

Paola Pivi
(Milan, 1971)

Paola Pivi uses the world as if it were a playing field. She takes a truck and turns it over on its side, seizes an airplane and tips it over, gathers one hundred Chinese people dressed identically, brings a group of white animals into an industrial warehouse, or photographs two zebras in the snow. Extracted from the reality of the world, but corresponding to an image previously conceived by the artist, each of Pivi's works respects only its own internal rules and does not emerge to demonstrate anything other than itself, or, as the artist says, "perhaps what it demonstrates has not yet been revealed."

While extremely dissimilar, the artist's works all share components of a performative nature and a tendency to push toward extreme limits. Since 2001 Pivi has worked on *Alicudi Project*, a piece consisting of the creation of a photograph on a one-to-one scale of the homonymous island, north of Sicily. Drawn to its natural morphology, which, according to the artist, makes it a complete world and similar to a true sculpture, Pivi has traveled to the island on numerous occasions, and, for a certain period, established it as her place of residence. In keeping with her desire to cultivate her own creative realm, Pivi has often chosen to live and work in unusual places that are difficult to reach and she currently lives in Anchorage, Alaska.

The five photographs in the collection were created in 2003, during the time Pivi spent on Alicudi. The subjects of the works include an ostrich at the edge of the sea, two ostriches on a boat, and a donkey alone in a boat. Apparently illogical, the moments photographed convey the image of a world apart, where the unusual and the marvelous seem separate from everyday life. If considered along with the photograph of the gallerist swimming with a fish and the photograph of the island seen from underwater through the lens of the surface of the Mediterranean Sea, these works bring to mind a dimension close to that of a fairy tale or a myth, where animals behave like people and, inversely, men act like animals. (MB)