

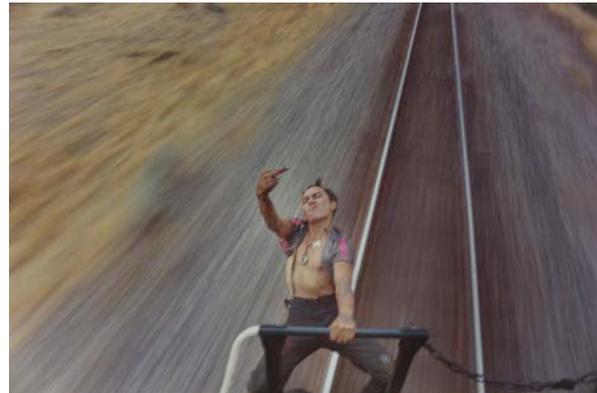
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MIKE BRODIE: A PERIOD OF JUVENILE PROSPERITY

By Susanne Peeters

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There have always been those who are nomadic. Historically, it was often for necessity, following the needs of food, water and safety. But, there is also the hunger of movement, just for movement sake. It is the necessity to move and travel with few possessions, an endless appetite for new sights, sounds and experiences that drive individuals such as Mike Brodie. Brodie is one such adventurer, and lucky for us, he picked up a camera along the way and captured a rare take of the life of train hopping across America. Starting in 2004, at age seventeen, Brodie left his home in Pensacola, Florida; beginning a period of discovery and travel. He began meeting and sharing his adventures with a whole community of fellow nomads. You can see these photos at M+B Gallery in Los Angeles.

The fact that Brodie was never formally trained in photography, and that his original intent was never to sell them or showcase them in a gallery, is the reason why they are so honest and intimate; raw and tough. This is the life on the road with a bunch of kids who could fall off a train and die at any moment, freeze in the cold, starve, get pregnant, or never value stability. It is the same group that may avoid frustration, apathy, and depression because they followed the restlessness inside and gave it a form and called it fun; or maybe just survival. Their tattoos speak volumes, "free rent" and "stay gold". Their readings include Thompson's: *The Rum Diary*, and short stories by Flannery O'Connor. They are definitely seekers, and Brodie makes us want to root for them.

The colors, the wind gnarled hair, the dirt, and the character rich clothing all communicate something about the feeling of being there. The community at the cost of security. The adventure at the cost of safety. As much as one may love the wind blowing in your face, the viewer gets a sense of the tiresome aspect of weather and travel. Many of the photos chronicle rest, and its intimate and elegant quality.