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New Deal Utopias

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Photographs by Jason Reblando

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Photographs of three communities built during the Great Depression explore one of the most ambitious programs of Roosevelt's New Deal.

New Deal Utopias explores three planned communities built by the U.S. government during the Great Depression, collectively known as "Greenbelt Towns." The photographs of the built environments and landscapes of Greenbelt, Maryland; Greenhills, Ohio; and Greendale, Wisconsin, evoke utopia both as an idea and place in the American mind. The towns were designed to be model cities to address the social and economic discrepancies brought on and accentuated by the Depression. In the 1930s, the program was critiqued as "socialistic" and "communistic" by conservative members of Congress, industrial and corporate leaders, and newspapers hostile to New Deal policies, yet they still managed to make an indelible impression on urbanist ideas in America.

This book emphasizes that the Greenbelt towns are an overlooked, but crucial part of the American landscape, as we continue to grapple with the complex roles of housing, nature, and government in contemporary life.

New Deal Utopias is published to coincide with commemorative events surrounding 80th anniversary of the opening of the Greenbelt Towns (2017–2018).

Jason Reblando is an artist and photographer based in Chicago and Bloomington, Illinois. He received his MFA in Photography from Columbia College Chicago, and a BA in Sociology from Boston College. He is the recipient of a U.S. Fulbright Fellowship to the Philippines and an Artist Fellowship Award from the Illinois Arts Council. His work has been published in the *New York Times*, *Camera Austria*, *Slate*, *Bloomberg Businessweek*, *Real Simple*, *Places Journal*, *Chicago Magazine*, and the *Chicago Tribune*. His photographs are in the Milwaukee Art Museum, the Museum of Contemporary Photography, and the Philadelphia Museum of Art. www.jasonreblando.com

Since 2011, **Natasha Egan** has served as the executive director of the Museum of Contemporary Photography at Columbia College Chicago.

Robert Leighninger Jr. is a member of the Advisory Board of the National New Deal Preservation Association, the Board of Directors of the National Jobs for All Coalition, and a Project Adviser to the Living New Deal Project. Though trained as a sociologist, he has been immersed in the history of New Deal public works for the past 20 years.

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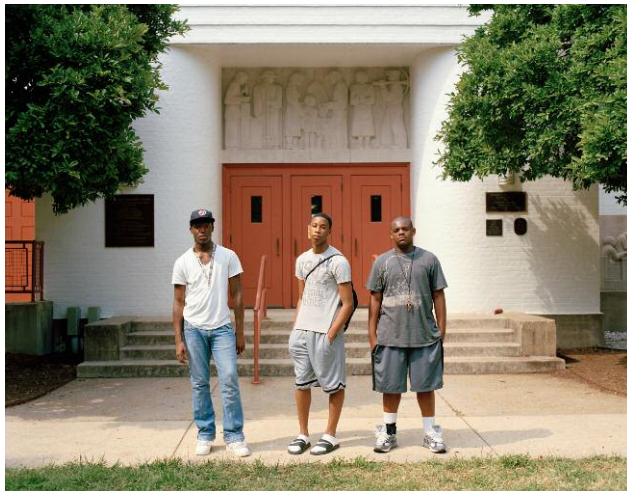
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