

# Glasstire

{Texas visual art}

## A Shockingly Modernist Project and Others: Four Books of Photographs

by [Bucky Miller](#) | January 4, 2023

**Overpass by Sam Contis. Published by Aperture, 2022.**

Here is a new addition to the body of literature relevant to psychogeographic Britain that also includes stuff by big dogs like William Blake and W.G. Sebald. Psychogeography, reductively the practice of wandering through a chosen terrain and remarking on what happens, has French Marxist origins and tends to focus on urban landscapes. Still, the pursuit feels inextricably British due to all the work on the topic that's been done in the UK (Iain Sinclair is worth a read). So I'm here in Virtual Texas, deciding Sam Contis's investigation of the English countryside counts.

Notably, her book gets there entirely via photographs. She moves readers steadily through farmland as she amasses a mountain of pictures, marking the places where man-made boundaries are broken. Time passes, at some point it begins to snow, the landscape remains. So does Contis, still coursing over walls and through fences. She seems to be led along by the event of her own photographing.

At just under 7 x10 inches, *Overpass* is just large enough to allow a person to dig into individual photographs. At the same time it still handles like a book book. It's the absolutely right format for the project, especially given the volume of pictures. The just-compact form conveys an impression that this book exists not to be looked through, but lived with.



*Image from the book "Overpass" by Sam Contis, published by Aperture, 2022.*