

Toluca Editions: 6 Projects

Thomas Ruff, Takashi Homma, Graciela Iturbide, Nobuyoshi Araki,
Jean Marc Bustamante, Andres Serrano

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Opening reception: Thursday October 29, from 6 to 8 pm

Josée Bienvenu Gallery is pleased to present Toluca Editions: 6 projects, the first exhibition in the United States of the young art publishing house founded in Paris in 2003 by Alexis Fabry and Olivier Andreotti. Each Toluca publication is the result of an intimate collaboration between an artist -using the medium of photography- a writer, and a designer. The artist's book as we have known it since the early 20th century gives way to a hybrid art object, taking up a novel position in the field. Last year, the 16 works published by Toluca were exhibited at Mexico City's Museum of Modern Art in a scenography conceived by Mauricio Rocha one of Mexico's leading figures in contemporary architecture. The exhibition will launch the latest Toluca collaboration with Thomas Ruff and a preview of their upcoming project with Rachel Whiteread [text by Ingo Schulze, case by Naoto Fukasawa].

Thomas Ruff [Fabio Morabito Text / Barber & Osgerby Case]

For the series *Houses*, shot between 1987 and 1991, Thomas Ruff photographed the exteriors of unspectacular buildings from the fifties and seventies in and around Dusseldorf. A text by Mexican based writer Fabio Morabito evokes the relationship between the two Germanies. The case, by the British design duo Barber & Osgerby, was made with a construction process used in the automobile industry to cut metal with extreme precision. The perfectly smooth steel sheet echoes the cold architectures photographed by Ruff.

Takashi Homma [Patrick Bouvet Text / NENDO Case]

Born in Japan in 1962, Takashi Homma has been photographing the centre and outskirts of Tokyo for over ten years. His collection, *Tokyo Suburbia*, published in 1998 is considered one of the masterpieces of 20th Century illustrated photography books. To evoke the deserted and almost unreal landscape of the photographs, French author Patrick Bouvet describes a young Tokyoite caught up in an extremely violent video game, and the contrasting calm that follows the trance - a mega city fast asleep. The case was conceived by the Tokyo based design firm NENDO, using a laser prototyping technology that transforms polyamide particles into a hard mold based on 3D CAD data. Founded by young architect Oki Sato in 2002, NENDO has received more than 30 design awards, their iconic "cabbage chair" made of paper waste generated by the fabrication of Issey Miyake's *Pleats Please*, is currently on view at the Museum of Modern Art in New York.

Graciela Iturbide [Abdourahman Waberi Text / Ryuji Mitani Case]

Considered a major figure in Latin American contemporary photography, Graciela Iturbide, born in Mexico in 1942, has had twelve books published and received the Hasseblad prize in 2008. Haunted by death and the sacred, her work is infused with indigenous rites of passage and rituals. To accompany her four self-portraits, Somalian born French writer Abdourahman Waberi stages a story of controlled violence, where a frustrated rioter in an imaginary country sees herself as part of the animal species. The handmade walnut case was conceived by Ryuji Mitani whose work as a craftsman carpenter in Japan is exclusively limited to objects for the table, sculpted out of precious woods.

Nobuyoshi Araki [Michel Bulteau Text]

For over 30 years, Nobuyoshi Araki has been documenting changes in Japan through a largely auto-biographical oeuvre haunted by loss and the possessive nature of love. Born in 1940, he still has vivid memories from his childhood in Tokyo, ravaged by the bombings of World War II. The six photographs were taken in the early seventies, they depict crushed soda cans found on the streets of Tokyo, and arranged as a tableau. Michel Bulteau wrote six poems, translated into Japanese and printed as overprints in an origami like structure. The case, by graphic designer Olivier Andreotti takes inspiration from the steep slopes that crown most buildings in Tokyo. Its painted plastic material recalls contemporary Japanese architecture.

Jean Marc Bustamante

For four years, from 1978 to 1982, Jean Marc Bustamante explored the outskirts of Barcelona equipped with a 7 x 9 inch view camera and produced more than 130 "tableaux photographiques". The ten photographs in this wooden case, designed by the artist himself, were printed by Dye Transfer in a 15 x 19 inch format.

Andres Serrano [Mario Bellatin Text / Harri Koskinen Case]

The five photographs are part of the emblematic series *Morgues* from 1992, shown here for the first time. Andres Serrano insists the corpses do not represent death "*To me they are very present, almost alive. There's a strong, natural force that comes forth in this series, its skin breathes.*" The container by acclaimed Finnish designer Harri Koskinen (known internationally for his lamp *Block* made of a glass block surrounding a bulb) is made of two stainless steel hulls with a double strap, evoking the sliding boxes for dead bodies in a morgue. The text, by Mexican writer Mario Bellatin, spreads out over fake anatomical parts and describes a miniature form of humanity seen through the magnifying glass of a podiatrist.

Project Room

Barbara Brändli

Sistema Nervioso

Vintage Photographs from 1970

Sistema Nervioso is the most ambitious body of work by Swiss born Venezuelan photographer Barbara Brändli. It is a kind of "pop manifesto", a portrait of the city of Caracas, filled with ads, graffiti and other urban signs. For *Sistema Nervioso*, a book published in 1975 she collaborated with the famous Venezuelan artistic director John Lange. Born in Switzerland in 1932, Barbara Brandli has been living in Venezuela for the last forty years. She's known for her work documenting the life of the Yanomami Indians in Venezuela.