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Digesting dystopia

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Digesting Dystopia

by

Erin Kay Carnes

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the Master of Fine Arts degree in Art
in the Graduate College of
The University of Iowa

July 2011

Thesis Supervisor: Professor James Snitzer

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CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

MASTER'S THESIS

This is to certify that the Master's Thesis of

Erin Kay Carnes

has been approved by the Examining Committee for the thesis requirement for the
Master of Fine Arts degree at the July 2011 graduation

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

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 and disconnect to the consequences of what we chose 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 where these questions are constantly being asked and reevaluated. Controversy surrounds every discussion and topic around food. How are we to know what decisions to make or what are the realities of our food's production? These images question what is good, bad, palatable, healthy, sustainable, natural, or processed. Just as we all have freedom to make our own personal dietary decisions, these images allow space for the viewers to reflect upon the impact of the decisions that they make.



Image 1: *Untitled*



Image 2: *Untitled*



Image 3: *Untitled*



Image 4: *Untitled*



Image 5: *Untitled*



Image 6: *Untitled*



Image 7: *Untitled*



Image 8: *Untitled*