

Ted Leigh is an Abstract Expressionist turned photographer. Though they are photographs of things his pictures are non-figurative. They are small epiphanies, moments glimpsed in the clutter of life, things that we don't usually notice—the way the edge of a crumpled photo (of what?) looks against a little piece of broken glass, partially covered by what might be the bristles of a brush—Leigh notices these bits of dreck, then gets in really tight on them, lighting them as carefully as though they were Gloria Swanson. And the light illuminates: half a butterfly; a bit of plaster molding; a chip of discolored linoleum; little torn bits of indescribable small, useless, trivial things. The crease of a book held open by a piece of pale blue glass becomes curiously sexy, as the reflected light caresses the curves of the paper.

In Ted Leigh's universe it would seem there are no accidents, that every chunk of rusty metal, every tiny torn up scrap of paper, has its place in the world, and is beautiful, if we would only look. He's also a superb craftsman. His colors are bittersweet, not conventionally appealing, and yet the photos are handsome. Painterly abstraction informs his work, with a sensuous play of surfaces and textures, and the tension, the importance of where things touch.

Ruth Middleman, 2004