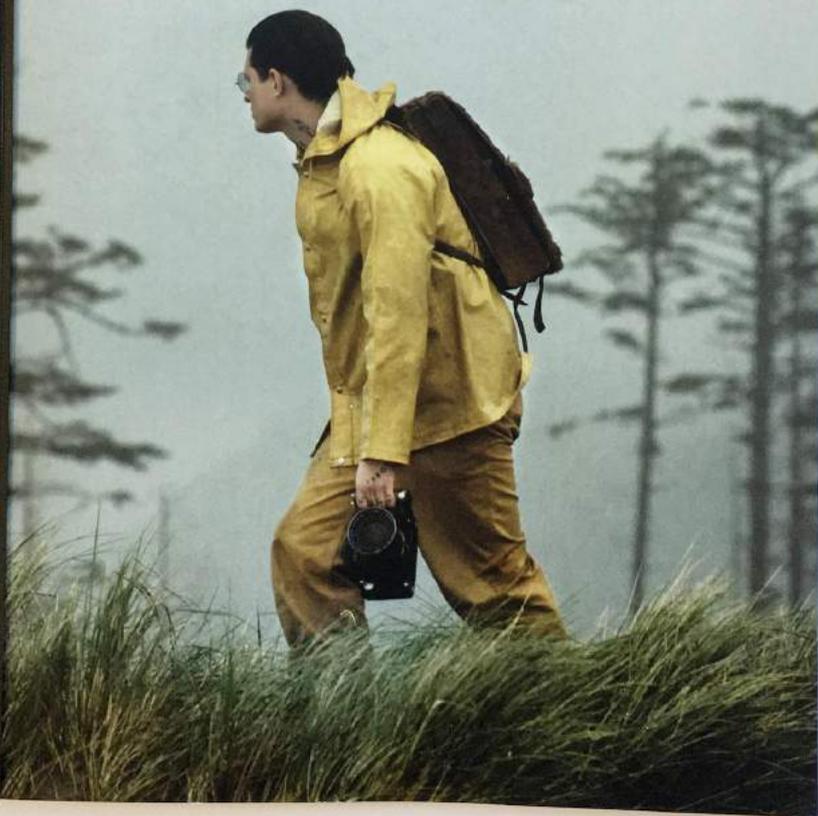


wilderness.



WILDERNESS MAGAZINE / George Byrne

When I'm out taking pictures I'm usually driving. I trawl along LA's gaping boulevards and winding back streets in search of the raw visual ingredients. It could be a wall, or a shadow or the way a handrail is draped around the edge of a building, I try not to discriminate - it's all fair game.

Sometimes, when I pull over and walk to the spot, the scene melts away to nothing, and other times the elements are too hard to compose in a coherent way and other times when I'm on my way back to the car I'll spot something way more interesting and take pictures of that. The whole process is a rather silly inexact science, but its deeply experiential, a bit like driving around the ocean pulling up lobster pots, I often get into a strange hypnotic state.

LA's urban landscape is littered with these beautifully surreal ready-made scenes, my images are in many ways highly produced moments, the difference being there is no cast, crew, actors or call times. It's all serendipity, chance and varying degrees of post-production.

What I've discovered after a few years of doing this is that no matter where I am or what I'm shooting, a person always seems to appear. Out of nowhere they glide through the pastel plains, oblivious to me, on their way to somewhere or someone. They often make the shot.

My interest in photographing LA comes from a base fascination with the landscape and its aura. Some places just trip the wire, everyone is different, but all urban environments hold an intangible *feeling*, its this feeling that I'm trying to bottle and the camera was the first thing I reached for in trying to achieve that goal.

Can dense structure lead to anxiety / is open expansive land as peaceful as advertised?

I think so yes, for me anyway. As I get older I seem to getting more and more sensitive to really build environments, I get a little claustrophobic, it feels like the whole place is screaming at me. Maybe I just need to harden up, but there is something to be said for emptiness and space I think, built landscapes with no people allow for unique contemplation.

Maybe the empty space makes us look at things we aren't supposed to see or feel, perhaps the unease some of us feel is just remnant of some ancient programming that tells us when we're alone we are vulnerable. Could that be why ocean horizons are so wonderful and soothing? You get the chance to clear the clutter and look into the abyss, without contemplating the daunting reality of an empty Earth.

I feel strangely comfortable when I'm out working in LA. There is just so much light, sun and space. For me, danger, like mold, needs the dark and damp, LA has neither. But I'll often move quickly, especially if I don't know the neighborhood, people are suspicious of people with cameras, what are you taking and why? No time to explain, jump in the car and keep moving.

Ramblin' man

What I've discovered after a few years of street photography is that no matter where I am or what I'm shooting, a person always seems to appear. Out of nowhere they glide through the pastel plains, oblivious to me, on their way to somewhere or someone else. Los Angeles's urban landscape is littered with these beautifully surreal ready-made scenes. My images are in many ways highly produced moments, the difference being that there are no cast, crew, actors or call times. It's all serendipity, chance and varying degrees of post-production.



Some place
feeling that
gaping bou
a handrail i



George Byrne's urban wilderness

Some places just trip the wire. Each one is different, but all urban environments hold an intangible feeling, and it's this feeling that I've tried to bottle and the camera was the first thing I reached for in trying to achieve that goal. I trawl along gaping boulevards and winding backstreets in search of the raw visual ingredients. It could be a wall or a shadow or the way a handrail is draped around the edge of a building; I try not to discriminate.



As I get older I seem to get more and more sensitive to really built environments. I get a little claustrophobic; it feels like the whole place is screaming at me. Maybe I just need to harden up, but there is something to be said for emptiness and space, I think. Landscapes with no people allow for unique contemplation.



Maybe
just ren
ocean h
contem



Maybe the empty space makes us look at things we aren't supposed to see or feel. Perhaps the unease some of us feel is just remnant of some ancient programming that tells us that when we're alone, we are vulnerable. Could that be why ocean horizons are so wonderful and soothing? You get the chance to clear the clutter and look into the abyss, without contemplating the daunting reality of an empty Earth.



Photograph by [unreadable]

For me danger, like mold, needs the dark and damp, and LA has neither. But I'll often move quickly, especially if I don't know the neighborhood. People are suspicious of people with cameras, saying, "What are you taking and why?" I've no time to explain, so I jump in the car and keep moving.



y if I don't
? I've no time

Sometimes, when I pull over and walk to the spot, the scene melts away to nothing, or the elements are too hard to compose in a coherent way. Other times when I'm on my way back to the car I'll spot something way more interesting and take pictures of that. The whole process is a rather silly inexact science, but it's deeply experiential, a bit like driving around the ocean pulling up lobster pots. I often get into a strange hypnotic state.

