



Liz Wolfe

蠕動的甜美 另翼的粉紅

Liz Wolfe has been called "The amazing eye candy photographer." In montages that juxtapose the commonplace with the exotic, Wolfe's work is alternatively funny, bizarre, sublime, or all three.

Liz Wolfe 素有「神奇蜜眼攝影師」之稱，在平凡場景與奇異事物共存的蒙太奇式作品當中，Wolfe 的作品會讓人感到另類的有趣、詭異、奇特，或三種感覺兼具。



✕: Please briefly introduce yourself for XFUNS readers.

My name is Liz Wolfe; I'm a photographer. I'm originally from the Canadian prairies, and now I live in Toronto. Since I started working professionally in 2004, I've been creating mainly art images, and recently I have started to do commercial work. My style is colorful and glossy, revoltingly sugary and painstakingly contrived.

✕: Please share with us your earliest influences that led you into the field of photography.

I discovered photography when I was 15 years old. My parents set up a tiny darkroom in our basement to print family photos in black-and-white; we were living in the middle of nowhere and this provided a fascinating distraction during a long, cold winter. So this is where I found photography, in a basement, on the edge of a prairie town, surrounded by endless fields of snow-covered wheat. My mom taught me how to use her 35mm camera and my dad taught me how to make prints. And that was it; I was in love!

When I was 17, I moved to London, UK, where I worked as a shopgirl. On my days off, I visited all the great galleries, and it was during this time that I stumbled upon a retrospective of the surrealist photographer Man Ray. I had never seen photos like this before; prior to this, I had thought of a camera as a tool used exclusively to document one's life and surroundings. I was amazed that the medium could be used to create such arresting imagery, and inspired by the concept of designing the elements of a photograph from scratch, as opposed to photographing things that already existed in the real world.

✕: What stimulates your creativity?

Really boring things stimulate my creativity, the more boring the better. Ideas for photos come into my head when I am, for example, listening to a man who is trying to impress me talk endlessly about himself. My mind wanders, I disengage completely, and suddenly I am entering an imaginary world where everything is beautiful and colorful and strange. On a superficial level, I appear to be involved in a conversation -- I'm smiling, reacting, nodding my head at all the right times -- but in reality I have retreated into my own secret fantasy world.

I spend a lot of time in my private world; it protects me from many things. And it is the place where my photographs come to life.

✕: Can you tell us a little about your studies and how this has shaped your work?

I have a degree in journalism, and I worked in my 20s as a writer and editor. Though I always loved photography, I never intended to do it professionally. I grew up in an ultra working-class rural society and, on the surface, I've always been a very practical and reality-based person. My first jobs, when I was 15 and 16, were cleaning offices and working in a gas station. So doing something esoteric like photography seemed totally ridiculous to me. (Actually, now that I'm doing it, it still seems ridiculous!)

I think my training in journalism has, in many ways, helped me in my photography career. In

my own way, I'm attempting to create a series of visual documents, just as a photojournalist would. I'm building my own private universe, a parallel world, and then documenting it to expose what lies beneath the surface of reality.

✕: What or who is your biggest influence in terms of style?

The aesthetic look of my photos has less to do with consciously trying to create a specific style and more to do with my obsessive need to arrange objects. I love to create environments that look painstakingly contrived, and the process of physically arranging the elements of the photographs is very meditative for me. When I am shooting, I make a conscious effort to think as little as possible in the conventional linear sense, and focus instead on the intuitive process of recreating the image I have envisioned in my mind.

When I was a kid, I had a babysitter who loved embroidery and decorating cakes, and I think, on some subliminal level, she must have influenced me. Surface design and texture play an important role in my photographs, and in many ways, the process of creating the look of the photos is very similar to embroidering or decorating elaborate cakes.

Artist File

Age 年齡:

34

Horoscope 星座:

Pisces / Year of the Rat 雙魚座 / 生肖屬鼠

City 城市:

Toronto 多倫多

Personal Website 個人網頁:

www.lizwolfe.com

Art Tools / Technique 使用工具 / 技巧:

Mamiya RZ67 camera / Photoshop

Specialist 專長:

Photography 攝影

Favorite Color 最喜歡的颜色:

You already know -- Pink! 你已經知道了一粉紅色!

Favorite Artist 最喜歡的藝術家:

Hayao Miyazaki 宮崎駿

Favorite Fashion / Trendy Brand 最喜歡的時尚品牌:

I like to support new designers + also I buy lots of second-hand fashions.

我喜歡資助新的設計師 + 我也買了很多二手時尚商品

Motto 座右銘:

Do before you think. 先做 · 再想







✕: What is the main concept and key element of your work?

Conceptually, I'm interested in creating magical worlds, in exploring things that lie beneath the surface, in constructing false realities in which elements of beauty and horror can comfortably coexist. The ultra-contrived, artificial aesthetic of my work is an important element. The images are glossy and stylized and commercial-looking, but underneath the seductive sheen of color and fun, there are disturbing elements. I hope people will think about this aspect of my work and how it relates to consumerism, pornography and the role of the media in our society.

There are many stories I want to tell, without explaining too much, and using a visual language that is otherworldly and mysterious, but that reeks of reality; part sci-fi, part crime scene, part candy explosion. My stories are often about the experiences of young girls because I think, historically speaking, the stories of young women are rarely told properly. And this is something I want to explore visually.

✕: Have you ever confronted any difficulties when creating works?

Yes, I am totally disorganized and my working space is chaotic and crazy and there are always things spilling and falling over and making a big mess. For example, when I was styling the photo with the blood and the peppermint stick through the hand, the model (my boyfriend) kept falling asleep, and every time I had everything perfectly set up, he would wake up and all the candies would fall down. Also, I am allergic to seafood; I get a rash just from touching it. So, the images containing squid and octopi are especially problematic and dangerous for me.

✕: How did you select color when you are creating?

Color plays a very important role in my photographs. I believe that color affects the way people feel and so I spend a lot of time selecting my colors. Generally, my colors are planned in advance, and I often use colored pencils to sketch what the photo will look like before I shoot it. I love bright colors, and also I am interested in the ambiguity that occurs when these candy colors are combined with unconventional and occasionally grotesque subject matter.

My color combinations are childlike and I think this helps me to address some issues about children through a child's eyes, which is very different than illustrating these issues from the adult perspective. Something that has always interested me is the line that separates a child's world from an adult's world. In many ways, I feel that I have never fully graduated to the adult way of seeing things.

✕: What kind of lifestyle and personality do those characters in your visual creations have?

When people appear in my photographs, which is rare, they are barely human. They have no evident personality, their faces are not visible, it is not entirely clear what is happening with them. My photos are more about what you can't see than what you can see. It's what you can't see that creates meaning. My models look wooden, overly-posed, prop-like; their inhumanity is over-emphasized. Similarly, the animals in my images look either very glossy, almost pornographically so, or completely fake. There are many examples of inanimate humanity and faux nature in my work, and this is intentional.

✕: Please share with us your view on "Fashion" ?

I love fashion and I especially love seeing the work of new designers and crazy, conceptual designs. I like shopping at second-hand stores and I think it's fun to combine new and old

clothes to create an original style. I don't like too-trendy or hugely mass-produced fashions; I like to see what all kinds of people on the street are wearing for everyday life.

Regarding fashion photography, most of it bores me, but there is some really incredible fashion work out there that breaks conventions and elevates the medium to an art form. I love fashion photos that are funny and provocative and over-the-top. I think fashion imagery should focus more on exploring the real experiences of women and less on depicting male fantasies of women. It's not interesting to me to see women presented as sexualized props with no personality. I want to see more of the glamour and fun and sexiness of real women and their daily lives.

✕: Which artist or people you admire most? Why?

I have great respect for people who have no desire to be famous. Also, I admire people who have, through some secret process they are completely unaware of, retained a childlike ability to find beauty in everyday things. I love talking to people who have nothing to prove.

✕: What is the most important thing in your life? How does it reflect on your work?

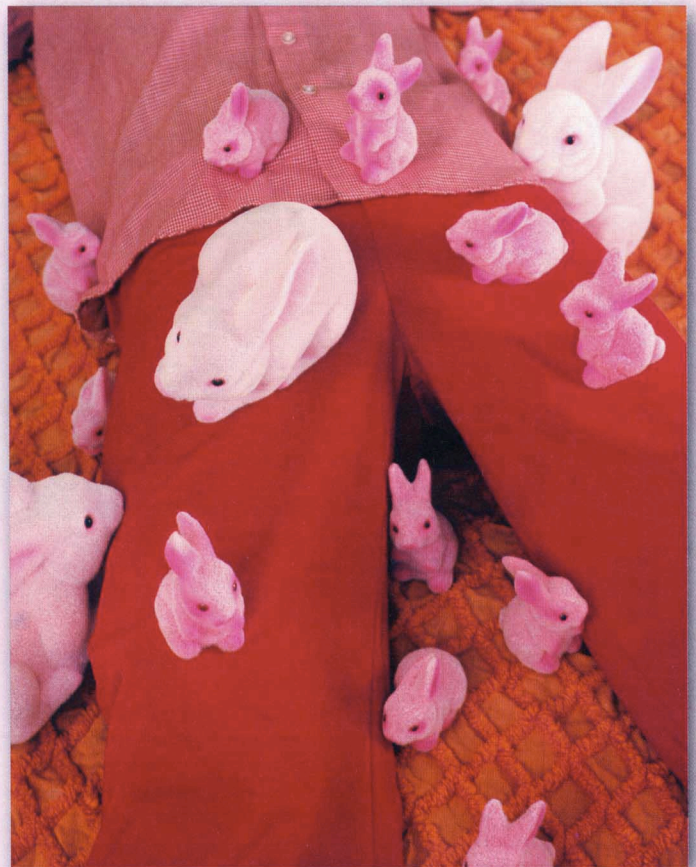
My boyfriend and I just had a baby and this is the most incredible experience of my life so far. It's crazy sometimes, doing photography and taking care of a newborn, but I really love it.

✕: What do you expect to accomplish in the next five years?

I plan to keep working with the same concepts and eventually to expand the scale of my production so that I can create environments that are truly larger than life. I'd like to create huge installations and photograph them. I'd like to do more commercial work, in my style. Also, I'd like to try working with film and video.

✕: Please drop some suggestions to new photographers.

Decide what you want to shoot and shoot it obsessively. Persevere. Be motivated by the desire to create something, not the desire to make money. Have fun, and don't take yourself too seriously. Be fanatical. Don't worry about how others perceive you. Don't over-intellectualize. Be social. Be impractical. Be a visionary. Be constantly aware of the fragility of human life. ✕





✕: 請向放肆的讀者們自我介紹吧。

我名叫 Liz Wolfe，是一名攝影師，原生長於加拿大的牧場，目前則居住在多倫多。2004 年展開職業攝影生涯至今，從事的多半是藝術影像，最近才開始接觸商業廣告作品。我的風格偏向色彩豐富豔麗，極端甜膩而且會令人受不了地做作。

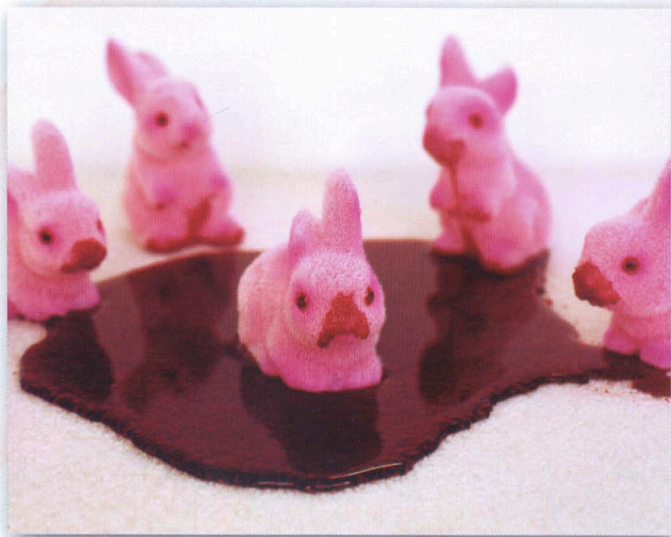
✕: 請和我們分享為何你會進入攝影這個領域？

我 15 歲的時候發現攝影這玩意兒。我爸媽在地下室弄了一間小小的暗房，以便沖洗黑白家庭照。我們住的地方鳥不生蛋，所以攝影可以讓我在漫長寒冬自我消遣。這就是我和攝影結緣的地方：廣大牧場邊的一個地下室，牧場周圍無盡的麥田都被白雪覆蓋著。媽媽教我怎麼使用她那 35 釐米的攝影機，爸爸則教我怎麼沖洗。就是這樣，我愛上了攝影！

17 歲的時候搬到英國倫敦，在賣場裡當店員。放假的時候我會去參觀那些很棒的藝廊，就在那時我碰巧見識到了超現實攝影師 Man Ray 的懷舊作品。在那之前我從沒看過類似的照片，更之前我總認為相機是用來記錄人們的生活和周遭事物的工具。這種用具所創造出來的畫面如此地引人入勝，讓我感到不可思議，用素描設計出相片內容的這個概念也讓我深受啟發，那不同於拍攝已經存在的真實物件。

✕: 你的創造力是受何啟發？

真正無聊的東西能啟發我的創造力，東西越無聊越好。舉例來說，當某人迫使我長時間不得不聽著關於他的事情時，腦子裡就會浮現我想拍的東西，腦海經常四處神遊、百分之百地心不在焉，但是會突然進入一個想像中的世界，那個世界所有東西都很美妙、繽紛又奇異。從表面來看，我狀似在跟別人講話——微笑、回應、適當時機都會點個頭——但實際上我已經回到自己的祕密幻想世界中。很多時間我都在自己的個人世界裡，那兒保護我遠離許多事物，只有在這個世界裡我的攝影才能獲得生命。





×：能談談求學過程以及對創作產生的影響嗎？

我拿的是新聞學位，20 多歲時從事的是作家與編輯的工作。儘管我一直都很愛攝影，卻從未想過要把它拿來當成職業。我生長在極為勞工階級的環境裡，從外表看來，我一直是個很實際也很注重現實面的人。我的第一份工作是 15-16 歲時在加油站裡打雜，對我而言，從事攝影這種耐人尋味的工作根本就是荒謬的事。（即使我現在已身在其中，還是覺得荒謬！）

就許多方面來看，新聞領域的訓練有助於我的攝影生涯。就我自己的方式而言，我會試圖做出一系列的視覺文件，那正如同一般攝影記者所做的。我正在建構一個屬於自己的平行世界，接著再把它拍攝整理出來，揭露現實的表面底下所隱藏的東西。

×：關於風格，你所受到最大的影響為何事物或何人？

我的照片所展現出來的美學印象，比較不是要刻意塑造出某一種風格，而比較像是我安排事物的一種強迫症。我喜歡創造出極度嬌柔做作的環境，而安排這些照片中的物件時的實際過程能讓我沈思很多事情。在拍攝的時候，我會盡可能地刻意不用傳統的邏輯思維進行思考，轉而專注在本能的過程中，拍攝出我心目中想好的畫面。小時候我有一個很喜歡刺繡和裝飾蛋糕的祖母，就某種潛意識而言她一定有影響到我。在我的攝影作品中，畫面的設計和材質扮演很重要的角色，而從許多方面來看，安排相片內容的過程很類似刺繡或是在蛋糕上做裝飾。

×：你作品中的主要概念和元素是什麼？

就概念而言，我喜歡創造充滿魔力的世界，發掘事物表面下隱藏的東西，創造出虛幻真實感，好讓美麗與恐懼能夠在其中相安無事。而其中重要的元素就是極度造作的人工美感，畫面看起來很豔麗、充滿風格、具有商業氣息，但是在誘人的調色遊戲底下，隱藏著令人不安的元素。我希望人們能想想作品中這個層面，想想這和消費主義、色情圖片以及社會媒體之間的關連。

我有好多故事想講，不需要用太多的言詞解釋，而是用一種視覺語言，這種語言雖然屬於另一個神秘世界，卻更能說明真相，感覺像是科幻小說、又像是犯罪場景、也像是甜言蜜語。其中大部分的故事是關於年輕女孩的，因為我覺得歷來這方面的故事很少有說得好的，而這是我所想要用視覺加以探索的東西。

×：進行創作的時候有沒有遇到過任何困難？

有，我整個人毫無組織能力可言，工作室雜亂無章，總是有東西堆得高高的又倒下來，搞得一團亂。舉個例子，我手拿血水和薄荷棒棒糖構圖的時候，模特兒（我的男朋友）一直打瞌睡，每當我把一切安排妥當之後，他經常一醒過來就會讓糖果掉落一地。同時，我對海鮮過敏，光是稍微碰到就會出疹子，所以那些用到烏賊和章魚的作品對我來說尤其麻煩且危險。

✕: 創作時你如何挑選顏色?

顏色在我的相片中占有很重要的角色,我相信色彩會影響人們的感受,所以花了很多時間挑選顏色。一般來說,我的用色都是先選好的,我常會用彩色鉛筆畫出我要拍攝的東西,看看那會是什麼樣子。我很喜愛明亮的顏色,也很喜歡將不同事物擺在一起時所產生的不明確感覺,像是把蜜糖色系結合在不合常理又令人做嘔的物件上面。

我的用色很稚氣,這有助於讓我透過小孩的眼睛來陳述議題,這和用成人的觀點來解釋事物有很大的不同。我向來感到有趣的就那條小孩與大人之間的分界線。許多時候我覺得自己還沒完全過渡到大人看事物的方式。

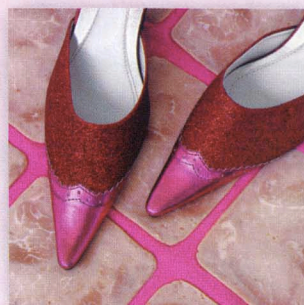
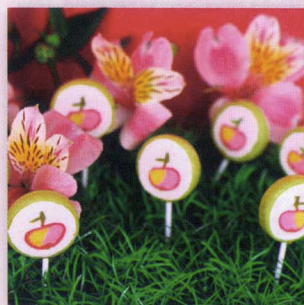
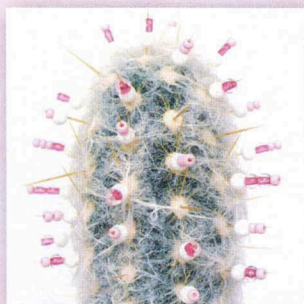
✕: 你的視覺創作當中出現的人物有何種生活和性格?

如果我的照片當中出現人物的話,是很罕見的,他們通常都不是人類。這些人物沒有明顯的性格,你看不見他們的臉孔,搞不清楚他們究竟發生了什麼事。我的照片呈現的不是你能看見的,而是你看不見的。看不見的部分才具有意義。我的模特兒看起來都像木頭、姿勢過於僵硬、跟道具沒兩樣,特別著重在他們的內在人性。同樣地,我的作品當中出現的動物,要不是浮誇到接近色情圖片,就是百分之百造假。我的作品中有很多非人性的人性、不自然的自然,而這些都是刻意的。

✕: 請和我們分享你的「時尚」觀點。

我熱愛時尚,特別喜歡看到新秀設計師做出來的瘋狂且具有概念的作品。我喜歡在二手商店買東西,我覺得把新衣和舊衣結合起來做出具有創意的東西非常有趣。我不喜歡過於前衛或是生產過於大量的時尚品,我喜歡觀察街上千百種人們每天所穿的不同衣服。

至於時尚攝影,大部分都讓我感到厭倦,但當代還是有一些了不起的時尚作品,他們突破了傳統,把這種媒介提升到藝術層次。我喜歡有趣又具煽動力、與眾不同



的時尚攝影。我認為時尚攝影的想像力應該著重在探索女性的真實感受,而不是只表達男性對女性的幻想,看著女人搔首弄姿卻沒有任何個性,對我來說一點也不有趣。我想看的是真實女人日常生活中更多的魅力、風趣和性感。

✕: 你最崇拜的人物或藝術家是怎麼樣的人?為什麼?

我超級尊敬不想要成名的人。另外,我也很崇拜能保留稚子之心,在日常事物中發掘事物之美的人,他們卻全然不知道自己這份天賦從何而來。我喜歡和不急於證明什麼的人交談。

✕: 你生命中最重要的東西是什麼?在作品中如何反映出來?

我和男友剛生了一個嬰兒,這是我活到現在最不可思議的體驗。有時候很瘋狂,要一邊處理相片一邊照顧新生兒,但我真的很樂在其中。

✕: 五年之後你期望有什麼樣的成就?

我計畫要用相同的理念繼續工作,最後要能拓展製作的規模,好讓我能創造出真正大於現實生活的環境。我會想要創作大型的裝置藝術再把它們照下來,多接一些商業廣告的案子,用我的風格創作。此外,我也想嘗試影片和錄影帶的拍攝工作。

✕: 請給新進的攝影師一些建議。

決定好你想拍的,然後就沒命似的去拍。要不屈不撓。動力要來自於創作的慾望,而不是賺錢的慾望。好好享受,不要讓自己過於緊繃。要做個瘋狂的人,別在意別人如何看待你。不要過於知性,要會交際,要不切實際,要有遠見。永遠都要注意人生的脆弱面。✕