

# M+B

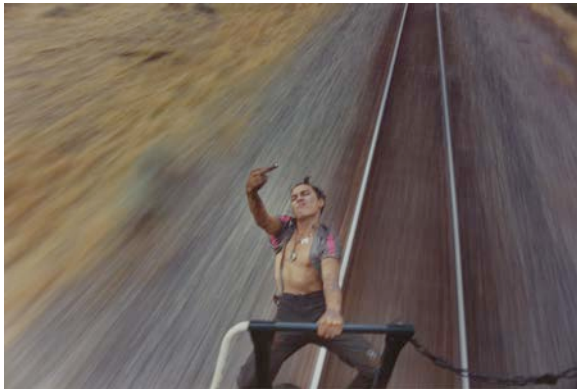
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## Wmagazine

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MIKE BRODIE: THE KID STAYS IN THE PICTURES

By Fan Zhong  
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It's been roughly a decade since Mike Brodie hopped his first train in Pensacola, Florida. Since that time, his romantic pictures of beautiful young savages traversing the country together—drifters on the tracks, you might call them, or punks just “hoboing, if you want to be corny,” Brodie says—turned the self-taught photographer into an art world sensation. Critics compared him to Robert Frank and William Eggleston, lauding his anthropological eye and the authentic grime of his raggedly beautiful subjects as they huddled in rail cars, hung off speeding trains and curled up next to the tracks.

“I don't really feel nostalgic about them,” Brodie says now of the photographs taken between 2004 and 2009—but the art world evidently does. The series is now enjoying a revival with a bicoastal exhibition opening tomorrow at New York's Yossi Milo Gallery and next week at L.A.'s M+B.

These days, Brodie resides in Oakland. And although the city and its neighbor, San Francisco, are hubs in the “traveler” subculture, he doesn't hop trains much anymore. Nor does he take very many pictures. (He's actually studying to be a railway mechanic.) “At some point, you grow out of that stuff,” Brodie says—by which he means both train hopping and the extracurriculars that go with it. “Drugs and alcohol tend to be even more excessively abused on trains.” Still, he hasn't totally lost touch with that scene. “A lot of the people in the pictures still come around,” he says. “It's still my life, but they've grown up with me.”

Brodie is flattered by the attention of the art world. “It's been really exciting,” he says. But he doesn't feel particularly connected to the work. “When I look at the pictures now, I feel a little desensitized to them—they've become just art objects to my eye,” he admits. “I actually have another stack of personal photos of my friends at home, ones taken in photo booths and with disposable cameras. Those are the pictures that hold real meaning for me.”

*“A Period of Juvenile Prosperity” runs from March 7 – April 6 at Yossi Milo Gallery, 245 Tenth Avenue, in New York, and from March 16 – May 11 at M+B, 612 North Almont Drive, in Los Angeles. A monograph of the same title will be published by Twin Palms on March 7.*