



## Photographers Lisa Kereszi, Chris Buck explore the power of absence at Hagedorn

January 10, 2013  
By LILLY LAMPE

"Traces of Myth," on view at [Hagedorn Foundation Gallery](#) through January 26, attempts to align the work of five photographers with the idea that they embody a larger cultural identity. The ground floor, which displays the work of Landon Nordeman, Paul Hagedorn and Laura Noel, fails to be cohesive. The second floor, however, provides a fascinating comparison between two photographers whose work deals with ideas of absence.

The second floor features images from Lisa Kereszi's "Fantasies" series and those of Chris Buck's "Presence." Kereszi's "Fantasies" present unexpected views of entertainment venues ranging from movie theaters and Halloween haunted houses to strip clubs. The artist doesn't focus her lens on identifying features such as gory masks or high-heeled women; instead she photographs empty rooms and spaces, focusing on details like the garish pattern of a theater aisle rug, the base of a stripper pole against a red carpet or the murky green of the exit in a haunted house.

Frequent views of hallways, corner passages and directional clues such as exit signs imbue these images with a sense of movement. The viewer's gaze is directed toward what he or she might see while navigating this sort of space.

More profoundly, the absence of people creates an intriguing void and sense of isolation. These are explicitly places where you pay to see people perform. Their absence disturbs expectations and refocuses one's attention on details that would otherwise be ignored. Seen with fresh eyes, the saturated colors and curious angles of these rooms become a labyrinthine array of wondrous effects. Through Kereszi's lens, these spaces lose their intended charge and in return gain a preternatural luminosity.

Not all the photos produce this otherworldly effect. "DJ Booth, South Beach," from 2002, is a more predictable depiction of an empty room. Lacking the sense of movement of the other works, the image provokes a feeling of anticipation of a soon-to-return DJ maestro; instead of intrigue, the viewer feels the boredom of waiting.

Chris Buck's "Presence" series focuses on the lure of celebrity through unconventional portraiture. The artist photographed art world and pop culture figures ranging from Chuck Close to Michael Stipe — or so he says. Not one of the celebrities is visible, yet the promise of these people draws the viewer in. Every corner and curtain becomes a hiding place, every prop a clue. Buck's portraits cleverly utilize society's obsession with celebrity in conjunction with an intellectual interest in signifiers. A [Huffington Post reviewer](#) found the sliver of lawn at the top of Buck's "David Lynch" reminiscent of the opening scene of Lynch's film "Blue Velvet."

The viewer's compulsive clue-seeking is futile: Buck reveals nothing about the portrait subject and everything about our relationship with celebrity. He traps the viewer in his or her own desire. Futility notwithstanding, the search and rueful acknowledgement of Buck's trap is ultimately enjoyable.

The artists' reception for "Traces of Myth" will take place Saturday, January 12, from 4 to 6 p.m.



# THE NEW YORKER



THE NEW YORKER | ARTS & CULTURE | EVENTS

GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN: ART

## LISA KERESZI

Many of the artist's previous photographs were made behind the scenes in strip clubs or peep shows, where slick façades gave way to disillusion and decay. Her new work, in a show titled "The Party's Over," picks up and expands the theme to take in a range of shut or abandoned venues, including a topless bar, a disco, and a summer resort. Kereszi isn't the only photographer chronicling America in decline, but, like Mitch Epstein, she has a keen eye for detail. The stripper pole at a swinger's club in Daytona Beach casts a shadow straight through the bull's eye of a dartboard on a pale-pink wall. Through July 6.

Through July 6

YANCEY RICHARDSON  
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## Urbanautica: the special interview by Gary Green with Lisa Kereszi

*This new chapter of Urbanautica for Manfrotto School of Excellence is taken from the special interview by Gary Green with Lisa Kereszi. The American photographer received a Bachelor of Arts degree from Bard College in 1995. After moving to New York City she worked as an assistant to Nan Goldin before returning to graduate school at Yale University's School of Art, where she earned her M.F.A. She has subsequently taught at the International Center of Photography and School of Visual Arts and has also been a visiting artist and critic at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill; Massachusetts College of Art; and Vassar College. She is currently on faculty at Yale as a Lecturer and Acting Director of Undergraduate Studies in Photography.*

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«I always took pictures. I had a Kodak disc camera when I was a kid and photographed a lot, although I never thought of it as a career choice. My mom had wanted to be a writer, so I think she really pushed me in that direction, if you can even call it pushing. It was pre-helicopter-parents days. I shot beach scenes in New Jersey, made sure I documented all of my friends (at least one picture each, as if to prove I had them) and also set up my Barbies as if they were in action at the pool or at a party or something. In high school, I was in the "Art Major" program, run by the most amazing teacher, Mr. Falcone. We didn't have photography, but we routinely painted large 4x6 foot and 4x4 foot paintings on plywood. Luckily, I had a giant '66 Impala, so my paintings actually fit fully inside the trunk. I wasn't a very good draftsman, so it kind of makes sense that I would use a camera once I got my hands on a real one. At Bard, I tried to get into photography as a freshman, but because I waited too long on registration day for the poetry professor to put up his class list (I didn't get in), I went over to [the photography] studio too late. Stephen [Shore] basically shut the door in my face. The following year, I knew to go to photo first. I also knew to try a different poetry workshop teacher, John Ashbery, who did let me in».

# YANCEY RICHARDSON GALLERY



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«At Yale, I studied mainly with Tod Papageorge, Gregory Crewdson and Philip-Lorca diCorcia, with lots of other guest critics in and out. Even Jerry Saltz, who was there for some of the crits, made an impression on me by giving me a copy of [Roland] Barthes's *Camera Lucida* to read. The whole idea of the "punctum" was very important for me to learn. PL [diCorcia] told it like it was, which was often difficult to hear. Greg taught me about artistic obsession, and about how you are who you are, and you never really escape yourself. Tod taught me that a photograph is not necessarily equal to reality—at all. Once you filter the world through your head, it's a fiction, and expression. He also taught me to let go of my writer's block that I carried from Bard, by showing me how I could make a poetry of the visual, rather than out of words. At my sophomore review, a poetry lit teacher told me that I did not have the love of language necessary to become a poet. I was devastated, but I suppose he was right. Hanging on to the meaning of words does carry into my photography still, though, as words appear out of context over and over again in my pictures».



«As for my own teaching, I feel like you figure it out on your own, to a degree. I actually lean more on my time at Bard for figuring out what needs to be taught. Too bad I wasn't paying enough attention as a student, or as a [teaching assistant] for Lois Conner and Laura Lefsky in graduate school, because there was a lot to learn about the classroom that I could have used now. I was very distracted by life and nonacademic pursuits, I guess».

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selected audience members will face off against Matthew Aaron Goodman, and while the entries are being written Alexander Chee will read from his new novel, "The Queen of the Night." The winner will be picked by the audience. (85 E. 4th St. 212-505-3360.)

#### LA MAMA LA GALLERIA

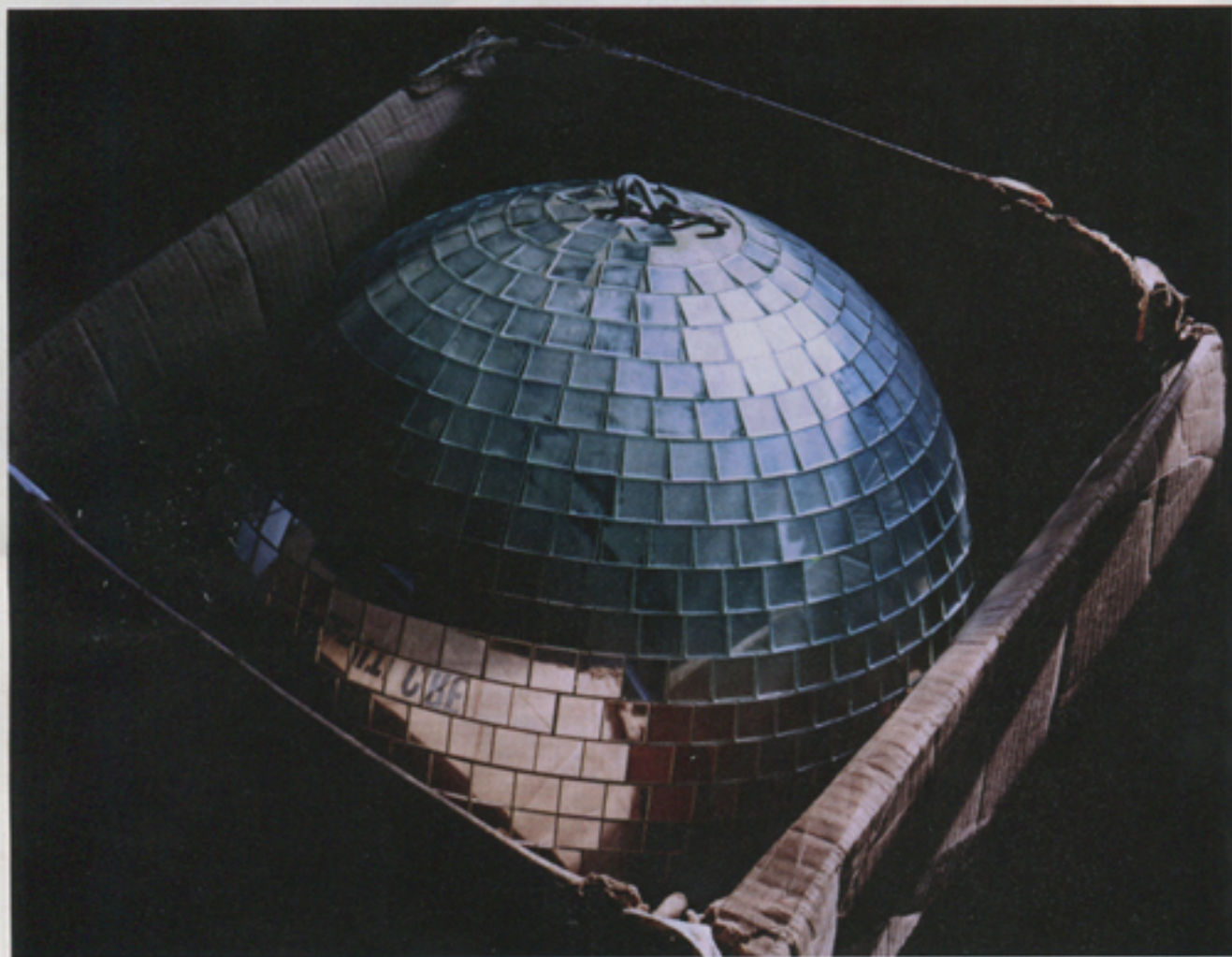
Eddie Sarfary, the Reverend Irene Monroe, Shawn Syms, Judy Gold and others read from their contributions to the new anthology "Love, Christopher Street: Reflections on New York City," which was edited by Thomas Keith and has an introduction by Christopher Bram, both of whom will also be present. (6 E. 1st St., between Bowery and Second Ave. 212-475-7710, June 8 at 7.)

## ABOVE AND BEYOND

### "ALL THE NEWS THAT'S FIT TO SCREEN"

In honor of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the New York Public Library's Helen Bernstein Book Award for Excellence in Journalism, the Library for the Performing Arts is presenting free screenings of films about journalism, accompanied by discussions with notable guests. The series starts on May 31 at 6:30 with "Shattered Glass," and Adam Penenberg, who broke the Stephen Glass fabrication scandal, will be on hand. It continues on Thursdays in June, with "Woman of the Year," with the sportswriter Karen Crouse, on

gold earrings. (York Ave. at 72nd St. 212-606-7000.) ♦ The cover lot at Christie's Old Masters auction (June 6) is a sixteenth-century image of the Passion ("Christ Carrying the Cross") by the Brescian painter Girolamo Romanino, in which Christ's expression is rendered in intimate detail and the rough surface of the Cross is contrasted with the luminous, satiny folds of his sleeve. The antiquities sale two days later (June 8) includes sculptures and glass objects (vases, etc.), as well as metal pieces, such as a bronze Phrygian helmet of the kind worn by Greek foot soldiers, or hoplites (c. 350-300 B.C.). Among the top lots is a Greek mirror (also from the fourth century B.C.) adorned with a relief of Paris and Helen gazing



Lisa Kereszi's photograph "The Party's Over, Disco Ball in Box, Connecticut, 2008," at the Richardson gallery.

### "ENTERTAINING SCIENCE"

This series, which is run by Roald Hoffmann, a poet who won the 1981 Nobel Prize in chemistry, and Dave Soldier, a composer and professor of neurology, psychiatry, and pharmacology at Columbia, presents its last event before a summer hiatus. Michael E. Goldberg, a professor of the brain and behavior at Columbia, joins Ellen K. Levy, an artist and educator at the Institute for Doctoral Studies in the Visual Arts, to talk about how the brain filters all of its informational inputs, in the process known as paying attention. (Cornelia Street Café, 29 Cornelia St. 212-989-9319, June 10 at 6.)

#### SHEHAN KARUNATILAKA

The Sri Lankan writer is in town to read from his debut novel, "The Legend of Padeep Mathew," about an aging sportswriter who covers cricket. (McNally Jackson Books, 52 Prince St. 212-274-1160, June 11 at 7. Also at Word, 126 Franklin St., Brooklyn. 718-383-0096, June 12 at 7.)

June 7; "The Sweet Smell of Success," with the gossip writers George Rush and Lindsay Powers, on June 14; "A Bitter Taste of Freedom," with the director Marina Goldovskaya, on June 21; and "The Bonfire of the Vanities," with Julie Salamon, whose book "The Devil's Candy" is about the making of the film, and Dave Itzkoff, of the *Times*, on June 28. (40 Lincoln Center Plaza. 212-870-1630.)

### AUCTIONS AND ANTIQUES

As in years past, the houses wind down with sales of Old Master paintings and antiquities from Europe, Africa, and the Near East. The offerings at Sotheby's sale of Old Masters (June 6) reflect wildly divergent world views, from the austerity of fourteenth-century Madonnas to the frisky playfulness of putti by the young Watteau. On the following day (June 7), the house offers antiquities, including a vivid Roman second-century mosaic of a fish and an elegant pair of Etruscan

amorously at each other. (20 Rockefeller Plaza, at 49th St. 212-636-2000.) ♦ Doyle holds one of its loosely themed auctions dedicated to the Belle Époque (lovers of minimalism beware), offering such items as an elaborately inlaid American Renaissance side cabinet, a fetching portrait of a Gypsy girl in full regalia, and various carved-ivory Art Deco figurines of dancers in exotic poses (June 6). A separate sale the same day revolves around a rather honey collection of memorabilia connected to the royal families of Europe (especially Britain), including teacups, commemorative jewelry, and photos. (175 E. 87th St. 212-427-2730.)

## GOINGS ON DIGITAL

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# photo-eye MAGAZINE

## Interview with Lisa Kereszi

FROM LARISSA LECLAIR, PUBLISHED ON JULY 17TH, 2009

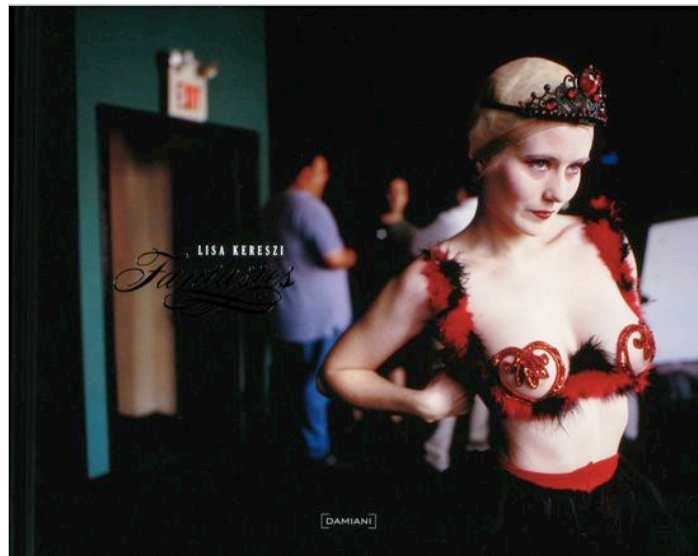
[VIEW COMMENTS \[0\]](#)

Lisa Kereszi | **Fantasies**

PHOTOGRAPHS BY LISA KERESZI. TEXT BY LYNNE TILLMAN.

Damiani, Bologna, 2008. Hardbound with printed boards. 96 pp., 55 color-illustrations, 11x9½". \$45.00

Lisa Kereszi's first monograph, *Fantasies*, interweaves images of the empty interiors of strip clubs with photographs of new burlesque dancers to create a narrative in between the environment of a fantasy and the expression of one. The tawdry nocturnal spaces are an emotional void, paralleling the possible emptiness of those who occupy the stages of the strip clubs, as well as those who fill the seats as patrons. According to Kereszi, the new burlesque performances have a more palpable joy than stripper routines, but Kereszi's images of the burlesque dancers in persona still exude a certain sadness and a reality that is rough around the edges. Kereszi draws back the curtain on fantasy and reveals its details, enticing the imagination of the viewer, yet simultaneously exposing the reality of fantasy's ephemeral nature.



*Fantasies*, by Lisa Kereszi. Published by Damiani, 2008.

**Larissa Leclair:** What is Burlesque and this new burlesque movement that you have captured in your photographs?

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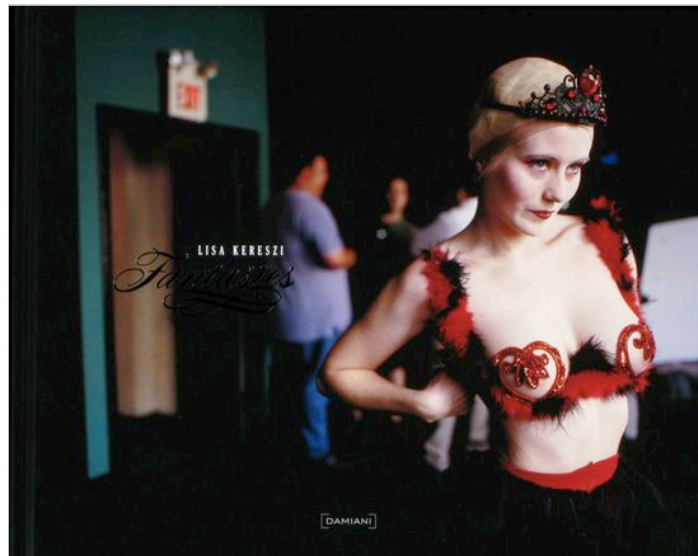
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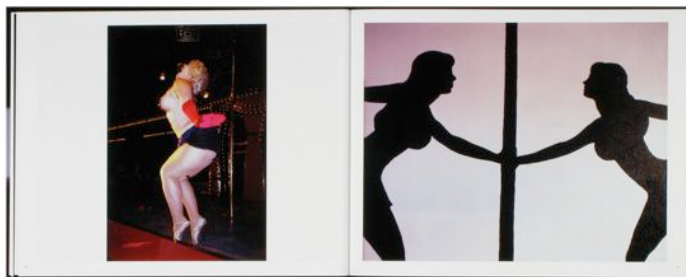
**Larissa Leclair:** What is Burlesque and this new burlesque movement that you have captured in your photographs?

**Lisa Kereszi:** Burlesque is more about comedy and the art of the tease than today's standard, typical gentlemen's club stripping...

Burlesque seemed to come out of this Vaudeville/comedy tradition. In between Gypsy Rose Lee or Tempest Storm doing an elaborate practiced funny routine there would be a comedian, there would be male performers, there would be magic, and there would be any number of other sorts of entertainment that all kind of go together... The new Burlesque movement is this revival of the 50's style — not sanitized strip tease, but something more joyful and more about a fuller form of entertainment and comedy rather than just the money shot. It is not about the "money shot." It's all leads up to a finale. Most of the routine is getting up until that point and then when she takes her bra off and you see her pasties, then it is over. It is all buildup, usually to a funny end — a joke. So these girls doing new burlesque are huge fans of those women that were doing it back then, like Jennie Lee and Dixie Evans, who was the Marilyn Monroe of burlesque. It seems like a lot of them came out of a couple different underground scenes. One of them is the rockabilly scene and some of these people went into doing swing dance, and now burlesque. The more punk rock/underground part of it went drag and then went into burlesque. There is the drag-East Village-punk rock scene. One of the girls I photographed, World Famous \*BOB\*, was telling me that in the mid-90s before she got into this more specific new burlesque thing she was performing at gay clubs in the East Village doing performance art-ish, freaky routines. Sexy routines. That audience was gay men. Yeah, it is titillating, but it is not exactly stripping. Now, yes, there are a lot of straight men but there are gay men and there are tons of women in the audience, and straight women. And you can see that in some of the pictures.

**LL:** Are there some clubs where the line between burlesque and stripping is blurred?

**Kereszi:** I have been out of the scene for three or four years. Within the last few years, there are some clubs that have straddled that line. There are highbrow strip clubs that have burlesque. Even before it had come out as this big thing that celebrities were doing — like the Pussycat dolls in L.A...



Spread from *Fantasies*, by Lisa Kereszi. Published by Damiani, 2008.

**LL:** ...the art of strip tease has become a popular aerobic exercise...

**Kereszi:** ...yeah, go-go aerobics. There is obviously a relationship between these different worlds and there are crossovers. In New Orleans, there's this woman Gio, who's been stripping for a long time but she's the best at what she does, and she knows the history and comes out of this Burlesque tradition. So she does her strip routine in a much more practiced, burlesque way. Also, at Miss Exotic World Contest, which the outdoor photos are from, in the desert in California,



most of the people were of this sort of new burlesque movement. But then there were a few women where you could tell had implants, and just the way they moved and the way they took their clothes off you could tell they were working in strip clubs. And I think a lot of women doing this are very post-feminist, pro-woman, pro-sex worker. There was this thing called the Sex Workers' Art Show, and some of these same performers went all over the country and performed at colleges and lots of different clubs. Some of them are burlesque people and some of them are like Annie Sprinkle — sex/art people. And there were also women who straddle that line between doing something for a living, to make money, but also liked being feminist about it. In my head I see a line drawn, though others would disagree. In the book there are two different projects that were made at the same time. For the most part, these strip clubs I photographed are strip clubs, and the only times that there was a crossover in the places I photographed was the place Show World, which was actually the first place I shot. And that was on Times Square, a circus-themed strip club, and the downstairs was still allowed to be video booths and a sex shop. But because of the Giuliani laws, they couldn't have live girls anymore. But since burlesque was arty, that's where the Va Va Voom Room, a local traveling show, had their performances for a short time. A friend of mine brought me to see his friend Dirty Martini perform and to see this insane place because he knew that I photographed empty interiors.



Spread from *Fantasies*, by Lisa Kereszi. Published by Damiani, 2008.

**LL:** So the empty interiors are from strip clubs - the images without the women. And the ones of the women are the new burlesque dancers.

**Kereszi:** I was a little bit uncomfortable putting the two worlds together because I wasn't sure how it would be received - also how it would be received by the women in the pictures. But so far so good. I think the women I've talked to about it are pro-women and pro-sex worker — these women are full of joy but there is a sadness too. It's not just a sadness in burlesque dancers, it's a sadness or a loneliness or a neediness that is human, and present in so many people...

It was not my idea to put these together. It was the idea of the person who helped me sequence the book- who made the book happen - Alice Rose George. She saw this link happening in the work years ago, and she helped make the work even exist and happen in the first place. She always saw a relationship. But I get very nervous — maybe even conservative — too black and white about things... She seemed to see something else in it and how the pictures worked together to create some other sort of statement.

**LL:** You mentioned the history of burlesque and striptease a bit. I was just recently looking at *Carnival Strippers* [by Susan Meiselas]. How does that work relate to your contemporary study?



Title page from *Carnival Strippers*, by Susan Meiselas (second edition). Published by Steidl, 2003.

**Kereszi:** I hadn't seen that work until I was already working on the project. And Alice knew Susan and said you need to see this book. When the book was re-released — that's when I saw it. And I loved it. I thought it was totally amazing. I also have this interest in Coney Island and sideshows, and magic. Susan found this world where two of these things that I am interested in are together. And I didn't know until I saw the book that at sideshows they would have a stripper tent. I love that work and it influenced me to a degree after I saw it, but I had already been working on the project for several years. Alice said "you should meet Susan and show her your work," but that never worked out. The 60s, when that work was made, were a transitional time and those women were definitely more akin to working strippers today. It's a job. Some of them probably don't want to be there, and some of them probably do, at least for a while. And some of them who do probably want to be there don't really want to be there. I just saw the Meiselas show at ICP, and luckily found the *Carnival Strippers* work hidden downstairs in a back corner — which I kind of liked, but also felt that it was odd to put all that violence right out there, and to hide the sex in a dark, tiny room with a warning sign at the entrance. The show had the recordings she made of interviews with the dancers playing. Hearing those words and looking at the pictures edited, there is no question that it was rough and tumble and a very depressing world to be a part of. They did it out of need. What is going on today in burlesque is much more like performance art. No one's getting paid very much, except maybe Dita Von Teese.

**LL:** Were you able to or interested in photographing in Las Vegas?

**Kereszi:** I have been there a few times. I was mostly photographing empty interiors and night landscapes. The only performers I photographed there were Elvis impersonators. I wasn't interested in the big Vegas showgirl thing. I have thought to try and get permission to photograph the stages empty, but I was never interested in the Moulin Rouge type of big show. The number of people on stage may be visually too polished. It becomes a spectacle more than a single focus.

The museum of burlesque is now there, Exotic World. Two wonderful people rescued it from deterioration in the desert in California and they moved it from the desert. Vegas is the perfect place for it because now, like the Liberace Museum, there is now the burlesque hall of fame. This year the Miss Exotic World contest was at the Palms Casino, and I was

one of the judges. It was very different, but it's in a totally appropriate place and links up with the showgirl stuff and old Hollywood.



Spread from *Fantasies*, by Lisa Kereszi. Published by Damiani, 2008.

**LL:** Let's talk about the photograph "Kitten de Ville posing with her trophy, Exotic World, Helendale, CA 2002." I am struck at how all the women are on stage, and all the men are photographing. Were women photographers outnumbered by men?

**Kereszi:** They were. There were women photographers. Katharina Bosse was there. She did a book called *New Burlesque*. There were probably a couple other girls, but it was a lot of men...

Part of the reason why I stopped the project was the sheer number of photographers — male or female. I started the project in 1999, and according to World Famous \*BOB\*, the scene was just started in NY in 94 -95. There were only a couple people doing stuff before that. I started the project in 99 and I think the last picture I took was 03. By 03, it was getting too popular. You're elbowing, and you just can't get in there. I'm not aggressive and I don't want to stand where everyone else is standing anyway, but it is still hard. And even in the dressing room where I was used to being the only person - there would be two or three people back there, and I was just kind of done. This picture is about that to a degree. Having studied here at Yale... and having studied Garry Winogrand and how he looked at things - the book *Public Relations* - looking at the press and photographers as something separate from himself and looking at things from behind, is definitely what influenced me to take this picture.

**LL:** You mentioned in your essay in the book that the women's magazine *Bust* published images from this project rather than the men's magazine [to whom] you originally pitched [the work]. Can you talk about the audience for this work as well as the audience you found at many of these performances?



Spread from *Fantasies*, by Lisa Kereszi. Published by Damiani, 2008.

**Kereszi:** I heard a couple of comments that I wasn't supposed to hear about the women in this book being ugly. Someone said something like "Oh, they're naked ladies, but they're ugly." And I was shocked when that was relayed to me. I don't think that at all, but I could see why a regular guy who is used to this air-brushed, silicone implant thing - that's what they want to see naked today. That wasn't the case when burlesque was queen in the fifties. So it's a different kind of guy, I think, that likes this world, and a different kind of person in general. Living in New York and being an artist, you are not really aware of the real world. And this seems much bigger to me than I think it really might be; it is a subculture, it is still an underground thing even if it is popular. The people that are making it popular on TV are Carmen Electra, who looks really skinny and beautiful and perfect. She doesn't seem to have the same charge that these women have.

Basically what happened was that Alice Rose George was the director of photography at *Details* in 2000. ... She asked me to pitch something and I said that the new burlesque movement would be great for *Details*. I told her, these girls are doing this new burlesque thing and there's a convention in New Orleans and a contest in California that I could go to plus the stuff that's going on in New York. She said yes — we will pay you day rates for a certain number of days and we'll pay all your expenses. And when I got back, over a three-month period, she edited these pictures ... and it just sat there and sat there because she couldn't convince anyone there. And then she left. Then the subsequent editors hired me for other jobs, and they kept it on the shelf. Then those women at the magazine moved on. And then finally, maybe '03 or '02 someone said they "Lisa, sorry, these bodies are not really the kind of bodies people are going to want to look at in *Details*." They were female editors and said we love the work but we cannot convince anyone here to let us run them. So they gave the work back to me and I called *Bust* magazine right away because I knew that they would run it, and they did...



Spread from *Fantasies*, by Lisa Kereszi. Published by Damiani, 2008.

**LL:** How did you come to work with the publisher Damiani?

**Kereszi:** It was through Alice. I actually knew about Damiani because Larry Fink is involved with them and came and lectured here. He said to the students, "I want to see work because I'm working as a consultant with this publisher. They are looking for book ideas." I think I did send Larry, who was once my teacher, a CD or prints but then nothing happened. And I don't remember if I sent him the burlesque stuff or other stuff - I don't remember what I did. Alice is also a

consultant to Damiani. It all happened really quickly. I sent the work to Larry, nothing happened. Then in September/October of 2007 Alice said, "Do you still have all that work? Come over, let's spread it out on the floor and sequence it. Damiani has an opening in their Spring '08 catalogue." ... So we threw together a dummy, I made an Apple iBook and she sent it to Italy. Then back and forth for only a week or two and then they said "Yes, but add more pictures." So then we had to add more pictures, pick a cover, and ask Lynne Tillman to agree to write an essay for trade. The next thing I know I'm going to Italy at Thanksgiving to go to press, and then the book came out March 1st. So it all happened really quickly. I wished I had more time. With the Nazraeli book I had more time to edit it with more care. But maybe being spontaneous and off the cuff works just as well.

**LL:** What work is Nazraeli going to publish?

**Kereszi:** It will be a collection of just my details and empty interiors; something poetic and not so specific. *Fantasies* is very specific to a project but I want the new book to be broader and the work linked by something else, some other feeling.

**LL:** Looking at the book on the train, I started to feel a little bit self-conscious after I thought about me being in the real world looking at these images.

**Kereszi:** This is fantasyland, this is not the real world...

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**LARISSA LECLAIR** is a photographer, writer and traveler. Her work focuses on visual history and culture, and international photography. She lives in the Washington, D.C. area.

**LISA KERESZI** is a photographer represented by the Yancey Richardson Gallery and a lecturer on the faculty at Yale University, where she is currently the Acting Director of Undergraduate Studies in Photography. Learn more and see her work at [lisakereszi.com](http://lisakereszi.com).

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# NEW YORK

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APRIL 30, 2007

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## Every Picture Tells a Story

**These photographers—  
one a documentarian,  
two devoted to staged  
work—discover narrative  
in frozen moments.**

### I.

#### LISA KERESZI

AT YANCEY RICHARDSON  
THROUGH MAY 5.

Kereszi finds poignancy as she shoots venues meant to be places of fantasy and escape—strip joints, nightclub lounges, movie theaters—in all their real-life seediness.

YANCEY RICHARDSON GALLERY

# NEW YORKER

GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

PHOTOGRAPHY

Issue of 2004-06-14 and 21

## **“GOVERNORS ISLAND”**

The most affecting ruins are those created in a single cataclysmic moment, like Pompeii or Chernobyl. Photographs by Andrew Moore and Lisa Kereszi, commissioned by New York’s Public Art Fund, address a less fraught event in this vein—the moment Governors Island was abandoned. (The Coast Guard left in 1996, ending two and a half centuries of military use.) The pictures include banal tableaux—a dusty Burger King, bowling balls left midgutter—and more portentous ones, such as the plaque honoring the soldiers who served in the Meuse-Argonne campaign of the First World War. They are sharp and full of intense color, and often both sad and inadvertently funny. Through July 8. (Urban Center, 457 Madison Ave. 212-935-3960.)

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