

MODEST MOUSE



PHOTOGRAPHS BY
PAT GRAHAM

Modest Mouse

By Pat Graham

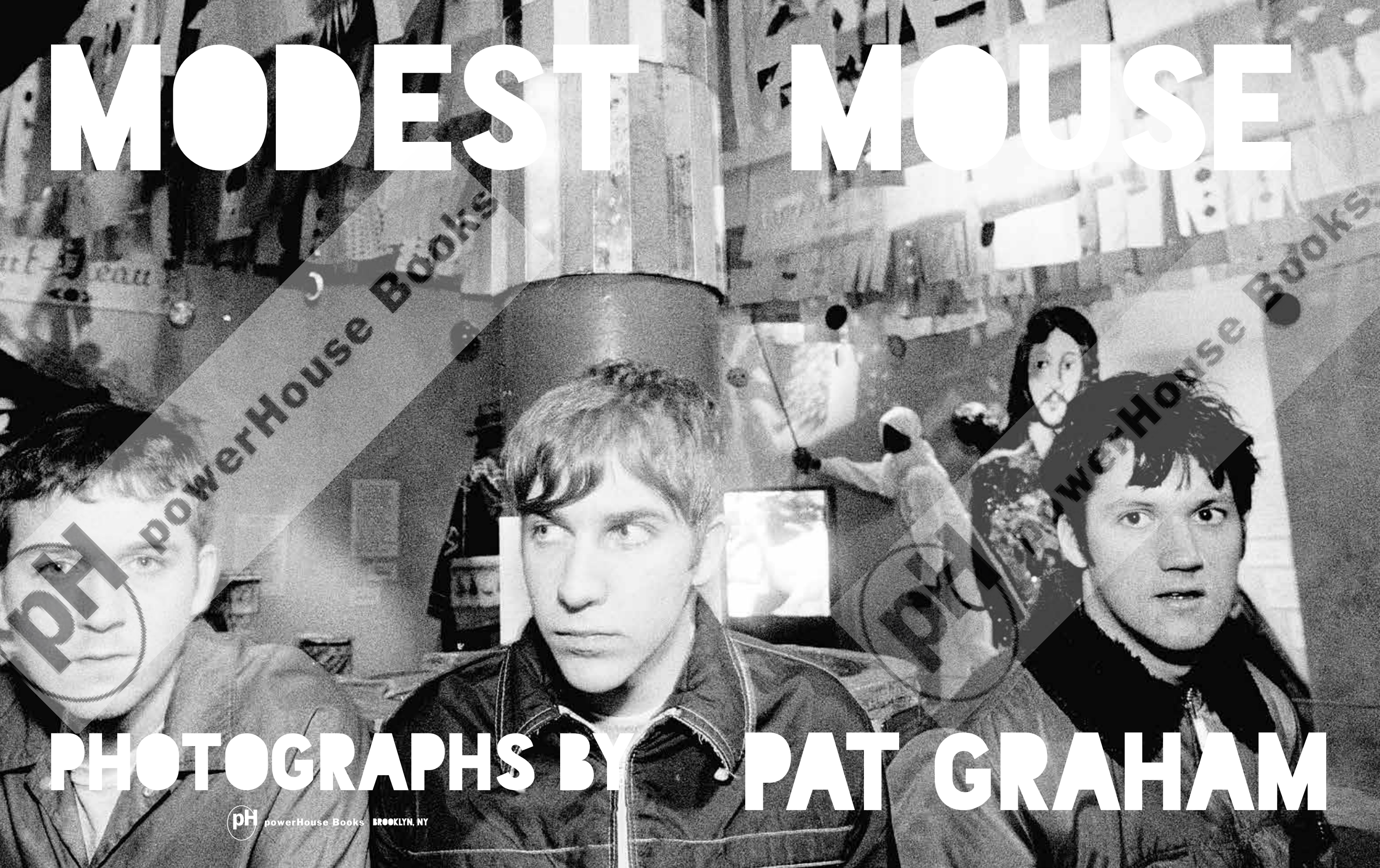
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PHOTOGRAPHS BY PAT GRAHAM



1996

This is the first time I ever photographed Modest Mouse live. The band played in Olympia, Washington, opening up for Dub Narcotic and The Make-Up. I always loved the vice grips on Isaac's guitar in this photo.





Later that year I met up with Isaac back in in D.C. The band took me to CMJ in N.Y.C. We ran all over the city. Isaac met these dogs that looked like they would kill anyone or thing.



Poof...the van stopped. We were stuck in the middle of a drift with no road or any other cars in site. As it was April, we had no hats or gloves. The closest thing was a pair of socks.

With socks on our hands we started to try and dig out while one person hit the gas in the van and spun the wheels. Nothing was helping. The road seemed to be gone and we were not moving, just getting colder. At one point we decided to use a piece of wood that was the top of a storage box in the van as a traction device. I shoved it under the back wheel. Isaac hit the gas and this flat box top went flying like a sled across the snow. Isaac went to look for it only to come back wet, as he had somehow stepped in a drift that had a river below it.

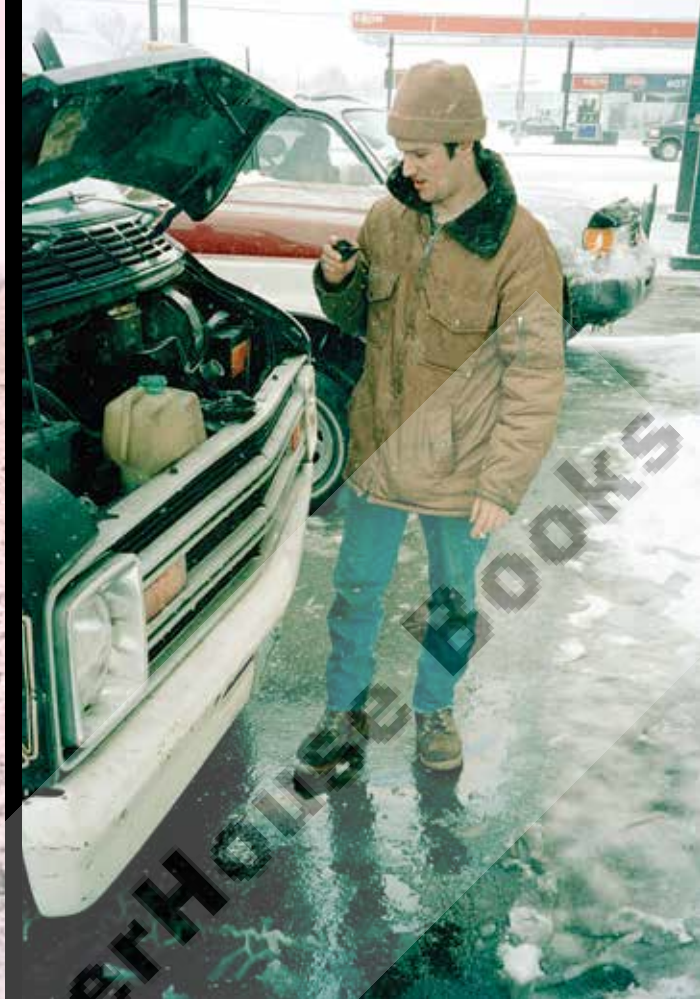
By this point we were really cold, my hands and feet were numb. We sat in the van with the engine running. The van then sputtered out and died.

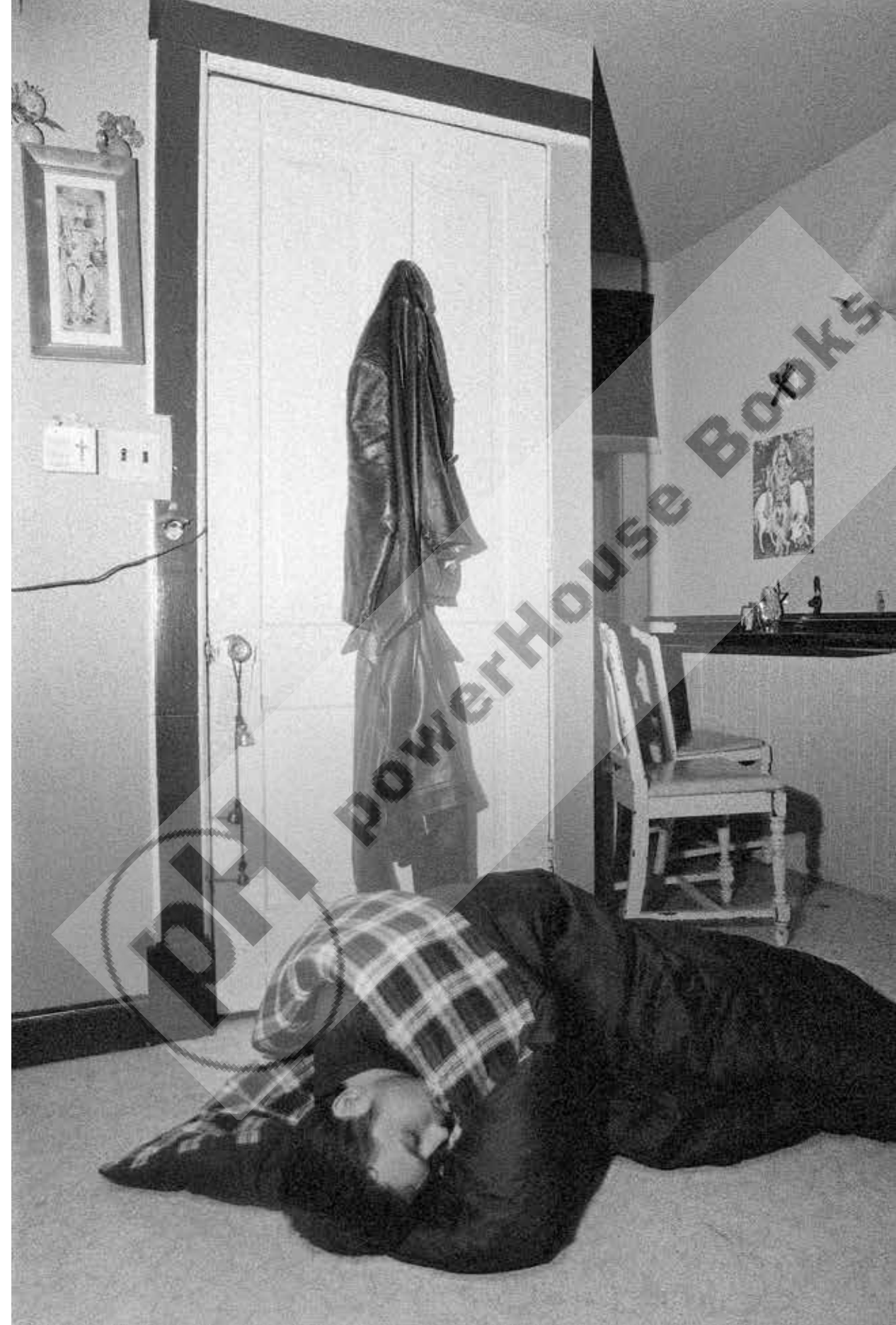
About ten minutes after this we noticed some headlights behind us, about 100 yards back through the snow. After crawling through the snow we reached a little red mustang with a cowboy dressed in Marlboro cigarette clothes behind the wheel. He opened the door and said in a drawl, "Climb in boys I barely made it this far we aint going nowhere tonight." Frozen solid we all climbed in and waited for morning. This ended the first day and night of our three-day drive to Chicago.

As the sun rose on our second day, we all watched from the inside of the car as a large hay bailer attempted to pull the van through the drift. This ended with the bailer tipping over next to the van. A second bailer drove up and had success. Having not really slept we jumped

back in the van and by a freak chance it started. The day was bright and the snow looked amazing. Being able to see the terrain now, it was lucky we had been stuck. As we drove slowly over the hills I could see huge drops on either side of the road. I was now feeling less likely to die and a little warmer, so I began taking pictures of the surreal terrain out the window. On one of my last shots a hawk flew high above the road into my viewfinder just as I was clicking the shutter.

We made it through the blizzard and out of Montana. The van kept going but did seem to have some problems, and we had to keep the heat off so it wouldn't overheat. At the end of day two we made it to a Jiffy Lube/garage somewhere in Minnesota. Sadly we got there too late and the place was closed. So we spent the night in the parking lot waiting for it to open. In the morning Isaac fixed the van and we carried on to Chicago. By the time we made it to The Empty Bottle in Chicago it was one in the morning and the band was supposed to play at ten. We unloaded quickly and MM managed to play a couple songs to a few people before the place closed.

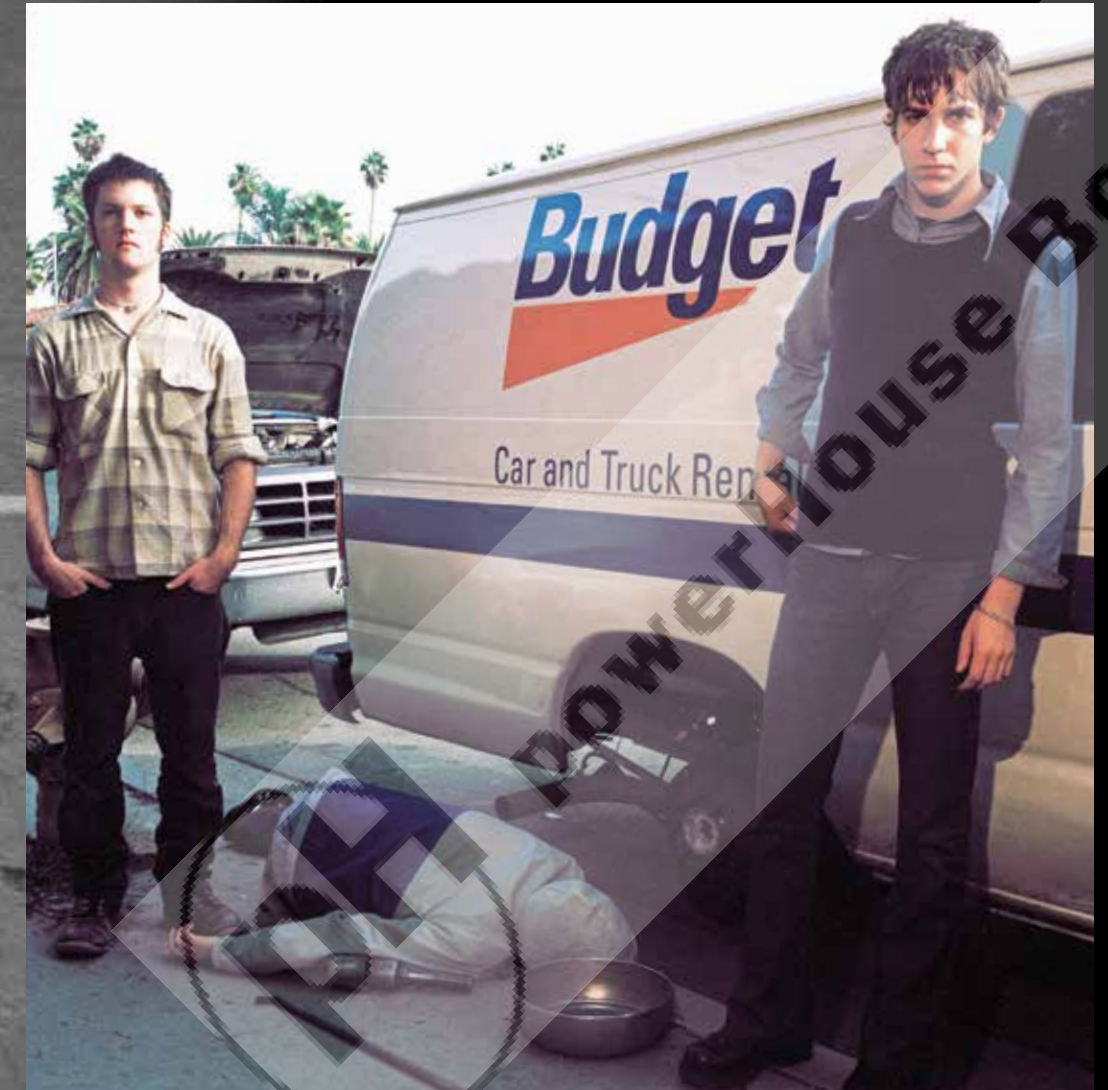






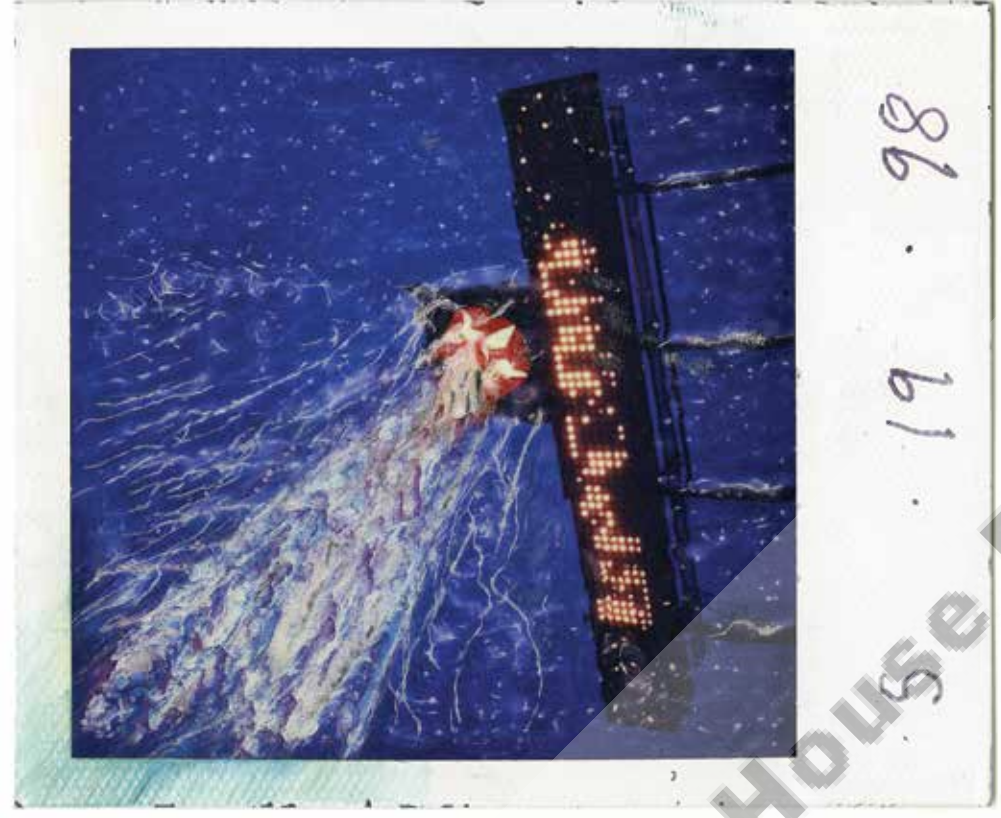
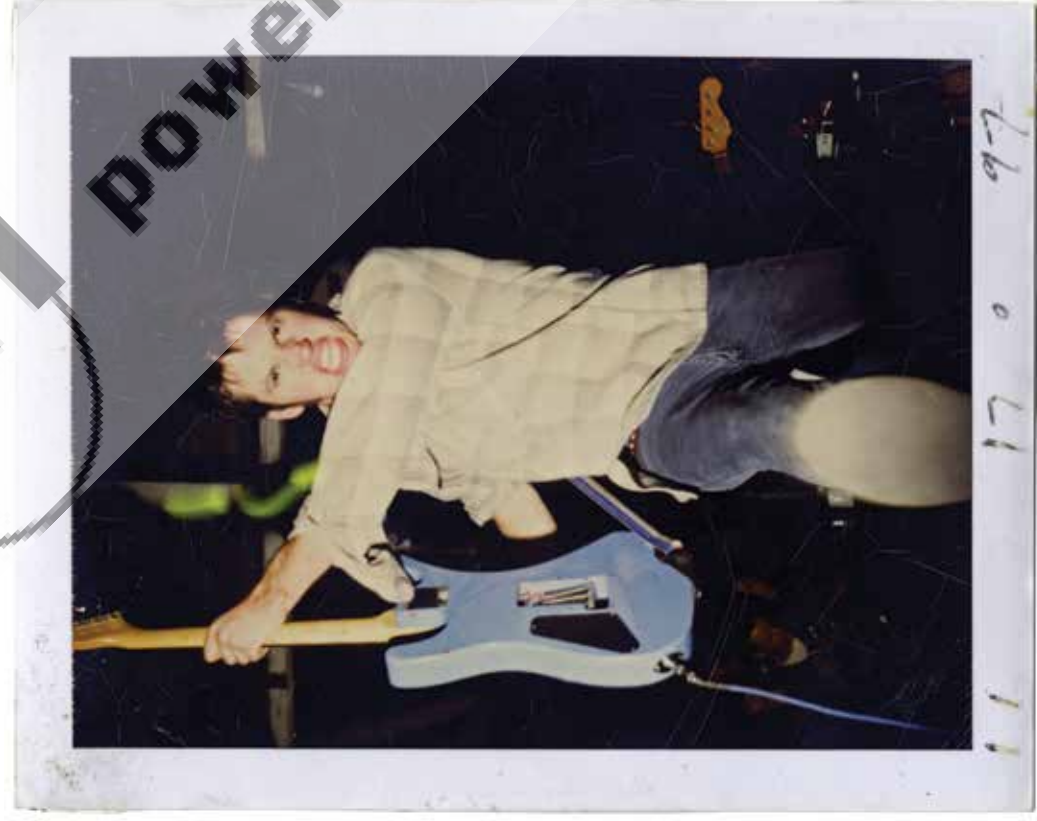






FALL 1997

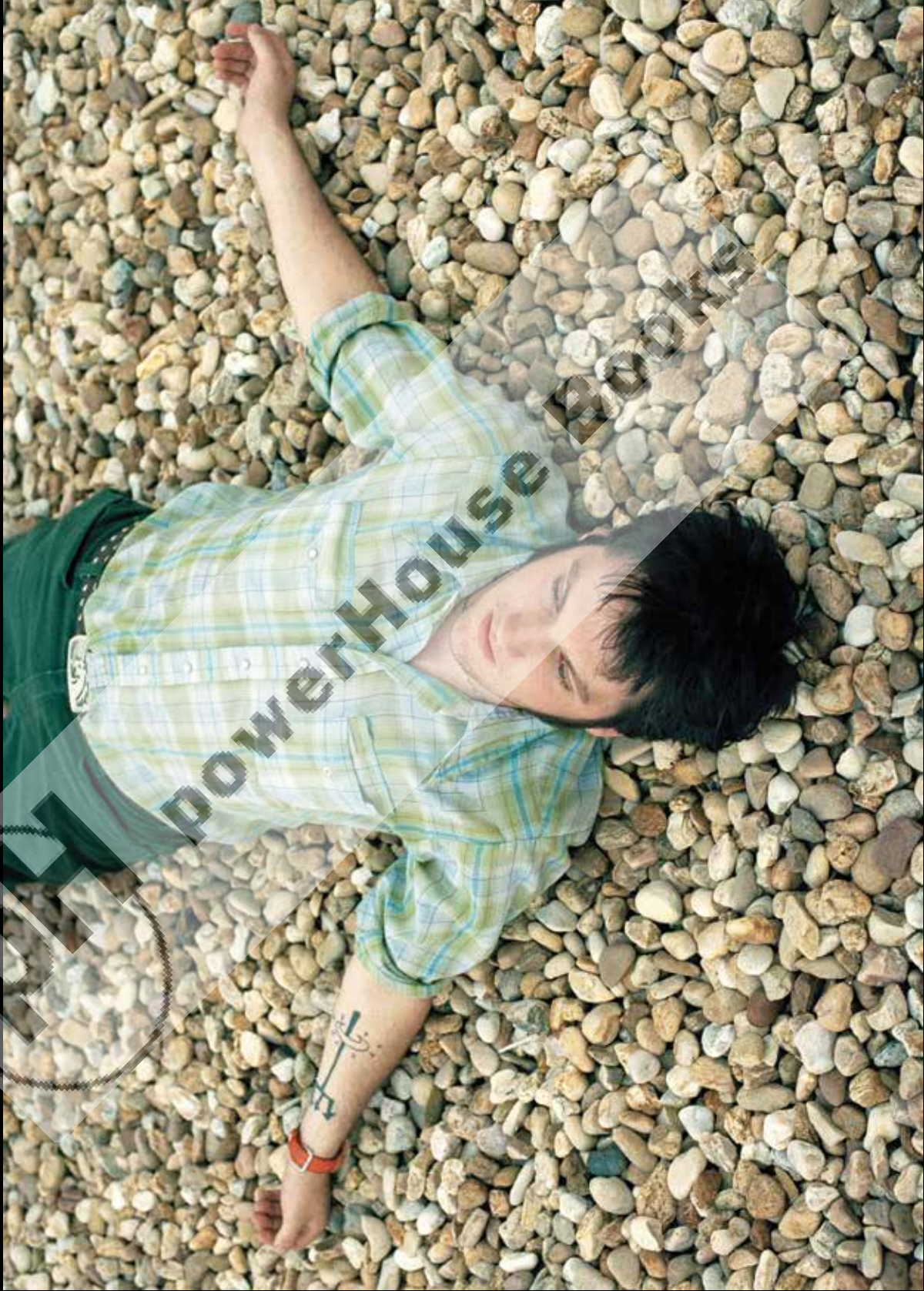
For this tour Isaac decided to rent a Budget van. If the van broke down they would just give us another one. The only slight issue with the van was it was a cargo van. No seats, and a cage separating the driver from passengers. Basically we just threw all the equipment, luggage, and merch in the back, and we slept/sat within it.



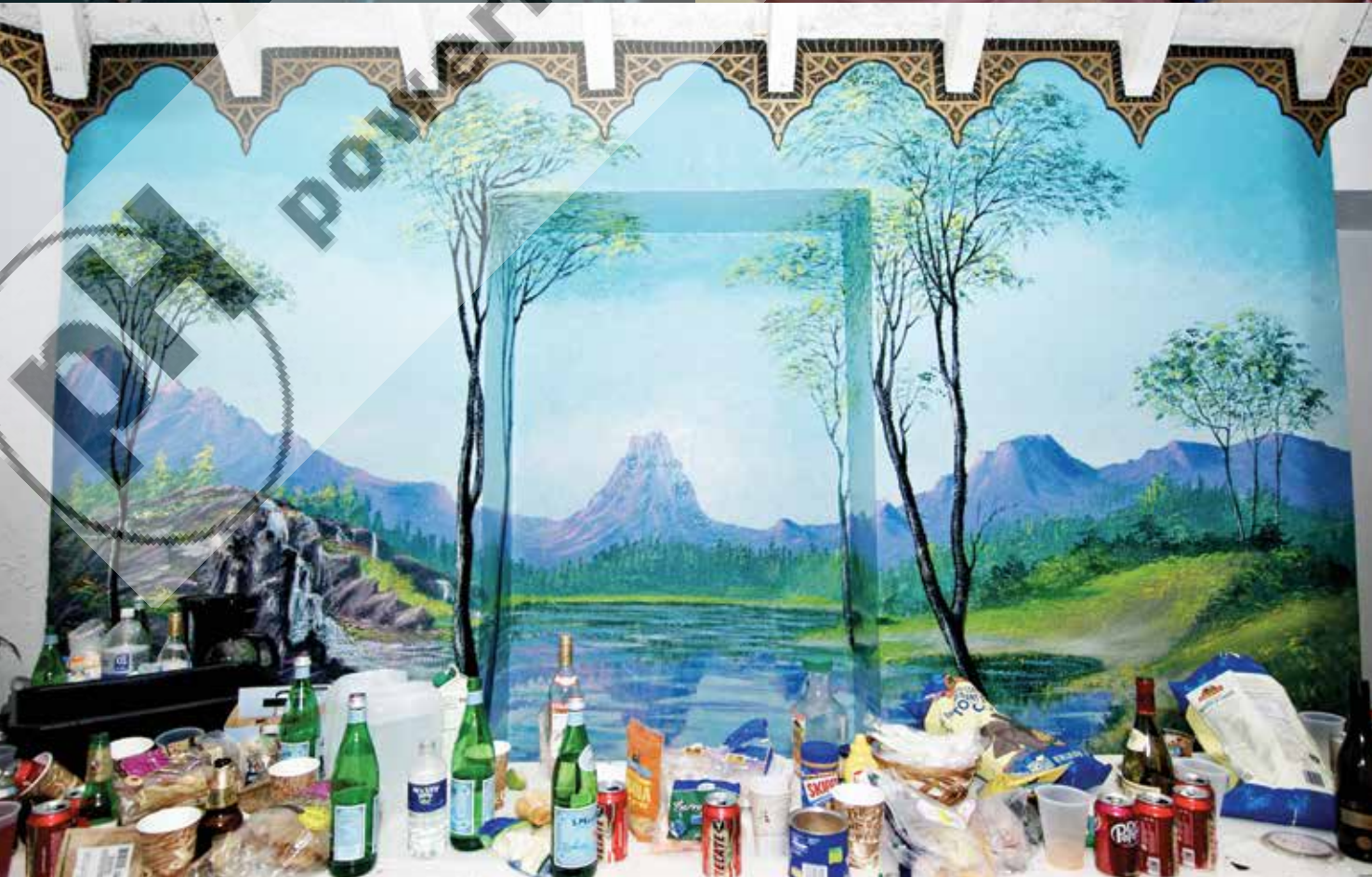


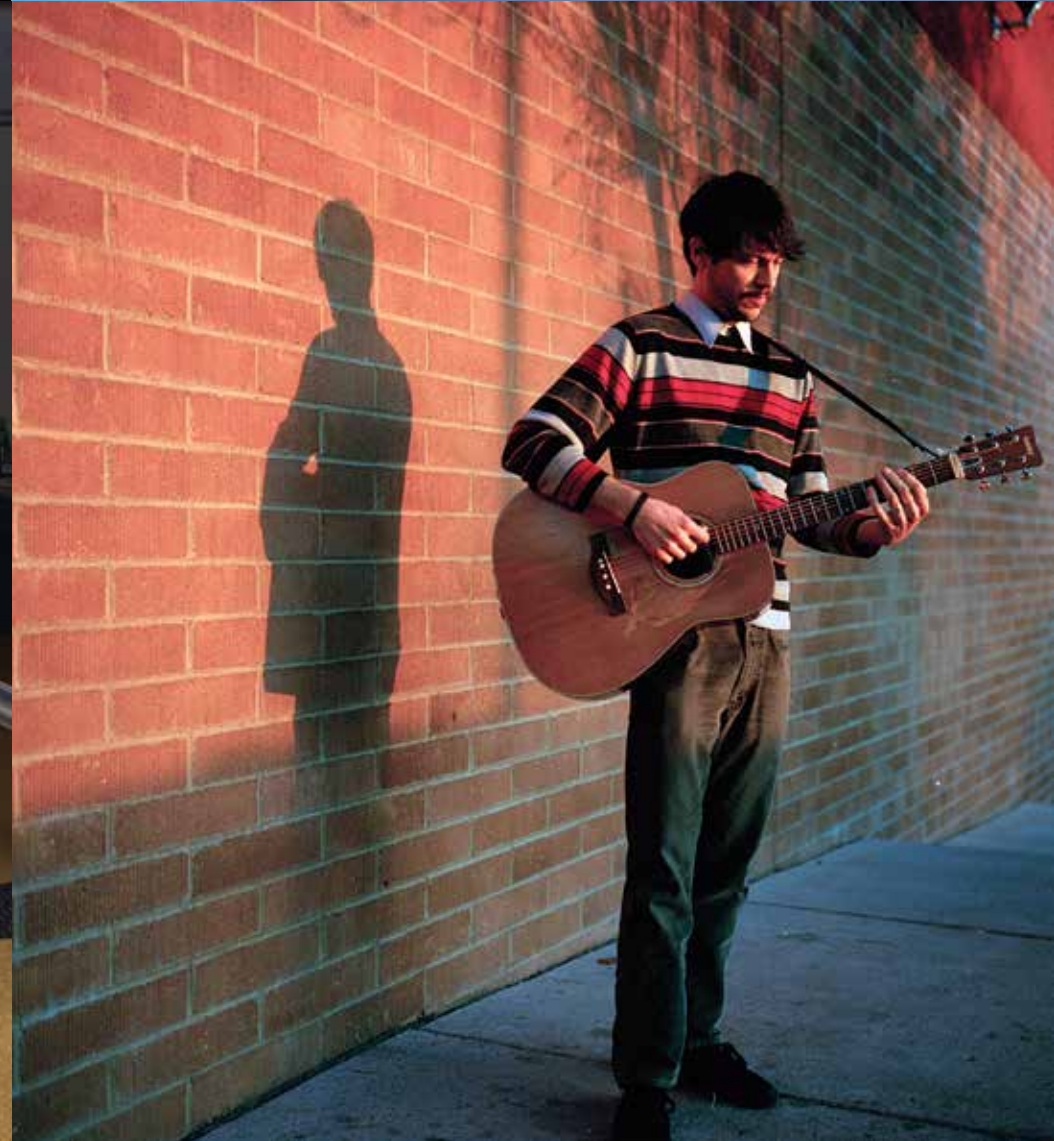
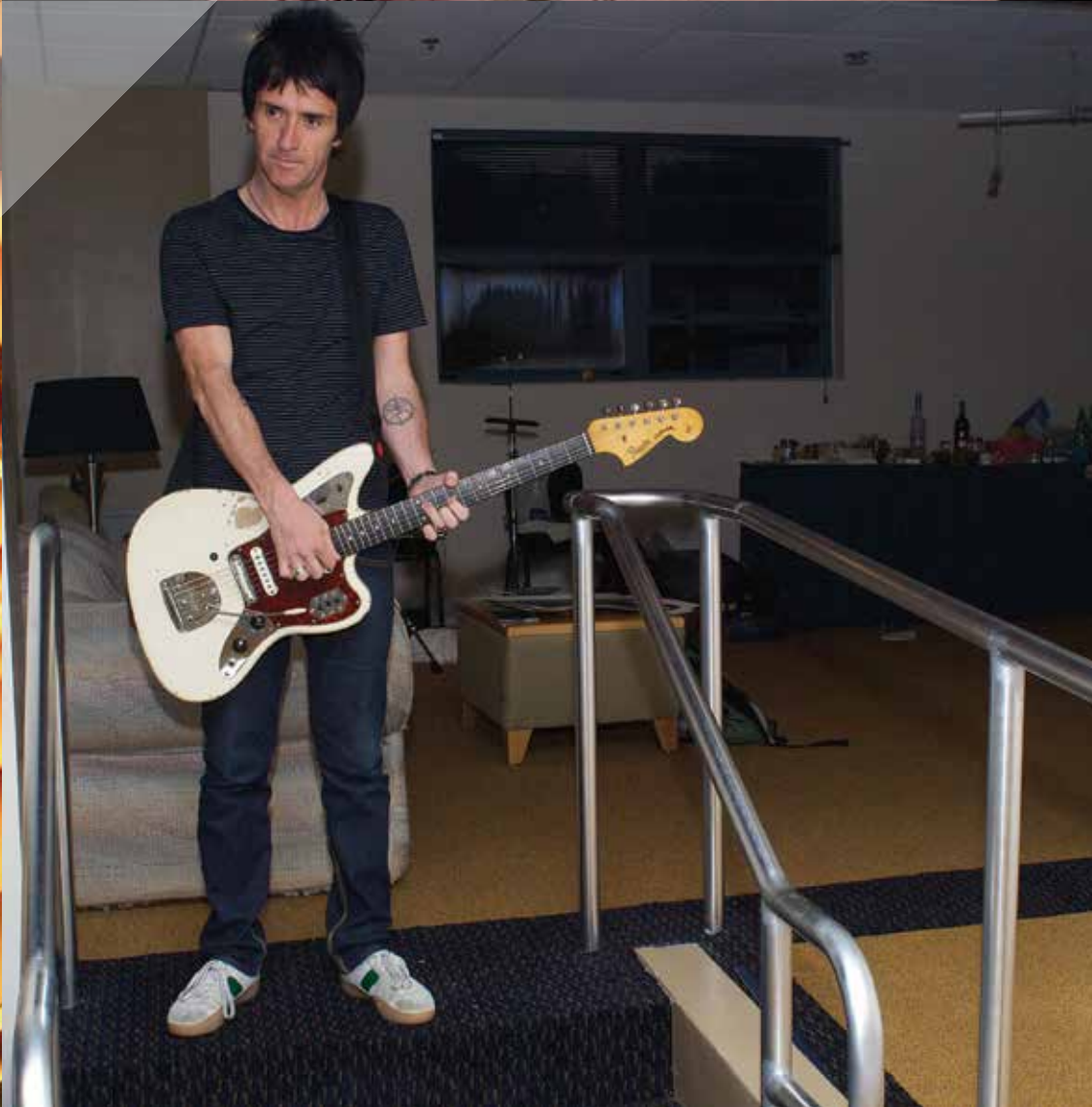
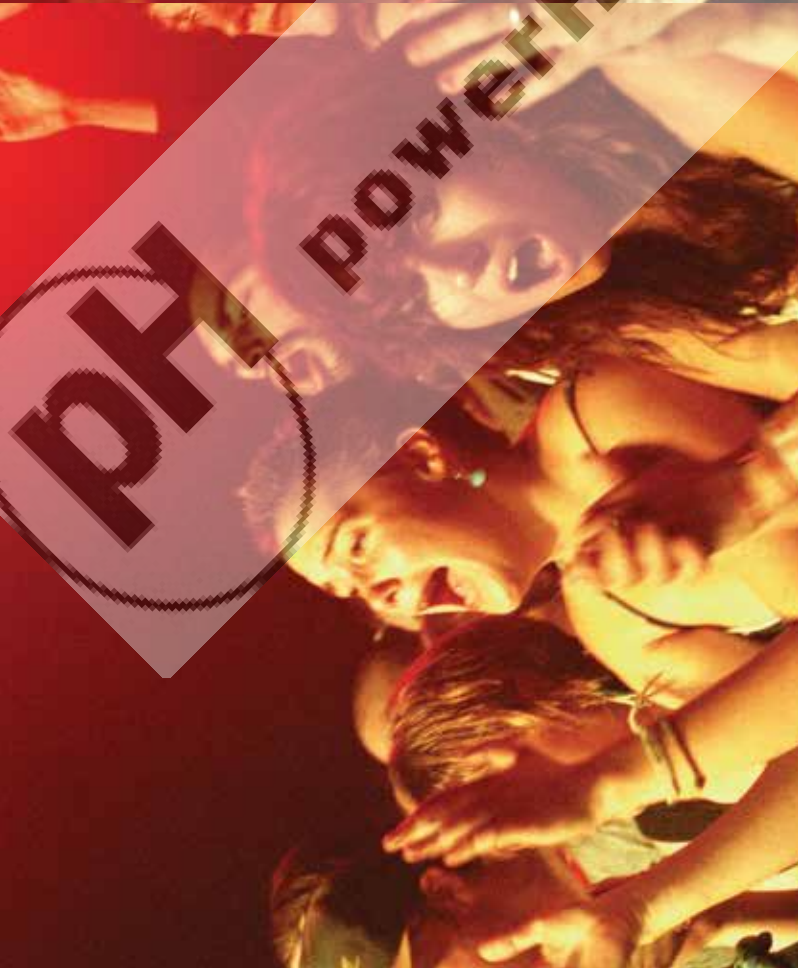












I made an offer. I made clear my dislike for the digits he told me to go somewhere far away and forget my way back or he'd make sure that "Turkey Freez" is closed on my birthday for the rest of my life, even when I'm really old when it's most important. I'm gonna stick around any way.



SSCRUM, SSCRUM, SSCRUM!!!

KISS, KISS, KISS!!!

Moms make make making tooth polishing treats for her bucktoothed baby.

KISS, KISS, KISS!!

Buddy bucktooth jumps to spell it out, jumps the gun and jump the ship in ship shape.

SCRUM, SCRUM, SCRUM!!



makee makee making

make making tooth

treats for her

d baby.

KISS, KISS!!

tooth jumps to

up, jumps the g

ship in ship



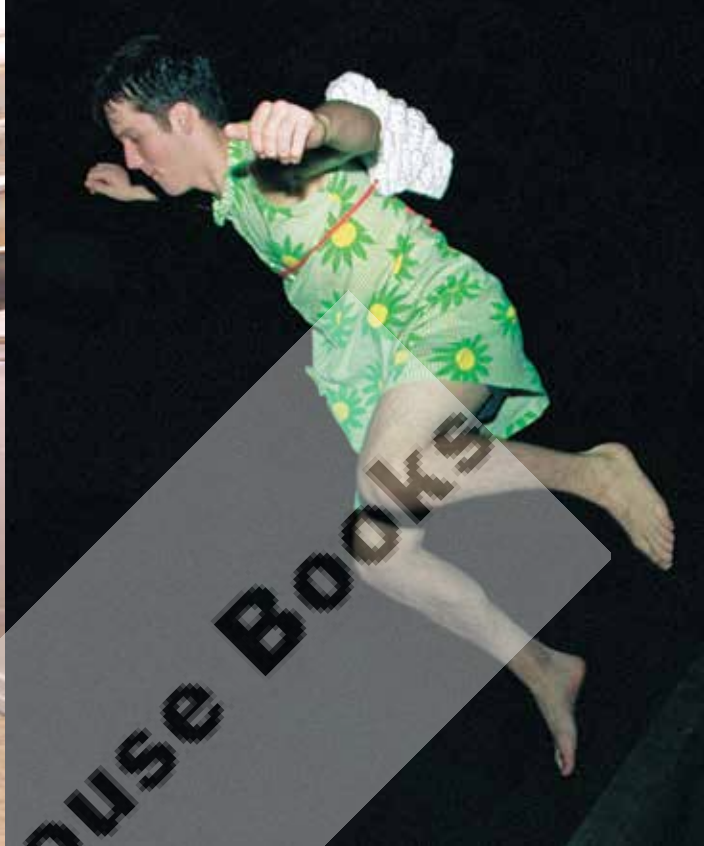
BUDDY

AND

BUCK

TOOTH

MR. FERRIEWINKLE



In 1992 I packed up my things and moved 15 hours east of my hometown to Washington, D.C. The punk music scene of D.C. inspired me.

My new home was the punk group house known as Positive Force. PF residents included activists, feminists, artists, and musicians. Everybody was doing something creative. My outlet was photography.

Soon I had a darkroom in my closet and I was developing and printing pictures from all the punk shows and protests I was witness too. Fugazi was at their height of creativity and new bands like Bikini Kill and The Nation of Ulysses played all the time.

Positive Force had a revolving door of likeminded people coming and going. One new housemate was Isaac Brock, a 16-year-old from Issaquah, Washington. Isaac struck me as very funny and super creative. The things that he would say and do made me laugh and think at the same time. We bonded over photography and our love of music. Isaac had his own great photos of bands from the Northwest and also loved the work of photographer Charles Peterson. I shared my pictures that I had shot of bands in D.C. with Isaac. He was very into them and I gave him a stack to keep. Isaac liked the blurring effect in my shots and wanted to explore this concept with me.

We talked about doing some sort of project together. I wasn't sure what he wanted to do but he started to gather outfits from thrift shops, and he also constructed sets/props out of boxes and Styrofoam. We had planned to take photos on the ground floor of the house late at night while everyone else was sleeping. Our roommate worked at a photo lab so she could get the film developed and prints made. This was great as it let us shoot as much as we wanted. We had a few of these late night photo sessions. I would set up the tripod and Isaac would direct us. The results were amazing and surreal. I loved the way these pictures looked: lots of color, motion, and strange settings.

At the time, it felt like we were taking these shots just in the name of an interesting photo. Isaac had talked about making a zine or little book. Months later

Eggtooth was finished. Isaac had created hardcopy layout pages that we took to our friend who worked at Kinko's. She made color copies and our zine was finished. I think we managed to make about ten copies or less. I look back at these photos, teamed with Isaac's writings, and still find them very interesting and hilarious. One scene in the book was of Isaac hovering over me with a carrot in his hand. The idea was that he would hit me with the carrot and the camera would capture this in a blur. After about four or five broken carrots over my head we still did not get the shot. It did not matter, what we did get was another great image. Eventually Isaac ended up back in the Northwest and I moved to another house to work for Simple Machines records. Isaac and I stayed in touch and he sent me a few tapes of his new band, Modest Mouse. The artwork was similar to *Eggtooth* and the music was inspired.

In 1996, I was in Olympia, Washington and Modest Mouse was playing a show. They were opening up for The Make-Up and Dub Narcotic. I would finally get to meet Isaac's bandmates and see him play live. The band played and I took my first photos of them. Isaac and I continued to have conversations about photo projects. I really wanted to do more with him, as his creative energy was so apparent. Somehow the idea came up of me going on the road with MM to help run things and to take pictures. We could take the ideas of *Eggtooth* across the country. Imagine the crazy photo ops we could find...

Twenty years later, I have traveled thousands of miles and shot thousands of frames of my close friend Isaac, and his band Modest Mouse. This book contains my journey documenting Modest Mouse and the creative force of Isaac.

I feel more than privileged that he chose me to share it with.

-Pat Graham

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