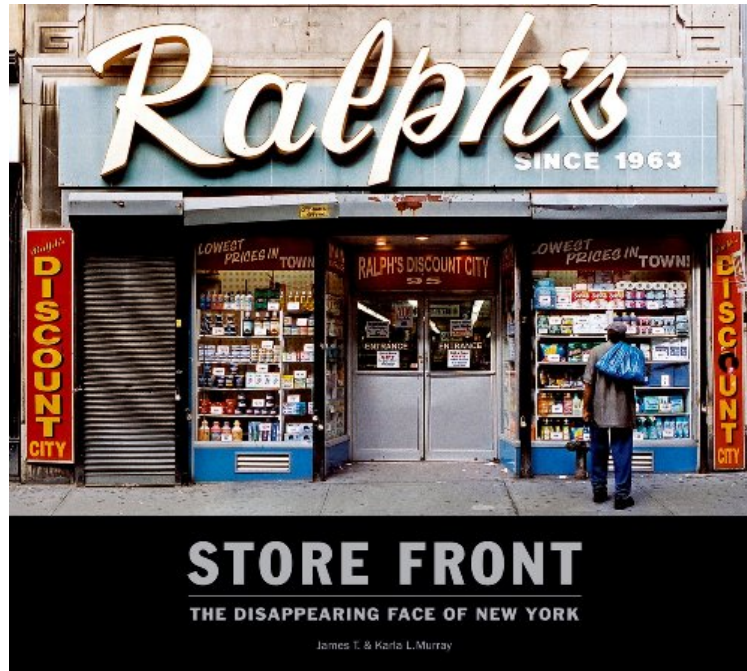


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Store Front: The Disappearing Face of New York

James T. Murray, Karla L. Murray

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James T. Murray, Karla L. Murray : Store Front: The Disappearing Face of New York before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Store Front: The Disappearing Face of New York:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. A Beautiful, Thoughtful Work Of Art And Urban Study By CustomerA must for coffee-table book collectors, NYC lovers, photography fans, city kids, and those interested in urban studies. As a NYC native, this book and its companion volume (Store Front 2) have provided me with hours of memories and information on much-beloved institutions, but their value is much greater than nostalgia, or the sheer physical beauty of these volumes; James and Karla Murray have captured the very essence of a disappearing part of big-city life, the mom-and-pop institutions that once were the lifeblood of every community. Through their wonderful photographs and insightful text, they bring hundreds of years of business and neighborhood ties to life, along with all of the social and cultural memories they evoke. Although there is no editorializing here, this book and its following volume (as well as their "New York At Night") stand as testament to the importance of local businesses to the communities they serve, and an indictment of the rapid strip-malling of many cities in the United States. By the time the first volume was published, a significant portion of the shops pictured had closed due to New York City's recent, unprecedented commercial rent rate increases, and I already see many businesses in the second volume that have disappeared in the last few years. This book fulfills many roles: as a work of art, as a memorial for what has been lost, a celebration of neighborhood individuality and pride, and a warning about what we lose when we ignore or cease to value our local institutions. Another plus is a lack of the Manhattan-centric focus so often found in books about New York City. A true labor of love by the authors, who have spent years walking through the five boroughs of NYC and documenting the rapidly-changing face of the commercial life in the city they call home. However you choose to read

and absorb these lovely, well-bound books, they are a beautiful addition to any library. I see them with different eyes each time I turn a page, and that is a wonderful attribute in any work of art. I heartily suggest that you add these volumes to your collection!

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Great BookBy K. R.I would recommend this book of photographs to anyone interested in the history of locally owned and operated shops and stores. The images in the book cover the five boroughs of New York; Manhattan, The Bronx, Brooklyn, Queens, and Staten Island. Each section is broken down by neighborhood. The authors mention in their introduction that nearly a third of the businesses they photographed have since disappeared. The date on that introduction is 2008, and from my own casual use of Google Map's Street View function to virtually visit many of the addresses in the book - I would say that as of 2013 more than half are gone. Included with the photographs are the approximate addresses of each of the shops and the date the photograph was taken. I bought this book because I wanted some photos of vintage urban storefronts to use as reference for a project that I'm thinking of doing. This book definitely fills that need and more. Along with the photographs the authors also provides a short history of each of the different areas of New York and they took the time to talk with the people who owned operated man of these shops and stores. Most of these businesses have been (or were) continuously run by the same family over the generations. That is something I imagined on some level in the back of my mind. But it wasn't till I started reading the brief write-ups of those conversations that these store fronts are like the covers of different books - each containing a unique story of it's own. Realizing that actually helped me with the project that I'm going to work on. Another feature that I found helpful, is that there are a number of fold-out pages, which the authors use to display whole sections of shops along one street, so that you get the feel of how shops like these co-exist side-by-side with each other. The book is well put together, it's 8.75" x 7.5" x a bit over 1" thick. I hadn't paid attention to the binding when I ordered it, so I was surprised to find out that it was a hard cover book. The pages are heavy gloss paper stock which makes the photographs really stand out. All-in-all, this is really a quality publication. There is a larger, coffee table edition of this book available - but I decided to get the mini version because it would fit better on my bookshelves. The authors also have another book of night-time photographs of businesses which I plan on buying too.

Store Front: The Disappearing Face of New York2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Images of a Vanishing Time and PlaceBy BookmarkIf you truly love the look, feel and vibe of classic New York City neighborhoods, you will love and appreciate "Store Front: The Disappearing Face of New York". Beautiful color photographs that will take you back in time to the community neighborhoods and the specialty merchants who served their customers needs and knew their individual names. The book comes in two sizes, I bought the mini version, same number of excellent photos with brief write ups about the various neighborhoods throughout the five boroughs of NYC.

This is a visual tour so saturated with realism you can smell the knishes neatly displayed in the window of the Yonah Schimmel Knish Bakery, a visual tour comprised of hundreds of images of unique 19th and 20th century retail graphics and neon signs still in use and inspiring us to purchase to this very day. But for how long? Are New York City's local merchants a dying breed or an enduring group of diehards hell bent on retaining the traditions of a glorious past? According to Jim and Karla Murray the influx of big box retailers and chain stores pose a serious threat to these humble institutions, and neighborhood modernization and the anonymity it brings are replacing the unique appearance and character of what were once incredibly colourful streets.

Store Front: The Disappearing Face of New York is a visual guide to New York City's timeworn storefronts, a collection of powerful images that capture the neighborhood spirit, familiarity, comfort and warmth that these shops once embodied. Almost all of these businesses are a reflection of New York's early immigrant population, a wild mix of Irish, Germans, Jews, Italians, Poles, Eastern Europeans and later Hispanics and Chinese. The variety is immense from Manhattan's Yonah Schimmel Knish Bakery and Katz's Delicatessen to the Jackson Heights Florist in Queens, Court Street Pastry in Brooklyn, D. D'Auria and Sons Pork Store in the Bronx and the De Luca General Store on Staten Island. And as the Murray's stunning, large format photographs make patently clear, the face of New York is etched in their facades.