



Photo by Wim Wenders

Another Saturday morning in Odessa Texas. My friend has gone to Dallas, so I will make my own weekend here, alone and middle of nowhere. Thousands of miles away from my home and friends. I'm staying in this old motel in a small desert town with population of 100 000. You look out of the window at sand dunes, the morning sun is shining on a stunted cactus tree, there is nothing else and time seems endless. Many vicious mosquitoes and sand fleas out here. These goddamn bugs are all around – settling on the notebook, my wrist, my arms, circling the rim of my Corona bottle ... but no bites because my whole body is covered with a cheap foul-smelling oil with no special characteristics, but it works.

I jump into my slab – 91 Grand Mercury Marquis with no AC and drove to my breakfast place. A nice Mexican restaurant Durangos which has been here for more than 50 years and where they serve that REAL Mexican food not that Taco Bell fast fuck. When you go to a random joint in U.S., your condiments are ketchup, mustard, mayo, salt, pepper – and maybe if you are lucky some barbecue sauce. Here, I am constantly amazed by the diverse salsas – red with Japanese chiles, green with jalapeno, limes, chipotle salsa, pinto gallo etc.

At \$1 per quesadilla, which can be stuffed with chicken, pork, beef, cheese, spinach, cactus, huitlacoche (the corn fungus), mushrooms, beans, tomatoes ... well, as you can see, it is hard to control yourself. Julieta and Maria are as always – full of positive energy in this slow dying community. I order my regular breakfast, burrito with different salsas, extra tomatoes and onions. Just like the last 4 months. I sit in my regular corner, watch the same people come by, listen to the same Mexican radio station and hear the same old airconditioner roaring. Everything seems so slow. It's, I suspect, a peculiarity of human brains that will focus on time and what it means, or how fast or slow it is. It's an enigma. It's like remembering an event that seems both long ago and yet just yesterday all at once.

I decided to go back through another neighborhood. It's 10 am and I see some guys waxing their candy painted slabs. I stop in the front of the Telstar motel. It's surrounded by police officers, one of them says that they were dispatched to a call of a "male down" and upon arrival, located an adult male's body chained to a bed and shot in the face. The bareness of having nothing to do made time go extremely slow and scary for this guy. I'm glad it's over now. It's dirty down in the south.

By the noon the best thing to do is to take a nap after a cold Mexican beer. It's so hot down here that even desert snakes hide into their deepest cracks. That's the time when nobody is doing nothing except my neighbours little kids. I do not know exactly what they do over there but they sure make a lot of noise. It cools down a bit in the evening so I think it would be nice to see how Mike is doing.

He works at a gift shop where they sell anything from dildos to crack pipes. The store is located in a trailer – some miles away from the town. They don't get much customers so it's damn cool just to sit on sideways and wonder about our lives while blazing the blunts – watching the day go by.

My Saturday night ends with three shots of Wild Turkey, 101 proof, real Kentucky, best whiskey that you can get here in this rare funhouse called Jungle Julia. I'm sitting on the corner of this smokey bar, looking out of the window. I see two striking looking women under the neon lights, laying on the balcony, enjoying their liquor. I feel a certain kind of bliss comes over me. This crazy little place has got my head all spinning and the only thought in my mind is that I've never enjoyed watching my cigarette burn before. I finally found the time I was looking for. We started talking and now we are here forever.

What lead me to write this story?

Special thanks to Elizabeth Bernays, Allan Luberg and Frank Stolk
Timo Rohula, Gerrit Rietveld Academy, 2009

WIM WENDERS AND THE BEGINNING OF THE JOURNEY

My research begun with watching a movie called "Notebook On Cities & Clothes". It's about famous fashion designer Yohji Yamamoto and it's made by a gifted and poetic filmmaker Wim Wenders. I was more interested in Wenders's work, so I started doing a research about him. I read some articles and watched some movies. It wasn't possible to get all these movies for me so I had to find out some other stuff which can lead me to the next point. I found a bunch of great photos from him which were mostly taken in California and Arizona. I liked the way how he poetically described them. My favorite one was about a desert painting which was hanging on an old lounge wall in Arizona. This painting sucked me into the dust.

- <http://www.wim-wenders.com>
- http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wim_Wenders
- http://www.youtube.com/results?search_type=&search_query=wim+wenders

DESERTS

Next I watched a documentary about deserts from BBC Planet Earth series. Everything was connected with time and slowness there. How the wind and sand have made these enormous dunes, how the cactus trees have been growing and sucking water for ages before us or how all these animals can survive and how they handle the time in this harsh world.

- http://www.bbc.co.uk/pressoffice/pressreleases/stories/2006/02_february/01/earth_deserts.shtml
- http://www.youtube.com/results?search_type=&search_query=bbc+planet+earth+deserts

DUSTY MOTELS AND PEOPLE LIVING IN THE DESERT VILLAGES

I was curious what's the meaning of the time for the people who're living in the desert villages and is their daily life different from us. Scenes from hollywood movies with all these dusty motels and funhouses beside the Route 66 have inspired me a lot. I've never been in the desert or near there.

I started collecting pictures about these motels to get more into the atmosphere I was looking for.

I tried to get a connection with people who are living there but I didn't found any real dwellers. During the search I found a story from the internet about a group of biologists who have been living in Sahara and Sonoran Desert in southern Arizona for few weeks. The story was written by a biologist and writer Elizabeth Bernays. I wanted to know some more so I wrote her a letter, but it seemed unlikely that she would respond to it. At the same time I figured out that one of my friends was living in Texas for two years.

I asked him to write a little story about it.

After two days I got letter back from this biologist. She gave me some great thoughts that kept my journey going. After hearing these stories from two different person I thought that now it's time to connect my own vision there. So I wrote this fictional story related to all these pictures I saw and stories I read.

I couldn't tell it was real or a dream, but I have been there now, staying in a old desert motel in a perfect environment and atmosphere what I created to myself.

- <http://www.elizabethbernays.com/>
- <http://www.eclectica.org/v1on4/bernays.html>











