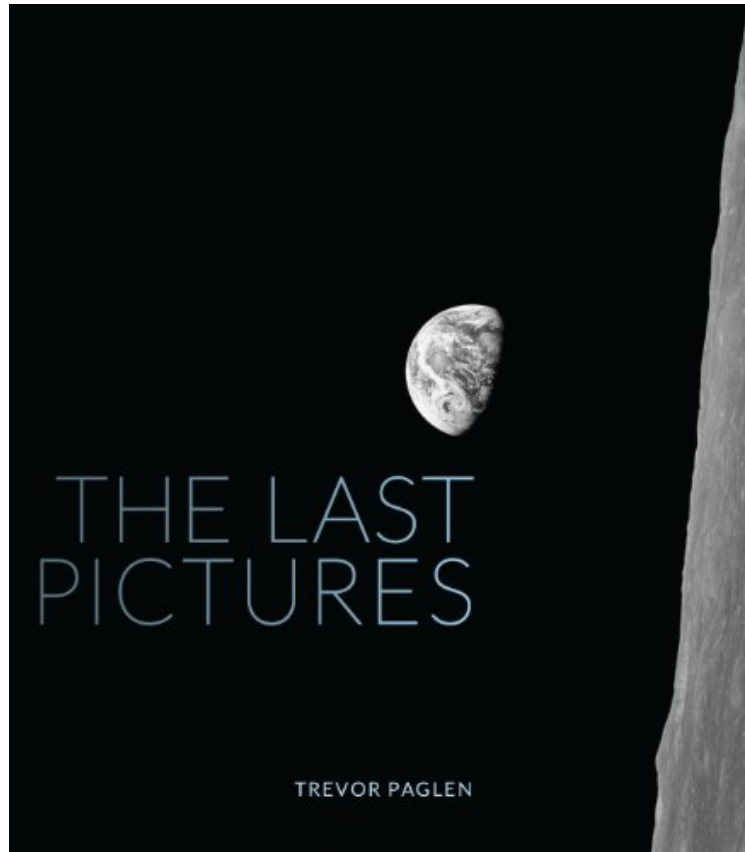


(Download free ebook) The Last Pictures

## The Last Pictures

*Trevor Paglen*

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**Trevor Paglen : The Last Pictures** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Last Pictures:

14 of 14 people found the following review helpful. Wonderful images, poor editing and composition By A. G. Bell Books like this often contain hidden gems; this one does, at least on several pages. The concept is a bit high-minded, but overall the quality of the images chosen, as well as their significance (admittedly, the latter being open to a very broad interpretation), is well handled. What dissapoints here is the lack of care put into the editing and composition of the work. Why--especially in a book of this size and format--the editors felt it necessary to span multiple pages with images which would otherwise fit unbroken on a single leaf is beyond me. When you take a photograph and print all but one inch of it on one page, leaving the rest hidden in the binding, you destroy the point behind the book; you lose the image. The only way to see complete photos in several cases here is to unbind the book (that is, destroy it) and piece the pages back together. Having known firsthand how unfortunate it is these days that many publishers just don't care about this sort of thing, were I Mr. Paglen (the author), I'd be a bit irritated over the layout and execution of an otherwise good work. 5 stars for the content; a big zero for how it was unfortunately mis-handled.

Human civilizations' longest lasting artifacts are not the great Pyramids of Giza, nor the cave paintings at Lascaux, but

the communications satellites that circle our planet. In a stationary orbit above the equator, the satellites that broadcast our TV signals, route our phone calls, and process our credit card transactions experience no atmospheric drag. Their inert hulls will continue to drift around Earth until the Sun expands into a red giant and engulfs them about 4.5 billion years from now. *The Last Pictures*, co-published by Creative Time Books, is rooted in the premise that these communications satellites will ultimately become the cultural and material ruins of the late 20th and early 21st centuries, far outlasting anything else humans have created. Inspired in part by ancient cave paintings, nuclear waste warning signs, and Carl Sagan's Golden Records of the 1970s, artist/geographer Trevor Paglen has developed a collection of one hundred images that will be etched onto an ultra-archival, golden silicon disc. The disc, commissioned by Creative Time, will then be sent into orbit onboard the Echostar XVI satellite in September 2012, as both a time capsule and a message to the future. The selection of 100 images, which are the centerpiece of the book, was influenced by four years of interviews with leading scientists, philosophers, anthropologists, and artists about the contradictions that characterize contemporary civilizations. Consequently, *The Last Pictures* engages some of the most profound questions of the human experience, provoking discourse about communication, deep time, and the economic, environmental, and social uncertainties that define our historical moment. Copub: Creative Time Books

From Bookforum The book showcases a diversity of photographic technologies, from surveillance shots taken by a drone to close-ups of the Ebola virus captured by an electron micrograph; this shuffling together of radically disparate scales makes for a thought-provoking browsing experience. *The Last Pictures* tells a dark but urgent story about present conditions of representational frustration. In the here and now, we have this book, a partial but chilling document of what we were, what we are, and what we might become. —Julia Bryan-Wilson “This is not just a publicist-driven fancy. . . . [Paglen’s images are] aesthetic and allegorical. . . . A unique tale of human history.”