

Press Kit for *Gas Stop*, by David Freund, published 2017 by steidl.de.

Gas Stop is a four volume set of books of photographs showing the culture, landscape and architecture of the American gas station, taken 1978-1982. Each volume is regional: East, West, Midwest and South.

720 pages, 574 images

Tritone

Clothbound in slipcase

28 x 22 cm

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Following are pdfs of two descriptive texts about the project, at 125 and 375 words. They may be quoted from, edited or used verbatim in blogs, reviews, newspaper websites or print media, with credit to David Freund.

Gas Stop

Published by Steidl, *Gas Stop* is a four volume set: West, Midwest, North and South, 720 pages with 574 photographs. *Gas Stop* depicts the culture, landscape and architecture of the American gas station from 1978 to 1981. Different from today's convenience store where one can buy gas without encountering another human, gas stations then offered attendant service, car repair, pay phones, maps, bathrooms and a range of other services and products. *Gas Stop's* photographs will evoke nostalgia for many, but its larger project is to describe a nationwide network that sustains American automobile culture, which in its way, is also a twentieth century version of an American commons.

David Freund

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2017

Gas Stop

In the twentieth century any American driver would likely stop at a gas station weekly, not just for gas. Then, gas stations were also oases offering food and drink, car repairs, directions, telephones, maps and, importantly, bathrooms. Yet, beyond appreciation as architectural novelties, they and their offerings have been little photographed.

From 1978 to 1981, David Freund looked at the culture, architecture and landscape of gas stations in more than forty states. The photographs show customers and workers interacting, gassing up, or just hanging out. Architecture and signage, both corporate and vernacular, reach out to passing drivers.

Gas Stop presents the designed or natural landscaping seen at stations, and the regional landscapes that hold and surround them. Sparking recognition and recollection, the photographs, accrue as elements in a nonlinear narrative of automotive America.

Of more than 200,000 gas stations in the United States at the time of his project, today about half are gone, especially full service ones. Such stations and their offerings exist now mostly in memory and in this work.

David Freund writes:

On the first morning of an intended photographic project, outside of my motel was a gas station from which I photographed a dark and rolling tanker truck as its four black tires passed a line of four half-buried white tires. In the misty distance was a grazing horse, framed by the back of the truck. In front of the station was a large, hand-lettered sign advertising milk, and across the road a small, local motel. As someone later commented, "These are about everything."

The painter Miles Forst once described gas stations as a place to go to fill up your tank and shut off your brain. That morning, however, I became aware of gas stations as a locus for many elements that characterize America. And whether stopping in or hanging out, people in motion are often around to enliven and propel the narrative. From that moment, looking out from and looking in at gas stations became my new project, which in the end entailed travel to forty-seven states and stops at thousands of stations. All provided discoveries.

www.davidfreundphotography.com

www.steidl.de

Review Quotes

“One of the great photo book collections from the last ten years.”

Robert Dawson, Photographer

“Ed Ruscha published the artist’s book *Twentysix Gasoline Stations* in 1963, modestly documenting stations between Texas and California. Photographer David Freund’s door-stopping *Gas Stop* is a massive expansion of that vision.”

Pat Padua, Spectrum Culture

“*Gas Stop* is more than a catalogue of industrial variations like Bernd and Hilla Becher’s studies of water tanks; and it’s not exactly a study of humanity like August Sander’s portraits of the German people. But Freund’s project is as essential as either of those,...

Pat Padua, Spectrum Culture

“David Freund: *Gas Stop* represents a monumental achievement in photojournalism.”

Karl Wolff, NY Journal of Books

“Since this is a Steidl publication, expect the very best in production and execution.”

Karl Wolff, NY Journal of Books

“From 1978 to 1981, David Freund photographed petrol stations in more than 40 US states - adding up to an everyman portrait of America.”

The Guardian

“Freund’s new Tritone, entitled *Gas Stop*, released by *Steidl* this year, showcases more than 500... gas stations in 47 states from 1978 to 1981.”

Karly Domb Sadof, The Washington Post

“...these aren't photographs to rush through... - rich, detailed, filled with history...”

Thomas Roma, Photographer