



Benoit Aquin

Pages 34, 35, 36, 37

Nationality **Canadian**
Born **1963**

Benoit Aquin is a photojournalist and landscape photographer who explores large-scale environmental issues and their impact on humanity. He has exhibited widely and his work is part of the collection in the Canadian Museum of Contemporary Photography, Ottawa. He has received numerous awards for his work including the Grand Prix in the Lux competitions in 2001 and 2007, the Prix Antoine-Desilets for his image titled *Tsunami* (2001), Grand Prix, Prix du Jury and Prix Le Soleil in the Regards du Québec competition (1996). His photographs have been featured in publications worldwide.

Artist statement

One of the greatest environmental disasters of our time: The Chinese "Dust Bowl" is probably the largest conversion of productive land into sand anywhere in the world. Deserts cover 18% of China today. Of those, 78% are natural, while 22% were created by humans.

With unsustainable practices, to date, Chinese farmers and herders have transformed about 400,000 square kilometres of cropland and verdant prairie into new desert. The shepherds have overgrazed the steppes, allowing their sheep and goats to chew the grass all the way down to its roots. The farmers, for their part, have over-exploited the arable land by opening fragile grasslands to cultivation and over-pumping rivers and aquifers in the oases bordering the ancient deserts. As the deep aquifer under the North China Plain is depleted, the region is losing its last water reserve; its only safety cushion, stretching the capacity of the Yellow River.

The soil, once it is barren, is swept up by the wind into dust storms, battering the capital Beijing and then moving on to Korea and Japan. The most massive of the yellow clouds of dust make their way across the Pacific and reach North America. The loss of precious topsoil for Chinese agriculture ends up polluting both China's cities and countries halfway around the world. The area of the desert thus created is equivalent to more than half the farmland in Canada. Three hundred million people are affected by dust storms in China. One hundred and eighty million people depend on the Yellow River. Hundreds of thousands of people have already been relocated and cities with ecological refugees have been created. The Chinese "Dust Bowl" is a fascinating subject. It is a compelling environmental manmade disaster and photographically an interesting journey. When I embarked on this trip I was convinced that I could make surreal images and at the same time raise awareness. This is about scarce water resources, desertification and ecological refugees in China.



Thomas Joshua Cooper

Pages 53, 54

Nationality **American**
Born **1946**

Thomas Joshua Cooper has exhibited worldwide in venues such as Tate St Ives, the Serpentine Gallery, London, Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, Lisbon and the Museum of Modern Art, Oslo. His work features in many major collections including those of the Victoria & Albert Museum, London, the Art Institute of Chicago, Museum of Art, Baltimore, La Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris, Boston Museum of Fine Art, Centro Atlantico de Arte Moderna, Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, The International Museum of Photography, George Eastman House, Rochester, The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles. In 1982 he established the Department of Photography at the Glasgow School of Art. He is a Royal Scottish Academician and has received a number of awards in the UK and US including 1999 the Major Artist's Award, Lannan Foundation, Santa Fe (1999), the Major Artists Award, Scottish Arts Council (1994), and the National Endowment for the Arts, Photography Fellow, Washington, D.C. (1978).

Artist statement

I have, since 1968, stuck to vows made in a moment of epiphany to make art only with my 1898 AGFA camera, to only make images outdoors, and to only ever make one image in any one place. With this singular and focused body of work, I have come to be regarded as one of the world's important landscape artists. *The World's Edge – The Atlantic Basin Project* is an ambitious mission, begun nearly twenty years ago, to photographically 'map' the extremities of the lands and islands of all five continents that surround the entire Atlantic Ocean.

The images of water encapsulate both the otherworldliness and the vital reality of the sea: the ethereal and frightening power of water – light, shadow, movement, depth, and volume. Most of these locations are difficult to reach; the border between man's foothold on earth and the unknown depths of the substance making up the vast majority of the world. Some places are endangered – with the delicate balance of the planet disrupted can these places be sustained? My project is a subtle, aesthetic and almost abstract meditation on the process of globalization, and the wandering transoceanic evolution of Western culture, and the human stories wrapped up in this grand sweep. Water is an element that binds us all, a vital necessity, a force with the power of affecting life and death. Growing up in the wilderness I learned the visceral connection between land and identity, as well as the tendency of the human eye to overlay what it surveys with stories and memories. When I travel to the edges of land, where water is all that lies ahead, these stories are clearly audible. My pictures offer an opportunity to meditate upon the grandeur of history and are an analogy for the particularity and sameness of our experience, especially in this age of increasing homogeneity; when the sustainability of our existence is everyone's concern.



Susan Derges

Pages 44, 45, 46

Nationality **British**
Born **1955**

Susan Derges is an internationally recognised art photographer based in Devon. She has exhibited widely in the UK and internationally at such venues as The Photographers Gallery, London, New World Art Center, Houston and Tokyo Design Centre. She also stages regular solo exhibitions at Paul Kasmin Gallery, New York, Purdy Hicks Gallery, London, Ingleby Gallery, Edinburgh, Nichido Contemporary Art, Tokyo and Joh Yun Gallery, Seoul/Busan. Her work is held in many collections, including those of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York and the Victoria & Albert Museum, London. Derges has completed numerous public commissions within the UK, Europe, US, Japan and Korea, the most recent of which has been a major public commission for The Eden Project, Cornwall

Artist statement

Water has been the focus of my photographic work for the past 27 years. I first became aware of the fragility and preciousness of this element when I lived in Japan in the early 1980s simultaneously with seeing it's potential to operate as a metaphor for a holistic approach to the natural world that includes our creative participation.

The Observer and the Observed series (1991) uses an early scientific experiment, demonstrating how a vibrating water jet can appear as distinct water droplets when viewed under a strobe light vibrating at the same frequency, as a metaphor for the interaction of the observer with that which is observed.

Full Circle (1992–1993) and the *River Taw* series (1997–1998) were more directly concerned with the natural cycles of particular life forms and their relationship to specific bodies of water. *Full Circle* continues with the metaphor of a scientific gaze whereas the *River Taw* and related prints attempt a more direct and tactile relationship to water by using the landscape as a large darkroom that enables photo paper to be immersed beneath the surface of water and exposed to a microsecond of light that prints all of the detail of river, fauna and environment at a one-to-one scale. The prints are intended be of a scale that makes a direct relationship with the body, where one is not only immersed in the image but through that experience makes connections with the materiality of water itself.

The Eden Project provided an opportunity to explore these ideas within an appropriate architectural setting – the Education Resource Centre was built on the growth principals of the forest canopy. Large scale photograms of the transformation of water within the hydrological cycle were printed into the laminate of architectural glass and became 37 panels that formed the solar terrace within the roof structure of the building, which people could walk around both in the open air and in the interior rooms of the top floor of the building.

The metamorphosis of water as it recycles itself throughout the environment became a visual narrative that also operated as a metaphor for wider cycles of life, death and renewal.

David Maisel

Pages 12,13,14,15

Nationality **American**
Born 1961

David Maisel has exhibited his works in solo and group exhibitions internationally most recently at the Santa Barbara Museum of Art and Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, San Francisco. Many of his photographs are held in permanent collections, such as the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. His work has been the subject of two monographs: *The Lake Project* (Nazraeli Press, 2004), and *Oblivion* (Nazraeli Press, 2006). Later in 2008 Chronicle Books will publish a third monograph, *Library of Dust*, and the Nazraeli Press will publish *Cascade Effect*, his collaboration with the poet Susan Stewart. He has held residencies at the Headlands Institute for the Arts (2008) and the Getty Research Institute (2007) and in 1992 he received the Opolis Foundation Photography Award.

Artist statement

The Lake Project and *Terminal Mirage* are two chapters in my extensive photographic series called Black Maps, which consists of my aerial photographs of environmentally impacted landscapes. These images depict the undoing of the natural world by wide-scaled human activity. The pictures of these damaged wastelands, where our collective efforts have eradicated the natural order, are both spectacular and horrifying. The forms of environmental disquiet and degradation function on both a documentary and a metaphorical level, and the aerial perspective enables the viewer to experience the landscape like a vast map of its own undoing.

The Lake Project consists of my aerial photographs from the site of Owens Lake, a formerly 250-square mile lake in California on the eastern side of the Sierra Mountains. Beginning in 1913, the Owens River was diverted into the Owens Valley Aqueduct to bring water to the fledgling desert city of Los Angeles, some two hundred miles to the south. By 1926, the lake was essentially depleted, exposing vast mineral flats and transforming a fertile valley into an arid playa. In the ensuing decades, fierce winds have scoured microscopic particles from the lakebed, creating extensive carcinogenic dust storms. Indeed, the lakebed has become the highest source of particulate matter pollution in the United States, emitting some 300,000 tons annually of cadmium, chromium, arsenic and other materials. The concentration of minerals in the little water remaining in Owens Lake is so artificially high that blooms of microscopic bacterial organisms result, turning the liquid a deep, bloody red.

In *Terminal Mirage*, my aerial images of the Great Salt Lake in Utah become a means to explore "the disturbingly engaging duality between beauty and repulsion", as the curator Anne Tucker has written about this series. The Great Salt Lake is, indeed a 'terminal' lake – it has no natural outlets – and this physical property results in the lake's exceptional richness in sodium, magnesium, potassium, chloride, sulphate, and other elements. Commercially operated evaporation ponds ring the lake's perimeter, in order to extract these minerals from the lake for industrial use. The nearby Tooele Army Depot (depicted in my penultimate photograph submitted from this series) is, however, the site of many of the nation's aging chemical weapons, housed in thousands of storage 'igloos'. These weapons are periodically incinerated on site, sending contaminated ash over the waters of the Great Salt Lake, which is then – disturbingly, inexplicably – mined for its mineral content.

Sammy Baloji

Pages 46, 47, 48, 49

Nationality Congolese
Born Lubumbashi, Congo, 1978

Since graduating in Humanities from the University of Lubumbashi, Sammy Baloji has dedicated himself to photography and film. His works explore the cultural, industrial and architectural heritage of his homeland, the former breakaway state of Katanga.

Sammy has exhibited his works extensively both in his hometown and internationally, including Cup Biennale in South Africa and an exhibition at the Musée du Quai Branly, Paris. He was awarded the Prix Afrique en Création (Cultures France) and the Prix pour l'Image (Fondation Blachère) at the 2007 Bamako Biennale. In 2008, he played a role in PICHA! (literally 'image' in Swahili), a series of meetings to explore the conception of images, aimed at helping local populations to understand their history through old images and new photos by emerging artists.

Artist statement

*An African Phantom:
Between Ruins and Modernity*

The history of my homeland, Katanga, has profoundly influenced my work, which is dedicated to the industrial heritage of Congo, a country whose contemporary history has been defined by the colonial exploitation of its valuable mineral resources. In 2004, I became fascinated by the ghostly character of the Gécamines (General Mines Society) factories in Lubumbashi. They symbolise a bygone age of wealth in Katanga, and reveal the industrial side of Africa.

The concept of inherited memory and the effect of living amidst the visible ruins of colonialism are central to my art. Past projects focus on colonial architecture, while my current work still bears a direct relation to the colonial past that gave rise to the cities of Katanga province. These cities were built upon mines now consigned to Katanga's history. The modern-day inhabitants of these cities are at the heart of my investigation: by merging historical black and white photos of the mines of Union Minière du Haut Katanga with contemporary colour images of disused sites in devastated landscapes, the past becomes present.

My photomontages are a way of accessing and repossessing the past in order to look to the future. Throughout its history, the Congo has undergone several dark eras, and the scars left by colonial industrial enterprise stand as testament to a time, not so long ago, when the pursuit of wealth reshaped the Congolese landscape and society. To superimpose past onto present demonstrates the will to denounce past and present abuses, and to reveal the enduring chain of cause and effect throughout history.

Andreas Gursky

Pages 13

Nationality German
Born Leipzig, Germany, 1955

Andreas Gursky makes large-scale, colour photographs distinctive for their incisive and critical look at the effect of capitalism and globalisation on contemporary life.

Studying under Bernd and Hilla Becher at the Düsseldorf Kunstakademie in the early 1980s, Gursky first adopted a style and method closely following Becher's systematic approach to photography, creating small, black and white prints. In the early 1980s he broke from this tradition, using colour film and spontaneous observation to make a series of images of people at leisure, such as hikers, swimmers and skiers, depicted as tiny figures in a vast landscape.

Since the 1990s, Gursky has concentrated on sites of commerce and tourism – drawing attention to today's burgeoning high-tech industry and global markets. His imagery ranges from the vast, anonymous architecture of modern-day hotel lobbies, apartment buildings and warehouses to stock exchanges and parliaments in places as far a field as Shanghai, Brasília, Los Angeles and Hong Kong. Although his work adopts the scale and composition of historical landscape paintings, his photographs are often derived from inauspicious sources: a black and white photograph in a newspaper, for example, that is then researched at length before the final photograph is shot and often digitally altered before printing.

Gursky exhibits internationally. In 2001 a solo exhibition organised by the Museum of Modern Art visited Centro de Arte Reina Sofia, Madrid, Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris, Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago and San Francisco Museum of Modern Art. In 2007 a retrospective initiated by Haus der Kunst, Munich visited Istanbul Modern, Sharjah Art Museum, Ekaterina Foundation, Moscow and National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne). His latest exhibition '80-08 opened at the Museum Haus Esters / Haus Lange, Krefeld and visited Moderna Museet, Stockholm and Vancouver Art

Artist statement

The 3.06 x 2.22 metre work *Untitled XIII, 2002*, confronts the viewer with an apparently infinite landscape of rubbish. In this portrait format, the landfill site in Chimalhuacán, Mexico City, extends as far as the eye can see.

However, the viewer is not primarily confronted with the waste of civilisation dumped in the Third World. At first glance the high degree of abstraction suggests an image with a more aesthetic quality and distinctly pictorial characteristics. Only on closer inspection do the razor-sharp details reveal themselves, initiating a discourse on reality, globalisation and the resulting consequences.

As a result, the image becomes a contemporary reinterpretation of the traditional world landscape, in which the world's waste assumes the position of the former landscape ideal. There is no specified locality, the subject of the image serving rather as a metaphor for global perspective and the social utopias of today.

Naoya Hatakeyama

Pages 30, 31, 87, 88, 89

Nationality Japanese
Born Iwate, Japan, 1958

Naoya Hatakeyama studied at the School of Art and Design, University of Tsukuba, Japan, before becoming a professional photographer.

Based in Tokyo, the majority of his work is focused on the city and urban landscapes. His portfolio of solo exhibitions includes Artists Today XI: SUMI Wakiro/ HATAKEYAMA Naoya, The Museum of Modern Art, Kamakura (2007), Naoya Hatakeyama, Rencontres Internationales de la Photographie, Arles and Fundación BBK, Bilbao (2003). His work has also featured in group shows at a number of international venues such as the Tate Modern, London and the International Center of Photography, New York. In 1997, he received the 22nd Kimura Ihei Memorial Photography Award.

Hatakeyama's photographs are found in public collections including the National Museum of Modern Art, Osaka, National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo, Tokyo Metropolitan Museum of Photography, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven, Swiss Foundation for Photography, Winterthur, La Maison Européenne de la Photographie, Paris and the Victoria & Albert Museum, London.

Artist statement

My photographic works examine the city in serial format – its past, present and future. Through formal experimentation, I aim to utilise the vocabulary of photography to reflect upon the relationship between humans and their environment.

Since graduation in 1984, following my studies under the pioneering Japanese photographer Kiyoji Otsuji at Tsukuba University, I have been based in Tokyo. This location has served as a model for the development of a body of work largely concerned with the relationship between nature, the city and photography.

Nadav Kander

Pages 66, 67, 68, 69

Nationality British
Born Tel Aviv, Israel, 1961

Nadav Kander is recognised as one of the most original and highly regarded photographers of our time. His work is included in the National Portrait Gallery and the Victoria & Albert Museum in London. Kander grew up in Johannesburg and began photographing at the age of thirteen. When he was drafted into the South African Air Force, he worked in the darkroom printing aerial photographs. He moved to London in 1986, where he continues to live and work.

His photographs have featured in publications including *The Sunday Times Magazine*, *Rolling Stone*, *Another Man* and *Dazed & Confused*. In 2009, *The New York Times Magazine* devoted an entire issue to *Obama's People*, his 52 portraits of President Obama's inaugural administration. His exhibitions include *Obama's People* at Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery (2009), *Yangtze From East to West* at Flowers Gallery, London (2008), Shanghai Art Museum, China (2006) and *Keep Your Distance* at the Palais de Tokyo, Paris (2005). He has received numerous awards from the D&AD and the John Koval Foundation in the UK, Epic in Europe and the Art Directors Club and IPA in the USA. He was awarded the Royal Photographic Society's Terence Donovan Award in 2005 and 2007, and has recently received the Silver Photographer of the Year Award at Lianzhou International Photo Festival 2008 in China.

Artist statement

The Yangtze River, which forms the premise to this body of work, is the main artery that flows 4100 miles (6500 km) across China, travelling from its farthest westerly point in Qinghai Province to Shanghai in the east. The river is embedded in the consciousness of the Chinese people. More people live along its banks than in the USA – one in every eighteen people on the planet.

Using the river as a metaphor for constant change, I have photographed the landscape and people along its banks from river mouth to source. After several trips to different parts of the River, it became clear that what I responded to, and how I felt while in China, was permeating my pictures: a formalness and unease showed of a country that feels both at the beginning of a new era and at odds with itself. China is a nation that appears to be severing its roots, by destroying its past in the wake of the sheer force of moving 'forward' at such an astounding and unnatural pace. Here are a people that are scarring their country and a country that is scarring its people.

My sense of alienation is explained pictorially by 'stepping back' and showing humans dwarfed by their surroundings. Common man has little say in China's progression and this smallness of the individual is alluded to in the work.

The sociological context of this project is very important and ever-present. The displacement of three million people along a 400-mile (600-km) stretch of the River, and the impact on humanity when a country moves ahead to the future at a lightning pace, are themes that will inevitably be present within the work.

A Chinese man whom I became friends with whilst working on the project reiterated what many Chinese people feel: "Why do we have to destroy to develop?" He explained how in Britain many of us could revisit the place of our childhood, knowing that it will be much the same, and reminding us of our families and upbringing. In China that is virtually impossible. The scale of development has left most places unrecognisable: "Nothing is the same. We can't revisit where we came from because it no longer exists."

China's landscape is changing daily both economically and physically. These are

Yao Lu

Pages 14, 15, 16, 17

Nationality Chinese
Born Beijing, China, 1967

Yao Lu is an emerging Chinese artist and Associate Professor of Photography at the department of the Central Academy of Fine Arts in Beijing. His work has been shown in numerous festivals and collective exhibitions around China (Lianzhou International Photo Festival 2007, New Chinese Occidentalism – Chinese Contemporary Art in Beijing 2006, Pingyao International Photography Festival 2004). Until recently, however, his work had rarely been shown outside China. This has now changed, with his work featured at Paris Photo, the Daegu Photo Biennale, Seoul, Schloss Pillnitz, Dresden, Foto Festival 2008, Lodz, and Houston. In 2008, Lu was named winner of the 2008 BMW Paris Photo Prize for contemporary photography.

Positioned somewhere between painting and photography, between past and present, Yao Lu's work speaks of the radical mutation affecting nature in China, as the environment is subjected to rampant urbanisation and the associated ecological threats endangering the natural world.

Artist statement

My works mimic traditional Chinese painting to express the contemporary landscape of China. China is developing dramatically, and with constant construction many things have disappeared and continue to disappear. In my photographs, what initially appear to be green hills are actually rubbish dumps covered with the 'shield' – a green netting that is ubiquitous in China.

I want the world to undergo benign transformation by prioritising environmental protection so that man can live in greater harmony with his surroundings.

Photography can be understood in a traditional way: it can 'record' histories long before our own time, and it can take people back to experiences and situations many years ago. But photography is also highly contemporary. Modern techniques can re-assemble and re-edit what is captured on film to create illusions for the viewer. In these works, you see images that are both real and fictional.

Stylistically in my photographs, I believe in preserving a feeling of beauty in the framing of the images, paying particular attention to composition, line and density, all the elements regularly contained in painting. I think good artwork is composed of many elements, and it should reflect the knowledge and skill of the artist. A good work of art has intelligence.

The flexibility of photography provides an expressive forum for me. I can manipulate it in many ways to make my creations.

Edgar Martins

Pages 58, 59, 60, 61

Nationality Portuguese
Born Évora, Portugal, 1977

Edgar Martins grew up in Macau, China, where he published his first novel, *Mãe, deixa-me fazer o pino*. In 1996 he moved to the UK, where he later completed an MA in Photography and Fine Art at the Royal College of Art. Martins has exhibited extensively throughout Asia, America and Europe and has received numerous awards for his photographic and literary work.

He was the recipient of the inaugural and much sought-after New York Photography Award (Fine Art Category) in May 2008, and was also selected for the Terry O'Neill Award (UK), the prestigious BES Photo Prize (Portugal) and awarded a National Media Museum Bursary Award (UK). More recently Martins was awarded the SONY World Photography Award (landscape category). He lives and works in the UK.

Artist statement

The Diminishing Present series (2005–2008) of forest fires in Portugal has a deceptive painterly quality. It is hard to believe that representations of ruin could be so seductive.

Portugal's 2005–2008 fires were the result of extended drought and extreme heat; many believed them to be an expression of global climate change. Moreover, they could be seen as evidence of environmental mismanagement: much of the forest was eucalyptus, a fast-growing but extremely flammable tree that is frequently planted in reforestation projects.

There is a convergence of subject and medium in these smoky photographs. They both portray and are made possible by one material suspended in another: their subject is suspended carbon; their medium photographic emulsion. These images were produced in conjunction with the National Fire Protection Unit and included a period of mandatory residency with firefighters in Portalegre. This training enabled me to work close-up to the flames, using a wider-angled lens than normal. This proximity to fire resulted in a technical accident that accounts in part for the tone of the images: in extreme close-ups of the flames, the film was fogged by exposure to intense heat, which reinforces the atmospheric quality of the smoke. In a sense, the subject became the medium here – the heat is presented as much as re-presented; it enacted a technical transformation that was encoded in the film itself.

The Diminishing Present is a photographic work structured within the pictorial traditions of Arcadian and romantic paintings. These images reflect both on the physical death of the landscape and the death of the landscape as a pictorial 'theme'.

Nationality Canadian
Born Ontario, Canada, 1955

Edward Burtynsky is one of Canada's leading photographers. He is a graduate of Ryerson University (Bachelor of Applied Arts in Photography) and studied Graphic Art at Niagara College in Welland. He links the development of his photographic work to his early exposure to the sites and images of the General Motors plant in his hometown.

Burtynsky's imagery explores the intricate link between industry, nature and humanity's impact upon the Earth. His photographic depictions of global industrial landscapes feature in the collections of many museums around the world, including the National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa and The Museum of Modern Art, New York.

Burtynsky has exhibited extensively internationally and regularly lectures on photographic art. His images have appeared in various periodicals, among which are: *Art in America*, *Smithsonian*, *Harper's Magazine*, *Artforum*, *Saturday Night Magazine*, *Canadian Art*, *National Geographic* and *The New York Times*. He has received many distinctions, including the TED Prize, Flying Elephant Fellowship, Applied Arts Magazine Award(s), and the Roloff Beny Photography Book Award. In 2006 he was awarded the title of Officer of the Order of Canada and received an honorary doctorate of laws from Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario.

In 1985, Burtynsky founded Toronto Image Works, a darkroom rental facility, custom photo laboratory, digital imaging and new media computer-training centre serving all levels of Toronto's art community.

Artist statement

Oil

When I first began photographing industry, it was out of a sense of awe at what humankind as a species was up to. Man's achievements had become a source of infinite possibilities. But as time progressed, that flush of wonder began to turn. The car that I drove cross-country began to represent not only freedom, but also something much more conflicted. I began to think about oil itself: as both the source of energy that makes everything possible, and as a source of dread, because of the way that it continues to endanger our habitat.

In 1997, I experienced my own 'oil epiphany'. It occurred to me that all the vast man-altered landscapes I had pursued for over twenty years had been made possible by the discovery of oil and the progress occasioned by the internal combustion engine. Over the next twelve years I researched and photographed the largest oil fields that I could find. I then went on to make images of refineries, freeway interchanges, automobile plants and the scrap industry resulting from the recycling of cars. I began to look at motor culture, where vast tribes come together with their vehicles as the main attraction.

In no way can one encompass the influence and extended landscape of this thing we call 'oil'. These images can therefore be seen as the individual notations of the global economic growth that is made possible through this massive energy force and the cumulative effects of the industrial evolution upon our planet.

Pages 60, 61, 74

Nationality American

Born Massachusetts, USA, 1952

Mitch Epstein is a filmmaker and photographer. He studied at the Cooper Union, New York, Rhode Island School of Design and Union College, New York. After a time spent working abroad, Epstein returned to America and began photographing his native country.

His photographs are included in numerous museum collections, including those of New York's The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Museum of Modern Art and Whitney Museum of American Art, the J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles and the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art.

Epstein's seven books include the retrospective monograph *Mitch Epstein: Work* (2006), *Recreation: American Photographs 1973-1988* (2005) and *Family Business* (2003) which received the 2004 Kraszna-Krausz Photography Book Award.

The American Academy in Berlin awarded Epstein the Guna S. Mundheim Berlin Prize in the Visual Arts (2008). Other prizes include a Guggenheim Fellowship in 2003. Epstein has also worked as a director, cinematographer and production designer on several films, including *Dad, Salaam Bombay!* and *Mississippi Masala*.

Artist statement

American Power

In 2003, I was asked to photograph the erasure of a small town in Ohio. In Cheshire, houses were being razed by the hour and streets were nearly emptied of human life. American Electric Power, one of the world's largest utility companies, had bought out the town and issued a gagging order to silence its residents, after increasing complaints that AEP's plant had contaminated the health of Cheshire's citizens. I was not the same after this trip. The cost of growth, with its implicit energy demands, had become terrifyingly vivid. I had seen firsthand the grave results of fossil fuel production on human life and our ecosystem. To further examine the role of energy in the United States, I embarked on a five-year-long, twenty-five state project called *American Power*. I photographed a consumerist society inured to the consequences of unbridled consumption. Many living in the shadows of power plants despaired their polluted water and air, but did not have the economic resources to relocate. Growth no longer meant progress but self-destruction.

I wanted to photograph the dangerous trinity of corporate power, consumerist advertising and a spellbound citizenry – one that believes that success means having more and using more. *American Power* is an active response to the American Dream gone awry. My project focuses on the United States not only because I am American, but because the US has exported its model of unrestricted growth around the world in the form of mass consumerism, corporatism and sprawl. We now need to export a revised model of growth, a revised American Dream. I included pictures in *American Power* of renewable energy – wind, biotech, solar – to show that a healthier, more economical and compassionate way of life is possible. *American Power* bears witness to the cost of growth; and it asks viewers to consider the landscape they have altered – and take responsibility for it.

After the project was finished, exhibited and published as a book, I looked for a way to disseminate this work beyond the art world. I created an interactive public art project with my wife, writer Susan Bell, that used billboards in Ohio and a website (whatisamericanpower.com) to share *American Power* more widely.



Chris Jordan

Pages 40, 41

Nationality American
Born 1963

Chris Jordan is a corporate lawyer turned photographic artist based in Seattle, USA. His work explores the detritus of mass culture, from images of mountains of garbage to his digitally-manipulated photographs depicting hundreds of thousands of cell phones, aluminium cans, plastic bottles and the like.

He has exhibited internationally in both solo and group exhibitions, most recently at the Museum of Science, Boston, Pacific Science Center, Seattle, Winsor Gallery, Vancouver and the Alcatel-Lucent Headquarters, Paris. In 2007, he was invited to participate in the Envisioning Change exhibition at the Nobel Peace Center, Oslo where he was also presented with a Green Leaf Award.

Jordan's work has been featured in many magazines and he has published three books: *Intolerable Beauty* (2005), *In Katrina's Wake: Portraits of Loss from an Unnatural Disaster* (2006) and, most recently, *Running the Numbers* (2009).

Artist statement

Midway: Message from the Gyre

In this project I returned to traditional photography in order to document a richly symbolic environmental tragedy: the plastic-filled carcasses of dead baby albatrosses on Midway Atoll in the Pacific. These images draw the viewer intimately into the horrors of global mass-consumerism, reminding us of the consequences of allowing growth to extend unchecked to every corner of the globe.

These photographs of albatross chicks were made in 2009 and 2010 on Midway Atoll, a tiny stretch of sand and coral near the middle of the North Pacific. The nesting babies are fed belly-fulls of plastic by their parents, who soar out over the vast polluted ocean, collecting what looks to them like food to bring back to their young. On this diet of human trash, every year tens of thousands of albatross chicks die on Midway from starvation, toxicity and choking. To document this phenomenon as faithfully as possible, not a single piece of plastic in any of these photographs was moved, placed, manipulated, arranged or altered in any way. These images depict the actual stomach contents of baby birds in one of the world's most remote marine sanctuaries, more than 2,000 miles from the nearest continent.

Vera Lutter

Pages 22, 23

Nationality German

Born Kaiserslautern, Germany, 1960

After studying at the Academy of Fine Arts in Munich and receiving a diploma in 1991, Vera Lutter moved to New York and studied Photography and Related Media at the School of Visual Arts, receiving an MFA in 1995.

Inspired by the city's presence, light and architecture, Lutter began experimenting with photography. Her photographic process involves capturing an immediate imprint of her experience by turning whole rooms into large pinhole cameras and exposing images directly on to wall-size sheets of photographic paper. Maintaining this concept of directness and keen to avoid any alteration, she retains the negative image and refrains from multiplication or reproduction. Though she is permanently based in New York, Lutter works in locations around the world, where she employs her technique of camera obscura, or pinhole camera, in projects that focus on industrial sites, particularly those that pertain to transportation and fabrication. They are often once-useful places that have now fallen into disuse – architecture, shipyards, airports and abandoned factories.

Lutter's images have been exhibited in group and solo shows, including the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia, Madrid, the Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris, Dia:Beacon and Dia:Chelsea, New York, Kunsthalle Basel, The Museum of Modern Art, New York and the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York. Her photographs feature in many permanent collections, including The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, the Neue Galerie, New York and the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art.

Artist statement

Body of Work

My work is informed by an interest in the parallels between industrial development since the nineteenth century and the discovery of the chemical process needed to make a stable photographic image. Progressing simultaneously, both phenomena are responsible for unfathomable changes in the way we live and trade information; both are currently undergoing great changes.

In my investigation of these parallels, I often discover sublime beauty within the destructive power inherent in many industrial accomplishments. In the name of growth, entire regions are radically and permanently transformed. My photographs from Berlin and Battersea Power Station study the change of city landscape due to the introduction of large-scale power plants into the urban environment. Vacant decaying factories like the Pepsi Cola factory in New York are a testimony to the power and destructive force of industrial transformation and migration that has been underway for decades.

In earlier images, I photographed vessels of transportation within their industrial environment, including shipyards, airports and the hangar in which a Zeppelin was constructed. My intention in these photographs was to focus on the monumental, the sublime and the overbearing appearance and threatening function of these objects. The image of an oilrig nearing completion in a German shipyard is suddenly charged with a reminder of its destructive potential as the Gulf of Mexico is devastated by the worst oil spill in the history of the U.S. My interest in transportation relates to globalisation, which is part of our lives and provides the comforts we expect to live with. Often it destroys regional economies and radically threatens the environment.

My work explores the enormous achievements and the destructiveness within the industrial process. While it does not provide the answer to sustainable growth, its very existence provokes contemplation, hoping this may lead to greater respect for the environment.

Michael Wolf

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Nationality German
Born Munich, Germany, 1954

The work of the German photographer Michael Wolf uncovers and documents a subject of vernacular culture – the making and shaping of personal spaces. Wolf grew up in the United States, Europe and Canada, studying at UC Berkeley, California and at the Folkwang School in Essen, Germany. He moved to Hong Kong in 1994 and worked for eight years as contract photographer for *Stern* magazine, after which he withdrew from editorial photography in order to pursue his own projects. Wolf's photographic work in Asia focuses on the city and its architectural structures and follows on from his interest in people and human interaction.

Wolf's work has been exhibited in numerous locations, including the Venice Biennale for Architecture (2010), Aperture Gallery, New York, Museum Centre Vapriikki, Tampere, Museum of Work, Hamburg and Museum of Contemporary Photography, Chicago. His work is held in permanent collections across the USA and Germany, including the Brooklyn Museum and The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, San Jose Museum of Art, California, the Museum of Contemporary Photography, Chicago, Museum Folkwang, Essen and the Deutsches Architekturmuseum, Frankfurt. He has won first prize in the World Press Photo Award competition on two occasions (2004 & 2010). He has published seven photo books including *Tokyo Compression* (2010), *Hong Kong Inside Outside* (2009), *The Transparent City* (2008) and *Pieces of China* (2007).

Artist statement

Architecture of Density

Hong Kong is one of the most densely populated metropolitan areas with an overall density of nearly 6,700 people per square kilometre. The majority of Hong Kong's citizens live in flats in high-rise buildings whose units can house as many as 10,000 people. My series *Architecture of Density* investigates these enormous city blocks and finds a mesmerising abstraction in the buildings' facades.

The structures in the series are photographed without reference to the context of sky or ground, and many buildings are seen in a state of repair or construction: their walls covered with a grid of scaffolding or the soft-coloured curtains that protect the streets below from falling debris. From a distance, such elements become a part of an intricate design. Upon closer inspection of each photograph, the anonymous public face of the city is full of rewarding detail – public space is private space, large swatches of colour give way to smaller pieces of people's lives. The trappings of the people are still visible here: their days inform the detail of these buildings. Bits of laundry and hanging plants pepper the tiny rectangles of windows – the only irregularities in this orderly design. The images from *Architecture of Density* give us an inkling of what our cities could look like if growth continues unchecked.

