

Flowers XS

**PHOTOGRAPHS BY  
GER C. BOUT**



Flowers X2

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From *Daido Moriyama*, *The World through My Eyes*,  
Skira Editore S.p.A Milan, 2010:

“I want to photograph things that I, too, don't fully comprehend, the things I can't explain - I can quite happily skip what I understand. Still, I have no intention of explaining anything with my photos. Those who look at them are free to interpret them how they like.”

# The Flowers by Ger C. Bout

These photographs by Ger C. Bout were inspired by the flower portraits of Nobuyoshi Araki.

This may seem puzzling at first. There is little, if any, of the erotic here, or of death (Araki's declared obsessions); no voyeurism, no lone subject in quiet isolation, no intimacy to the image which draws us in.

On the contrary, Bout's work, less about image than object (each piece is envisioned at a monumental 10 x 15 m), overwhelms and repels. It forces us to a distance by mere virtue of its size and complexity. Its noise. Its "profusion". The very opposite of intimate, these photographs seem oddly, at first, like billboard advertisements for something called nature.

And yet.

When Araki puts paint upon his (often dead) subjects, this tiny act of resurrection produces beautifully monstrous flora. Gaudy and unctuous, those random drips and sickly haphazard colors become transformative beyond a commentary on sex and death. Less about living or dead, real or fake, they attain a wonderful tactile garishness which seems to delight itself in pure, plastic color.

Bout's process, no less random or haphazard (a single chosen preset on the computer will more often not produce a desired result), is likewise Promethean. His Überblumen, now blown-up to an oppressive grandeur, seem to swarm, menacingly, like locusts. A plague of flowers, these monster blossoms may be excruciatingly pretty, or aching sweet, or irradiated to a beautiful disease. No less garish, crass, or energetic, they, too, seem to delight in the pure (graphic) pleasure of their colors.

What Bout interprets is Araki's take on the beautiful and grotesque.

Context is critical for work such as this. These photographs demand to be challenging. The almost greeting-card aesthetic of these images can be too easily dismissed, their aberrant danger too easily overlooked. These are not calming, meditative images. They are pretty, but they are poisonous. They want, for example, to be hung, floor to ceiling, in large formal rooms, heavily framed at threateningly precarious angles - as if all this over-classical, this prettiness, this nature, might just come crashing down upon our heads.

*N.A. Jones*, Berlin, October 2012







































































































# The Flowers

In 1993, I was in Tokyo for the presentation of my “Table No 1” at the Tokyo Furniture Fair. My winning entry for the Asahikawa International Furniture Competition was presented there.

Being there I found *TENSHI-SAI* by Nobuyoshi Araki. I bought the book. I still enjoy the pictures of his flowers: the colors in particular are amazing.

Some years ago I got interested in digital photography and digital printing. I wondered if my printer could produce the same intense colors as those of the flowers in Araki’s book.

Photographing flowers was the only way to find out. I made pictures of many flowers in different colors. This book contains a first selection of my flowers. A second selection, Flowers M, will be presented later this year.

*Ger C. Bout*, January 2015

# About Ger C. Bout

Ger C. Bout studied Urban Planning at the Technical University of Delft in 1975. One of the places where he worked during his studies, is Linz, Austria, where he met his Finnish wife, Riitta.

Directly after his graduation, he moved to Finland, working for the Department of Architecture at the University of Otaniemi/Helsinki. He started to design and produce furniture.

Some years later, the couple moved to the Netherlands. Bout worked for various Public Housing organisations and was the director of the Institute For Architecture (IVA) in Utrecht. He continued to design and make furniture.

Bout became more and more interested in art, modern dance, theater and music. He discovered he enjoyed building, but hated architecture.

After frequent trips to New York and San Francisco and other places, inspired by meetings with interesting artists such as John Cage, Christo, Robert Frank, Robert Irwin and Dennis Oppenheim, his interest went beyond architecture. More and more Bout was able to get his ideas realized in unconventional public art projects.



In the eighties and early nineties Bout realized installations in several countries and worked with all kinds of artists and disciplines. He learned he was able to reach many people with his ideas, even complete cities.

People who had never had anything to do with art became key players in the making of these works, both in concept and sculptural form. He learnt that many were willing to participate in his projects, because of his presentations with which he started each project. He realised that the images he produced with these presentations played an important role in his projects.

Bout decided to concentrate completely on the production of images. He started to experiment with pictures of nearby objects, using combinations of old fashioned large format camera's and today's digital camera's and digital possibilities. The pictures of flowers presented here are the first results of this new approach.



# Colophon

The Flowers XS are presented by the artist in collaboration with *Roland Groenenboom*, *Isha van der Burg* and *Micheline van Neste*, with a text by *N.A. Jones*.

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More information about Ger C. Bout at [www.gercbout.com](http://www.gercbout.com)

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