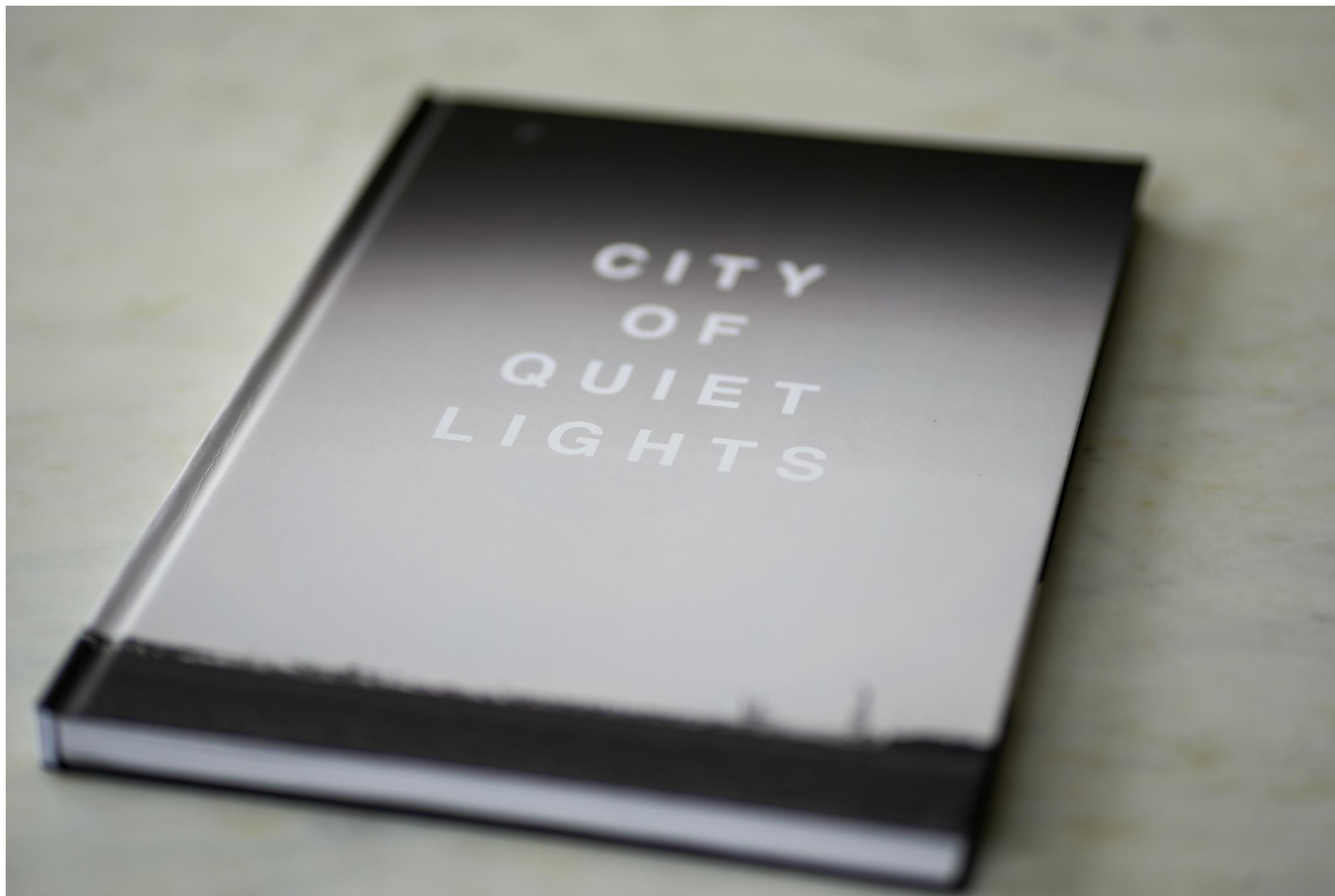




City of Quiet Lights

Stories of a City Searching for Connection

A photographic reflection on memory, solitude, and human presence within New York City.

Photographed between 2021–2025.

Prepared as a limited tribute edition marking 25 years after September 11.



FOR NEW YORK
25 YEARS AFTER SEPTEMBER 11

Before I knew the city,
I knew its promise.

A distance,
made of longing,
romance,
and the quiet geometry of chance.

In the summer of 2001,
I stood above it,
looking out across Manhattan.

Months later,
everything changed.

A pause in a classroom.
A voice,
slightly trembling.

The towers had fallen.

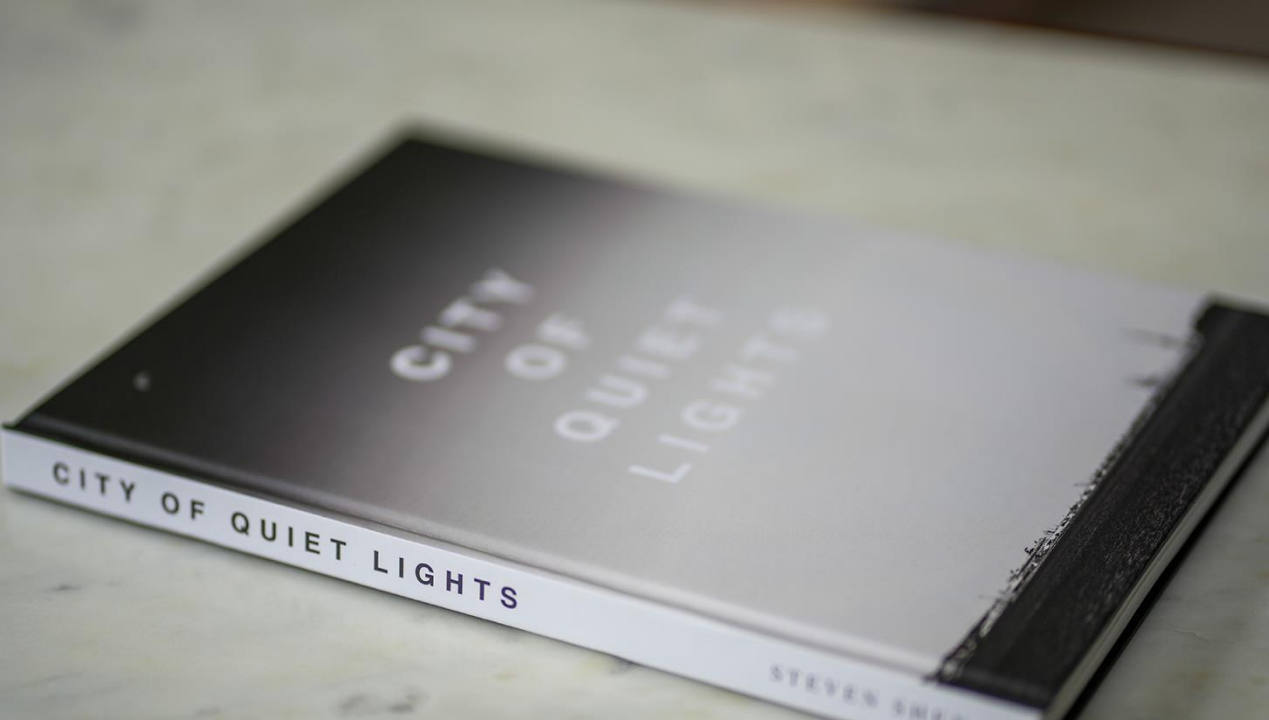
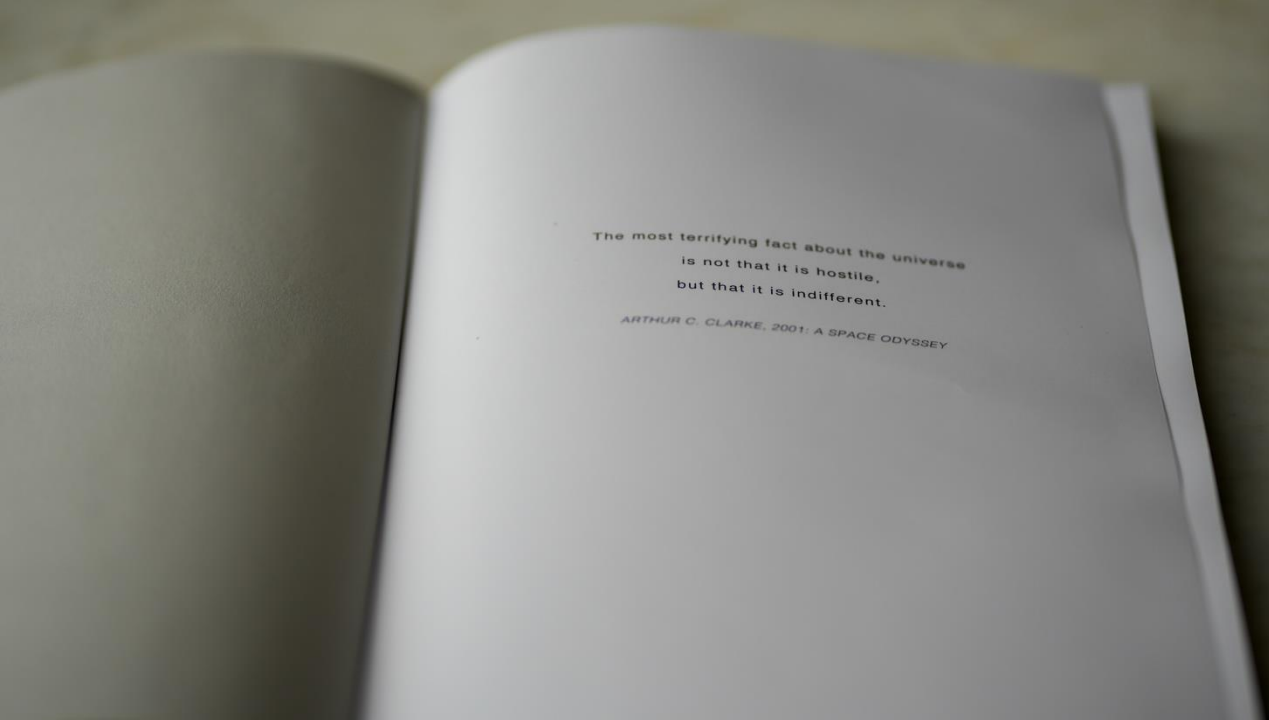
In that instant,
something in me
fell with them.

Twenty years later,
I returned.

With a camera.

The skyline had changed.

But something remained.





"He adored this City."

At the edge of a city where steel
meets water and light,
a fleeting silhouette crosses the
rocks,
as if lifting, for a moment,
the weight of New York.

This book begins here,
between light and shadow,
between what is real
and what is longed for.

New York does not offer meaning.
It asks us to look for it,
in noise,
in motion,
and in the quiet of being alone.

It fascinates.
It confuses.

It draws us closer,
even as we drift apart.

These photographs are not of the
city itself,
but of what passes through it,
hesitation,
courage,
affection,
anxiety,
and those small, tender moments
that ask for no witness.

If the city never pauses,
then this book gathers what it
leaves behind,
fragments of light,
and something unnamed
that stays with us.

Steven Shen
Sydney — New York
January 2026

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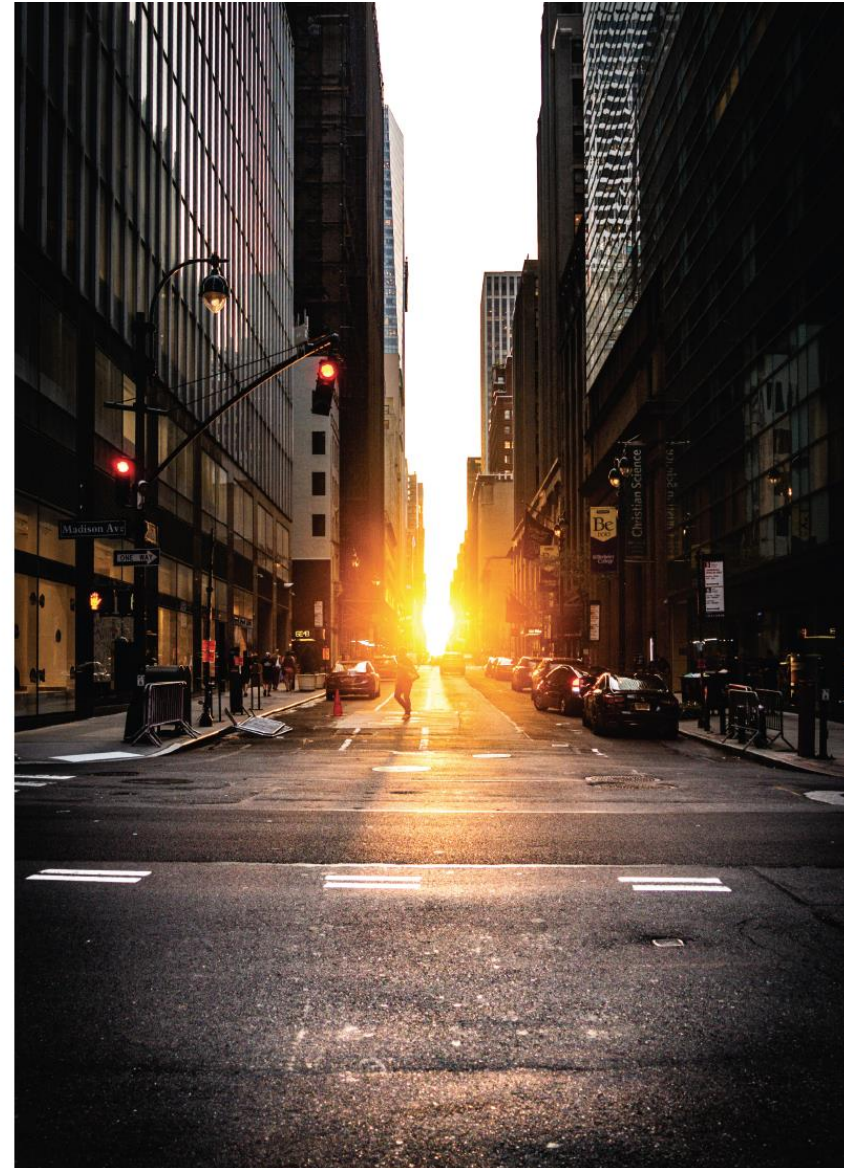
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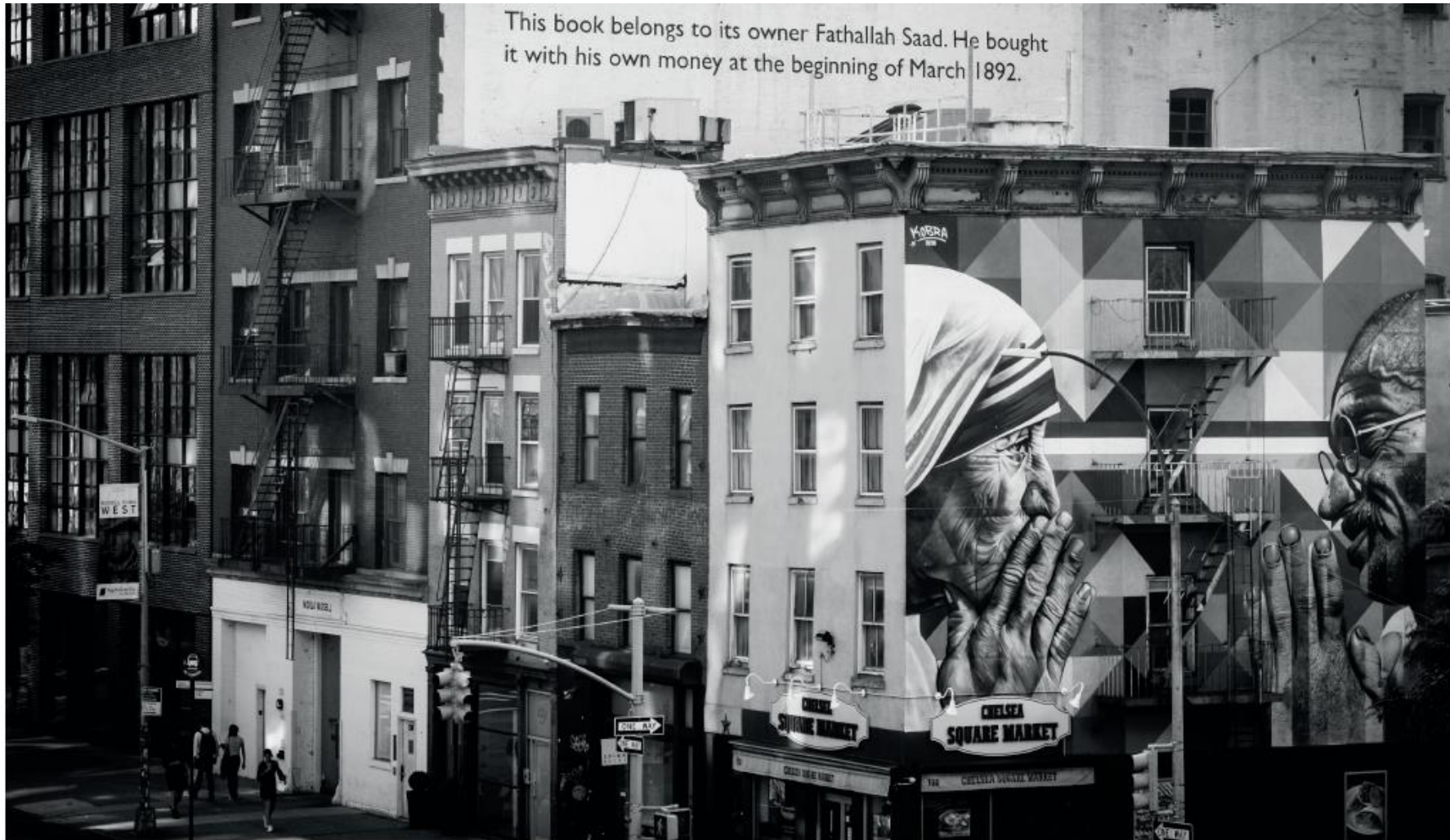


CH 2 . SOLITUDE IN MOTION

In New York,
loneliness moves.

It walks beside us,
without asking.

Among the noise,
it keeps its own rhythm.







CH 5 . BETWEEN US, THE CITY

Not a distance,
but something that stays.

Some days it draws us closer.
Some days it keeps us apart.

Always,
it remains in between.





Steven Shen is based between Sydney and New York.

With a background in strategic marketing, his work explores light, solitude, memory, and traces of grace within the modern city.

stevenshenphoto.com

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Photographs in this book were taken in public spaces
as part of an ongoing street photography project.

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