

tate shaw – the ground

Published on May 20, 2015



The Ground by Tate Shaw is both a stunning photo book and personal essay, spanning a tumultuous two years spent in the unlikely paired landscapes of Iceland and rural Pennsylvania. In the process of chasing a self-imposed obsession with creating a book, Shaw unearths some truly illuminating and multifaceted metaphors of energy and ground, revealing how this obsession changed his entire attitude towards thought, photography, and creative intention.

The essay and photographs are seamlessly interwoven, mirroring each other in a narrative of a fight for energy, both physically and creatively. With his images of geothermal plants, an underground coal fire that has burned for fifty years, and bright pits of hazardous run-off from hydrofracking, Shaw tells the story of the violent relationship humans have with the ground in attempts to harness its energy. The images are inkjet printed on rich, heavy printmaking paper, and selectively washed out with water to smear and obscure them. They progress in intensity, starting with softer, solid ground which steadily gets rougher, plants and soil turning into sparse rocks, choppy water, and eventually becoming manmade plants and pipes, scanning the landscape of mining, drilling, and fracking sites.

Interspersed with these images is Shaw's own personal reflection on his mindset while photographing. He realizes that an obsession with creation can completely overpower the very essence of art until it becomes polluted – and this act of forced thought is strikingly similar to harmfully penetrating the ground for energy.

We're needy, we're starved for inspiration, for fuel. So we probe, we demand, we try to harness it, lock it down, tame it, to find meaning where it may not exist. What results is a fervent, sometimes beautiful, yet completely unsustainable and catastrophic outpouring of consequences. To Shaw, the ground became the mind, and the

energy selfishly stripped from it became a forced creation. Shaw used to think that “books used to be open ground, a field to move through every single day, a space to dissolve oneself completely”. But once it became an obsession, he realized it could become a cloud, obscuring him from even himself – realizing that he ignored whole parts of his life if it was not in a book he read, or in a book he was planning to create.

When the act of wanting to create, to represent life, becomes an obsession – the purpose of it cannot be seen clearly. It becomes jaded, like the pools of hazardous hydrofracking run-off sitting in its rubber lined pit. Though it is of the earth, it was stripped so forcefully that if it returned to where it came from, it would poison us. Initially, Shaw was under the impression that our thoughts were whole because we used them to solve problems, but in reality, these thoughts are only solutions to the very problems created by thoughts that existed before them.

Finishing with an exquisite final scene of Shaw and his wife wrapped together in a natural hot spring in Iceland, he has his epiphany. His notepad and his camera far from him, it’s then he realizes that energy is monolithic, and our thoughts, our creations, and the very ground beneath our feet are victim to its forces roiling beneath the surface.

As Shaw and his wife drift from heat pocket to heat pocket overlooking all the other bathers, he finds that sometimes, in order to see a moment purely, it just needs to exist undocumented. The secret to creation is to sometimes just let moments pass organically instead of by force – to allow the thoughts and energy to simply flow and connect, like drifting from pocket to pocket of natural heat.

Tate Shaw is the Director of Visual Studies Workshop (VSW), Rochester, NY, a nonprofit organization supporting artists’ books, photography, and the media arts. He is also an Assistant Professor at The College at Brockport, SUNY where he directs the Master of Fine Arts program in Visual Studies at VSW. Shaw makes artists’ books, writes essays, organizes symposia on books, and is co-publisher of the small imprint Preacher’s Biscuit Books. [To view more of the book, take a look here.](#)

Title : “The Ground”, 2013

Size : 12 x 8 in

Page Count : 124 Pages

Publisher : Preacher’s Biscuit Books

Edition : 500 copies, signed

nguan – how loneliness goes

Published on July 17, 2014



In Nguan’s second monograph entitled *How Loneliness Goes*, soft light and a muted palette coat moments of rare solace in one of the most crowded countries in the world. We are hit with the word loneliness before even opening the cover, and as the pages go by we start to question if the subjects are the lonely ones, or if maybe it’s the artist. Or maybe it’s all of us. The work unfolds slowly and becomes a nod to all those who feel alone in a crowded room, who live on busy streets, and get a little more lost with every face they see.

But this monograph isn’t only about loneliness. It’s also about Singapore. Nguan has stated that whenever he hears his country being described as beautiful nowadays, the words “it’s so clean” inevitably follow, as if the country “owes all of its allure to an inordinate amount of soap.” He was influenced by a piece on Singapore written by William Gibson called *Disneyland with the Death Penalty*, which describes the country as “a bland dystopia where the ghosts are gone and ‘nothing is falling apart.’” From then on, Nguan has created his photographs as a response to that statement, and it shows in the sallow colors of his photographs: washed clean, but left with a dull film from hard water. Nguan stated that he wanted his palette to be reminiscent of colored pencils, to show a “naïve and tender tone on the surface meant to belie the grimmer themes beneath”. Just like Singapore.

Then, it all comes to a close with a breathtaking image of a cracked flowerpot bound in thick cords, hugging tightly around the ceramic that’s bursting from the weight of what’s growing inside. Flip the page and we’re left with the following:

“*How Loneliness Goes* is about those of us who abide in the city. My wish is for this book to wander in my stead, exist as a testament to existence, and credibly proffer the possibility of beauty as a balm for everyday sorrow.”

Never have I gotten such severe goose bumps at the end of a photo book before. Never have I seen an artist tie up in such a refined, elegant way the essence of the purpose that they wish their work to serve.

Nguan grew up in Singapore and graduated with a degree in Film and Video Production from Northwestern University in Illinois. His first monograph, Shibuya, was named in PDN Annual as one of the best photo books of 2010, and his work has been featured in publications such as Arkitip, It's Nice That, and the Vice Photo Issue.

Title : "How Loneliness Goes", 2013

Size : 10" x 10.5" inches

Publisher : Self Published

Page Count : 55 Pages

Edition : 220 copies, signed

justin kimball – where we find ourselves

Published on June 15, 2014



In most of America's attempts to escape their everyday lives, it isn't all palm trees and tiled pools. The sterilized green and bikini waxes of upper class getaways are left behind and Kimball takes us on a vacation back to real nature. We end up at campgrounds, on dingy smoke-stacked beaches, at lakes with mud runs. It's a wild and unkempt world where most of the country ends up spending their precious time off, unwinding among rocks and rivers, sparkling yellow water, and other people's wet spandex.

Ever since he made his first photograph of a ride operator drinking water from a gin bottle, Justin Kimball has been telling stories, both found and fabricated, through his camera. This monograph is one his finest in story telling and shows that with the right set of eyes on the right subject, anything can be seraphic. Kimball mulled over and meditated on this collection for nine years, and it shows. Every angle is deliberate, every moment decisive, and every instant miraculous.

When it comes down to it, what's really so great about this monograph is that Kimball presents everything at face value. It's not a commentary on humans vs. environment, it's not a call to action. Kimball takes these not so

beautiful places and people and lifestyles, and in them finds moments of sanctity. Of divinity. Every man becomes an Adonis, every dip in the water a baptism, every life touched, an epic.

Justin Kimball was born in New Jersey and received his M.F.A. in photography from the Yale University School of Art and Architecture. He is currently a Professor of Photography at Amherst College and the recipient of a Guggenheim Fellowship and Aaron Siskind Fellowship. His monograph, Where We Find Ourselves, has been widely collected in libraries all over the world and was met with much international acclaim.

Title : "Where We Find Ourselves", 2006

Size : 11.2 x 9.9 inches

Page Count : 94 Pages

Publisher : Columbia College Chicago

ISBN : 1-930066-46-5

Edition : 2000, signed

irina rozovsky – one to nothing

Published on October 14, 2014



In 1988, photographer Irina Rozovsky and her family were supposed to emigrate from the USSR to Israel, just like many other Jewish families at the time. But they never arrived. Instead, they settled in America, almost on a whim.

Rozovsky finally made it to Israel in 2008, and with that visit, she entered the realm of *what-if* that we all carry at the back of our throats. There, her photo book *One to Nothing* began unintentionally, as the orange and dusted country moved her to make more photographs in a single week than she had in the past two years combined. To Rozovsky, Israel is the world's "Achilles Heel". It's a place most of us watch on the news from our couches. We all make judgments, take sides, and harbor opinions that we don't really have enough of a background to declare.

But in this stunning book, Israel is presented without its most prominent features. No Temple Mount, No Wailing Wall. She chooses instead to focus on the outskirts, the city lights setting the horizon on fire, a camel hiding its head so it appears to have two moot ends. The work is doused in a sense of tender neutrality, and it's a viewpoint so rarely seen, yet so necessary for the region today.

Inside the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, only a few feet behind where Jesus was said to be buried and resurrected, Rozovsky made a photo of a ladder, hanging slanted under a painting of Jesus, swaddled and bleeding. This photo, like much of *One to Nothing*, was an accident created during an erratic exploration of a dark storage space. Only when lit up by the flash could Rozovsky see the painting itself, and the ladder—not pointing upwards towards the heavens as they're so often seen—but hanging useless on its side. It's a subtlety made in the best taste, communicating the weight of the region with only the simplest details.

To Rozovsky, the work, and the title itself, is a score to an “existential battle” locked at 1-0, with no end in sight. It’s all about the contrast of myth and reality, and the disillusionment that happens when a land known for so much war and holiness is actually beneath your feet. It’s a guide on how to take a neutral stance out of pure empathy, an ode to Israel’s complicated history, and a study on Rozovsky’s past expanded outward, as she sees what could have been, and what was running in her blood all along.

—

Irina Rozovsky was born in Moscow and grew up in Boston. She received a BA in French and Spanish Literature from Tufts University and an MFA in Photography from the Massachusetts College of Art. She currently lives in Brooklyn, NY and teaches at the International Center of Photography. Her recent monograph, *One to Nothing*, was named as one of the best photo books of the year by Alec Soth and *Photo-Eye Magazine*.

Title : “One To Nothing”, 2011 *signed

Size : 8.5 x 8.5 in

Page Count : 64 Pages

Publisher : Kehrer Verlag

ISBN : 978-3868281996

base – valerio platania

Published on June 17, 2015



Usually when photographers decide to tackle the milieu of shopping centers and suburban culture, we're presented with shelves stocked into oblivion, crying babies on leashes, and the trunk of the 2003 Town & Country so stuffed that it refuses to close.

But instead of condemning consumerism and focusing on the earthly insides of these spaces, Valerio Platania remains at the confines, presenting a more formal study of not only the architecture of the spaces themselves, but of the strange and otherworldly nature of their existence.

Though Base was shot at the fringes of different superstores in Spain, Portugal, and Italy, this work is anything but documentary. None of the photos have a given location, and are instead categorized into 5 chapters, all with titles relating to space exploration, colonization, and survival science.

What results are images that seem like our earth relocated, a planetary base existing somewhere in the emptiness of the universe with only an eerie similarity of the home we used to know. The compositions are vibrant and engaging, but somehow still desolate. Shapes and colors work together to bring otherwise mundane scenes to life, architecture seems foreign, and the base of a light post becomes the tails of a rocket while the stormy earth sky looms like launch smoke.

Humans are also rarely included in the series, but when they are, they make only the vastness even more obvious. Men shopping with their babies becomes lone explorers looking off into the distance, their hands shielding their eyes from a sun that seems to be stronger than our own.

Platania perfectly captures the strange, surreal nature of these strip malls. Their off-kilter decorations, their stockpiles, and the alien feeling that surrounds them, floating forever in the middle of nowhere.

Valerio Platania was born in 1981 in Italy, and works both as a photographer and engineer. He completed his Masters in photography at LENS School of Visual Art, and his artistic work became known to a larger public through his first photobook, BASE (2014).

Title : "Base", 2014

Size : 31 x 23 cm

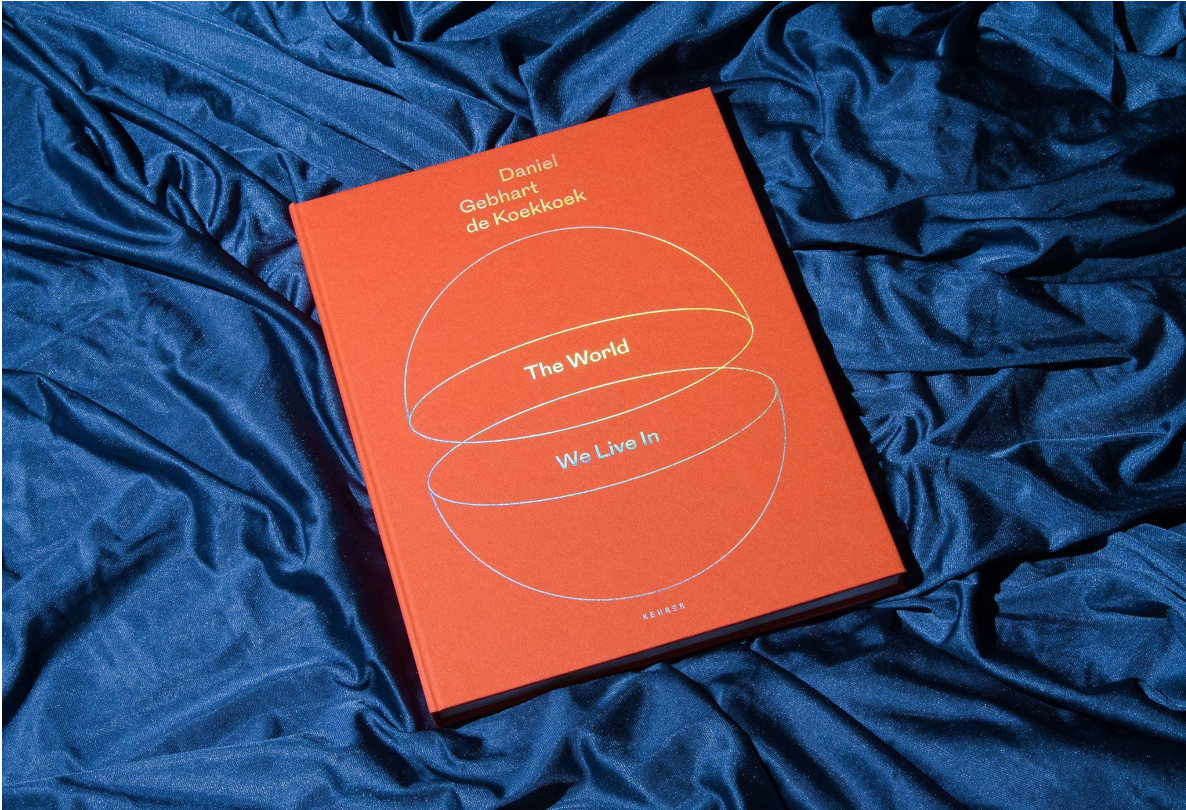
Page Count : 64 Pages

Edition : 700 copies, signed

ISBN : 978-84-616-7257-8

daniel gebhart de koekkoek – the world we live in

Published on September 20, 2014



Daniel Gebhart de Koekkoek started his career in 2006 and worked as an intern with Magnum Photos, NYC, in 2008. He is currently based in Vienna, Austria and has worked for renowned magazines such as VICE, Vanity Fair, Monocle, Travel+Leisure, The Financial Times, Zeit Magazin, SZ-Magazin. His work has been included in several independent art publications and exhibited throughout Europe, Asia, and The United States.

The World We Live In was listed as one of the best photo books of 2013 by ilovethatphoto.net, and was voted photo book of the year at PDN Photo Annual 2014. It features full bleed layouts, a lay flat cover design, and a stunning print quality on gorgeous paper. All of us here at Aint-Bad are in love with this book.

With no introduction or guidance, the reader is taken around the world: through snowy campers in St. Moritz, a mass baptism in Vienna, or a nuclear power plant in Zwentendorf, Koekkoek presents these small universes, never trying to force a uniform message or deeper meaning in the narrative. It's left to the viewer to string it all together, and by the end there is only one the simple conclusion: this is the world we live in. These are the places that we call home.

Fascinated with microcosms, Koekkoek works with the idea of being able to move through several worlds in a day. While each community may have their own way of existence, that existence always shares components in a

much larger picture. Koekkoek has a style that can only be described as documentary with a fathomless soul, and his treatment of light and seemingly effortless communication of different realities, is something you must hold in your hands to understand.

Title : “The World We Live In”, 2013

Size : 23 x 30 cm

Page Count : 160 Pages

Publisher : Kehrer Publishing

ISBN : 978-3-86828-470-6

Includes limited edition A4 Print

jonathan lipkin – livingston county photographs 2006–2011

Published on July 13, 2014



Livingston County is a collection of photographs featuring the small towns of New York run by hunting rifles, hard work, and Coors Light. Lipkin winds a stunning narrative through both slick winters and the dry husks of summer, and what originally started as an assignment to photograph salt mines expanded into a four year project exploring rural isolation, the psychology of its people, and examining what it means to belong.

It's at the same time both positive and negative, uneasy and somehow comfortable. It's as close to a first hand account that can be reached without actually being a part of the town, and Lipkin aptly described the experience as a "complicated blend of aggression and tenderness, compassion and brutality, as I was greeted with open arms and a wariness that befit my status as an outsider".

The photos move along with an interesting parallelism, and there doesn't seem to be much of a separated lens between man and animal. The spheres of thriving and surviving crash together, men and women court each other, rearing children like they rear cattle, and the kingdom of man and the kingdom of the animals lays down to rest on the same level. Everything is instilled with a sense of fondness at arm's length, hobbies turned into lifestyles, and the resulting mix of modesty and savagery.

Jonathan Lipkin is a photographer, writer, and professor of digital media at Ramapo College of New Jersey. He has lectured internationally on issues of digital media and is the author of Photography Reborn and In the Realm of the Circuit.

Title : "Livingston County Photographs 2006-2011", 2011

Size : 8 1/8" x 11"

Publisher : Conveyor Arts

Page Count : 120 Pages

Edition : Signed

marco lachi – how does it feel...

Published on July 12, 2014



If you were to pick up Marco Lachi's *How Does It Feel To Be Leaving The Most Beautiful City In The World?* without any prior knowledge of the past of Cape Town, you'd still be able to feel the tension slowly creeping in before reaching any of the text. The photos start lush and idyllic, painting a portrait of the luxurious side of the city: hotel rooms, classic cars, poolside champagne, and sunglasses. But with each page turn, Lachi moves outward, pulling his lens further and further away to the edges of this paradise. The same light and architecture remain, but our attention is brought to the walls surrounding the city. The fences, the barbed wire, the security cameras, each looking both quaint and sinister, sheathed in their fresh coats of paint.

It's these elements of the city that brought Lachi's attention to the fact that though Apartheid is in the past, it still murmurs in South Africa's culture. His photos represent the region's uneasiness, and the still existing "signs of insecurity among its inhabitants".

But the real feat of this work is based in its collaboration. Too often words and photos join together to form an all too complete narrative—it becomes reporting instead of art, journalism instead of documentation. Lachi and Terry, however, never overlap. They leave some spaces blank, presenting instead only rations of the whole, each attempting to break through the crust of the city from their own side at the same harmonious pace. And so each chips away at this tourist veneer, together beautifully framing the racial tensions, urban fear, and the importance of a departure from a singular point of view. After all, leaving the most beautiful city in the world might not mean you've actually left. Maybe it just means you can't see it the same way ever again.

Marco Lachi was born in Florence, Italy, working as a planner in an architectural firm before graduating from the Fondazione Studio Marangoni in 2007. His work has been featured in ZOOM, Ojo de Pez, and European Photography. From 2008 to 2011, he lived in Cape Town, South Africa, working as a freelance photographer. During that period, Marco collaborated on the book How Does It Feel To Be Leaving The Most Beautiful City In The World? with African writer and journalist, Olufemi Terry. The book was a finalist in the 5th Dummy Award at the 2012 Photobook Festival Kassel, and has been featured in many places such as CPH Mag and Fotografia Magazine.

Title : “How Does it Feel to be Leaving the Most Beautiful City in the World?”, 2013

Size : 7.5 x 8.5 inches

Page Count : 48 Pages

Edition : 250 copies , signed each book also comes with a limited edition c-print, signed and numbered by the artist.

bjarne bare – hose variations

Published on June 25, 2014



You can tell a lot about a person from the inanimate objects they surround themselves with: their clothes, the knick-knacks on their mantel, or maybe the blankets on their bed. But the last thing you'd think to check is their garden hose. Bare, however, might just change your mind. His monograph, *Hose Variations*, is exactly what you think it is: a forty page book filled with 27 studies of hoses from the neighborhoods of Los Angeles, Berlin, Oslo, Lodz, and Buenos Aires.

Hose Variations could be considered a slight continuation of Bare's previous series, *Outboard Swaddle*, an extensive formal study of outboard boat motors wrapped in tarps in Venice. Like *Outboard Swaddle*, *Variations* is not only a formal exploration of "coiled form and color", but it also provides the reader with a surprisingly insightful profile of its absent user. Bare puts it best:

"How one keeps one's garden hose is a visible, though commonly overlooked, sign of one's moral attitude towards the social whole. Often communal property, easily tangled and damaged through neglect, a well-coiled hose shows one's consideration for the next user and the proper functioning of the group."

Photographed in both pristine condition and in twisted disarray, Bare presents to us the exact opposite of the decisive moment, finding his meaning instead in the static stretches in between.

While certainly a light-hearted study, *Hose Variations* serves as a serious testament to the significance of artist's

intention. With a focused lens and a deliberate purpose, we can turn the objects in our lives on their heads, we can study ourselves without even being in the frame, and a garden hose can hold much more than just water.

Bjarne Bare is a Norwegian photographer who graduated from the Oslo Academy of Fine Art. His work has been featured in Boooooom, Its Nice That, and Self Publish, Be Happy. He has won grants from the Arts Council in Norway, and is the co-founder of Melk, an artist run initiative gallery, studio space, and bookstore for new Scandinavian photography. His first monograph, Hose Variations, is currently distributed in three different continents by Blackbook, Melk, and Antennebooks.

Title : “Hose Variations”, 2011

Size : 26 x 19 cm

Page Count : 40 Pages

Publisher : Cornerkiosk Press

ISBN : 978-82-998640-0-8

Edition : 500, Signed

sara macel – may the road rise to meet you

Published on June 3, 2014



MAY THE ROAD RISE TO MEET YOU SARA MACEL

Macel grew up with a traveling salesman father peddling telephone poles made out of Southern Yellow Pine. As a child, she always wondered where he went as she watched his car disappear down the driveway, and *May The Road Rise To Meet You* is the outcome of these early wonderings. Its sixty pages hold both real and fabricated scenes of an imagined career of her father Dennis, and a tender encapsulation of a daughter filling in the blanks of an entire life lived where she could not follow. Going back to both the places in her father's past, and the places she imagined he could have been, the perspectives blur seamlessly from Macel to Dennis, all locations blend into the same transient milieu, and all sense of time slips away. We're left with only a sense of a young girl putting herself into her father's size 11 work boots, and right alongside her, we feel out the open road in its widened soles.

With Macel's critical eye, attention to light, and included hotel paper scraps from the past, she delivers gut punching visceral sensations. Looking at these photos you can taste that metallic burn in the back of your throat on a 5 am flight; you can feel that half-second blinded by sunlight through a yawning windshield, searching to

see if you're still in the same state as when you fell asleep.

May The Road Rise To Meet You is more than a monograph: through Macel's lens, the story of her father's career becomes a universal shared voyage of distance in its many forms. It gives us new perspective about the male vs. female experience on the road, comments on how men are viewed by women, how parents are viewed by their children, and how inevitably, photographs can toy with memory.

—

Sara Macel was recently named one of the Top 50 Photographers in Photolucida's Critical Mass Award, received the Individual Photographer's Fellowship Grant from the Aaron Siskind Foundation, and her first monograph, May the Road Rise to Meet You, has been featured in The New Yorker, Fraction Magazine, Condé Nast Traveler, CPW, and Lenscratch.

Title : "May The Road Rise To Meet You", 2013

Size : 10 x 9 in

Page Count : 67 Pages

Publisher : Daylight Books

Edition : 1250, Signed