



**A**t first look Michael Wolf's new monograph seems like yet another high-density study of urban architecture. But *Transparent City* turns the usual squared-up, view-camera discipline on its head: You can actually see into many of the buildings because they are photographed in low light, with the lights on inside offices and apartments. Yet the scenes within those windows often seem choreographed, as if Wolf were directing Chicago's interior life (one TV shows Jimmy Stewart with his telephoto lens in *Rear Window*), and the big views are interspersed with blown-up details of the windows. Some of the latter are as sharp as the overall views. Others are heavily pixellated—exit signs, a computer mouse, a man practicing putting. Try as you might, you can't find any of these details in the full-spread images. Is Wolf fabricating them to trick us into scrutinizing every inch? Perhaps, but he's also challenging the idea behind his prior work, that photography is most compelling as a record of surfaces. —RUSSELL HART

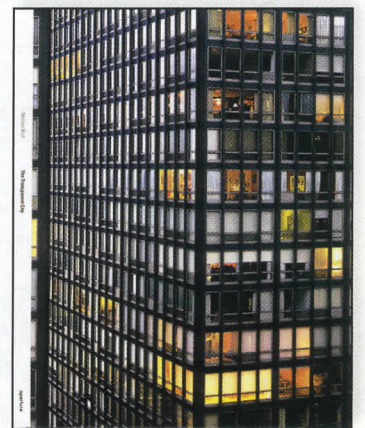
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### Transparent City

By Michael Wolf  
Aperture, 112 pages, \$60

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## LOOKING GLASS







Two of Michael Wolf's see-through views of Chicago.