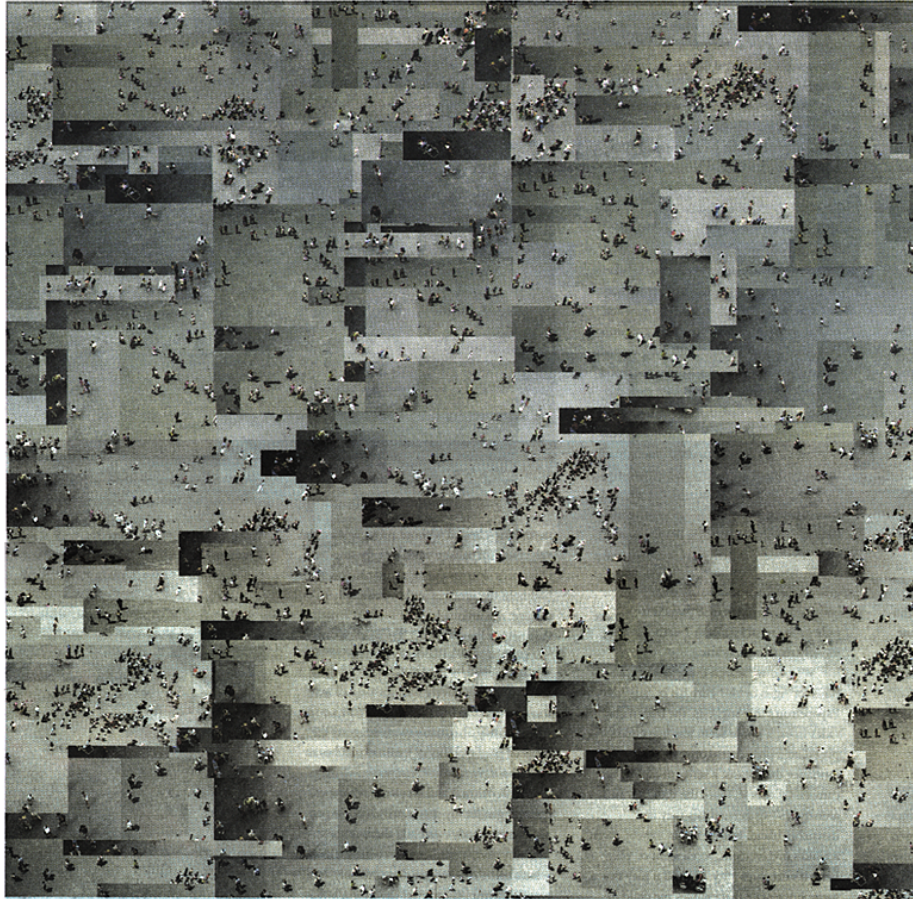


Nicola Loder



Nicola Loder, *Piazza della Signoria 1* - Florence

Nicola Loder's solo show *wild thing* appeared at Melbourne's Centre for Contemporary Photography April 10-May 10. Her work has featured in several local and international exhibitions including *Telling Tales*, *the Child in Contemporary Photography* at the Monash University Gallery in 2000, *Strangely Familiar* at the Australian Centre for Photography and *Orbital* at Lux Gallery London. She has also curated several shows, received project grants from Cinemedia/Experimenta and has lectured in media arts and photography at several Melbourne universities.



Nicola Loder, *Sheep, the road to Maryborough* (detail)



Nicola Loder, *Piazza* (detail)

"...The movement of crowds across these spaces resemble the meandering of desire lines of sheep across a paddock. Indeed, these are images of tourists 'flocking' to the attractions of London, Sienna, Florence and Venice, corralled like sheep toward one prominent site or another. Contrariwise, a field full of sheep is reworked into an exclusive, loving portrait of only two newly clipped merinos, caught frolicking in a soft clear light. So while tourists pay homage, grazing the rich cultural pastures of Western civilisation, another introduced species makes itself at home on the cleared plains of a new land..."

"Not surprisingly, Loder's images were first conceived a few years ago at the height of debate over genetic engineering, and in particular the cloning of the first living thing, a sheep called Dolly. The interrelation of key terms in her work bears this out: crowds, sheep, species, digital manipulation. And let's recap the benefits of new media technology too: co-extensiveness in time and space (or omnipresence); manipulability and mutability; infinite reproduction and refinement. Photoshop is not just a useful tool but also a terrifying premonition of things to come, after war, at the end of the world. To judge by Loder's virtual scenarios, public space, as it turns out, is a cul de sac and the ideal paddock is where the real sheep plays happily with its identical copy."

Stuart Koop, catalogue essay, *wild thing*

wild thing, Nicola Loder, Centre for Contemporary Photography, Melbourne, April 10-May 1. Photographs and text reproduced with permission.