.

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