

RAD SCHOOL

FROM LEFT, Greg Miller, LeRoy Grannis, and Andy Davis, at Victoria Beach in Laguna Beach, California.



the next wave

They grew up shooting the curl from Santa Cruz to San Clemente. Now their art is finding its season in the sun.

i'm kind of in my post-Pop, Mexican Expressionist period," painter Greg Miller was saying recently. "And yet I still have all these surfer guys telling me, 'Dude, awesome! Can we do some trunks with your work? Maybe surfboards?'" It's not such a bad occupational hazard to have if you're an artist based in Venice Beach, California, who happens to be a lifelong

surfer and who fills large-scale works with surfing iconography and then finishes them off with the same resin used for surfboards.

Miller—whose work has appeared on boards and in galleries from coast to coast—is part of a loose band of California-based artists busy stoking up a surf-culture renaissance. They descend from such pioneers as the prolific illustrator Bill Ogden, *Surfer*-magazine founder John Severson, and the photographer LeRoy Grannis, now

88, who dodged near drownings and bouts with skin cancer to document surfing's 1960s heyday (see page 136). Grannis's lens caught not only the requisite "tube shots" (surfers framed inside breaking waves) but also the surf scene at large, from antique Chevy pickups laden with longboards to dolphins at play off Carlsbad. Speaking of Grannis's work, Miller, 54, reflected, "Whatever that period was—that was me and my friends." Miller's paintings, which incorporate *a&d* >136

PHOTOGRAPHY

chairman of
the board

A pioneering lensman and
his endless summer.



The intrepid surf photographer LeRoy Grannis first mounted a 100-pound redwood board in 1931, heard the news of Pearl Harbor on the sand at Hermosa Beach, and in 1959, at the suggestion of a concerned doctor (too much stress, ulcer), took up the hobby of taking his Land Camera to the various point breaks and surf contests along the Southern California coast, from Dana Point to Malibu and beyond. "Photos by Grannis" quickly became an iconic watchword during surfing's golden age, as the man known affectionately as Granny went on to help found *Surfing* magazine and, throughout the sixties, raised surf photography to an art form.

In **LeRoy Grannis: Surf Photography of the 1960s and 1970s** (Taschen; \$400), the myth of

sun-soaked California is spun out in elegiac Technicolor: A hot-dogging Miki Dora, one of the sport's great pioneers, catches a tube; a stack of amber-hued boards at Greg Noll's surf shop in Hermosa glows like honey; the dewy-fresh surf model Marsha Bainer poses next to a longboard twice her height; and the towering green wall of Hawaii's Pipeline tumbles with apocalyptic fury. Grannis's motto was "Shoot it now or you'll never get it back." In this dappled monograph, the period that Grannis documented—California at maximum stoke, surfing evolving from fad to ethos—appears much like a wave itself, as evanescent as it was indelible.—**M.R.** *a&d* >138



SURF'S UP

"Photos by Grannis":
Marsha Bainer in
1964 (ABOVE) and
Shaun "The Prawn"
Tomson riding
Pipeline, 1977 (LEFT).