

PROVOCATIVE**NATION**

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Celebrate Earth Day with photography about America's green movement. "Shifting Normal" photo exhibition explores sustainability across America.

NEW YORK, April 13, 2010. Who is green and why? In September 2009, Brooklyn photographers Mauro Clerici and Tonianne Fleig embarked on a road trip across the United States to find out.

While adapting their lifestyle to include more sustainable practices, Mauro and Tonianne realized that the "greening" of America wasn't as honest a practice as they had assumed. They became aware of unsubstantiated environmental claims and misleading language that led to confusion as to when something can be called sustainable.

The couple decided to travel the country to find a more truthful definition of what it means to be green. Their only agenda: connect with individuals who are trying to make a difference —whether they're off the grid, under the radar or up front and center. "The current sustainability movement is asking us to go on a lifestyle diet without cutting out any of the fat. We wanted to meet people who made deeper commitments to live sustainably," says Tonianne.

Traveling with their own reusable provisions in a hybrid car, Clerici and Fleig logged about 11,000 miles over 56 days. Compared to a standard American mid-size car, their carbon oxide emission should have been close to 10,207 lbs CO₂. Instead, thanks to the hybrid engine, they were able to produce less than half of that: 4,695 lbs CO₂.

They spoke with people from many walks of life. In Detroit, they talked with Tyree Guyton, an urban environmental artist and founder of The Heidelberg Project. In Greensburg, Kansas, they met with Daniel Wallach, the founder of Greensburg GreenTown; an organization that is rebuilding the EF 5 tornado devastated city as a model of sustainability. In Houston they met with Randy Evans, the former executive chef at Brennan's of Houston who was about to open Haven, his first sustainable restaurant. While on the road, they documented these stories and many more in a blog at <http://www.provocativenation.com/trip>. "Everyone we spoke to had similar motivations and frustrations. They wanted to leave planet Earth in a healthy state for future generations but felt the country was not responding fast enough" says Clerici.

"Shifting Normal" is a visual narrative that highlights nine of these stories. Tonianne says, "We want these images and words to deepen people's understanding of what it means to live more sustainably. We want to show, through example, that we need to shift our way of thinking if we truly want to adapt to a new normal."

A reception for "Shifting Normal" will open on April 22nd from 6-9PM at Kevin Barry Gallery located at 25 Victory Blvd in Staten Island. Exhibit will run from April 19– June 15 2010. An original sound installation by film composer Ko Seungyeon will be played during the opening.

About Provocative Nation: Led by Mauro Clerici and Tonianne Fleig, Provocative Nation is an ongoing project that explores the evolving sustainability movement in America. Although Americans represent roughly 5 percent of the world's population, they generate 40 percent of its

waste. Provocative Nation seeks to learn about the diverse entrepreneurial, creative and educational endeavors average Americans are pursuing in the spirit of sustainability—while also examining unsustainable institutional and behavioral norms. (<http://www.provocativenation.com>)

About Mauro Clerici and Tonianne Fleig: Mauro Clerici works full-time at a marketing research company. He continued to work his corporate job from the road in addition to blogging and shooting for Provocative Nation. Tonianne Fleig has worked as a print producer in the advertising industry for the past 10 years. She is now working as a film editor, producer and photographer.

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