
Tankstille
The Silence of Abandoned Gas Stations
SHELL
SHELL
SUPERSHELL
PA 122
Dieter Klein

Tankstille

Dieter Klein

The Silence of Abandoned Gas Stations

Imprint

Tankstille - The Silence of Abandoned Gas Stations
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Foreword

TANKSTILLE

For many years, I have photographed abandoned cars and the places they left behind. Along the way, I also began collecting photographs of another disappearing world: gas stations.

The gas station is inseparable from the history of individual mobility. Wherever cars went, fuel had to follow. Over the decades, networks of small filling stations spread through cities, villages and along country roads. Later, many of them disappeared again as traffic changed, roads were rerouted and larger stations replaced smaller ones.

Some survived. They became workshops, shops, houses or simply empty buildings. Others were modernized beyond recognition. Many were demolished and left no trace at all.

I have photographed many real abandoned gas stations. At the same time, thousands of historical photographs accumulated in my archive. Most are documents of their time—cars at the pumps, attendants at work, travelers passing through.

But a few seemed to contain something else.

Once the people were gone, once the cars had disappeared, once time and light began to shift, these places became strangely quiet.

That quiet became the starting point for this book.

I no longer think the distinction matters very much. Some of the places shown here existed exactly as they appear. Others almost did. Some never did.

I would have photographed them if they had existed.


J. Leameri
VINS D'OSINGER. FINALE
DROGERIE
PHOTO
MARECHAL
Esso
Kodak
PHOTO
Agfa
PHOTOS
MARECHAL
Mobiloil

You could buy gas, ask for directions, and hear the local news without leaving the porch. The chickens had the run of the place. They still do.




BP
BP


DESERT
CENTER


SHELL
SHELL
SHELL
Coca-Cola
SHELL
X-100
Mobilgas
ESSO



Out here, a quarter of a tank could change your plans. You watched for a sign, a roof, anything that meant gas ahead. This place must have been a welcome sight.




DIESEL
SHELL
X-100


CHEVRON


ERYGOL


SHELL
X-100
MOTOR OIL
SHELL
X-100
MOTOR OIL
D 12
BETZ 7
VOISINS 2
SHELL





A dozen pumps, fresh from the oven. For once,
the smell is butter and sugar. Help yourself.
There is enough fuel here for the afternoon.






Auto-Licht
Essolub
MOTOR-ÖLE
FÜR JEDEN
ZWECK
Reifen
Batterien
Zubehör
Esso
Essolub
WALSCHERT
MOTOR-ÖL


SINCLAIR
GASOLINE


LE FAUCON
CYCLES & MOTOS
ARMOR
PNEUS DUNLOP
Peugeot
EOLINE
EOLINE
V. REGNIER


Embagol
HES 296


American Petroleum & Anvers
MOTOCARLINE
14
MOTOCARLINE


TEXACO
TEXACO
TEXACO
MOTOR OILS
GASOLINE
GREASING
FORO


EXACO

The canopy still offers shade. Rain finds its way through the cracks, and the wind brings sand into the service bays. There is little left to put away when the weather turns.




PLASTIC INJECTION
MODEL SERIES
FS-01
PAINT
PATINA
DETAILS
PRIMER
BASE COLOR
WEATHERING
DECALS
FINAL COAT
CLASSIC
ICONS
FOR A
NEW ERA
FS-01
VINTAGE FUEL PUMP
MODEL KIT
BUILT ON NOSTALGIA
BP
Mobilgas
STAR


E SO
STEIN
FORMT
ERINNERUNG




AGIP
PEOPLE
CARS
IDEAS
TOMORROW
AUTOMOBILITY
HISTORY
DESIGN
CULTURE
AGIP
Servizio
per un
mondo nuovo
Italia
ca. 1958
Agip
Agip
Agip


AUTO-
-LICHT
STANDARD
STANDARD
Auto-Licht
VARTA
ESSO
Gute Fahrt
mit
ESSO
MOTOR OIL


FINE FRAGRANCES
TIMELESS ESSENCES
BEAUTY
LIVES
EVERYWHERE
PERFUME
FINDS
NEW
PLACES
Super
BENZIN
EASY
SUPER-SR
Continentale
Berlin
Rauchen verboten
Rauchen
Rauchen verboten
FOUR
SCENTS
A LONG
HISTORY
SCENTS
WITHOUT
BORDERS


ESSO
OPEN
Motor-Oil


SERVICE
TIRES
BATTERIES
ACCESSORIES
THE NEW
1962
MODEL 44A
Built for
a better tomorrow.




OHIO
MALLEABLE IRON JOINTS
AMERICA'S CASTINGS
STATE MOTOR OIL
SHELL OIL


CITROËN
LA VOITURE FRANÇAISE PAR EXCELLENCE


A
CLEANER
BRIGHTER
TOMORROW
1180
PEOPLE
IDEAS
MOBILITY
A BRIGHTER
TOMORROW


DIESEL
ESSO


GULFLEX
GULF
REST-ROOMS


AUTO-LICHT
STANDARD
STANDARD
Auto-Licht
ESSO


STANDARD OIL CO.


STANDARD
STANDARD


CAS

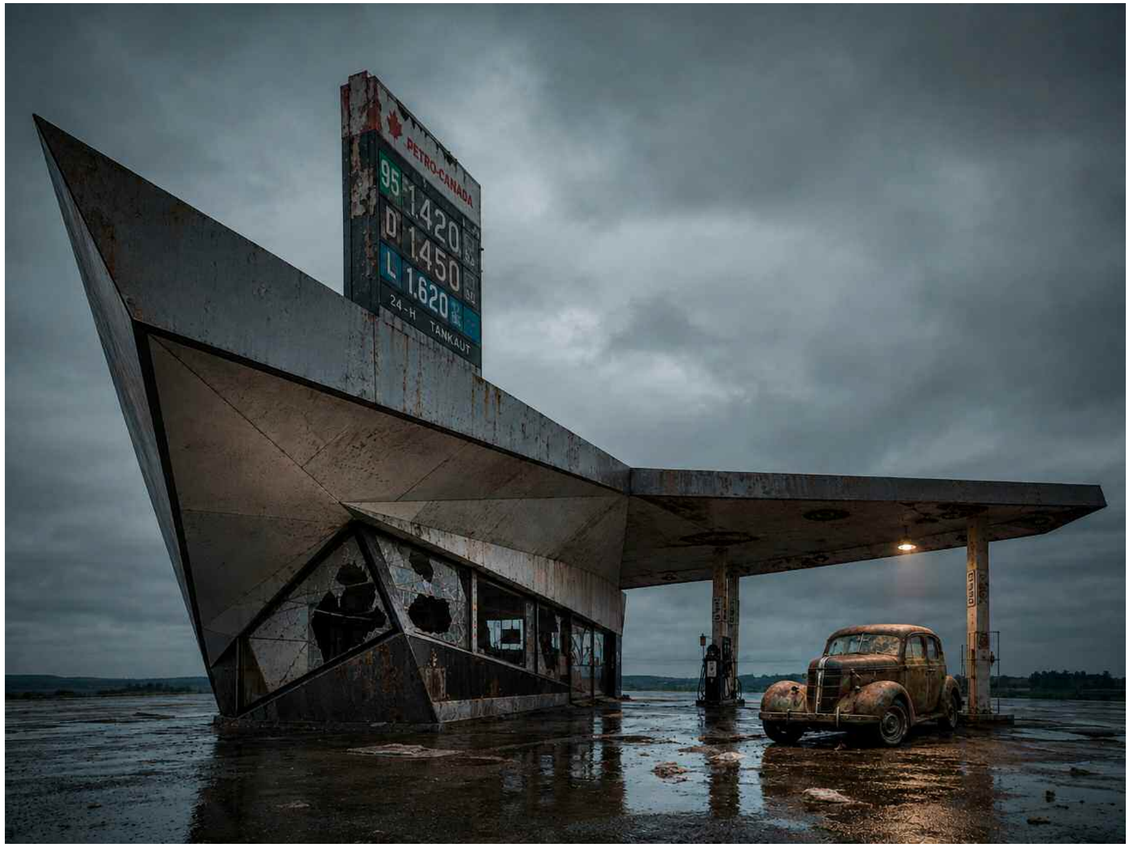

STANDARD OIL CO.


ATLANTIC
WHITE FLASH
GASOLINE ALLEY
CANDY
ATLANTIC
WHITE
FLASH
PLUS
ATLANTIC
WHITE FLASH
GASOLINE






SHELL
HELL


PETRO-CANADA
95 1.420
D 1.450
L 1.620
24-H TANKAUT


STANDARD
STANDARD
ATLAS TIRES
SAFE DRIVE SAVE FUEL
BATTERIES ACCESSORIES TIRES
ATLAS TIRES
ATLAS TIRES SALES SERVICE RECAPING
GAS 29¢
OIL 35¢
GREASE 14¢
AIR




SHELL
SHELL
SUPERSHELL


GENERAL


AUTO
AUTO



After the rain, the clearing smells of wet leaves. Water gathers beneath the pumps. Beyond the concrete, young trees are taking root among the cars.




STANDARD OIL PRODUCTS
Polarine
CHAMPION
TIRES
STANDARD
STANDARD OIL
H. B. & SON
SERVICE STATION
GASOLINE · OILS · GREASE
TIRES · ACCESSORIES


STANDARD
FOR
SALE


EAST GARAGE


SHELL
SHELL

On a night like this, you would have pulled in just to ask how far it was to the next town. You might have stayed until the rain eased. The light by the door makes it easy to imagine.



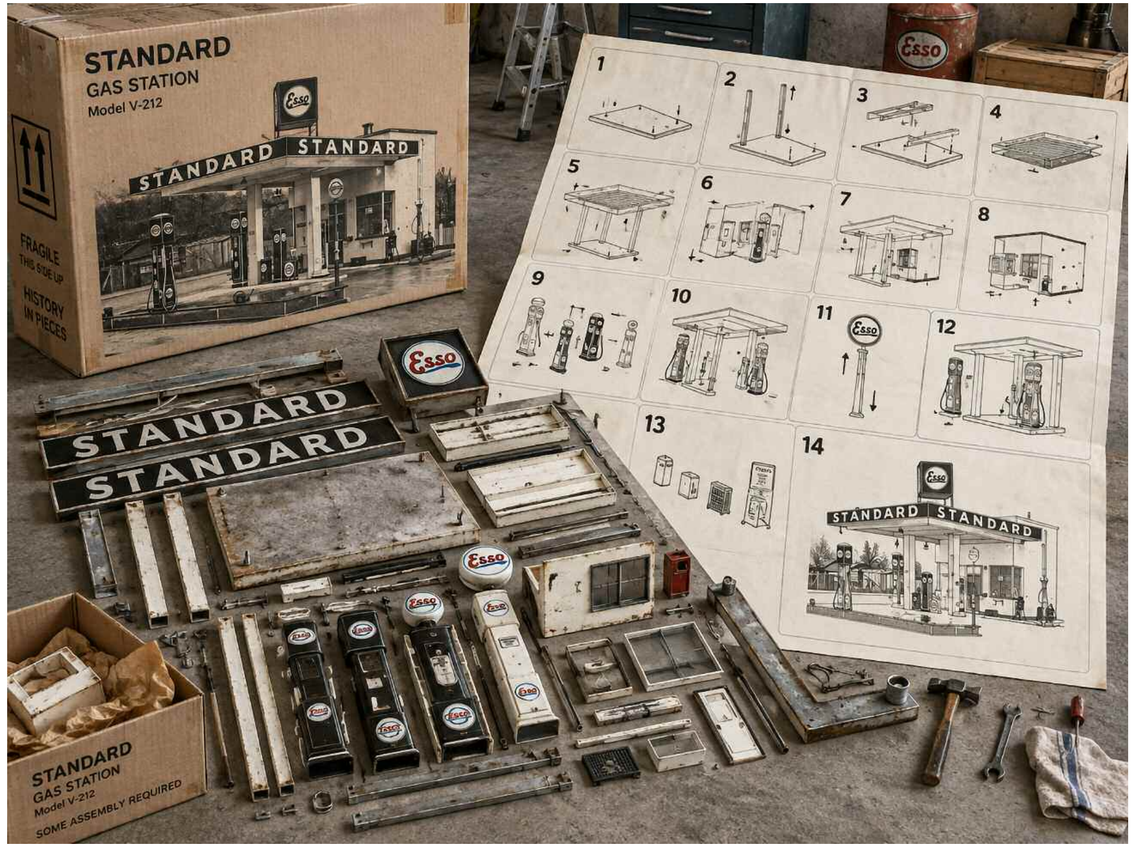

TOTAL
GARAGE DU VILLAGE
ENERGOL
REPARATIONS
TOUTES
MARQUES
HUILE


JOY
FOR
SMALL
AND BIG!
TOYS
MODELS
CONSTRUCTION SETS
TECHNICAL TOYS
PUZZLES
GAMES
24
OPEN
TOYS
MODELS
CONSTRUCTION SETS
PUZZLES
GAMES
DINKY TOYS
MARKLIN
Engineering for Young Minds
BUILD
PLAY
DISCOVER
AUTO-LIGHT
STANDARD
No. 305
Gas Station
with Clock
and 2 Pumps
Quality Toys
Made in Germany
Standard
Gas Station
No. 396
$7.50
Books
BAKERY


GENERAL
GASOLINE


GARAGE CENTRAL
ESSENCE - HUILE - REPARATIONS
TOTAL


AL HILAL SERVICE
PETROL & MOTOR OILS
خدمة
افضل
زيوت
بترين
ديزل
جميع
الأنواع
Mobiloil
نهاية
الطريق


STANDARD
GAS STATION
Model V-212
STANDARD STANDARD
FRAGILE
THIS SIDE UP
HISTORY
IN PIECES
STANDARD
STANDARD
STANDARD
GAS STATION
Model V-212
SOME ASSEMBLY REQUIRED
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
STANDARD STANDARD




ESSO

A few gallons, a word about the weather, then back along the road. The little building offered shelter while the tank filled. Around it, the wind had miles of open ground.



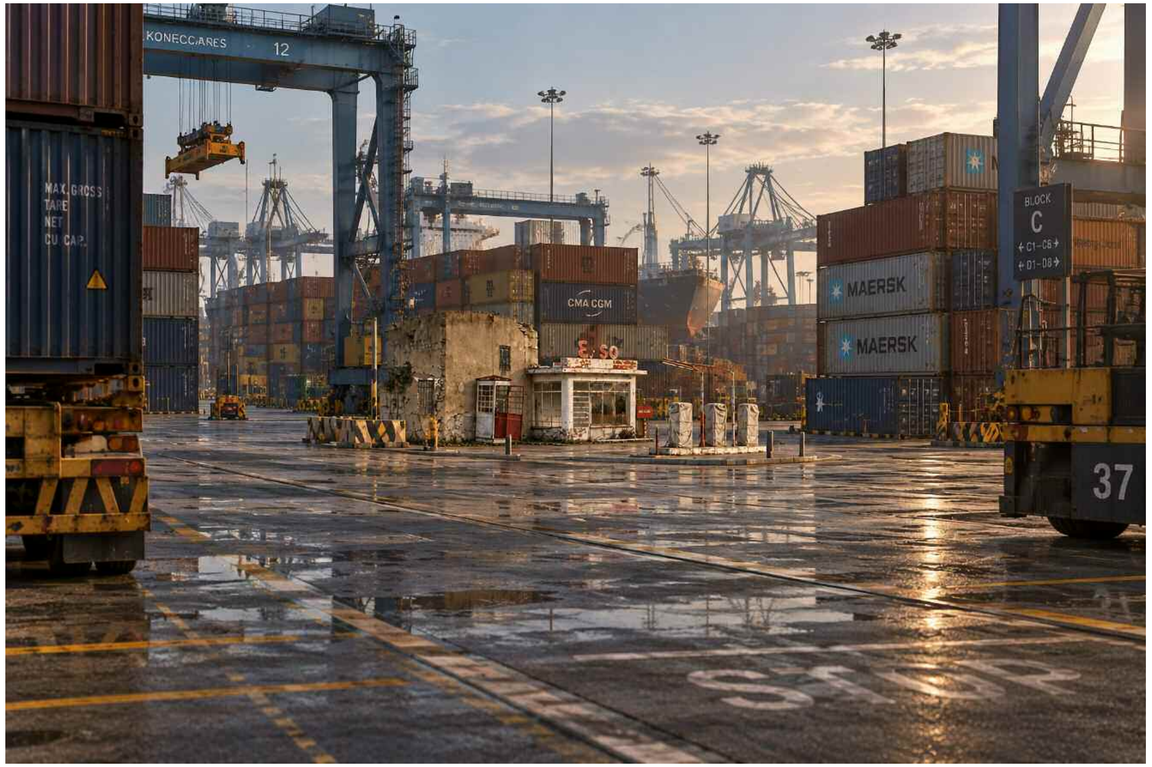

STANDARD
STANDARD
Esso


БЕНЗИН


THE CAMEL STOP
TIRE
REPAIR
USED
TIRES


SINCLAIR
LAST STOP
BEFORE
DEATH VALLEY




KONECRANES
12
MAERSK
MAERSK
CMA CGM
BLOCK
C
37


34
37
OLEX
OLEX
OLEX
OLEXOL
AUTO-ÖL
OLEX
OLEXOL
AUTO-ÖL
Stadtmitte
Bahnhof
Guter Fahrbetrieb durch Olexol Kühlwasser
OLEXOL
Mehr Kilometer für morgen


RUNSTILL


GARAGE CENTRAL
ENTRETIEN • RÉPARATIONS • GRAISSAGE
HUILES
ESSENCE
ACCESSOIRES
Mobil




H. A. ROSE
Ice Cream Popa & Cigar
SINOCO
ICE CREAM
CANDY
TOBACCO.
H.A.R OSE
Hot Coffee


ESSO


Service Station
OFFICE


FRONTIST


Esso
Coming Soon
THE SERVICE STATION
OF TOMORROW
DIESEL

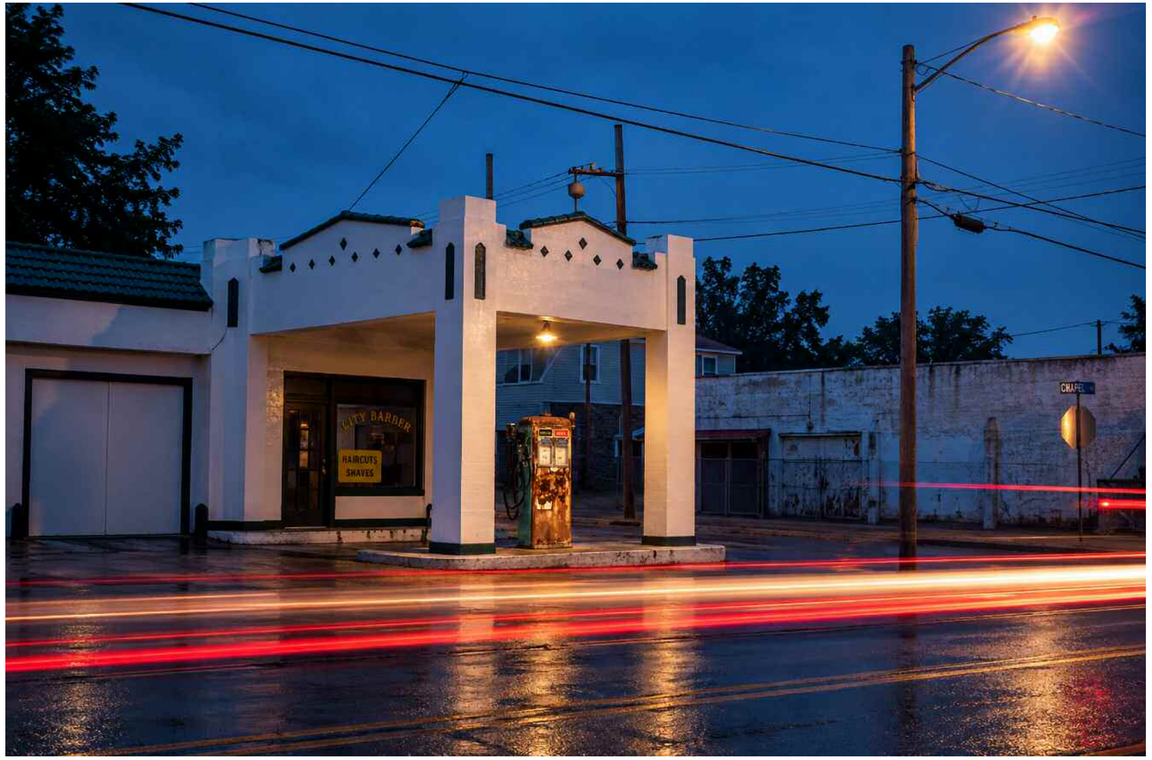




Someone once chose two red pumps for the front of this wooden store. They would catch a driver's eye from the road. Even now, their faded color gives the place a certain pride.

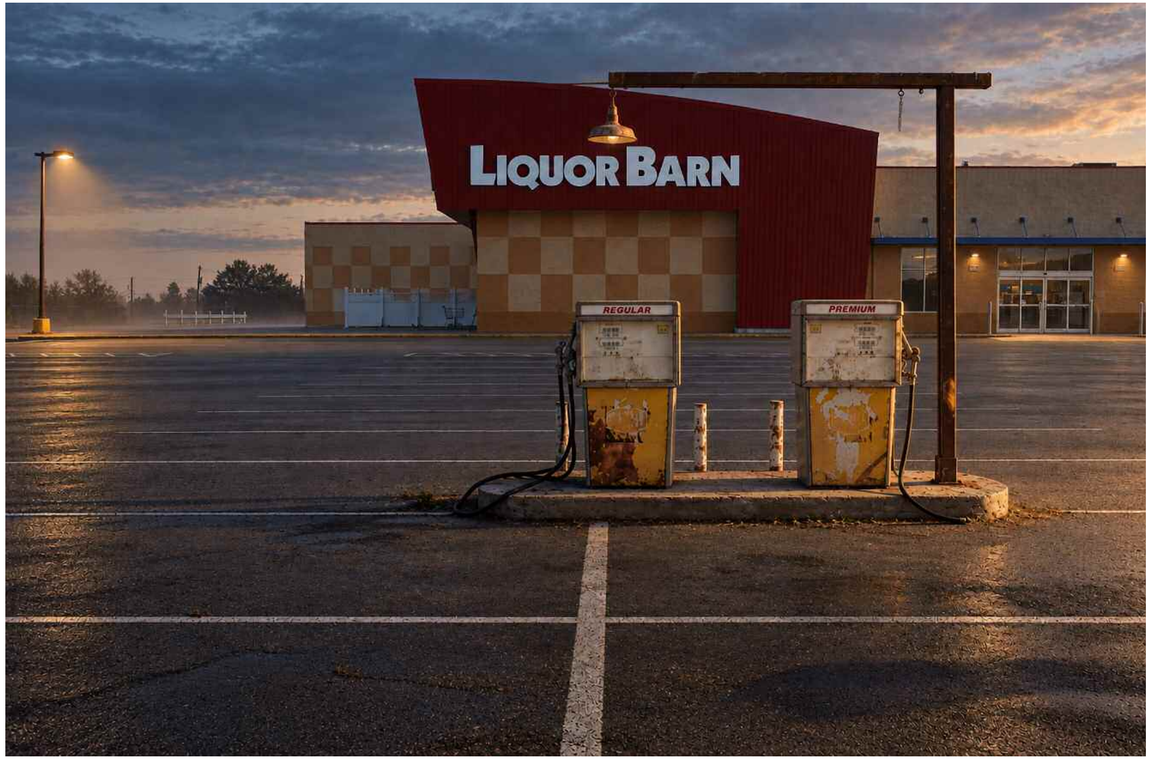



REST ROOMS


CITY BARBER
HAIRCUTS
SHAVES
CHAPEL


VAL'S GARAGE
BEEPERS
CELLULAR PHONES
Sales
and
Rental
KEEP
OUT


ESSO
ESSO
STATION


LIQUOR BARN
REGULAR
PREMIUM


REGULAR
12 9 10
SELF SERVICE
DUDLEY'S
BAIT


GAS
OIL
TIRES
BATTERIES
Mobilgas
LION
AUTO REPAIRS
SALES · SERVICE · PARTS
TIRES
TUBES
BATTERIES
ACCESSORIES


Esso


NUG










REPAIRS
WELDING
FABRICATION
ALL WORK
Mobilgas


BP




VAL'S GARAGE
ESSO
ESSO
ESSO
ESSO

Toward evening, the heat begins to leave the ground. For a few minutes, the old paint takes on the colors of the sky. I would have waited for this light.






R. E. NINGER
GEN. MDSE.
Coca-Cola


BP




GARAGE
SHELL
Regular
76
ESSO

Before the first customer arrived, someone had to decide where the windows would go, how the cars would turn, and where to put the pumps. On this table, there is still time to move everything.




Mobil




SHELL


SHELL
SHELL


KINGS CANYON LODGE
OPEN


Esso


CARS
FUELS
ROADS
PEOPLE
PLACES
STORIES
GAS STATIONS
A VANISHING AMERICA
SMALL
PLACES
BIG
MEMORIES
PUMPS
SIGNS
BUILDINGS
MAPS
PHOTOGRAPHS
OBJECTS
SHELL
GULF
AGIP
R.E NINGER
Coca-Cola


WE STILL HAVE GAS
Shell
Shell
2
GALLON
LIMIT


MOTEL
VACANCY
GAS


ESSO






NEW CARS


Pour
votre voiture
PIÈCES
DÉTACHÉES
Esso
Revell
HUMBROL

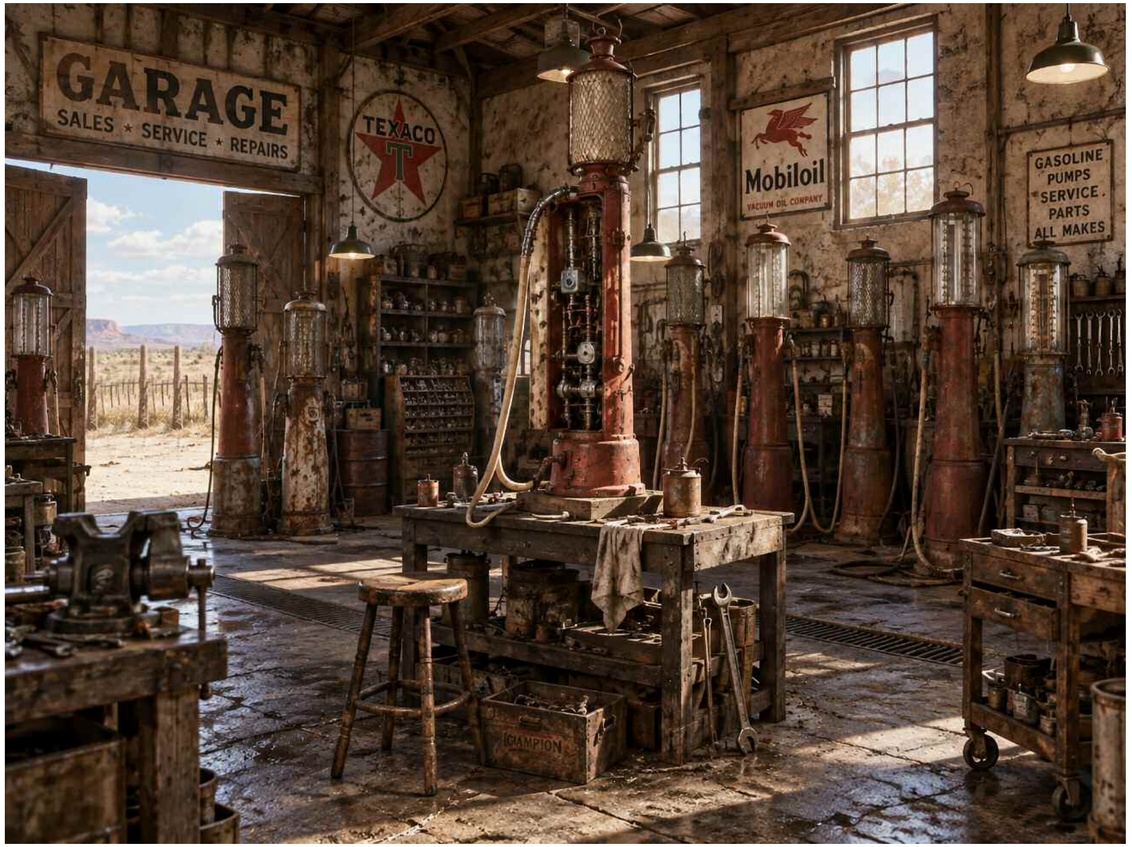
In winter, you kept an eye on the fuel gauge.
You wanted enough to reach the next town,
with something in reserve. Snow has covered
the pumps, but the road is clear.




CAFE
BEER
5¢ HAMBURGERS 5¢
CAFE
CAFE


ANTAR




GARAGE
SALES ★ SERVICE ★ REPAIRS
TEXACO
Mobiloil
VACUUM OIL COMPANY
GASOLINE
PUMPS
SERVICE
PARTS
ALL MAKES
CHAMPION


KINGS CANYON LODGE
OPEN


BAR
Coors
BEER
PACKAGE
LIQUORS
BUD
LIGHT
ICE
BUD
LIGHT
BYB


PRESENT TRADI
COLD
DRINKS
JEWELRY
ESSO

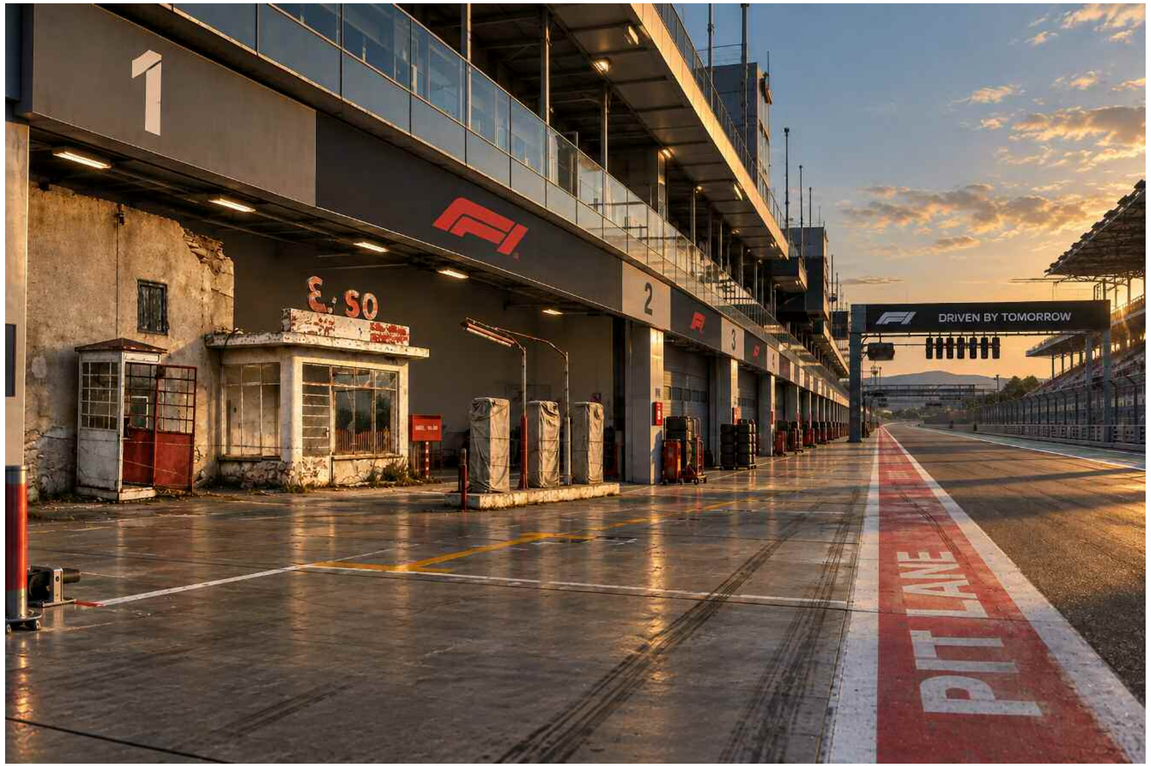



GARAGE
Ford
TRUCKS




WELCOME
TO
MARKSVILLE
V-413


Esso
EXTRA


1
2
3
DRIVEN BY TOMORROW
PIT LANE




BANK
Stop your Motor




DAPOLIN



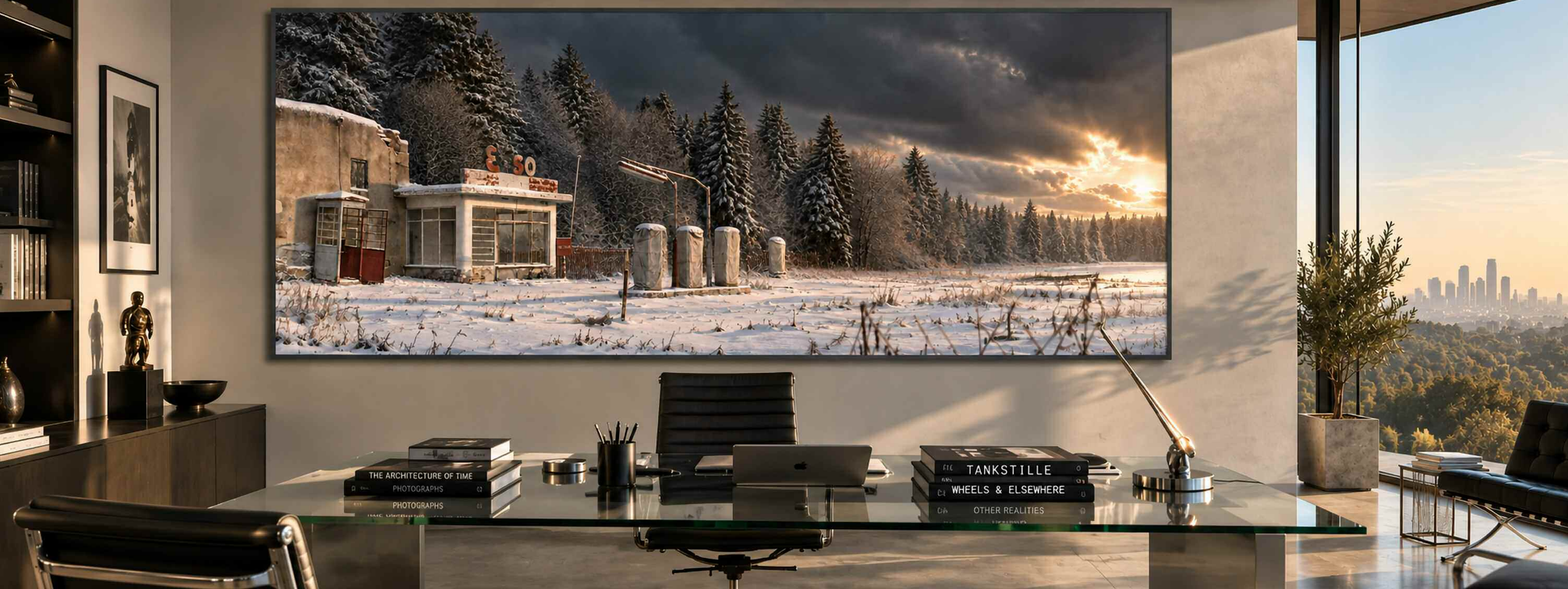

Mobiloil
SHELL
GASOLINE


ESSO
NO SMOKING




PEPSI




ESSO
THE ARCHITECTURE OF TIME
PHOTOGRAPHS
PHOTOGRAPHS
TANKSTILLE
WHEELS & ELSEWHERE
OTHER REALITIES

The lamp lights a patch of ground between the pumps and the garage. Beyond it, the yard is dark. It is just enough light to make you pause and look inside.




PEGO
PEGO
PEGO


KEEP OUT





DEPENDABLE FUEL FOR THE ROAD AHEAD

TRUSTED EVERYWHERE IN THE WORLD SINCE 1889

Esso

On the Road at Home

ESSO – More Than Gasoline

FUELS · LUBRICANTS · MOTOR CARE



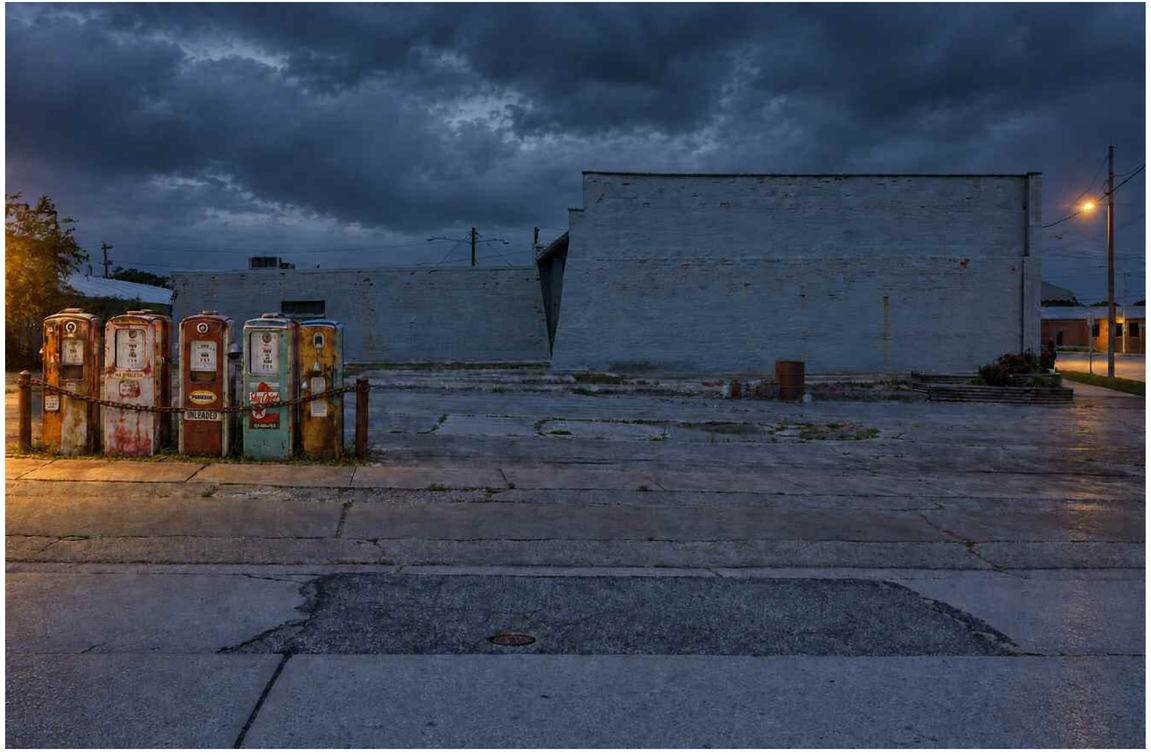
Wherever You Go – Esso Goes With You

CLEANER ENGINES LONGER LIFE

STANDARD OIL COMPANY

A Name You Can Rely On

BETTER ROADS A BRIGHTER TOMORROW

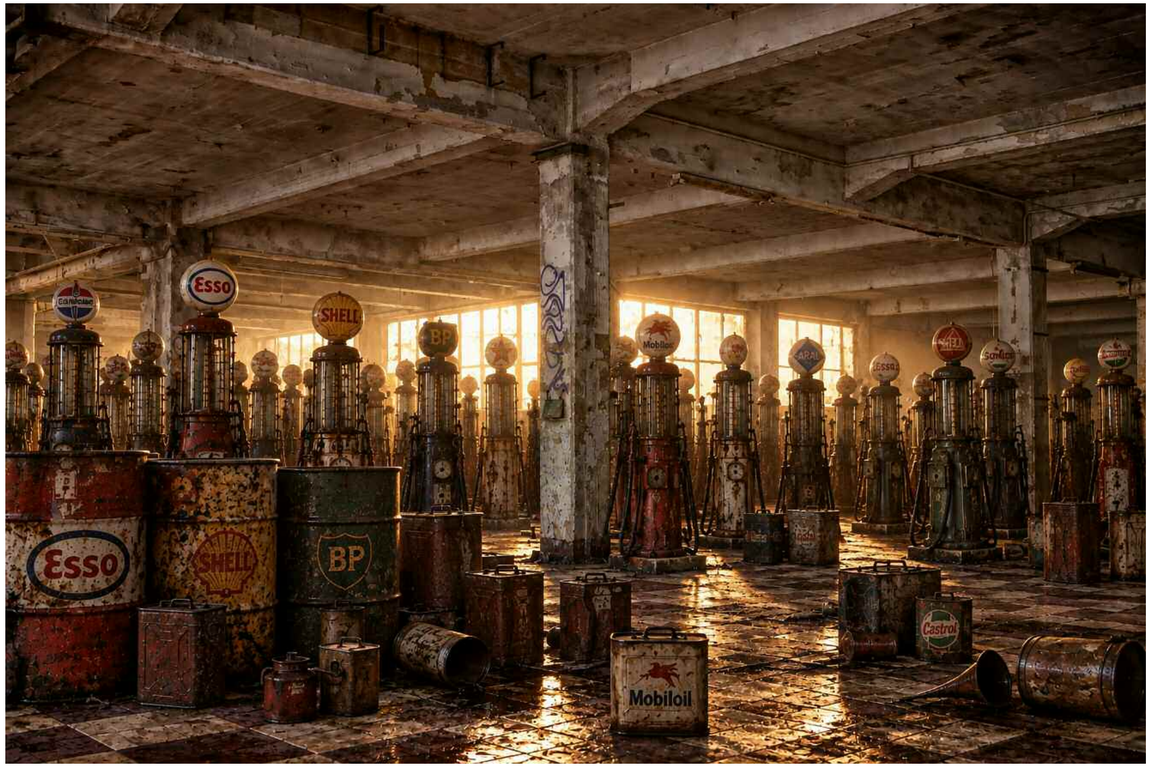



Esso
STANDARD
STANDARD
Service
Batterien
Reifen
Ölwechsel

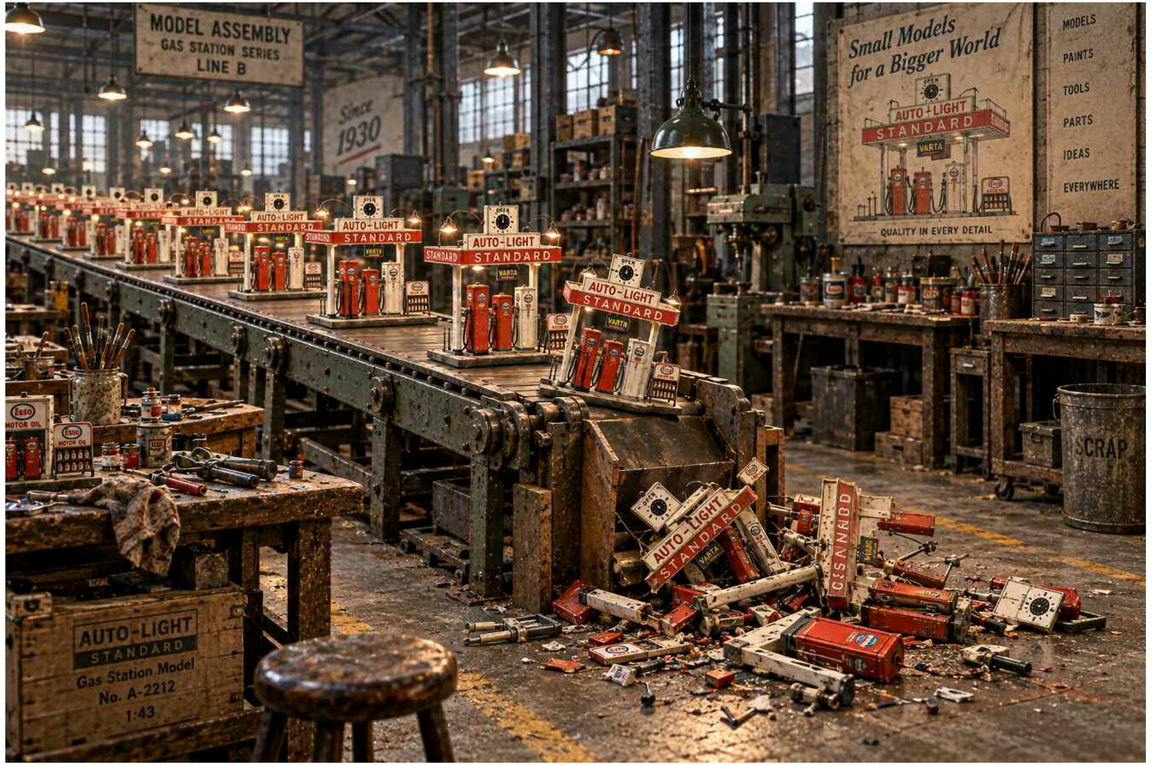
From here, the view might once have been a reason to stop, even with a full tank. Stretch your legs. Look across the valley. Take a little longer than you needed.




STANDARD OIL
Esso
STANDARD
U1223
Icons
of the Road
America on
the Move
1920–1940
Roads, fuel and freedom
shaped a nation. These images
capture the spirit of an era
in simple, enduring forms.
V-550
Standard Oil
Paper cut (single sheet)
400 x 300 cm
2024


Esso
SHELL
BP
Mobiloil
Castrol


SHELL
GASOLINE


MODEL ASSEMBLY
GAS STATION SERIES
LINE B
Since 1930
Small Models for a Bigger World
AUTO-LIGHT
STANDARD
QUALITY IN EVERY DETAIL
MODELS
PAINTS
TOOLS
PARTS
IDEAS
EVERYWHERE
AUTO-LIGHT
STANDARD
Gas Station Model
No. A-2212
1:43
SCRAP




Mobilgas
MOTOR OIL


NO SMOKING
UNLEADED GASOLINE
CONTAINS LEAD
PENNZOIL
UNLEADED
Sky Chief
TEXACO
GASOLINE
SERVICE
AUTO
REPAIR
PARTS
TIRES
BATTERIES
OPEN DAILY
GAS
OIL
TIRES
SERVICE


OBJECTS
OUT OF
TIME
KUNST
TECHNOLOGIE
IMAGINATION
PETROLEUM MENSURA
QVALITAS MOTVM FACIT
1 GALLON
Petroleum Mensura


PLAY
SHAPE
IMAGINE
REPEAT
V-253
- roof
- pumps
- cactus
- details
- weathering
CLAY
BIG ADVENTURES
GAS STATIONS ARE COOL!
THE CAMEL STOP
810
TIRE REPAIR
USED TIRES
U.S. POST OFFICE
SMALL IDEAS
BIG WORLDS
MY GAS STATION


INTERNATIONAL ICE SCULPTURE FESTIVAL
ELM SUPER SERVICE
TIRES
GAS
OIL-GREASE
SHELL GASOLINE & MOTOR OIL
VEEDOL
"Stop" IT'S A PLEASURE TO SERVE YOU"
TIGER OILS
Whiz
CLEANER
CREASER
1st PRIZE
INTERNATIONAL ICE SCULPTURE FESTIVAL
ART IN ICE A COLDER BRIGHTER WORLD


Riverside
Garden Centre
PLANTS
POTS
ORNAMENTS
STATUES
BIRDBATHS
OUTDOOR LIVING
Gardens
Make a
Happier
Place
Quality
Concrete
Garden Ornaments
Built to Last
Concrete
Petrol Pump
£295
Stone Lion
£185


STANDARD OIL CO.
LAC LÉMAN
SOUVENIR DE PROVENCE
The Alps
TUSCANY
GARDENS OF THE WORLD
PARIS
STANDARD OIL CO.


Pl. XXVII
VESTIGIA TEMPORIS
HISTORIA NATURALIS




EVEN SMALL REPAIRS
ARE DONE
RIGHT AWAY
SAME DAY SERVICE
CHAMPION
SPARK PLUGS
BETTER
STARTS
LONGER LIFE
TYRES
BATTERIES
SERVICE
GOOD
CARS
BETTER
PEOPLE
Esso
MOTOR OIL
KEEPS YOUR
ENGINE
YOUNG
Esso
Esso


HUNT HREY
Coca-Cola
MARKSVILLE
CONCOURS D'ELEGANCE
PRESERVING AUTOMOTIVE HISTORY


GAS
OIL
TIRES
NOTHING ELSE
FUEL
FOR
A
DIFFERENT
TIME
SAME
CARS
DIFFERENT
ROADS

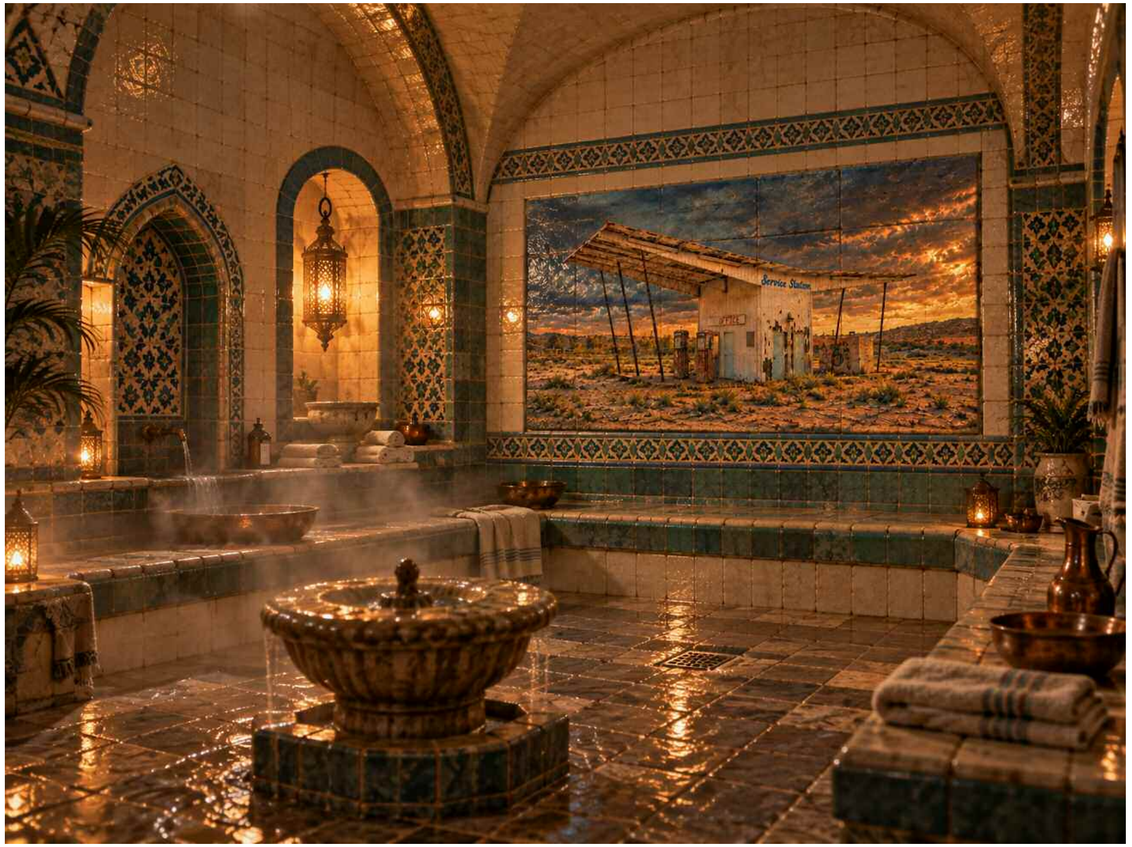



Model Trains
BUILD A SMALLER WORLD
TRAINS
PLANES
AUTOS
KITS
ACCESSORIES
LIONEL TRAINS
AMERICAN RAILROADS
RAIL ROAD CROSSING
SERVICE STATION
HO SCALE
127 PARTS
REALISTIC DETAILS EASY TO BUILD
Classic Models
DESERT STATION
HO SCALE
112 PARTS
REALISTIC DETAILS EASY TO BUILD
Classic Models
LONELY PUMP
HO SCALE
98 PARTS
REALISTIC DETAILS EASY TO BUILD
Classic Models
FRONTIER STATION
HO SCALE
134 PARTS
REALISTIC DETAILS EASY TO BUILD
Classic Models
MARKLIN
FLEISCHMANN
TRIX
Roco
Small Details Big Stories
Esso
DESERT CENTER
TRAINS MAKE GOOD FRIENDS


E SO


A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE ON EVERYDAY THINGS
WHEELS & ELSEWHERE
BEYOND THE ROAD
WHEELS & ELSEWHERE
PLACES
OBJECTS
STORIES
MODERN LIVING TIMELESS DESIGN
AUTHENTIC
CRAFTED SPACES
LOST PLACES
MODERN INTERIORS


UPHOLSTERY
TRADITIONAL CRAFTSMANSHIP
FINE FABRICS
RESTORATION
NEW LIFE FOR
OLD TREASURES
CUSTOM
UPHOLSTERY
CHAIRS
SOFAS
AUTOMOTIVE
SPECIAL PROJECTS
QUALITY
PRESERVES
HISTORY
UPHOLSTERY
FABRICS
TOOLS
TRADITION


Service Station




MOTEL
NO
YES


Our World
LITTLE EXPLORER
TOYS
CONTAINS LEAD
GASOLINE


PRESERVING OUR MECHANICAL HERITAGE
GASOLINE PUMP V-044a
Restoration Project
DOCUMENT
CONSERVE
STABILIZE
REASSEMBLE
PRESERVE
METAL
GLASS
RUBBER
HARDWARE
DOCUMENTATION
STAR
Object V-044a
Conservation Stabilizer


Esso


HOTEL
GENERAL
GASOLINE


LINE
3
ASSEMBLY
PAINT
QUALITY
FINAL CHECK
DRIVING
A CLEANER
TOMORROW
PEOPLE
TECHNOLOGY
MOBILITY
A BETTER
TOMORROW
ESSO


SOME
PLACES
STAY
FOREVER
CHEVRON
ART
FUELS
LIFE
ACRYLIC
VINTAGE
REFERENCES


STANDARD OIL
STANDARD
STANDARD
Esso
EXTRA
Esso
EXTRA


GARAGE
TANKSTILLE
PHOTOGRAPHS BY DIETER KLEIN
SEPT 12 — NOV 3, 2026
MAIN GALLERY
PHOTOGRAPHY
PLACES
MEMORY
OTHER REALITIES


842
842
BP


SHELL
SHELL
SHELL



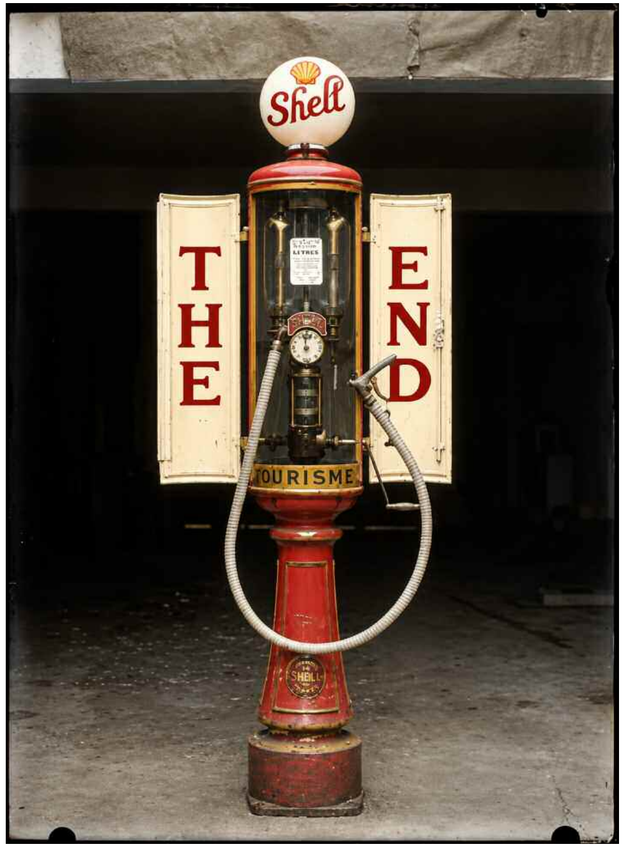



REPAIR CAFÉ
FIX
RESTORE
REUSE
GIVE IT
A LONGER LIFE
NOT
TRASH
JUST
TEMPORARILY
BROKEN
REPAIR
REUSE
REIMAGINE
GASOLINE
TOOLS
FOR A
BETTER
TOMORROW
Electrical
Rubber
Brass
Screws
Springs
Hoses
Meters
Meters
Misc.
Screws
Washers
Gaskets
SMALL PARTS
GOOD
THINGS
GET
REPAIRED


SHELL


ARAL
ARAL
45
BENZIN
NORMAL
ARAL
ATELIER
RÉPARATION
ENTRETIEN
TOUTES MARQUES
Mobiloil


PÂTISSERIE
MAISON FONDÉE EN 1928
GÂTEAUX
TARTES
MACARONS
CHOCOLATS
CONFISERIES
TRADITION
QUALITÉ
PASSION
SPECIAL
ORDER
WEDDING CAKES
BIRTHDAY CAKES
CUSTOM DESIGNS
COLD
DRINKS
JEWELRY
ESSO
Tartes
Petits Fours
Chocolats
Macarons
Love
Fuels
Everything
Pour
les grands
moments
SALON
DE THÉ
DOUCEURS
POUR
TOUTES
LES
OCCASIONS


Shell
THE
END
TOURISME