Tyler Haughey
CV

Born 1988, Ocean Township, NJ. Lives and works in Brooklyn, NY.

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Science, Photography & Art History, Drexel University, Philadelphia, PA

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

2020 *Tyler Haughey: New Wok,* Online Viewing Room, Sears-Peyton Gallery
2020 *Photo LA,* Sears-Peyton Gallery, Los Angeles, CA
2019 *The AIPAD Photography Show,* Solo Presentation with Sears-Peyton Gallery, New York, NY

GROUP EXHIBITIONS

2021 *Spring Selections,* Sears-Peyton Gallery, New York, NY
2020 *Winter Selections,* Sears-Peyton Gallery, New York, NY
Artists For Biden, Platform.art
2018 *High Summer*, Sears-Peyton Gallery, New York, NY
2017 *At a Languorous Pace*, Sears-Peyton Gallery, New York, NY
Critical Mass Top 50: Markers of Time, Artwork Network Gallery, Denver, CO
2016 *New Jersey State Council on the Arts Fellowship Exhibition*, Monmouth University, West Long Branch, NJ
2015 *Summer Group Show*, Sears-Peyton Gallery, New York, NY
ONWARD Compé '15 (Juried by Elinor Carucci), Project Basho, Philadelphia, PA

AWARDS & HONORS

2018 Nominee, PDN's 30: New and Emerging Photographers to Watch
2017 Flash Forward Emerging Photographer, The Magenta Foundation
2016 Critical Mass Top 50, *Photolucida*
2015 Individual Artist Fellowship, New Jersey State Council on the Arts

PUBLICATIONS

2021 "Off-Season," Gabrielle Esperdy, *Places Journal*
2020 "Photographs of Glorious Midcentury Motels in New Jersey During the Winter Months," Tora Baker, *Creative Boom*
Wired, South Jersey's Midcentury Modern Motels

2019 *Artsy*, "10 Must-See Artists at AIPAD's Photography Show"
inForma, University of Puerto Rico Architectural Journal, Issue 12, "Site Conditions"
FLOAT Magazine, Book Review
AUGUST Journal, Book Review
2018 *Phroom Magazine*, Book Review
Lenscratch
C41 Magazine (Italy)
Panthalassa Society (Spain)
Humble Arts Foundation, "32 Photobooks That Dropped Our Jaws in 2018"
Aesthetica Magazine (UK)
2017 *Lonely Planet Traveller Magazine* (UK)
Wired Magazine (Japan)
Feature Shoot
FotoRoom
2016 Humble Arts Foundation
Phroom Magazine (Italy)
American Photo
Aint-Bad Magazine
Popular Photography Magazine
British Airways High Life Magazine (UK)
ICON Magazine (Spain)
Spiegel Online (Germany)
PDN
Fast Company
Slate

COLLECTIONS

Morgan Stanley Collection, New York, NY
Fidelity Investments, Boston, MA
Philadelphia Museum of Art Library, Philadelphia, PA
SFMOMA Library, San Francisco, CA
Center for Land Use Interpretation, Los Angeles, CA

Tyler Haughey
Artist Statement

Tyler Haughey (b. 1988, Ocean Township, NJ) received a BS in Photography and Art History from Drexel University in Philadelphia. His work has been exhibited throughout the US, including recent solo presentations at *The AIPAD Photography Show* in New York in 2019 and *Photo LA* in Los Angeles in 2020. His first monograph, *Everything Is Regional*, was published in 2018 and his work has been featured and written about in numerous publications including *Slate*, *Artsy*, *Places Journa*l, *Wired*, *Der Spiegel*, *Fast Company*, and *Artnet*, among others. He has been awarded an Individual Artist Fellowship from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts, and his work is included in the collections of Morgan Stanley and Fidelity Investments.

PLACES

Off-Season

By Gabrille Esperdy

Places Journal
March 2021

Famous for beaches and boardwalks thronged with summer renters and day-trippers, the Jersey shore is an unlikely place in which to depict landscapes that are still, quiet, unpopulated. Winter is coming, and the fake palms are wrapped in plastic.

Last summer, this assignment seemed so promising. Comfortably within my writerly wheelhouse and keyed to my present circumstances, producing a text in response to the New Jersey photographs of Tyler Haughey checked all the boxes. I'd been "staying at home" on the North Jersey coast since early March, when the lockdowns started, and had just finished teaching in the stressful pivot-to-remote spring semester; and once I spent time with *Ebb Tide* and *130 Miles*, I knew I wanted to write about these photographic projects, a decision that a long and satisfying phone conversation with the photographer confirmed. Tyler and I talked about boardwalks and motels and other commercial vernacular buildings from the middle of the last century, all of which turn up in his pictures, along with Robert Venturi and Denise Scott Brown and Stephen Shore and John Margolies, all of whom influenced his pictures.

Yet for many months I struggled to write the text — this text you are reading — that I thought would come so easily. Which is to say I struggled against the combined and cumulative impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and the Black Lives Matter protests, which together produced a profound dissonance of place and time — a peculiar form of seasonal effective disorder. That's not a typo; I don't mean that I was suffering from the mood-altering ailment known as SAD, even though, no doubt like nearly everyone reading these words, bouts of anxiety and depression were (and remain) all too frequent, and the lousy coastal weather (so much rain) hasn't helped. Rather, I mean that the effects of the season, on my town and on towns up and down the shore, were completely out of whack, and had been since the shutdowns began a year ago, in March 2020. Off season was like high season; winter was like summer. This wasn't a simple reversal; it was more like a warped reflection in a funhouse mirror.

It happened slowly, as winter gave way to spring; in our town of Asbury Park, lights were turned on in the summer houses and cars were parked in driveways all week long. Population density seemed to determine the order of arrival: first came the folks from Manhattan and Brooklyn, then Hoboken and Jersey City, and finally Staten Island. Our year-round neighbors were suddenly more

present, some working from home, others furloughed. The airline pilot down the block was usually brisk and business-like as he strode by in his uniform to catch the train to Newark Liberty; grounded, he now ambled by in sweatpants, with a morning cup of coffee or an early evening beer. The local distillery, with on-site consumption suspended, was giving away house-made hand sanitizer with every curbside purchase of gin. The fishmonger, which usually operated only two days a week before Memorial Day, was now open five days, long before Easter. On weekends, locals and visitors crowded the ocean front, many in flagrant violation of the governor's Executive Order No. 104, which imposed "aggressive" social distancing measures to stop the spread of the virus. Typically, in the off-season, walking the beach and boardwalk offered a kind of glorious solitude; suddenly, it was a grim exercise in dodging the maskless. Early on, the city limited access to the beach and closed the entire mile-long boardwalk, removing the benches for good measure. When police tape proved an insufficient deterrent, the chain-link and steel safety barriers arrived. All this, while temperatures hovered in the 40s and the sun was barely visible through the clouds.

These restrictions had eased somewhat a couple months later when I started to pore over Haughey's photographs; but there seemed to be no way to reverse the mental and emotional impact of the topsy-turvy seasonal effects. Though I didn't understand it then, those effects were coloring my impressions. That's imprecise — those effects were *filtering* my impressions of his pictures, not unlike an Instagram filter that changes the mood of an uploaded image in odd and unexpected ways. The more I looked at the photo portfolios, the stranger they became, as in strangely familiar and uncanny; utterly recognizable but still somehow ineffable.

Quietude is not a quality or condition typically associated with New Jersey. The most densely settled state in America is known more for its rumble-and-roar, from the din of traffic on the massive multilane Turnpike to the assertive voices in the subdivisions and shopping malls. And when anti-sprawl activists use "Jersey" as a verb ("don't Jersey Vermont"), the perceived noise is visual as well as aural: brash billboards, big and bigger boxes, gaudy casinos, roadside structures and signage in varying states of upkeep and decay. Nonetheless, quietude — that condition of being subdued, reserved and not loud — is precisely the quality that suffuses Tyler Haughey's New Jersey photographs. This is not, to be sure, a Thoreau-in-the-woods kind of contemplativeness, though the Garden State does possess landscapes that rival Walden and Katahdin.

But Haughey has not trained his lens on the rolling hills of the Delaware Water Gap, or the forests of the Pinelands, or the cliffs of the Palisades. Now based in Brooklyn, he was born and raised on the North Jersey coast, and "down the shore" (in tri-state patois) has proven to be his abiding photographic subject, one explored along the entire 130 miles of Atlantic coastline, from Sandy Hook in the north to Cape May in the south, with a particular focus on Atlantic City and the

Wildwoods, those very different beach towns perched on barrier islands that epitomized seaside New Jersey in the mid-20th century.

Given the outsize cultural stereotypes — beaches, boardwalks, and amusement piers thronged with day-trippers and summer renters strutting in bikinis and board shorts, their ombrés and extensions in full plumage — the Jersey shore might seem an unlikely place in which to seek, and depict, landscapes that are still, quiet, unpopulated. Indeed, these pictures defy expectations, which is what makes them feel at once poetic and prosaic. Haughey is not pursuing the "decisive moment" of Henri Cartier-Bresson or the "snapshot aesthetic" of Robert Frank — though both approaches would capture the intense summertime interactions of beachgoers and their environs. Even as his photographs embrace the expected iconography of seaside resorts, from sand dunes to plastic lounge chairs to mini golf, they are hauntingly de-peopled.

To some extent this is a calendric effect: taken before the pandemic, the photographs do not show the Jersey shore of the high season between Memorial Day and Labor Day, nor even the "local summer" that extends until Columbus Day. In these photographs the atmosphere you sense is not the ocean breeze; it's a wind chill. Winter is coming, and the fake palms are wrapped in plastic. Winter is here, and the tiki umbrellas and drained swimming pools are dusted with snow. "Sorry Closed See You in the Spring" reads the sign in a plate glass window. Another sign, "CLOSED," with a steel chain securing a dirty revolving door, suggests more stinging realities, and this pre-pandemic picture feels particularly poignant given the economic toll of the coronavirus on so many seasonal seaside businesses.

The group of photographs that Haughey has titled *Ebb Tide* offers an especially nuanced exegesis of the subject. In oceanography, ebb tide is the retreat of water away from shore and towards the sea. It is almost too obvious to draw parallels between the tidal current and the seasonal flow of urban and suburban visitors to and from the beach resort. In figurative terms, ebb tide also suggests decline; but in some photographs we can detect movement in the opposite direction — *flow* as well as *ebb*. At the Golden Rail Motel in North Wildwood, we see an assortment of bulky televisions sets — the old cathode-ray-tube model — in the undercroft beside the motel office. They're the victims of obsolescence, discarded to make room for sleek flat screens; the photographic frame extends to the discarded boxes in the adjacent dumpster. Despite their stillness, then, these pictures are not static: here the flux and reflux of consumerism are as predictable as Atlantic currents.

The constancy of change is more explicit but less straightforward in the photographs of Atlantic City. In one image we see a postmodern casino from the 1980s alongside a grand old hotel from the 1920s, and, in the foreground, a cluster of wood-frame houses. Here, the contrast of old and new suggests the accidental urban scenography that has defined the "queen of resorts" ever since New Jersey voted to legalize gambling in the mid 1970s. That move that was soon followed by the

opening of Atlantic City's first casino, Resorts International, in the refurbished Haddon Hall Hotel, a beaux-arts pile constructed just before the Great Depression. In Haughey's photograph, the upper stories and crowning pavilion of that now whitewashed hotel occupy the dense middle register of a scene otherwise framed by emptiness: an overcast sky, an asphalt road, a weedy stretch of untended grass. The image can be seen as a compact collage, with the foreshortening of the camera and the carelessness of the free market combining to confound our perceptions. The patchy strip of green was, we realize, the result of bullish demolition followed by unexpected decline. The houses are a mix of so-called "taxpayers" — real estate parlance for small structures built cheaply to pay the property tax on land the owners anticipate will attract future big development — along with boarding houses that may never have seen better days. Now they are dwarfed by the casino towers. Capturing demolition, deterioration, renovation, and construction, Haughey has left it to us viewers to sort out the death and life of Atlantic City. But in two other Atlantic City pictures he is more pointed.

In a photograph taken one block south, we see another glimpse of Resorts International; here it's the Rendezvous Tower, completed in 2004 and festooned with neo-art-deco appliqués and a crowning pyramid. The pomo edifice stands in marked contrast to the two-story storefront that fills the rest of the frame. A pair of bay windows and a pronounced cornice hint at an earlier and more domestic occupation of 137 South New York Avenue; but now the bays are boarded up, and the ground floor sheathed in a discordant stone veneer. This is not, however, a derelict structure; the blue paint is fresh and the security gates look recent. The blue is vivid, almost celestial, and it was likely chosen to match the signs that hang above the entrance door like a marquee and feature female pole dancers and tell us that the place is called Dreams Atlantic City. Much like casinos, strip clubs keep the action on the inside, and the street feels desolate. On the sidewalk there's a lone white guy in jeans, sweatshirt, and work boots, slightly hunched over and carrying a plastic sack from a discount grocery. No dreaming here; just down-market reality.

The tension is even starker in a photograph taken a mile north and a stone's throw from the ocean. Here we confront the behemoth of a sleek casino looming over a ramshackle shingled cottage. Our vantage point is an empty lot adjacent to the house; the slightly oblique angle makes the scene feel off-kilter. The outline of the old gabled roof smacks, visually, into the canted molding that separates the casino's lower floors, with their stone-like cladding, from the glass-walled upper stories. It's hard to resist seeing this picture as a clash between the past and present of Atlantic City; its evocation of a continuum of persistence and novelty reminded me of the crowded scenes of Berenice Abbott's *Changing New York*; but it also calls to mind the zoning free-for-all of late 20th-century Houston.

Nonetheless, this is 21st-century Atlantic City, and the photograph is anchored by the specificity of time and place. The casino is the Revel; it was designed by the high-profile firm Arquitectonica, and its opening in 2012 was accompanied by breathless predictions that it would reignite the

resort city's failing fortunes. Just two years later, Revel declared bankruptcy, and, for almost four years, the 5.5 million-square-foot complex sat empty (it's now owned by another casino developer). Can we read the muteness of the facade in Haughey's picture as a reflection of abandonment, of bad luck? Across the street, in contrast, the old house bristles with signs of life. Stacks of wood pallets, a discarded treadmill, a tattered American flag, life preservers and old tires painted to look like life preservers — these are evidence of tenacious, albeit weary, habitation.

That's an apt way to describe how so many of us are feeling now, one year on, ragged around all the edges but determined to cling to the simple act of dwelling, of residing in some place we still recognize, despite the dissonance. Tyler Haughey's photographs may have captured the Jersey shore before COVID-19, but the pandemic has deepened and amplified their meanings. In their commitment to the mundane — to dunes and beaches and motels and AstroTurf and casinos and cottages — these images are extraordinary.

CREATIVE BOOM

Photographs of Glorious Midcentury Motels in New Jersey During the Winter Months

By Tora Baker
Creative Boom
January 27, 2020

Situated in The Wildwoods, a group of small shore towns on a five-mile-long barrier island, the postwar resorts have been captured by photographer Tyler Haughey in his series, Ebb Tide.

"They contain a trove of midcentury modern motels that make up the largest concentration of postwar resort architecture in the United States," Haughey explains. "They remain fully functioning and virtually unchanged since their original construction, in many cases over fifty years ago."

Back then, they considered the use of materials and kept things to a minimum with poured concrete and glass bringing European high modernism to America's middle class. Their design focused around the idea of a 'decorated shed', a term coined by renowned postmodern architects Robert Venturi, Denise Scott Brown and Steven Izenour in their seminal 1972 book Learning from Las Vegas.

"Each motel relies on unique architectural features and symbolic ornament to form its own identity and set itself apart from the others nearby," Haughey continues. "Infused with space-age optimism and experimentation, and utilising the iconography of faraway, exotic destinations, these structures represent the way American families vacationed during the postwar era."

The motels were built to cater for an annual influx of summer tourists that began holidaying in the area in the mid-1950s. But they then faced a steep decline in visitors during the rest of the year, leaving most with no choice but to close for the off-season.

"Normally vibrant and full of life, they sit shuttered and vacant for nine months every year, acting as empty time capsules of summers past. Their boldly coloured facades, futurist details, and exuberant neon signage sit in stark contrast against the eerie, unpopulated emptiness of the winter months, transforming these beach towns into real-life abandoned film sets."

The architects Robert Venturi, Denise Scott Brown and Steven Izenour also visited The Wildwoods to study the motels and together launched a university research studio in the hope of protecting and preserving them. Alas, since then, more than half of the 300 motels that once stood have been sold and demolished, making way for conventional, high-rise condominiums.

Haughey adds: "As a native of the Jersey Shore, I am greatly influenced by the vernacular architecture, seasonal economy, and off-season vacancy of a tourist destination. This project explores the fleeting moments that occur at places designed and known for summer recreation."

South Jersey's Mid-Century Modern Motels, in All Their Neon Glory

By Michael Hardy

Wired

January 5, 2020

From the 1950s to ’70s, hundreds of motels were built in The Wildwoods. Now, in the age of Airbnb, only half of them are still in operation.

The Wildwoods is the collective name for a cluster of small shore towns spread across a five-mile-long barrier island in southern New Jersey. The area first developed into a major summer tourism destination in the 1950s when brothers Lou and Will Morey, inspired by a visit to Miami’s South Beach, started building motels on the island. The Jersey Shore destination got another big bump in 1957 with the completion of the Garden State Parkway, which channeled an estimated 350,000 additional cars to the region every year. By 1970, more than 300 new motels had been built in The Wildwoods, many of them owned by the Moreys.

Around half of those motels are still in operation, and they’re the subject of native New Jerseyan Tyler Haughey’s series, *Ebb Tide*. Haughey grew up near Asbury Park on the northern stretch of New Jersey’s long Atlantic coast, so he’s familiar with the culture of beach towns that fill up with tourists during the summer and empty out in the winter. “I have a strong connection to that landscape, especially in the off-season when all the tourists leave,” he says. “People still live there, but a lot of these places are just kind of forgotten about.”

Although he visited The Wildwoods on a family vacation as a child, it wasn’t until he was attending college in Philadelphia that Haughey began developing a professional interest in the region. Once it caught his eye, he started making 90-minute drives to The Wildwoods to photograph the area’s kitschy, ‘50s-era motels, all of which were emblazoned with names like Isle of Capri, Monaco, and Caribbean. “Developers like the Moreys named their motels after these far-off destinations that middle-class vacationers may not have been able to reach,” Haughey says. The low-rise motels all looked fairly similar, using simple geometric forms and poured concrete construction individualized by tropical paint jobs and bright neon signs.

Many of the motels were at least superficially inspired by Miami’s Fontainebleau and Eden Roc hotels, icons of mid-century modernism. The Moreys and other Wildwoods developers democratized the mi-dcentury modern aesthetic by using inexpensive construction techniques to mass-produce motels catering to America’s booming middle class. Although mostly ignored

by architecture critics at the time, such styles began to get reappraised thanks in part to the landmark 1972 book *Learning from Las Vegas* by architects Robert Venturi, Denise Scott Brown, and Steven Izenour, who championed the "decorated shed"—a generic structure whose function is only identifiable by flashy signage.

Haughey cites *Learning from Las Vegas* as an important influence on his photography, which captures the beauty of modest coastal motels in the middle of winter. (The photographs are included in Haughey's new book *Everything Is Regional*, recently published by Aint-Bad, and will be exhibited at the Sears Peyton Gallery's booth at Photo LA from January 30 to February 2.) He chose to shoot the motels in the off-season in order to focus on the buildings themselves rather than the tourists who continue to throng the South Jersey coast every summer. Although many of the motels have been torn down and replaced by high-rise condos, the ones that remain continue to attract middle-class vacationers from upstate New Jersey and the Philadelphia suburbs, just as they have for half a century.

"There's still a huge draw to them," Haughey says. "The Wildwoods hasn't gone upscale—in the summer it still attracts a lot of blue-collar families. It's kind of great that it has managed to hold onto that identity."

Tyler Haughey: Everything is Regional

By Marissa Iamartino
Float
2019

Last time I was in New Jersey, I got in a fight with a guy in a white Pontiac at a gas station. I was with a couple friends on our way to hike (more like walk aimlessly and hitchhike) in the Poconos. Did you know New Jersey is the sole state where it is illegal to pump your own gas 24 hours a day? I promised myself I'd never stop there again.

My great-grandfather immigrated to the U.S. - specifically, to New Jersey - from Italy in 1919. He worked as a hat-maker there until he moved to Danbury, Connecticut, which was at the time, the hat-making capital of the world. According to the National Italian American Foundation's analysis of the 2000 U.S. Census, the states with the highest Italian-American populations are Rhode Island, Connecticut, and New Jersey. Since coming here, my family has lived in all three.

In "Everything is Regional", Tyler Haughey, a native of the Jersey Shore, examines remnants of a bygone era in the Wildwoods and beyond. Looking through the pictures, I feel the fuzzy tarantula of nostalgia creep into my chest cavity. The kitschy motels with pastel facades and tri-color half tone post card reproductions bring me back to a time before I existed, yet I still feel a longing for the simplicity and bravado of the mid-twentieth century. That's the interesting thing about this work, for me. It feels intensely wistful and evocative of a particular era, yet conceptually, the idea of humans congregating beside the sea is timeless. Is Everything Regional? Honestly, I'm not so sure.

Haughey's pictures of motels pull me through this book. These images in particular have a Steven Shore-esque quality, not only with their precise framing of empty streets, pools, and balconies, but also through their haunting simplicity and building-specific palettes. Geometrically, my eyes search for the tiled squares, cracks of stucco, painted parking spots, and hatching railings like a Christian searches for meaning in the Bible. Contrasting these images with the circular dots of the half tone postcards brings me to consider the intense cultural shift that happened in America between the rigidity of the 1950's, and the anarchic fluidity of the 1960's and 70's. I am especially drawn to the image of the 'Singapore Motel' - with it's intense white lines, flurries of falling snow, gleaming white elephant at the edge of a dirty pool, and the sublime fury of waves crashing in the background; I just can't look away. It's eeriness, preciousness, and peculiarities refuse to let my eyes escape the borders of the frame. I would hang that picture in my home, just so I could look at it every day.

In ruminating on coastal areas, Tyler Haughey's work forces me to think about how, regardless of time and space, seaside communities across the globe happen to have similar architectural characteristics. While visiting my grandfather on the Adriatic coasts of Mezzogiorno as a child, I specifically recall the pastel-colored shacks (we refer to them as 'lidos') and rows of colorful umbrellas that embellish every spiaggia. My parents used to drive my brothers and me down to Ocean City, Maryland in the 90's, where the east coast motels with post-war architecture beaconed their neon signs outwards towards the Atlantic. Ocean City is likely a mirror

community to Wildwood; a space past it's prime, desperately clinging to the tethers of it's former title as a Vacation Destination. In Cape Cod, Miami, San Diego, Ibiza, Havana, Rabat, Cancun, Naples, Bali – the beach-side architecture uses white, yellow, pink, and teal as color signifiers for fun, sun, and care-free living. I am no anthropologist, but is this some sort of human construct that we have created, to warn others of our "vacation mode"? Are we like poisonous red berries or deadly tree frogs, screaming our intentions out into the universe?

"Everything is Regional", despite its nod to global human tendencies, is undoubtedly, distinctly American. I went to Las Vegas last May, with my dad, actually – not the typical 'bachelorette party' experience – and his direct quote, giggling as we walked into The Venetian was, "Well Missy, we have now upgraded from stingy to seedy." What other nation in the world would unearth a sense of pride in directly, cheaply reconstructing the classical architecture of other countries? Someone was clearly thinking: "We have it too good here to ever leave, right – so why not build the stuff on our own sacred land?" Even back in their heyday, I wonder if the glaring neon of "the Caribbean" and the "Isle of Capri Motel" injected wonder into the hearts of American tourists. As I look at the post-cards Tyler Haughey chose to reproduce, I see a direct critique of historical, white America: an unknowingly exploitative community that thrived on constructing falsified, idyllic realities, and in this mode, these postcards function as a critique of capitalism and the machismo. It is only now, decades later and in the internet age, that young people are dissecting the gross injustices that the United States of America has inflicted on its own people. I am a young woman, twenty-five years old, in thousands of dollars of debt for wanting to get an education, and the promises of "equal pay" and "retirement" are nowhere in sight for my future. No wonder home-run businesses like HipCamp and AirBnB are destroying these seaside motels. People my age can't afford anything else.

In the words of Adam Giles Ryan, who wrote the introduction to this work: "In the broadest sense, these pictures are about the lengths to which Americans will go to assure themselves that they are indeed having a good time." If you plan to look at "Everything is Regional", I highly suggest that you take the time to read this introduction. It is so well done and fully thought out, that it made writing this review a daunting task. Through portraiture, still lives, architectural images, and the postcard reproductions, Tyler Haughey's photographs manage to acknowledge our country's disturbing, historical obsession with exoticism, but also, point a finger at the United States' peculiar need to separate life from leisure.

In the wake of our current political climate, as I watch immigrant families be grossly mistreated, I cant help but think about my own great-grandfather's journey here. He slipped into the U.S. just before the 1924 Immigration Act, a federal law that severely restricted immigrants from Southern and Eastern Europe, and completely denied Asian immigrants from entering the country. He came here one year before Sacco & Vanzetti supposedly committed that infamous robbery in Braintree, Massachusetts. After Sacco's wrongful conviction and execution, his ashes were eventually returned to his birthplace in Torremaggiore, Apulia – just an hour by car from the town in Molise where my great-grandfather was born. And lastly, like so many people, my great-grandfather's name was butchered on Ellis Island. I now proudly carry that butchered name with me.

Because of Tyler Haughey (and my friend Caiti Borruso) I think I will stop in New Jersey again. Perhaps those neon signs boasting the names of far-away places have sometime, somewhere, brought someone a tiny sense of comfort. Maybe a stranger in a strange land saw the words "Isle of Capri Motel" glowing in atomic number 10, and it brought them home, just for a second. After all, I am realizing that most of us are probably here, because someone sharing our own DNA was lured by the idea of the American Dream. Maybe that phrase is on

a neon sign somewhere – a beachside, collapsible façade in white, yellow, pink, and teal. Who needs red, white, and blue when you're looking at the ocean, anyways?

From the artist:
The title, taken from a poem by former US Poet Laureate Robert Pinsky about the area of New Jersey where both he and Haughey grew up, speaks to the vernacular interest and deep connection to place that the subject matter holds. The son of a union sign painter, Haughey's interest in roadside architecture and signage began at an early age, and as a native of the Jersey Shore, he is greatly influenced by the seasonal economy and off-season vacancy of a tourist destination.

Though many of the locales depicted were photographed during the unpopulated emptiness of the winter months and are devoid of people, the images exude a human presence from the not-so-distant past; people are present through their absence. Haughey draws inspiration from an array of artists that have used this landscape as the basis of some of their most important work, such as the writer John McPhee, architect Andrew Geller, and photographers Gregory Conniff and George Tice. His project Ebb Tide, which takes the midcentury modern motels of The Wildwoods as its subject, acts as a nucleus to Everything Is Regional, and is further discussed and contextualized by Adam Giles Ryan, Assistant Curator of Photography at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, in the introduction to the book.

Tyler Haughey (b. 1988, Ocean Township, NJ) received a Bachelor of Science in Photography and Art History from Drexel University in Philadelphia, PA. He was awarded an Individual Artist Fellowship from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts in 2015, was chosen as one of Photolucida's Critical Mass Top 50 in 2016, and was selected as a Flash Forward Emerging Photographer by The Magenta Foundation in 2017. His work has been featured in such publications as Slate, PDN, Lonely Planet, American Photo, Spiegel Online (Germany), and Wired Magazine (Japan), and is included in the Morgan Stanley Collection. He is represented by Sears-Peyton Gallery in New York and Los Angeles. He lives and works in Brooklyn, NY.

PHROOM

Everything is Regional // Tyler Haughey

By Christian Michael Filardo
Phroom Magazine, Book Review
2018

I don't know much about New Jersey. I've driven around, past, and through it. Like most, my understanding of the state is clouded by pop culture and over generalization. The Boss, the mob, Trenton makes the world takes, Jersey Shore. I know as a state it's green and often treated like the ugly sibling of New York. It's probably safe to say that the state of New Jersey has a vulnerable identity often misinterpreted by outsiders. In "Everything is Regional" by Tyler Haughey we explore motels, coastal enclaves, and parts of New Jersey that have not been frequented in mass for a long time. We see the decadence of American tourism and the subsequent abandonment of a once fantasized locale for more idyllic destinations.

One of the first things that I notice about the motels in Haughey's monograph is that they are often named, themed, or punctuated by the exoticism of another place. Malibu Motel, Caprice Motel, Caribbean Motel, Waikiki Ocean Front Inn. The irony is obvious, coastal beach towns attempting to create an identity through the fascination of another world. Trying to build a dream based around another dream. It's a model that only works for so long, why choose the fake when you could have the real thing? It's daunting to think about. How a once thriving industry could become so quiet, isolated, abandoned.

While it's no mystery that east coast winters are nothing far from treacherous, the summers can be whimsical. Droves of people are known to hit the boardwalks and find escape in swim trunks, alcohol, and a limited annual sunshine regiment. Thus, I find Haughey's images more haunting than I usually would. Besides a few portraits the human presence is largely absent from the architectural oddities we find in Everything Is Regional. Sprinkled amongst motel images Haughey has included scans of halftoned vernacular postcards from the regions' motel heyday. Who basks in the warm glow of a motel's neon sign? Does anyone even eat continental breakfast anymore? How many waffle irons did we lose?

Fake palm trees missing their fronds are omnipresent. It's safe to say that people who created a lot of these motels were California Dreaming. Flamboyant paint jobs counteract the blinding drab white eastern sky. When I look at these images I can't help but feel like saying, "this is America". What we are looking at is the failure of capitalism in picture form. This infrastructure was created knowing that one day it would surely be outmoded. This is what makes these images distinctly different from motel photographs of the west. These motels were created without the dream of

western expansion. They were perhaps aware of their certain failure but chose to exist for a moment we can only look back on with great nostalgia.

There is a very specific beauty here. Haughey's images of Barnegat Light, New Jersey particularly strike me. I've never been but I'd like to go there. Create new memories in a place that many including myself haven't taken the time to know. Haughey's depiction of New Jersey is one of sadness, fondness, a gentle look at a place that he loves and cares for greatly. While I wasn't sure how I would ultimately feel about Everything Is Regional I'm glad I took the time to know the northeastern coast a little bit better through the eyes of talented photographer trying to preserve and document the structures of a vanishing industry.

LENSCRATCH
FINE ART PHOTOGRAPHY DAILY

Tyler Haughey: The States Project: New Jersey

By Kimberly Willham
Lenscratch
November 30, 2018

The photos in Tyler Haughey's series *Ebb Tide* capture the classic motels of the New Jersey shore in their 1950s candy-colored glory. His crisp formalism melds perfectly with the "modern" style of the structures and captures their spare winter dormancy. The series also includes close ups of old postcards depicting tourists enjoying the pleasures of the shore. The contrast between these two sets of images conjures thoughts of the slow demise of such quaint seaside retreats. A monograph of this work, *Everything Is Regional*, was published by Aint-Bad this Summer.

Ebb Tide

The Wildwoods, a group of small shore towns situated on a five-mile-long barrier island along the southern New Jersey coastline, are home to one of the most important architectural collections of the 20th century. They contain a trove of midcentury modern motels that make up the largest concentration of postwar resort architecture in the United States. They remain fully functioning and virtually unchanged since their original construction, in many cases over fifty years ago.

Adopting a spare aesthetic and using contemporary materials such as poured concrete and glass, the motels brought European high modernism to America's middle class. Applying the idea of the "decorated shed", a term coined by renowned postmodern architects Robert Venturi, Denise Scott Brown and Steve Izenour in their seminal 1972 book Learning from Las Vegas,each motel relies on unique architectural features and symbolic ornament to form its own identity and set itself apart from the others nearby. Infused with space-age optimism and experimentation, and utilizing the iconography of faraway, exotic destinations, these structures represent the way American families vacationed during the postwar era.

Built to cater to the annual influx of summer tourists that began vacationing in the area in the mid-1950s, the motels have always faced a steep decline in visitors during the rest of the year, leaving most with no choice but to close for the off-season. Normally vibrant and full of life, they sit shuttered and vacant for nine months every year, acting as unoccupied time capsules of summers past. Their boldly colored facades, futurist details, and exuberant neon signage sit in stark contrast against the eerie, unpopulated emptiness of the winter months, transforming these beach towns into real life abandoned film sets.

In the late 1990s, Venturi, Scott Brown and Izenour visited The Wildwoods to study the motels. During this time, Izenour spearheaded a multi-university research studio, aptly titled Learning from The Wildwoods, which documented the buildings in hopes of protecting and preserving them. Since then, however, more than half of the 300 motels that once stood have been sold and demolished, making way for conventional, high-rise condominiums. The halftone compositions, which are sourced from archival motel-issued postcards of The Wildwoods, act as a way to consider the life and memory of the places depicted, all of which are no longer standing. Even in the constructed, idealized world of a postcard, the subject's disillusionment and uncertainty are present, juxtaposed against the inherent joyfulness of summer vacation that the initial compositions seek to portray.

As a native of the Jersey Shore, I am greatly influenced by the vernacular architecture, seasonal economy, and off-season vacancy of a tourist destination. This project explores the fleeting moments that occur at places designed and known for summer recreation.

Interview

Kimberly Witham: It is often said that "familiarity breeds contempt." In your case, this does not appear to be true. Growing up in Ocean Township, did you appreciate the beauty of the Hotels and Motels you now photograph or did this realization come with the benefit of retrospect?

Tyler Haughey: I've always been innately drawn to the vernacular architecture of the state's coast, however the area of the Jersey Shore that I'm from does not have many motels along the beach – it's nearly all cookie-cutter, gigantic mansions and high-rise condominiums. I would spend a lot of weekends at my grandparents' house in Barnegat Light, which is halfway between Asbury Park, where I grew up, and The Wildwoods, where the motels are. Barnegat Light is a very small, quiet beach town, and visiting it as a kid was like traveling back in time: it felt totally different than the beach towns where I lived, and had such a specific sense of place. When I first visited The Wildwoods I immediately had that same reaction, as if I'd happened upon a time capsule from decades earlier, and that feeling was a major reason for my attraction to the area. I loved how all of the motels were built almost identically, using many of the same structural and design elements; but set themselves apart from each other with their different color schemes, iconography, and signage. When I started doing research about them, their actual history enhanced my interest even further.

KW: In stark contrast to the old postcards you have reproduced, you made a conscious decision to create photographs devoid of people. Can you talk a bit more about that choice?

TH: Shooting the motels during the winter months came from a desire to strip away any distractions and depict them in a more focused way that best described their individual identities.

It was also a way of exploring what they look like during the other nine months of the year, when the tourists have gone home. I felt that these places were like real-life abandoned film sets—vacant, but still suggesting a tangible recent history.

Choosing to photograph them during this time of year also arises out of my interest in and experience with the off-season of a tourist destination. Growing up at the Jersey Shore, the post-summer months—when the tourists have left and the area becomes quiet and peaceful again—are always what you look forward to, and that is something I was thinking about while making this work.

The halftone compositions, which are sourced from archival motel-issued postcards of The Wildwoods, act as a way to consider the life and memory of the places depicted (most of which are no longer standing) and bring a personal presence to an otherwise humanless body of work.

KW: You recently published a book of your photographs – tell us about it!

TH: I did! My first photobook, *Everything Is Regional*, was published by Aint-Bad and released in June of 2018. It examines the built environment of northeastern coastal towns and explores how we use, interact with, and remember places designed and known for summer recreation. It combines photographs that I've taken since 2010, examining the threads that run through my work, but takes my project *Ebb Tide* (which is featured here) as its nucleus. It features a great introduction by by Adam Giles Ryan, former Assistant Curator of Photography at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (and fellow New Jerseyan!). You can read more about the book here.

C 41®

The Particular and Nostalgic Landscapes of Tyler Haughey

C14

November 28, 2018

Tyler Haughey (b. 1988, Ocean Township, NJ) received a Bachelor of Science in Photography and Art History from Drexel University in Philadelphia, PA. He was awarded an Individual Artist Fellowship from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts in 2015, was chosen as one of Photolucida's Critical Mass Top 50 in 2016, and was selected as a Flash Forward Emerging Photographer by The Magenta Foundation in 2017. Recent exhibitions include At A Languorous Pace at Sears-Peyton Gallery, New York, NY; The NJSCA Fellowship Exhibition at Monmouth University, West Long Branch, NJ; and Project Basho's ONWARD Compé 2015, Philadelphia, PA, which was juried by Elinor Carucci. His work has been featured in such publications as PDN, Slate, Popular Photography, Lonely Planet, American Photo, Fast Company, Spiegel Online (Germany), and Wired Magazine (Japan). He lives and works in Brooklyn, NY.

About 'Everything Is Regional':

The title, taken from a poem by former US Poet Laureate Robert Pinsky about the area of New Jersey where both he and Haughey grew up, speaks to the vernacular interest and deep connection to place that the subject matter holds. The son of a union sign painter, Haughey's interest in roadside architecture and signage began at an early age, and as a native of the Jersey Shore, he is greatly influenced by the seasonal economy and off-season vacancy of a tourist destination.

Though many of the locales depicted were photographed during the unpopulated emptiness of the winter months and are devoid of people, the images exude a human presence from the not-so-distant past; people are present through their absence. Haughey draws inspiration from an array of artists that have used this landscape as the basis of some of their most important work, such as the writer John McPhee, architect Andrew Geller, and photographers Gregory Conniff and George Tice. His project Ebb Tide, which takes the midcentury modern motels of The Wildwoods as its subject, acts as a nucleus to Everything Is Regional, and is further discussed and contextualized by Adam Giles Ryan, Assistant Curator of Photography at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, in the introduction to the book.

FotoRoom

Ebb Tide – Tyler Haughey Shoots Jersey Shore's 1950s Resorts, During the Off Season

FotoRoom
2017

Worldwide, the words Jersey Shore have become synonymous with bulky guys and busty girls partying hard and shaming themselves in so many different ways (thank you, MTV). For the non-American, Jersey Shore is actually the common name used for the coast of the US State of New Jersey, a popular summer destination since the 1950s, when many new resorts were constructed to host the influx of tourists. American photographer Tyler Haughey's beautiful series *Ebb Tide* captures the unique architecture and mood of these resorts during the off season, when the tourists are gone and the motels sprinkled with snow.

Hello Tyler, thank you for this interview. *Ebb Tide* is a series of photos of resort motels found along the southern New Jersey coastline. What is special about these motels?
The motels are all located on a small five-mile-long barrier island in New Jersey, and make up the largest concentration of postwar resort architecture in the United States. These structures are some of the finest examples of midcentury European architectural design being brought down to an everyman level, creating a sort of regional modernism. What is so special about these 50+ year old places is not only that so little has changed about them since their original construction, but that they are also still functioning at a high level, with hundreds of thousands of people visiting the area and staying at the motels every summer.

You seem to have made most of the pictures in fall/winter, and anyway not during tourist season.
Shooting the motels during the winter months came from a desire to strip away any distractions and depict them in a more focused way that best described their individual identities. It was also a way of exploring what they look like during the other nine months of the year, when the tourists have gone home. I felt that these places were like real-life abandoned film sets—vacant, but still suggesting a tangible recent history.

Choosing to photograph them during this time of year also arises out of my interest in and experience with the off-season of a tourist destination. Growing up on New Jersey's coast, the post-summer months—when the tourists have left and the area becomes quiet and peaceful again—are always what you look forward to, and that is something I was thinking about while making this work.

What inspired *Ebb Tide*? What resonated with you about these resorts that you decided to make them the subject of your project?

I grew up less than a mile from the beach just outside of Asbury Park, New Jersey, which is 100 miles north of The Wildwoods; so I've always been innately drawn to the vernacular architecture of the state's coast. I would also spend a lot of weekends at my grandparents' beach house in Barnegat Light, which is halfway between Asbury Park, where I grew up, and The Wildwoods, where the motels are. Barnegat Light is a very small, quiet beach town, and visiting it as a kid was like traveling back in time: it felt totally different than the beach towns from where I lived, and had such a specific sense of place. Along the coast back home I was used to seeing these ultra-modern, gigantic mansions, while the homes you'd see in Barnegat Light were modest, with beach gravel driveways and cedar shingles. It felt frozen in time, like nothing there had changed in the last 100 years.

When I first visited The Wildwoods I immediately had that same reaction, as if I'd happened upon a time capsule from decades earlier, and that feeling was a major reason for my attraction to the area. I loved how all of the motels were built almost identically, using many of the same structural and design elements; but set themselves apart from each other with their different color schemes, iconography, and signage. When I started doing research about them, their actual history enhanced my interest even further.

Did you have any specific references or sources of inspiration in mind while working on *Ebb Tide*?

My father was a union sign painter when I was young. I remember working with him on certain projects in our basement at home, so I'm sure that's where my interest in signage and roadside architecture stems from. The research and writings of Robert Venturi, Denise Scott Brown and Steve Izenour, who actually spent a good amount of time in The Wildwoods themselves, were also a major reference point for me while making this work. The writer John McPhee's book on this area of the state, *The Pine Barrens*. The postwar beach houses built by architect Andrew Geller along the Northeast seaboard. Andrea Robbins & Max Becher's book *The Transportation of Place*.

What have been the main influences on your photography?

George Tice's dedication to and tireless exploration of a specific place (which also happens to be New Jersey). The objective approach of the 19th century French photographers from the Missions Heliographiques, specifically Edouard Baldus.

Who are some of your favorite contemporary photographers?

Bevan Davies, Henry Wessel, Grant Mudford, Martin Parr, Thomas Struth. Adam Cade, Misha Petrov and Roger Grasas are doing really interesting projects right now. Many of the American color photographers from the 1970s that are still working today: Joel Meyerowitz, Stephen Shore, John Pfahl, Joel Sternfeld.

feature shoot

Wistful Photos Of The Wildwood Motels On The Off-Season

By Ellyn Kail
Feature Shoot
March 2, 2017

Photographer Tyler Haughey compares visiting the motels of Wildwood, New Jersey on the off-season to wandering onto a film set after the cast and crew has departed. For nine months of the year, the lights are switched off, the windows are shuttered, and the doors are locked.

The now-iconic doo-wop motels of Wildwood, North Wildwood, and Wildwood Crest popped up along the New Jersey coast in the mid-20th century, when post-war American families could hop in their cars and escape to someplace magical.

In the 1950s and 1960s, more than 300 family-run motels were erected in the area, most with a classic and inexpensive blueprint consisting of a U or L-shaped building centered around a swimming pool.

Many motels promised color televisions, and each one was unique in its decor. Some were meant to reflect the experience of glamorous Caribbean destinations, complete with plastic palm trees; others took inspiration from the Space Age and transported visitors into the future.

Haughey himself grew up on the Jersey Shore; he remembers the annual cycle of tourists who came to see the beach in the summer and left once more in the fall. Still, he didn't encounter The Wildwoods himself until he was an adult, passing through by car on a chilly February day.

Ebb Tide is the artist's ode to the motels after everyone else has left them behind for the year. While their former inhabitants are busy with the hum and drum of their daily lives, the buildings themselves still exist somehow in the world of fantasies and dreams. There are no people here, but perhaps as the snow falls outside, we can imagine still the pitter-patter of little feet rushing to the pool.

Since the 1980s, motels around the country have given way to chain hotels and high-rise apartments. With the turn of the 21st century, about 50 Wildwood motels were razed to the ground. These days, only half of the original buildings remain.

Many hours of research inform Haughey's photographs of this tiny stretch of American history. Despite it all, he doesn't lament the losses the place has suffered in recent years; instead, he holds fast to what remains. These motels have survived fifty bitter winters; surely they can make it through one more.

The artist plans on publishing *Ebb Tide* as a book. Follow him on Instagram for more.

PDN PHOTO OF THE DAY

A Portrait of the Empty Jersey Shore

PDN

September 5, 2016

The title of Tyler Haughey's project "130 Miles" refers to the length of New Jersey's coastline, from the top of Sandy Hook to the bottom of Cape May, as measured by National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. But rather than showing the crowds that gather in the summer, Haughey is interested in showing the Jersey Shore's sites and attractions without people, building a series of empty beaches and water slide parks lit by a low-angled sun. He explains to PDN by email, "As a native of the Jersey Shore, I've always been interested in the different ways that the coastline of the state is used, and how these can change from town to town. I began to research and explore this idea and found that for such a relatively small oceanic shoreline, the diversity that exists is drastic. I had experienced many of the usages while growing up there, from World War I artillery bases to high-end private beach clubs and well-known seaside landmarks, and because of that I was able to approach the project with a familiarity and affinity for the landscape I was photographing." While he knew many of the places he wanted to include from growing up there, others were new to him. "I did a fair amount of research into the areas I had never visited before, from reading about the history of a place to using Google Maps to see what was there that I was not aware of prior, but much of the work came out of just driving around and exploring the landscape."

Shot mostly during the first half of 2012, Haughey writes in a statement that the images "take on a new light following the devastation that amassed along the state's seaboard during Hurricane Sandy in October of that same year. Most of the locations in these photographs were directly hit by the storm, and many have sustained permanent damage, or in some cases, are no longer standing." The fate of the shore in the storm colors the images with a darker tone, but it didn't change Haughey's outlook. He tells PDN, "Because some of the places depicted were seriously damaged or even destroyed during Hurricane Sandy, I tend to look at the work now with some sentimentality, but this didn't have an effect on how I edited the project. This landscape continues to exist long after the summer tourists go home and the major storms such as Hurricane Sandy pass, and I wanted to make sure that came across in the work."

PHROOM

Ebb Tide // Tyler Haughey

By Christian Michael Filardo
Phroom Magazine, Book Review
December 18, 2016

Tyler Haughey (b. 1988, Ocean Township, NJ) received a Bachelor of Science in Photography and Art History from Drexel University in Philadelphia, PA. He was awarded an Individual Artist Fellowship from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts in 2015, and was selected for inclusion in Photolucida's Critical Mass Top 50 in 2016. Recent exhibitions include the NJSCA Fellowship Exhibition at Monmouth University, West Long Branch, NJ; the 2015 Summer Group Show at Sears-Peyton Gallery, New York, NY; and Project Basho's ONWARD Compé 2015, Philadelphia, PA, which was juried by Elinor Carucci. He lives and works in Brooklyn, NY.

The Wildwoods, a group of small shore towns situated on a five-mile-long barrier island along the southern New Jersey coastline, are home to one of the most important architectural collections of the 20th century. They contain a trove of midcentury modern motels that make up the largest concentration of postwar resort architecture in the United States. These motels remain fully functioning and virtually unchanged since their original construction, in many cases over fifty years ago.

Adopting a spare aesthetic and using contemporary materials such as poured concrete and glass, the motels brought European high modernism to America's middle class. Applying the idea of the "decorated shed", a term coined by renowned postmodern architects Robert Venturi, Denise Scott Brown and Steve Izenour in their seminal 1972 book Learning from Las Vegas, each motel relies on unique architectural features and symbolic ornament to form its own identity and set itself apart from the others nearby. Infused with space-age optimism and experimentation, and utilizing the iconography of faraway, exotic destinations, these structures represent the way America's middle class traveled and vacationed during the postwar era.

Built to cater to the annual influx of summer tourists that began vacationing in the area in the mid-1950s, the motels have always faced a steep decline in visitors during the rest of the year, leaving most with no choice but to close for the off-season. Normally vibrant and full of life, they sit shuttered and vacant for nine months every year, acting as unoccupied time capsules of summers past. Their boldly-colored facades, futurist details, and exuberant neon signage sit in stark contrast against the eerie, unpopulated emptiness of the winter months, transforming these beach towns into real life abandoned film sets.

In the late 1990s, Venturi, Scott Brown and Izenour visited The Wildwoods to study the motels. During this time, Izenour spearheaded a multi-university research studio, aptly titled Learning

from The Wildwoods, which documented the buildings in hopes of protecting and preserving them. Many of these structures, however, struggling from inhabiting the gray area between the past and present, have recently become less valued and have fallen victim to the condominium boom that has affected countless coastal communities. More than half of the 300-plus motels that once stood have been sold and demolished, making way for conventional, high-rise constructions. The condos are an ever-looming presence, imposing on the landscape and acting as a reminder that any number of the remaining motels could suffer the same fate at any time.

“As a native of the Jersey Shore, both the vernacular architecture of the eastern seaboard as well as the off-season vacancy of a tourist destination are themes of great interest to me. With this project, I explore and document how places designed and known for fostering fun and family-oriented memories look when they are deserted and void of any life. I aim to show these historic sites in a new light, while at the same time bringing awareness of them to a wider audience.”

SLATE

The Historic Midcentury Modernist Motels of the New Jersey Coast

By Jordan G. Teicher
Slate
August 19, 2016

Staying overnight at one of the more than 150 motels in the Wildwoods can feel like traveling back in time.

The Wildwoods comprise three towns—Wildwood, Wildwood Crest, and North Wildwood— along a 5-mile barrier island on the southern New Jersey coastline. They started drawing tourists looking for summer sun and surf in the late 19th century, but things really picked up in the 1950s with the completion of the Garden State Parkway. That's when middle-class motorists began arriving in droves, and motels started popping up by the hundreds over the next 20 years. Inspired by European high modernist design, they sported bright colors, angular features and distinctive, sometimes kitschy ornamentation. While about half of them have since given way to towering condominiums, those that remain are still family-owned and -operated, and little has changed about the way they look since they were constructed.

Five years ago, Tyler Haughey, then a student at Drexel University, was driving along the coast when he happened to pass through the Wildwoods. A Jersey Shore native, he'd heard about the Wildwoods but had never been to any of them before. It was February, and the motels were deserted, but he found them captivating, and so he stopped to photograph some of them.

"It felt like I'd happened upon an abandoned film set," he said.

Two years ago, he returned to photograph all of the remaining motels in the area for a series, "Ebb Tide," which he's now looking to turn into a book. He photographed the motels, he said, just like he photographs people, with an eye for the perspectives that best encapsulated their individual identities. Often, that meant a straightforward image of the front from the parking lot or a wider shot from across the street. Other times, he focused on the pool or the front office. He was particularly drawn to the motels that borrowed the iconography of far-flung destinations.

"Maybe it feels like you're in Malibu, but it only took you an hour to drive there," he said.

For more than three months every year, the Wildwoods are still popular destinations for vacationers from the Northeast and beyond. But Haughey intentionally only visited during the off season, especially during the winter. With virtually no people around, including the motel owners, he found he could better focus on the architecture. Frequently, however, his photos focused on smaller details—an overturned chair, for instance—that suggested the presence of tourists without actually showing them.

"I always felt people were kind of present through their absence in these places. They don't feel abandoned. They have a tangible recent history there," he said.

POPULAR PHOTOGRAPHY

Capturing the Stark Transformation of Beach Towns in the Off-Season

By Vanessa Mallory Kotz
Popular Photography
November 28, 2016

Malibu, Sahara, Monaco—it sounds like an exotic world tour, but you can go to all three in New Jersey! These mid-century modern motels named for sunny locales pepper a five-mile stretch of the Jersey shore, just north of Cape May, known as Wildwood. Tyler Haughey first visited the area one January, after the throngs of people had packed up their beach towels and dusted the sand off their feet, leaving these architectural gems to sit lonely and shuttered.

Haughey grew up 100 miles north, near Asbury Park, where he witnessed summer tourists vacationing "down the shore" as well as the stark transformation of these beach towns in the off-season. "[I'm] embracing it as part of my identity," the photographer says. Looking like abandoned film sets in winter, the charming architecture of Wildwood's motor courts—the Waikiki Motel, the Lollipop, and the Jolly Roger—captivate Haughey. For the past two years, he has been researching, interviewing historians and townsfolk, and documenting these candy-colored relics in frozen conditions devoid of people, dubbing the project *Ebb Tide*.

These structures with futuristic flourishes and sparkling pools have been tempting visitors since 1954, when the opening of the Garden State Parkway brought 350,000 cars to the area each year. Overnight, hundreds of motels sprung up to accommodate the influx. Their glamorous names and tropical details were inspired by Miami Beach and the fantasy of vacations families couldn't afford.

Today, a little over 150 "doo-wop" motels are left, protected by the National Register of Historic Places. "I aim to show these historic sites in a new light while at the same time bringing awareness of them to a wider audience," Haughey says.

When selecting a subject, he looks for a site where there are "as few distractions as possible," highlighting the uniqueness of each motel. "It's like shooting portraits of people," he says of details like towering plastic palms flanking a lobby entrance or a giant concrete elephant overlooking a pool.

Haughey's work captures the dreamy leftovers of a time so often idealized today. His images remind us that nostalgia is something to be visited for a short amount of time, and then left behind. What lingers are just the shells of that bygone era.