



Dead zone
In Meyerowitz's stunning book chronicling the effects of the 9/11 attack, the impact is in the detail

COFFEE-TABLE BOOK OF THE MONTH

Aftermath Joel Meyerowitz Phaidon Press, £40



Five years on from the attacks on the World Trade Center and the memories of the actual physical (as opposed to the emotional) destruction wrought that day have faded remarkably quickly. Largely this is due to a contradiction at the heart of the event; the most visually recorded multimedia mass murder in history quickly became something that good taste and the memories of the dead dictated shouldn't be dwelled upon. After the first few days of saturation coverage, most footage of the consequences have been barely screened since.

This makes the photographs in Joel Meyerowitz's epic book *Aftermath* all the more shocking. For the year after 9/11 he was the only photographer to have regular access to the Ground Zero site, recording it from the first week when it was still a gouged crater of melted rubble to a year later when the sifted remains were being catalogued at the Fresh Kills sorting site.

It's the detail in the pictures that your eye is drawn to. What first looks like the famous image of the jagged base of the tower



reveals, on close inspection, trailing curtains, filing cabinets, office furniture and melted steel girders blowing in the wind. In every picture, the fact that countless real people lived and worked in this space is unavoidable. And while the crushed buildings and industrial destruction is almost overpowering in each image, it's the absence of these people that gives the book such an emotional punch. *Aftermath* will be published by Phaidon on September 1; Phaidon.com

