



On the Beach

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Richard Misrach, one of today's most prolific contemporary masters, is internationally renowned for his carefully considered, beautifully rendered epic works. In *On the Beach*, a lavishly produced, oversized monograph that features the long-awaited publication of this spectacular series, Misrach hones in on our delicate relationship to the sea.

Light, color, and form are crucial components in Misrach's explorations of difficult subjects. In this body of work he uses a gorgeous, slowly shifting color palette gleaned from changes in depth and tide; abstract patterns of waves and rippling water, and beaches both empty and cluttered. Throughout the series, Misrach carefully balances the minutiae of human gesture against the massive scale of the sea. In some images, a lone figure floats in a liquid field of brilliant turquoise--or in others, lies beached and partially buried. The details in the images are frequently ambiguous. Are the figures relaxed or drained of life? Cavorting in the surf or panicking in the riptide? The balance is a fragile one between control and surrender to the elements. As Misrach says, the work is "suffused with a sense of the sublime, but it also begins to expose our vulnerability and fragility as human beings."

At 20 x 16 inches, *On the Beach* is the largest book ever published by Aperture, and also the first major publication of new work by Misrach in many years. It accompanies a major touring exhibition, with stops in Chicago, Honolulu, Seattle and at the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C.--a venue that very rarely shows the work of living artists.

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Lynn Hardie:

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