



LeRoy Grannis, surf photography It was the collision of nature's raw energy and the dexterity of man's limbs that gave birth to the rugged American surf culture captured by legendary photographer LeRoy Grannis. In this special signed, numbered collector's edition, *LeRoy Grannis, Surf Photography of the 1960s and 1970s*, Jim Heimann, executive editor at Taschen, and Steve Barilotti, *Surfer* magazine's editor-at-large, present over 250 images from the most pivotal period in surf history. Complete with an introduction

that documents the era popularized by the revolutionary music of the Beach Boys and the Hollywood glamour of Gidget, these carefully selected color and black-and-white shots escort readers on their own ride through both the calm and turbulent waters of surf culture.

For more than 30 years, Grannis ("Granny" to his friends) placed himself between surfer, wave and sand, propelled by the same adrenaline rush that more than half a century earlier led Mark Twain and Jack London to write about this sport of Polynesian origin. Each image pays homage to the beach scene Grannis first encountered as a five-year-old boy learning to bodysurf with his father on Hermosa Beach in California. But it was only after stints in the U.S. Air Force and later at Pacific Bell Telephone that Grannis, suffering from a stomach ulcer, took-up photography to reduce stress. So in 1959, the 42-year-old Grannis did a strange thing: he started spending more time in his garage. It was in this makeshift darkroom that he developed over 2,500 frames shot with his East German 35mm camera. Encouraged by John "Doc" Ball, a longtime buddy and surfing's founding father, Grannis' work was relished by cohorts eager to have a glimpse of themselves riding the waves. By 1960, Grannis' shots of the surfer's haven of Malibu could be seen in *Reef* magazine.



Like Tom Black, inventor of the surfing fin and the first photographer to shoot surfers from the water in 1929, Grannis' first wave of success started in Hawaii. It was during his 1961 trip to Waikiki and the fabled north shore of Oahu that he shot some of his most famous photos, including those of surfing greats Rick Gregg and Phil Edwards.

By land or by sea, this collection illustrates the real glory of Grannis: the authentic sights, sounds and seasons of the scene captured on film. Not concerned with the political affiliations and disputes that came with the 1966 "Shortboard Revolution" (when young surfers like Nat Turner made the radical move of using homemade boards that were almost a foot shorter to win championships), his interest was purely chronicling the sport. For Grannis, vernacular created by surf shops, surfer girls and the limitless variety of the boards themselves were just as important as the bronzed body that crested the waves. His sincerity was reflected in what Barilotti calls his "paternal lens" that kindly captured vibrant, eager teenagers. In 1964, he transformed this success into a venture with surfwear tycoon Dick Graham, launching the renowned *International Surfing* magazine, all the while keeping his day job at Pacific Bell.

After public interest peaked in the late '60s, the antiestablishment voice of the '70s quashed surfing's competitive edge, and Grannis published his last photo for *International Surfing* in 1971. Within a brief, kinetic decade, Grannis created the world's collective vision of American surf culture, from the clean-cut surfer of the 60s to the rumblings of rebellion ahead in the '70s. Each of the 278 pages in Heimann and Barilotti's exquisitely bound hardcover volume remind surfer and spectator alike of the pleasures of sun, sand and the always elusive perfect wave ■ *Joanne Molina—LeRoy Grannis, Surf Photography of the 1960s and 1970s, edited by Jim Heimann and Steve Barilotti, 278 pages, \$400/hardcover, Taschen*