

## The Pocket Polaroids Series

**Poetry's commitment to concreteness and to the autonomy of the poem's language parallels photography's commitment to pure seeing. Both imply discontinuity, disarticulated forms and compensatory unity: wrenching things from their context (to see them in a fresh way), bringing things together elliptically, according to the imperious but often arbitrary demands of subjectivity.** (Susan Sontag, On Photography)

Fifty years ago Lawrence Ferlinghetti launched the now-famous Pocket Poets Series in San Francisco. Respectfully alluding to that achievement, the Pocket Polaroids Series devotes itself to the truthful reproduction of original instant prints – Polaroid or other, amateur or professional – and humbly strives to develop into an index of the medium as it has enriched and empowered us in the 20th century.

Polaroids are originals. No free second set, no negative, no backup. Anxiously anticipated, superstitiously put aside, never discarded, they convey a sense of immediacy and uniqueness that their digital successors fail to imitate. It is a bittersweet irony that we have to flatten their aura, deprive them of their mortality and reduce them to ordinarily reproduced photos in order to

celebrate their singularity. Then again: it's the reproduction that makes the original.

Each volume in the Pocket Polaroids Series is dedicated to one concept or photographer, one location or idea – from shaky party-shots to commercial studio work, from dead serious mugshot to arty amateur porn. No credentials needed. Poetry wanted.

## **HCMC: Faces of Saigon**

The images in this volume were taken in the streets of Saigon during the month of December 2003. For the portraits the photographer approached locals in the streets of the city without the help of a guide or translator. Simply pointing to his clumsy-looking Fuji Instax 100 he offered them a picture – many loved the opportunity, few were scared away, some frowned upon the intruder.

The polaroid experience – two quick close-up exposures followed by the universally shared fascination with the developing picture – momentarily annihilated any personal and cultural distance, both communicatively and physically enabling the project's concept: taking an image and leaving an image.









