

Midwest Book Review

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Once a ubiquitous feature of Chicago's landscape, the neon sign is gradually disappearing because of the deleterious impact of Illinois winters. The result of the harsh climate and the entropy of neglect, the neon signs of neighborhood businesses are decaying, fading, rusting, and manifesting empty spaces where colorful glass tubes used to be. Chicago librarian and artist Dan Zamudio photographed many of Chicago's neon signs with a camera called 'Diana', which is made of plastic (including the lens) and thus produces a slightly blurred focus that creates beautiful and memorably surreal images. In "Chicago Neon Signs", Zamudio has compiled sixty of these black-and-white photographic images that will prove to be enduring monuments to this once great commercial advertising art form to be found in every Chicago neighborhood but which is now, year by year and decade by decade, disappearing from the scene. "Chicago Neon Signs" is an original compilation which is highly recommended for personal, professional, community, and academic library Photography reference collections -- and would serve as an excellent template for similar photographic studies with respect to other American cities.