

06/2018

**John Gossage**

***Looking up Ben James***

**A Fable**

### **Main description**

"It is spring 2008 and my friend, photographer and book collector John Gossage is coming to the UK. We have planned to embark upon a minor road trip together. All John requests is that I drive and that we visit some 'typical Parr seaside locations'. No problem." Martin Parr

"The protagonist of this work, "the photographer", Mr. Parr is pictured throughout the book." John Gossage

Martin Parr and John Gossage's British coastal trip covered spots like Georgian Clifton (Bristol), Severn Bridge (Wales), and Caerau, the mining village near Cardiff where photographer Robert Frank had made his famous report and met the miner Ben James in 1953. The road took them further north to reach Porthmadog and Blaenau Ffestiniog in North Wales, ending in Liverpool, Morecambe and smaller towns in the Lake District. The outcome are shots of street scenes, backyards, gardens, sceneries and very few people on the way, silent testimonies of small, unexpected details of everyday life in a world that is not visited by many, let alone photographed. As Parr concludes in his introductory text: "I am amazed that the collective vision of this volume is so familiar, but entirely alien. It restores my faith in photography to know that a mature and original photographer like John Gossage can see the things I just did not notice."

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### **Biography**

John Gossage, born in New York in 1946, now residing in Washington, D.C., briefly studied with Lisette Model and Alexey Brodovitch from 1960 to 1961. In the late 1960s he learned Telecaster guitar from Roy Buchanan and Danny Gatton, giving up professional music in 1973 and returning to photography.

From 1974 through 1990 he had various exhibitions at Leo Castelli Gallery in New York. From 1990 on he has been concentrating almost exclusively on publications, producing twenty-four different books and boxes on specific bodies of photographic work.

## **Bibliography**

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