

# PHOTOGRAPHING BORING PLACES

---

ARE WE NEARLY THERE YET?  
JASON RUFFELL

**B**ORING. I'm bored. A phrase I'd often say as a child hoping my parents would offer an exciting opportunity. Apart from a variety of chores, nothing interesting was offered. Boring was a part of childhood. Growing up, life didn't get that more exciting. Going through the motions of being an adult. Everyone else's life seemed so much more interesting. Social media updates of their exciting lives. Exciting places. Photos replicated.

God hates me. Well, if there is a God. I fluctuate on the issue. Brussel Sprouts are my evidence for the existence of God at present. Nature couldn't produce something so vile. Satan's testicles. Therefore God must exist. It makes sense.

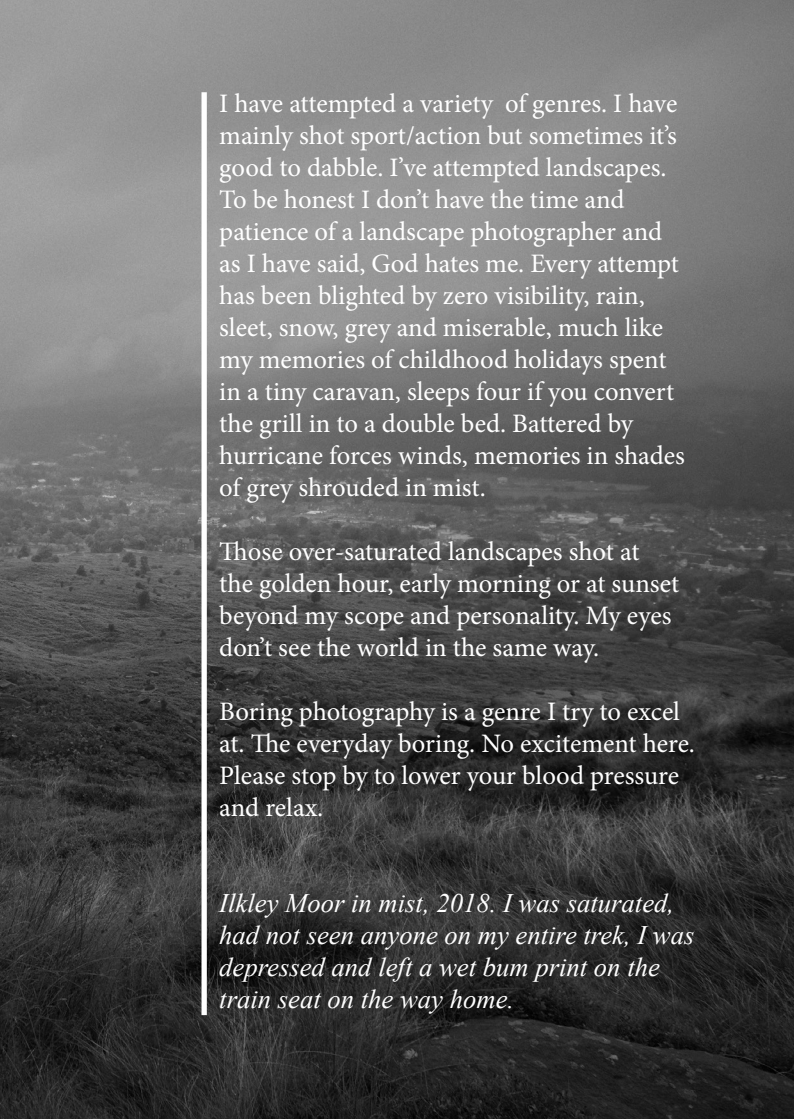
As a part-time photographer I try to take stunning photographs but they elude me. I can't match the hyper-real, exciting images I see online everyday, mine end up, more, boring.

*Block of flats, London, 2019. There were more interesting things to photograph on the Embankment.*









I have attempted a variety of genres. I have mainly shot sport/action but sometimes it's good to dabble. I've attempted landscapes. To be honest I don't have the time and patience of a landscape photographer and as I have said, God hates me. Every attempt has been blighted by zero visibility, rain, sleet, snow, grey and miserable, much like my memories of childhood holidays spent in a tiny caravan, sleeps four if you convert the grill in to a double bed. Battered by hurricane forces winds, memories in shades of grey shrouded in mist.

Those over-saturated landscapes shot at the golden hour, early morning or at sunset beyond my scope and personality. My eyes don't see the world in the same way.

Boring photography is a genre I try to excel at. The everyday boring. No excitement here. Please stop by to lower your blood pressure and relax.

*Ilkley Moor in mist, 2018. I was saturated, had not seen anyone on my entire trek, I was depressed and left a wet bum print on the train seat on the way home.*

# Equipment

As this is the first 'zine' I thought I'd outline some of the equipment you may need to create boring images. I'm not going to give all my secrets away, but a camera is useful.

You don't really need any specialist equipment to photograph boring places, however the better your gear the less spectacular your images will feel.

Any camera will do, however, everything is in the preparation. A smart-phone will take adequate images but as you will more than likely carry this device with you at all times the likelihood of shooting boring images increases and therefore makes them less special.

A good camera for a beginner is a Phase One IQ4. The 150 mega-pixel sensor will produce some mind-blowing boring imagery. Using



a £50k camera to capture the inane is a perverse delight. However, it can be seen as a good investment. Andreas Gursky's "Rhein II", sold at Christie's for \$4.3 million, it is an excellent example of the boring.

If you are not so flush, or just a cheapskate, you can make your own camera out of any old box you may find lying around the house. A dose of diarrhoea will give you plenty of toilet tube rolls to create zoom lenses of various focal lengths, allowing you to zoom in on the boring without having to exert any energy.



Of course building your own camera has some disadvantages. Unless you are confident at grinding your own lenses it will more than likely have to be a pinhole camera. Building a mechanism to advance film will require some dexterity and time so it is easier to expose on to photographic paper.

This takes us back to the preparation. Photographing boring places should not be a spur of the moment thing, it requires research to find places one will not find in tourist brochures.

Although I have used film and pinhole cameras in the past I now prefer digital. Digital can give you instant feedback on how boring you have been. Allowing to adjust your shot, re-frame and shoot again which helps in post, as you will not have to spend hours photo-shopping anything out that adds any excitement in to your images.

The following pages offers up a selection of boring images for your perusal. You may not get to the end of the 'zine' as they may prove to be just too boring.



Pinhole cameras can yield some spectacular results.  
Below is a boring shot from the M4.

*M6 at night, 2008.*

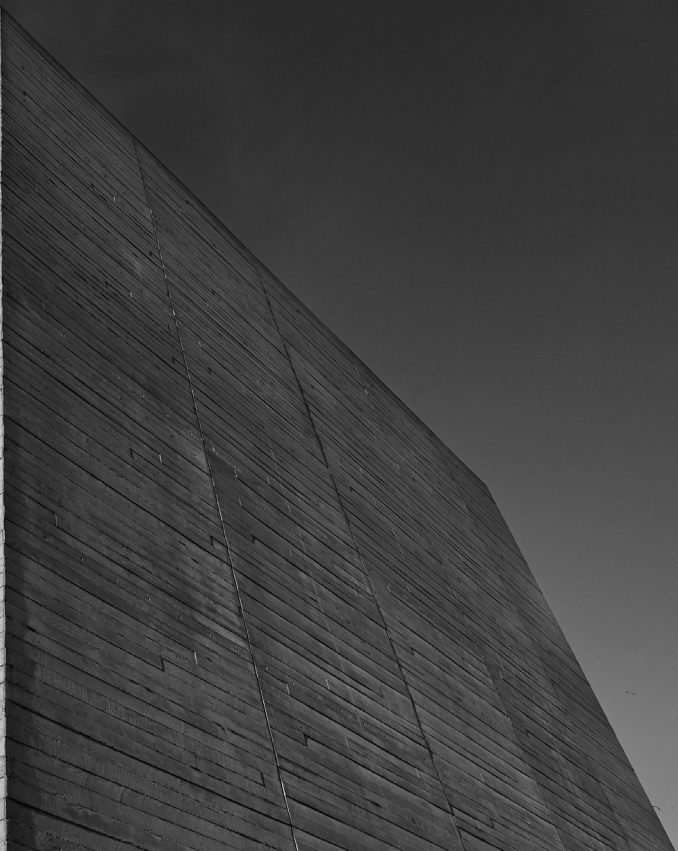


*National Theatre, London, 2019.*

*The monolithic lines of the National Theatre, displaying the former's marks on the concrete. It was executed exceptionally well , or not, depending on your love of concrete.*









*Thames Estuary, 2019.*

*The wide expanse and low contrast make for  
an exceptionally boring composition.*





*Access to all platforms, 2017.*

*Even train-spotters avoid taking pictures of ladders.*

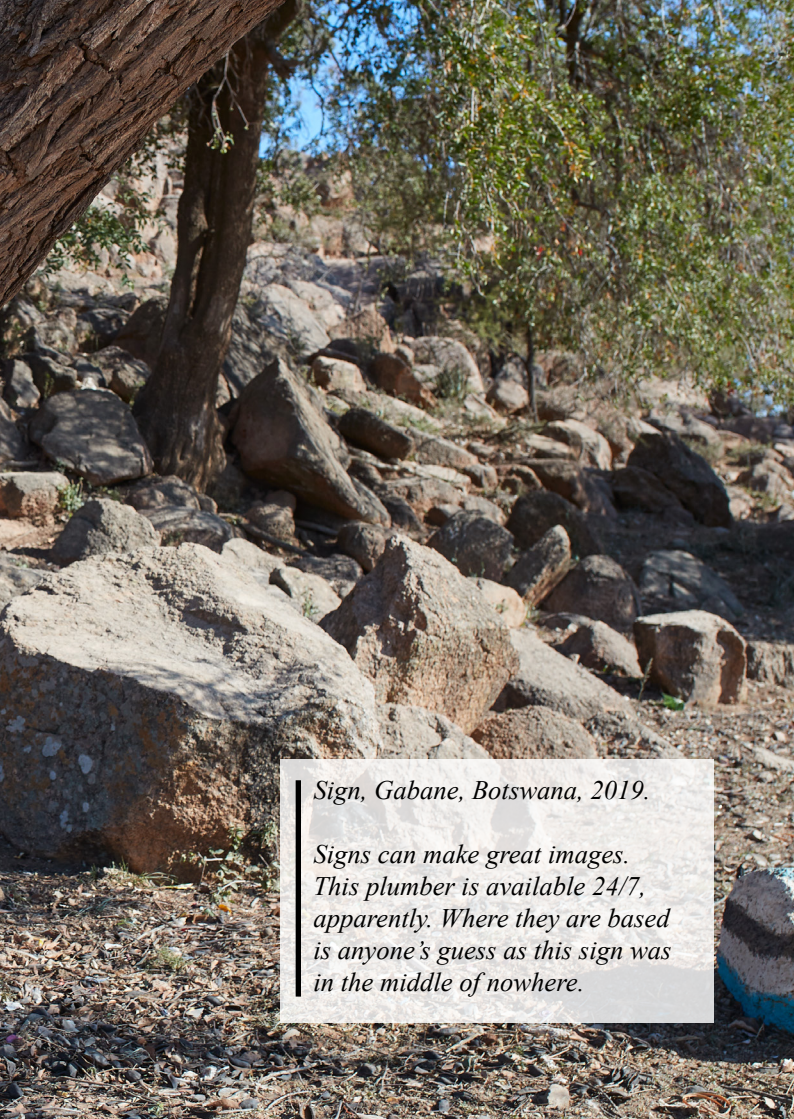
ors

orms



PLUMBER  
74631414  
24/7



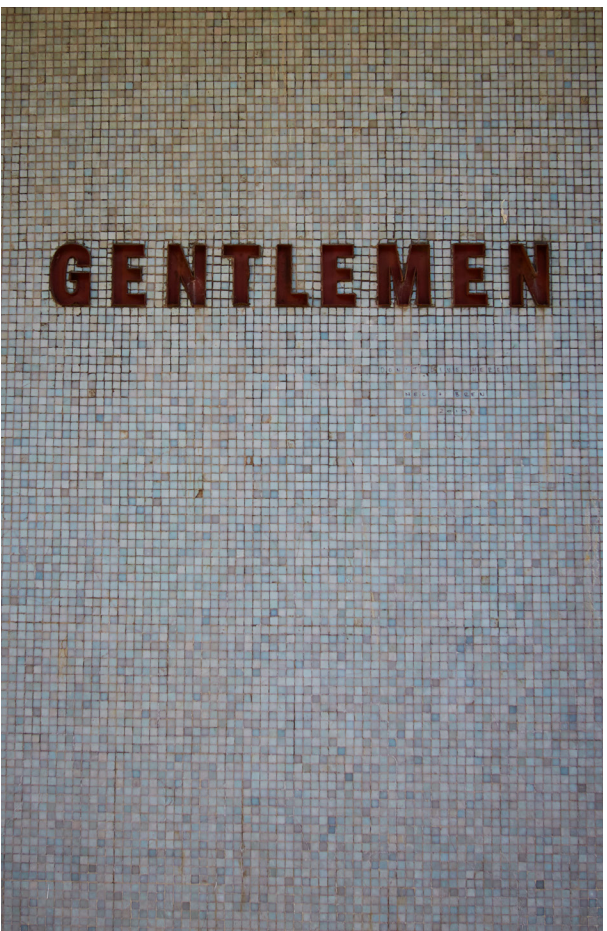


*Sign, Gabane, Botswana, 2019.*

*Signs can make great images.  
This plumber is available 24/7,  
apparently. Where they are based  
is anyone's guess as this sign was  
in the middle of nowhere.*



*Great Coffee, Sheffield, 2018. / University of Salford paving, 2018.*



*Gentlemen, Hyde Park Flats, Sheffield, 2016.*

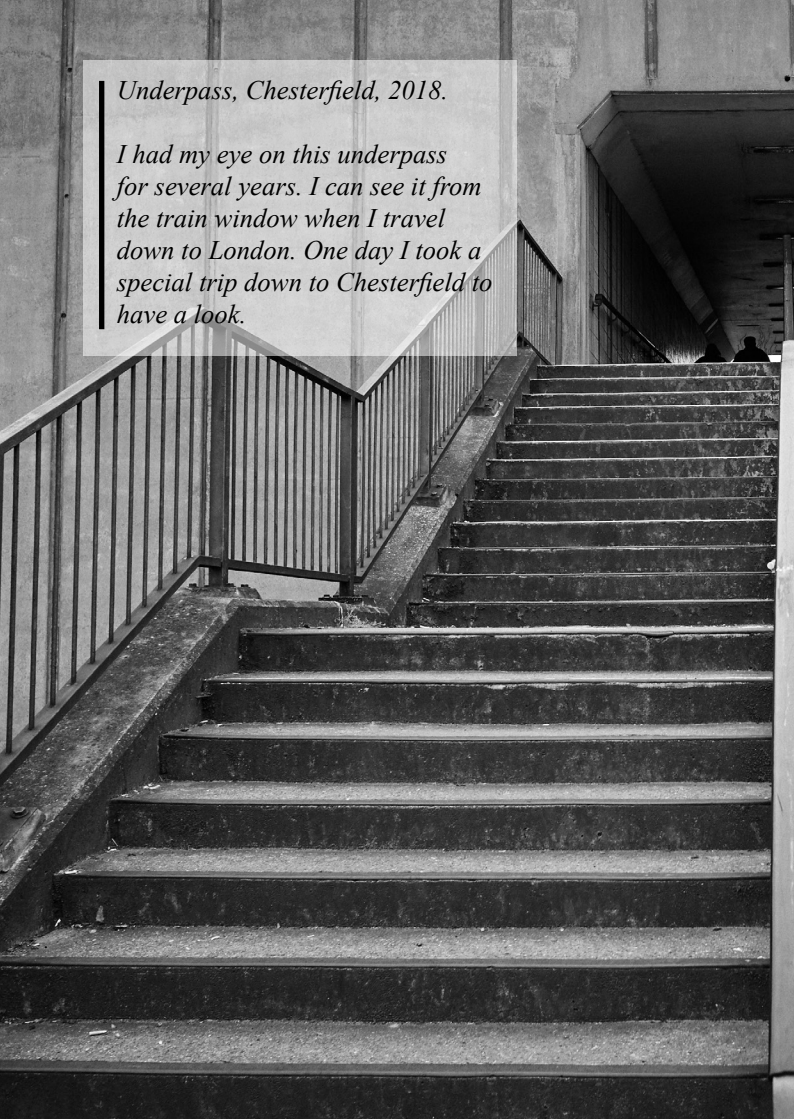


*The Arts Tower, Sheffield, 2018.*

*Viewed from the front and side. One day I will get the top.*







*Underpass, Chesterfield, 2018.*

*I had my eye on this underpass  
for several years. I can see it from  
the train window when I travel  
down to London. One day I took a  
special trip down to Chesterfield to  
have a look.*







That's it for the first edition. I'm glad you made it to the end, or just looked at the back cover.

In the next edition I plan to look at boring plant photography. Trees, flowers and JCBs.

All content © Jason Ruffell, 2019.  
Why you'd want to copy any of it is anyone's guess.