

**PORNSCAPES**, Anne Bernard, in *Pornscapes*, 2006, Ed Goliath, Frankfurt / New York

There is something deeply exciting about spurring pleasure to the heights of sheer madness. No doubt that in the arms of this man, I discovered deep within myself physical capacities that I never had imagined. Pierre's insatiability whetted my appetite for performance. His provocative photographer's gaze aroused my latent exhibitionism.

Like any couple that practices self-eroticisation, Pierre took pictures whilst we made love, with the urge to carry the expressivity of our bodies even further. A sort of intimate diary started to take shape, with the both of us as only protagonists, and nothing but this tiny, autofocus camera to bear witness for our repeated coils of ardour. It must be said that at the time, we were one thousand kilometres apart; I lived in Montpellier and he in Brussels. More than any other couple devoured by the passion of love, when we met we sought to fill the void which we knew would soon take over us. Roadsides, train toilets, kitchen tables or hotel rooms, no place was spared from our brazenness. Not a moment's rest for our desire for fusion, no brakes on the insolence of our urge.

The game of love is well fitted to the snapshot speed of photography. What more banal than to want to suspend the experience of a feeling, to prolong an orgasm well beyond its term, to postpone for a while the bodies' respite. From click to click, from picture to picture, an entire magical world begins to unfold, to grasp and pull itself together, again and again... Just between the two of us. Because far from being an outside voyeuristic eye, the camera was the extension of our arms, taking without aiming whatever there was to record in that instant. Triggered by Pierre, and also by me, in the most intuitive and ill-timed manner, it took part in our erotic games and revealed what we couldn't see for ourselves. And the offset view in the shots taken from an outstretched arm yielded some unforeseeable pictures, unknown angles of our own intertwined bodies.

Back in Brussels, Pierre was very impatient to discover what the camera had recorded, and he placed as many 24x36 negatives in the 4'x5' enlarger as possible. That added up to six. He picked them haphazardly, with no proper choice nor with any prior intention, and printed them all in one go. The result was at first uncertain, but of little importance; the surprise in itself gave way to a new wave of excitement and extended the game further. My throat was even deeper yet, my sex more gaping, his more penetrating.

One day whilst looking at a new series, we noticed that some pictures enriched each other mutually. It was as if tracing a hidden intention. It's never a game of chance only... All of a sudden, a set of six pictures became only one... That was the real starting point of the work, and Pierre then decided to keep this form, particularly since it reminded him of J. S. Bach's partitas. In this rigid and restrictive framework, we were certain of finding all sorts of possible combinations, and of matching them with as much freedom and fantasy as possible.

Our double body game thus continued through cutting and reassembling the contact sheets. The fusion of love and chaos of our bodies went on to multiply by simply letting the pictures penetrate each other or set each other off. Together, they could well develop a new language, uphold a new organic connection, geometrical or metaphorical, concrete or abstract, depending on our imagination and the level of reading. Every madness was allowed in order to push reality even further and let the mental orgasm hit us. A bit like Hans Bellmer had previously done, what was happening in our heads could finally be exposed. He suffered no more of reality's limits in space and time. We even gave ourselves the right to eroticise the environment around us, landscape or architecture, with which we so often attempted to connect.

In this series of works, the act of love does not seek to present itself as such. As much as it feeds on the most basic sexual urges, it is in complex compositions that stem from rigorous reasoning that it can actually explode. It regenerates in endless free variations, as poetic *pornscapes*. Like other excessive couples, for example Gainsbourg/Birkin, or Lennon/Ono, who in their overflowing passion found a common ground to work with, the photography presented here has found its own demonstrative and affirmative language. A deliberate intention of letting surrealism take over in composite shapes, hybrid beings, compact or dislocated. For there are no limits to the desire to penetrate oneself, to absorb a sex, to feel a climax tear through one's stomach. Feet, mouth, buttocks, breasts, members, everything can be watched, grabbed, licked all at once. For this, one needs only to recognise the ongoing creative force of desire.