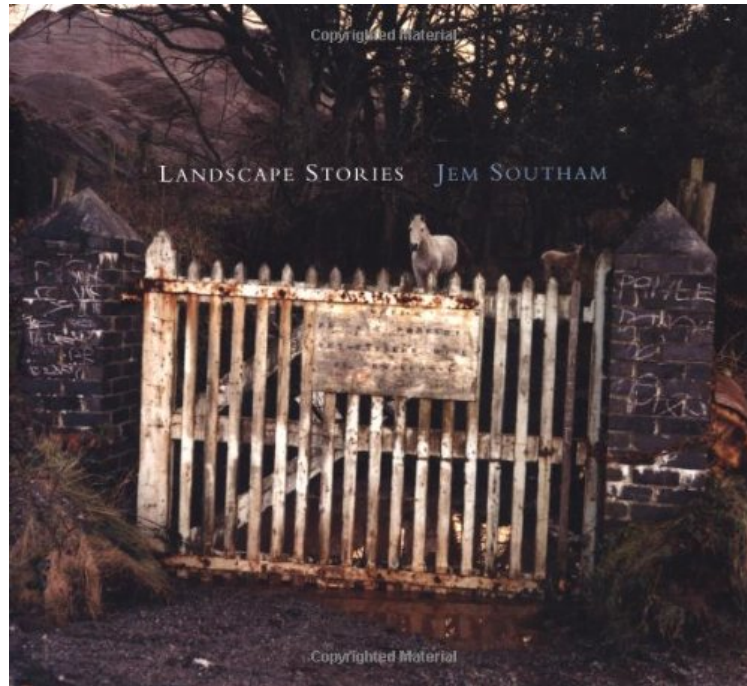


## Landscape Stories

*Jem Southam*

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**Jem Southam : Landscape Stories** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Landscape Stories:

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Stimulating By Stephen Best Southam's wonderful book of (mostly) large format images taken from multiple series has been one of the most stimulating of the medium I've yet come across. I think it was Fay Godwin (also from the UK) who first made me look at both the beauty and timelessness of the landscape and the detritus of habitation despoiling same. One can get too precious with the subjects considered worthy of an exposure. From the methods of the photographer as revealed herein, Southam is a painstaking master of the medium with a strong idea of what he's trying to convey. His images of rock falls and dew ponds are unquestionably beautiful and with great colour. But it's the "stories", the multiple approaches of aspect or over time that are most interesting here. With some thoughtful essays and excellent printing, this is a book worthy of consideration. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Overdue Survey of Southam's work By nerose Good survey of Jem Southam's work, and an essential book for anyone concerned with landscape photography today. His greatest bodies of imagery for me are 'the Raft of Carrots' and 'Red River', both represented here, as are the later works. The design is a little 'classic' which I guess is fine, but the endless quotations of Southam, set out alone on pages in bold get a little tiresome, and misdirect you from the images to the words. Southam is sadly little known in the US, but should be appreciated much more. For the past 30+ years he has been one of the most important photographic artists working with true intelligence in the landscape.

Early in the morning, before breakfast and the beginning of the workday, photographer Jem Southam takes to the

countryside of southwest England, visiting and revisiting the hills and dales of Bristol, Cornwall, Devon, and Somerset. His lyrical photographs of these places, taken in series over several years, chart the subtle evolution of this picturesque countryside as it has been transformed by both natural processes and human intervention. Ostensibly topographic and descriptive, each achieves a greater power thanks to an allegorical language that draws on our collective imagination. *Landscape Stories* is the first comprehensive collection of Southam's work, drawn from three completed series: *The Pond at Upton Pyne*, *The Red River*, and *Rockfalls, Rivermouths, and Ponds*, along with several smaller groups of pictures from series still in the making. Southam's brief narratives about each site—together with essays by Gerry Badger and Andy Grundberg, which examine Southam's work from European and American perspectives, respectively—create a rich context for viewing these remarkable, large-format photographs.

From *Publishers Weekly* Insisting that "a landscape is never innocent," Andy Grundberg's introductory essay for this hefty book captures perfectly the suspicious yet oddly playful mood of this atmospheric collection. British photographer Southam's thought-provoking works relay their own stories and attest to his following in the footsteps of early 20th century British landscape photographer Peter Henry Emerson, whose work is known for standing "in opposition to the industrialization and urbanization that were then transforming the economic and social fabric of life." While much of Southam's work is also preoccupied with its own wink-wink brand of social commentary—evidenced by photos of abandoned mine shafts and confined songbird cages in a zoo—he has an eye fine-tuned to the nuances of country life's quietude: a photograph of recently cracked eggs, their orange yolks exposed for judging at a poultry show, is intriguing, while gentle studies of verdant barnyard scenes shot over a series of months chart the landscape's evolution. Particularly interested in areas once dominated by industry that have since been abandoned, Southam captures the scarred countryside's slow return to nature. Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. "The photos are, let's not mince words, beautiful: things to gaze and wonder at, full of detail and texture." -- *Stride Magazine* About the Author Born in Bristol, England, in 1950, photographer Jem Southam describes himself as a product of postwar optimism and Cold War paranoia. Shaped by these cultural forces, together with the vestiges of English romanticism and west country non-conformism, his se