



CRAZY PHOTOGRAPHY

Diane Rortex



'Don't play with your food!' goes mother's famous mantra, aimed at children the world over for generations. But, as Pierre Javelle and Akiko Ida have artfully proved, playing with food can unlock a world of ingenious creativity - a universe where skiers plummet down slopes of Chantilly cream, or where penguins dodge polar bears on icebergs made of marshmallow.

Pierre and Akiko met whilst studying photography at the school of Arts Décoratifs in Paris. He, Burgundian by birth, had grown up on a diet of Doisneau and Cartier-Bresson; she, from Japan, spent her childhood baking and photographing bread. Both graduated to a career in food photography. Together, they created the Minimiam project, in which foodstuffs become a microworld populated by tiny plastic figures only 1.5 centimetres tall. Some of the figures busy themselves with relatively mundane activities, pushing a tiny lawn mower over the furry surface of a kiwi fruit for example; others inhabit dangerous, fantastical worlds, in which they dress as ninjas and aim guns at trays of sushi. Clearly, Pierre and Akiko generate a sense of fun through their photography, but

they also draw our attention to the fantastic details of food - the unconsidered colours or textures of the things that we consume every day.



Mock up a nightmarish contemporary event, such as the 9/11 attacks; add small children in costumes; and then stir slowly to await general outrage. Jonathan Hobin's photographs were always going to provoke a strong reaction. However, the Canadian photo-based artist is keen to stress that his prime intent is to explore the effects of media coverage on the young.

In the Playroom is an ongoing series of images. Alongside the aforementioned World Trade Center attacks, Hobin has recreated the murder of child beauty pageant queen JonBenet Ramsey, the abuse of Iraqi prisoners by American soldiers at Abu Grahیب, the 2004 Boxing Day tsunami and eight other grimly iconic scenes. Previously, he has given fables and fairy tales a kitchen-sink twist, but turned his sights on the historic, tragic events of recent history for In the Playroom. Hobin has described such news stories as being 'modern fairy tales', drawing attention to the fact that, try as they might to protect them, parents can't completely shield their children from the images displayed in the world's media. Some of the children in the photographs are professional child models; others are family and the children of friends of the artist.



«IN THE PLAYROOM» series: THE TWINS

In Liu Di's China the animals are big. Really big. They impose themselves on the cities, static in the landscape with their faces set in a philosophical stare. For the viewer, the animals' presence forces a departure from the comfort and banality of everyday life.

The young Chinese photographer has exhibited his work in Beijing and Hong Kong as well as at the Musée de l'Élysée in Lausanne. In 2010 he won the Lacoste Élysée prize for his Animal Regulation series of manipulated photographs. The images present a realitybending set of contradictory elements. The landscapes are familiar; their apartment buildings typical of many Asian cities, but the solitary creatures within are a huge distortion of what we're used to. Rhinos, pandas and toads are enlarged to an impossible scale. They sit or stand, oversized in the city, gazing out passively across the landscape. The animals' heads are out of proportion to their bodies, further testing the viewer's entrenched perceptions of nature. Liu Di asks us to break away from the conventional, monotonous ways in which we see the world. He wants us to deconstruct what we know, thereby enabling a re-examination of reality and, he hopes, the discovery of value in our trivial lives. The artist has given this approach a name: 'anti-common sense', a technique designed to attenuate the psychological numbness of our daily routines.

*ANIMAL REGULATION NO. 4
ANIMAL REGULATION NO. 6 (Overleaf, left)
ANIMAL REGULATION NO. 2 (Overleaf, right)*





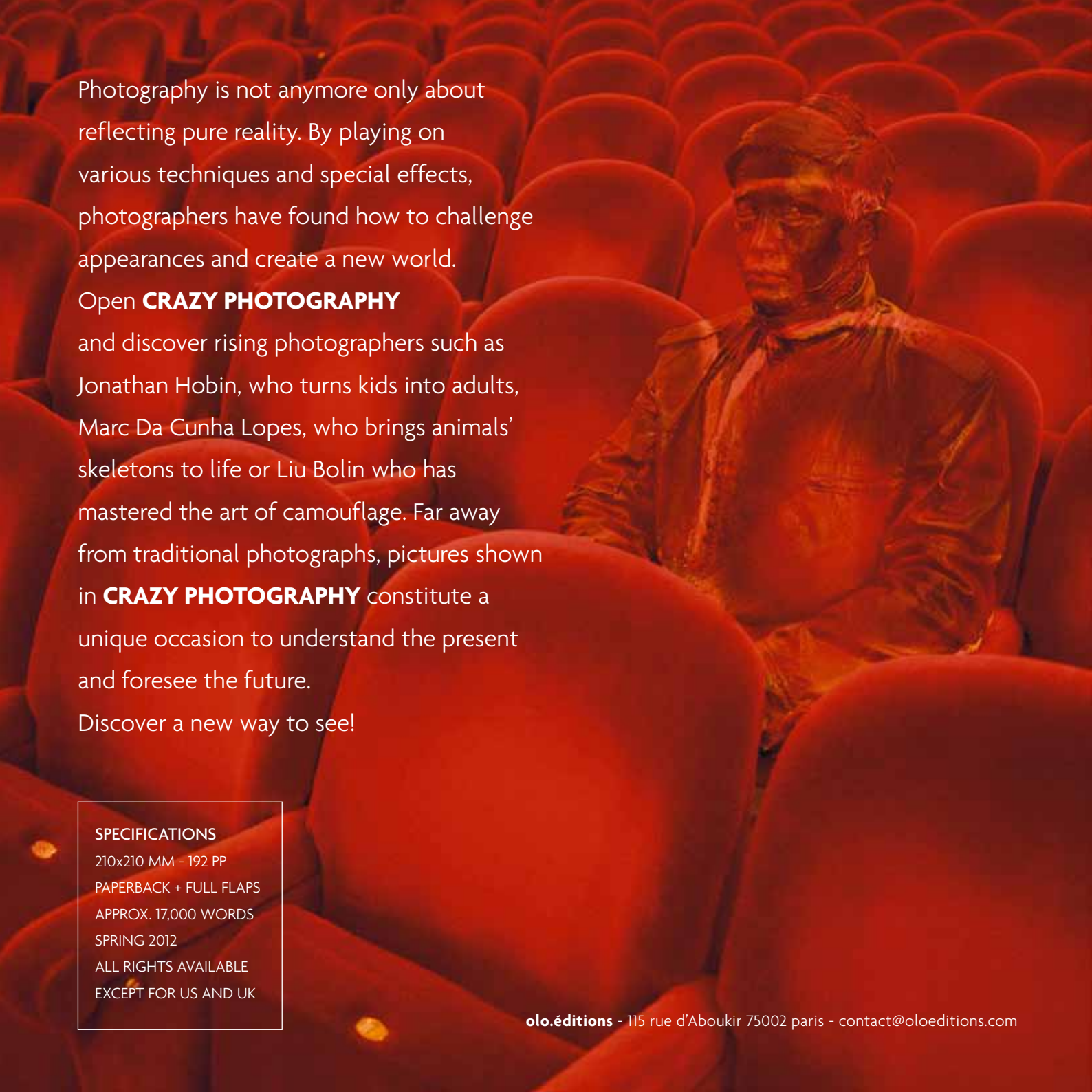
Everything that you see in Lori Nix's photographs exists - the images haven't been retouched. Each work in *The City* series features a miniature post-apocalyptic landscape, painstakingly crafted at tabletop scale by Lori over a period of several months.

The Brooklyn-based artist describes herself as a 'non-traditional' photographer, in so much as the subject matter is manufactured rather than 'found'. She depicts the decline of humanity, photographing a city devoid of inhabitants and in which the manmade structures decay - the museums, theatres and bars being reclaimed by Mother Nature. The influence of the great Romantic painters, so adept at rendering both horror and beauty, is clear. In Lori's work the danger and disaster is, however, tempered by a touch of humour, a manifestation, she says, of the sense of euphoria that a child might take from natural calamities such as a snowstorm, flood or insect infestation. In describing *The City* series, where the flora, fauna and insects reclaim the landscape that was theirs before man's encroachment, Lori comments: "I am afraid of what the future holds if we do not change our ways regarding climate, but at the same time I am fascinated by what a changing world can bring."



«THE CITY» series: LIBRARY
«THE CITY» series: GREAT HALL (Left)





Photography is not anymore only about reflecting pure reality. By playing on various techniques and special effects, photographers have found how to challenge appearances and create a new world.

Open **CRAZY PHOTOGRAPHY** and discover rising photographers such as Jonathan Hobin, who turns kids into adults, Marc Da Cunha Lopes, who brings animals' skeletons to life or Liu Bolin who has mastered the art of camouflage. Far away from traditional photographs, pictures shown in **CRAZY PHOTOGRAPHY** constitute a unique occasion to understand the present and foresee the future.

Discover a new way to see!

SPECIFICATIONS

210x210 MM - 192 PP

PAPERBACK + FULL FLAPS

APPROX. 17,000 WORDS

SPRING 2012

ALL RIGHTS AVAILABLE

EXCEPT FOR US AND UK