Snapshot: ‘Ed Ruscha: Archaeology and Romance’

A new exhibition of the artist’s photographs, drawings and prints, which centres on art books he produced between 1963 and 1978.

Taken the year after David Hockney made the LA swimming pool into a pop art icon with his painting *A Bigger Splash*, this photograph by American artist Ed Ruscha reveals a rather more dilapidated vision of Hollywood to Hockney’s.

The image is featured in a new exhibition of the artist’s photographs, drawings and prints, which centres on the art books that Ruscha produced between 1963 and 1978. ‘Pool #2’ appeared in a photo book titled *Nine Swimming Pools and a Broken Glass*,...
which presented a series of photographs of empty pools followed by a single image of a shattered glass.

It’s these tonal contradictions that make his photographs so compelling. His LA is classy yet kitsch; romantic, yet strangely discomfiting.
'Ed Ruscha: Archaeology and Romance' is at The Harry Ransom Center in Austin, Texas, to January 6

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