

# BARABARA IWEINS *KATALOG*

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**ARLES**  
**ASSOCIÉ 2022**  
LES RENCONTRES  
DE LA PHOTOGRAPHIE

**EXHIBITION "KATALOG"**  
**RENCONTRES D'ARLES 2022**

Production : delpire & co  
Curated by Emmanuelle Kouchner  
and Anna Toussaint - Photosynthèses, Arles

After moving for the eleventh time, Barbara Iweins, photographer and artist from Brussels, started a singular work of introspection: photographing one by one the 12,795 objects of her house, indexing and classifying them by color, material, frequency of use... The crazy project of *Katalog* lasted more than four years ! From this "necessary therapy", she imagined a catalog with graphic and pop compositions - a fascinating mirror of our consumer society - where an intimate self-portrait is revealed, carried by 50 short stories both funny and moving.

A trench coat that recalls a funny event in a sad hospital, a mug that evokes a brotherly dislike, a child's toy that personifies the memory of an unloved dog, iPhone shells that reveal the tricks of a teenager, or a crumbling hot water bottle that preserves the pain of a separation... Through this zany inventory, Barbara Iweins summons the memorial power of objects and invites us to share in a fascinating collective and personal memory.

Sequenced room by room, the book invites the reader to a guided tour of the house, starting with the entrance and continuing through the kitchen, the living room, Barbara's bedroom and those of her three children, without forgetting the bathroom and the cellar.

The numbers of the objects are scattered throughout the book, proposing an amazing pagination system, just like the project. Barbara Iweins did not only photograph 12,795 objects, she also analyzed them.

Using the performance of an Excel spreadsheet, she has established statistics on this shapeless mass, giving the story an absurd and irresistible logic with short sentences in the caption of some plates. Some succulent examples: "90% of gloves are lost within two weeks of purchase", "The amount spent on all the objects in the house is estimated at 121,046 €", "37% of the Playmobil in the house are bald" or "I have the weakness to believe that I am the only person in the world who knows that the dominant color in her house is blue (16%)".

From her neurotic collector's tropism intertwined with an irrepressible need to put order in an intimate chaos, as she confesses, Barbara Iweins has created a monumental project as much in its form as in its outcome. Behind the lightness tinged with self-mockery of the *Katalog* project, a work of visual anthropology of our contemporary society takes shape.

« Absolutely everything went into it: from my daughter's holey sock to my son's Lego, to my vibrator, to my anti-anxiety medication, to everything, absolutely everything..»

Barbara Iweins, introduction

Behind the lightness tinged with self-mockery of the *Katalog* project, a work of visual anthropology of our contemporary society takes shape.

# THE AUTHOR

A neurotic collector, as she defines herself, Barbara Iweins is a Belgian photographer who began her artistic career in Amsterdam. Drawing her inspiration from literature - Edouard Levé - and contemporary art - Sophie Calle, Christian Boltanski, Jan Saudek - she is fascinated by the vulnerability of humans and has never stopped pushing the limits of intimacy. For her series *Au coin de ma rue*, she entered little by little into the private lives of strangers. In *7AM/7PM*, she invited these same strangers to sleep at her home, to capture the innocence and fragility as they awoke. On her return to Brussels, she used her own private life for the first time for a case study: *Katalog*.



©Barbara Iweins



## *Katalog*

Barbara Iweins

Publication date : 23 june 2022

Price : 42€

12 795 color photographs

19 x 26 cm ;

360 pages, French.

EAN : 9791095821502

# EXTRACTS FROM THE 50 STORIES

«Yes, there is someone else. »

I should have sat down before I asked him that question. I was so not expecting it. My legs give out. My vocal cords still have the strength to kick him out. I should have thrown all his stuff out the window like in the movies but I'm in a daze. I roll into a ball on the bed. Under the comforter, I can feel that stupid hot water bottle that he places every night, burning, against his back. This hot water bottle has always disgusted me.

Systematically between the two of us, it cools down over the hours and ends up sticking, icy, against my stomach in the middle of the night. I want to vomit. I go to the kitchen to get scissors and cut it into small pieces, very small pieces.



Barbara's bedroom, 14.9.2014 (39 years old)

I'm replaying the dinner scene over and over in the cab. I can't believe it! And to think that we were ending a drunken and hilarious evening. At rock/paper/scissors, I had just snatched our grandmother's beloved mug that we've been fighting over since the sale of Masnou. Just before leaving the restaurant table, in a fit of laughter, I look at him and think how lucky I am to have such a brother. "Do you think if we hadn't been brother and sister, we would have been friends?" I am so sure of his answer that I just wait for him to nod. He replies, full of confidence, "No, I don't think so."

My inebriation evaporates instantly.

"What?! We wouldn't have been friends?!"

- No! But we're brother and sister, that's not nothing..."

I'm nailed to the spot. I am terribly offended.

And I still am today, two years later.



Kitchen, 14.9.2014 (39 years old)

Your days at the hospital are long. Today, I decided to give you a somewhat daring surprise. Completely naked, I put on heels and wrap myself in a suede trench coat. As I slam the door, I giggle inwardly but I don't back down. I slowly gain confidence as I walk along the avenue de Messidor towards the streetcar stop. Suddenly, I feel a draft on my thighs. Strange... I touch the back of the trench coat and realize with horror that it is split from the top of the thighs! I've been walking around for ten minutes with my ass in the air. That's me! Even if I try to be sexy, I'm getting the shame of the century.



Hall, 12.9.2018 (43 years old)

# PRESS IMAGES

Image credit: ©Barbara Iweins

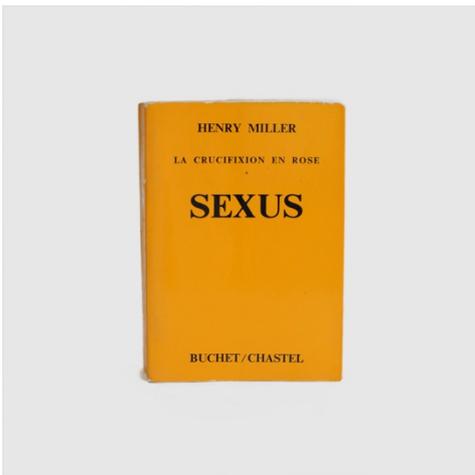
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Trench – Hall – 00079



Hot-water bottle – Barbara's bedroom – 04327



Sexus – Staircase – 03562



Bichon – June's bedroom – 08846



Sisters – Barbara's bedroom – 05143



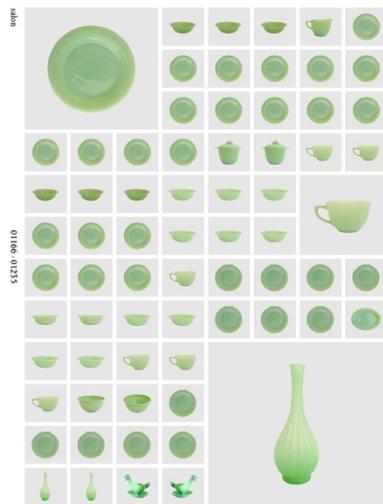
Family – Living room – 01236



Denture – Pieter's bedroom - 07871

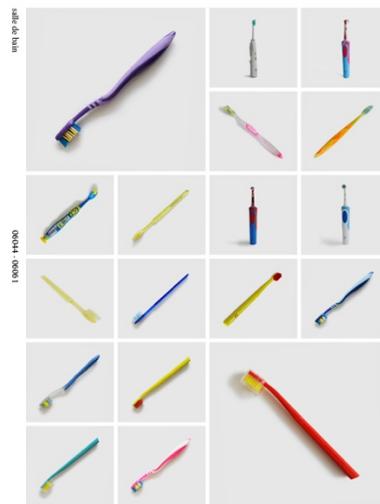


Skeletons – Cellar - 12795

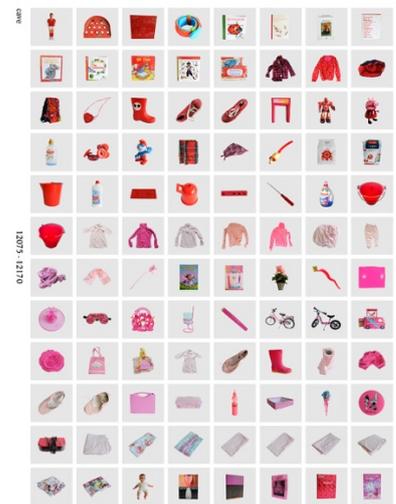


55 % des objets vintage du salon sont de couleur verte.

Living room – 01116-01235

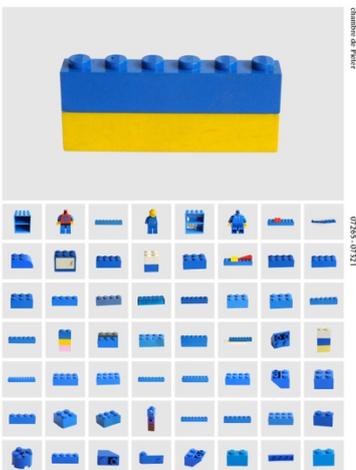


Bathroom – 06044-06061

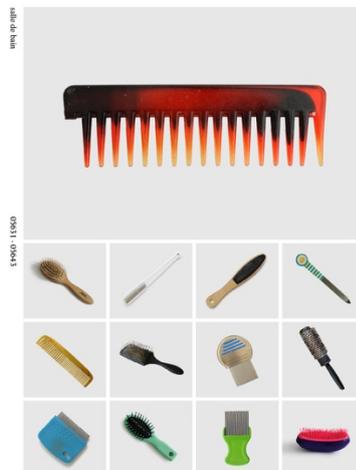


7 % des objets de la maison sont roses.  
La somme totale déposée dans la maison pour les objets roses: 7 881,60€.

Cellar – 12075-12170



Pieter's bedroom – 07265-07321



Bathroom – 05631-05643



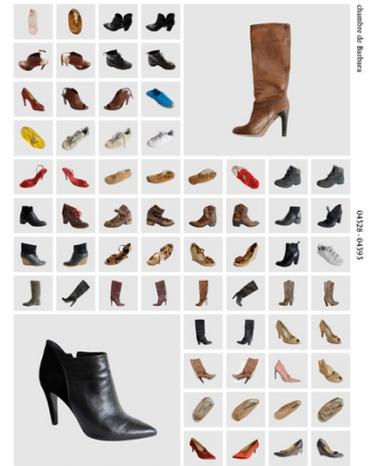
Kitchen – 00306-00309



Pieter's bedroom – 06541-06573



Barbara's bedroom – 04313-04326



Les paires de chaussures que j'aime sont achetées en double.

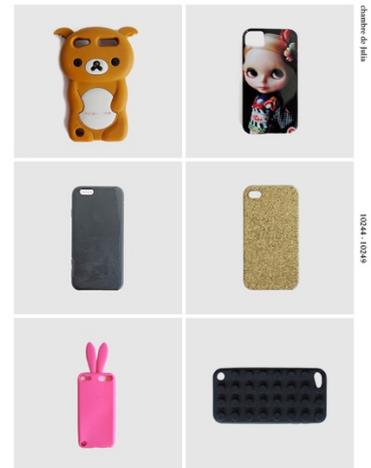
Barbara's bedroom – 04328-04393



Living room – 02042-02055



Barbara's bedroom – 04782-04818



Julia's bedroom – 10244-10249



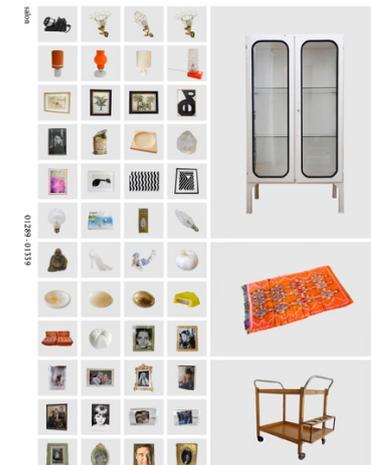
1 % des objets de la maison ont une valeur sentimentale. Plus les objets sont inutiles, plus ils me sont indispensables. L'inverse est également vrai.

Living room – 01134-01147



33 % des objets de la chambre de Julia ne sont jamais utilisés.

Julia's bedroom – 09987-09992



John Goodman et Tom Waits font partie de notre famille imaginaire. Ils ont chacun droit à un cadre.

Living room – 01289-01339

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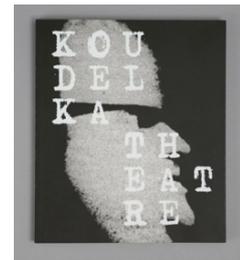
*Vibrations*  
Henri Foucault



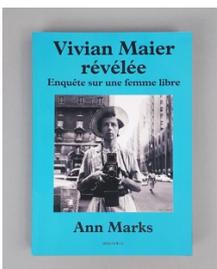
*Le soleil ni la mort*  
Stéphanie Solinas



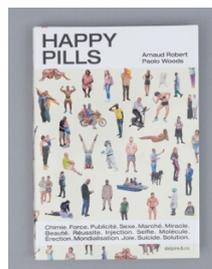
*Shi Nikki*  
Nobuyoshi Araki



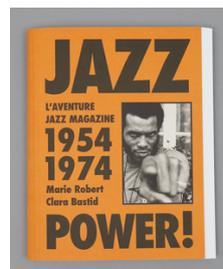
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*Happy Pills*  
Arnaud Robert and Paolo Woods



*Jazz Power!*  
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