

Paul Fuentes

ARTS & CULTURE

Looking closer at the work of Paul Fuentes reveals quirky disparities; like a scene out of Alice in Wonderland or Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas.

Words: Emma-Kate Wilson | **Photography:** Paul Fuentes



Pig Party by Paul Fuentes. Photo - [Paul Fuentes](#).



Italy by Paul Fuentes. Photo - [Paul Fuentes](#).

Vintage cars and a medley of animals intersect timeless imagery of the American landscape in London-based Paul Fuentes surrealist photo compositions. It seems very appropriate that the artist describes them only as “dreamy.” The soft pastel hues feed into this notion, as does the giraffe popping its head through a pink mini or the black panther sunbaking on the vintage orange sun lounger.

Inspired by old photographs, films, mid-century advertising, and magazines, Paul invites an art travel collection that is reminiscent of a bygone era. Suitably he counts the classic Slim Aarons images of a glamour-set exploring the world or painter David Hockney’s depiction of Californian charm as creative sources.

The Palm Springs aesthetic was something he discovered on his first trip, where he realised it all made sense to him: “the desert, the architecture, the views, the style and color... it was like an awakening.” The pop-art motif appears throughout Paul’s idiosyncratic compositions, something he has always loved since a young child. “I was fascinated by color, and pop culture, which I guess reflects a lot of joy and happiness,” he explains.



“Mexico itself has influenced me a lot, the colors, the irony, the warm and the happiness,” shares Paul. *Porche* by Paul Fuentes. Photo - [Paul Fuentes](#).

Growing up in Mexico, Paul comes from a creative background; his mother is a designer and his father a musician and producer. It felt natural for him to progress into an artistic career path, beginning with graphic design in Mexico City. “Mexico itself has influenced me a lot, the colors, the irony, the warm and the happiness,” he shares. In fact, the use of pastel colours began here.

The artistic process begins by scouting the location, sketching a type of set, and then forming the general composition and palette of bright, pop art colours. “There is always some photoshop edition and compositing,” Paul adds, “and I work with all the elements separately, I don’t use any kind of filter or presents.”

“I love Palm Springs, the first time I went, I remember thinking, this all makes sense to me, the desert, the architecture, the views, the style and color.”

Within his practice, there is a fluidity between his graphic design background and his photographs – namely those iconic pastel hues. Paul also worked as a creative director of a magazine for five years when he started the PF Design Collection, but the duality doesn’t stop there. “I consider myself as a creative; honestly I do not care that much about the titles – I like to people to decide that themselves.”

Fundamentally across everything the artist does invites curiosity through travel, finding joy in colour, and remembering a child-like innocence to play – even if we’ll have to settle for only Instagram travelling for now!



Palm Springs Tiger by Paul Fuentes. Photo - [Paul Fuentes](#).



Lake Como Bellagi by Paul Fuentes. Photo - [Paul Fuentes](#).



Tiger Motel by Paul Fuentes. Photo - [Paul Fuentes](#).