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Midnight Modern: Palm Springs Under The Full Moon



Synopsis

Midnight Modern brings into focus a view of Palm Springs and its internationally renowned modernist houses never before shown, shot entirely by the light of the full moon. Created over the course of three years by Australian photographer Tom Blachford, the surreal images function as portals in time, with the homes, cars, and beautiful scenery appearing almost exactly as it all did 60 years ago. The crisp moonlight adds a new dimension to the famous mecca of desert modernism and shows a contrasting side of a town famous for its sunshine, cocktails, and hedonism. Working closely with the Palm Springs community, Blachford gained remarkable access to some of the most coveted architectural jewels in the area, including the Kaufmann Desert House, Edris House, Frey House II, Frank Sinatra Twin Palms Estate, and dozens of restored Alexander tract homes in the valley. Blachford's work builds on the famous documentary and lifestyle approaches of Julius Shulman and Slim Aarons, but injects a signature mystery. His cinematic aesthetic acts as a stage for an untold narrative, inviting the viewer to script their own drama going on behind the walls of these historic homes. This original, lush work is a rich contribution to the record for those midcentury architecture and design lovers fascinated by Palm Springs.

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Customer Reviews

"A surreal ode to the California desert oasis of Palm Springs and its cache of pristine modernist architecture." —Architectural Digest "Tom Blachford's noirish images highlight the mystery and beauty of desert architecture" —Curbed "This collection of richly colored

photographs, taken by moonlight, is filled with darkly glamorous, low-slung buildings; 1950s cars sit on their drives, waiting to take their residents on to the next cocktail." — Newsweek AS SEEN IN: Escapism Magazine, The Guardian, Hemispheres Magazine, Hyperallergic, PIN-UP, Popular Photography, Vanity Fair, Vogue Living and We Heart.

Tom Blachford's photography has a way of connecting the familiar with the surreal, rendering functional, man-made structures into strange and beautiful dreams. Based in Melbourne, Australia, his fascination with texture and shape made for a natural transition into the world of architecture. Blachford's work has been featured in Domus, Wired, Curbed, Dwell, Vogue and Wallpaper*. Chris Menrad, a Southern California native, was drawn to Palm Springs in 1999 by its abundance of modernist architecture. He is a founding board member of the Palm Springs Modern Committee, an organization dedicated to the preservation of Desert Modern architecture, and a real estate agent specializing in architectural properties in the Coachella Valley. He lives in a Krisel-designed home, which was the first Palm Springs' Class One historic Krisel/Alexander-built house.

Great on several fronts, photography, Palm Springs and Mid-Century architecture

Just when we thought that the iconic homes of Palm Springs have been photographed in every conceivable way along comes Tom Blachford, following his Moon Seeker app through the night to capture each house at the right time. Tom's images show the otherworldly beauty of the desert at night as a backdrop to the designs of many celebrated architects who left the incredible, practical works of art that happen to be the houses we live in. A wonderful visual treat and an important book to have for anyone interested in midcentury modern architecture, Palm Springs and a photographer's appreciation for his subjects.

Beautiful book of classic mid century houses and automobiles. What makes this volume so special is all photos were taken with moonlight as the only source of illumination. A serious collector of mid century subjects should have in their library....or coffee table for sure!

I'm a huge fan of buying my books on . Especially all things mid-century modern architecture AND automobiles. This book's description had both. When I read about the dusk/night photos of the homes in Palm Springs I just thought it would be the same great photos I've seen in countless other

books I have....and enjoy frequently. However, these photos look more like they were shot using a filter to "simulate" the dusk/night view. Plus there were no comments below/adjacent to any of the photos....just a quick mention of what kind of car was sitting in the driveway, what year the home was built/designed, and the name of the original architect. No more, no less! I guess the book didn't really promise anything else its just that I'm so use to books on Palm Springs and the associated architecture & homes having a lot more dialogue and not just a "picture book" filled with photos that one could think were accidentally shot with a heavy filter vs. any "starry nighttime" views. Don't get me wrong....if you look close you can see stars in the photos. Its a great "picture book" that doesn't require any concentration on descriptions or background information on architects or builders.

I first became aware of Tom's work several years ago after his first series. I was immediately drawn to the hypnotic images of the homes in my town. The stillness of the desert night, brightly lit by the full moon, is one of the things I love the most about Palm Springs. These homes are classics in their own right, and pairing them with the moonlight creates these striking photos. I was very lucky to spend time last February with Tom as he shot my home. It was an incredible experience, one I will always treasure. This collection is spectacular, and a must for anyone who appreciates mid-century modern architecture, Palm Springs, and architectural photography.

Tom Blachford has invented his own style and system to photograph architecture with only moonlight illuminating. The images are very "film noir" and have a mysterious vibe. Its a different way to see mid-century architecture presented, and it will appeal to both architecture and photography fans alike. And...really enjoyed the vintage cars as well. Totally unique and very cool!

Thank you Tom Blachford for creating a book that not only pays tribute to Mid Century Architecture but also transports the viewer back in time. Your photography is respectful, insightful and most of all beautiful to look at. We have two of your works in our home and everyone that sees them is mesmerised by their beauty. They truly are extraordinary pieces of work that capture a dreamy mystique not often achieved in photography.

The photos in this book are quite magical. The moonlight casts an indescribable light on these gorgeous homes. The light and shadows and twinkly stars above and those rugged mountains beyond are all hallmarks of Palm Springs. This book is a must-have for the coffee table! I pour over it often.

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