



# Ed Ruscha: Then & Now, Hollywood Boulevard 1973-2004

*Ed Ruscha*

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## **Ed Ruscha: Then & Now, Hollywood Boulevard 1973-2004** Ed Ruscha

Between 1963 and 1978, Ed Ruscha produced 18 small artists' books. Usually self-published in small print-runs, these publications have become seminal works in the history of Conceptual art and the photography book. *Then & Now* is the first artist's book that Ruscha has made since 1978. One of the most famous of Ruscha's books from that early period is *Every Building on the Sunset Strip*--a famous stretch of real estate along Sunset Boulevard--published in 1966. In July, 1973 he followed the same procedure when he photographed on Hollywood Boulevard. Loading a continuous strip of 30 feet of Ilford FP-4 black & white film into his Nikon F2 and then mounting it on a tripod in the bed of a pickup truck, he drove back and forth across the 12 miles of street shooting both the north and south sides of its entire length. The negatives were developed, contact sheets were made, and the materials placed in storage. 30 years later, in 2003, a digital record of Hollywood Boulevard was created and it served as a reference guide for the traditional film/still documentary of 2004. For this shoot, the same type of camera equipment was used to re-photograph the street on 35mm color-negative film. The resulting material of both shoots--4,500 black & white and 13,000 color images--have been scanned and digitally composed into four panoramics of the complete 12 miles. In *Then & Now*, the original 1973 northside view is shown along the top of the page and juxtaposed with its 2004 version. The panoramics face each other and they are aligned. The result is what Ruscha refers to as "a piece of history... a very democratic, unemotional look at the world." Whilst it is a significant historical document which succinctly conflates and renders the passage of time, it is also a project which spans the career of one of the truly original artists of our time and brings his work full circle.

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