

ERIN KAY CARNES

DIGESTING DYSTOPIA

Editor's note

The photographs on the following pages come from the series *Digesting Dystopia* by Erin Kay Carnes, who graduated from the University of Iowa in 2011 with an MFA in photography. Of these pictures, she writes:

There is a discrepancy between where our food comes from and where we believe it comes from. Our understanding of the origins of our food is often distorted. The relationship between consumers and the ingredients keeping us alive is characterized by an overwhelming amount of contradictory information. And yet, the decisions that we make regarding these products have a profound effect on every facet of our existence.

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I use the contentious climate of the food industry as the background for making surreal images that open up conversations about the politics of eating. These compositions are fabricated representations of our relationship with food and the industry that surrounds it. The images exaggerate the realities that exist within our culture and illuminate our desensitization to and disconnect from the consequences of what we choose to consume. What does our food culture look like, and what will it lead to in the near future? What is food? Where should it come from? How accessible should it be? What are the real costs of our dietary choices? We live in a time when these questions are constantly being asked. Controversy surrounds every discussion about food.

My images question what is good, bad, palatable, healthy, sustainable, natural, and processed. They allow viewers to reflect upon the impact of the decisions that they make.







