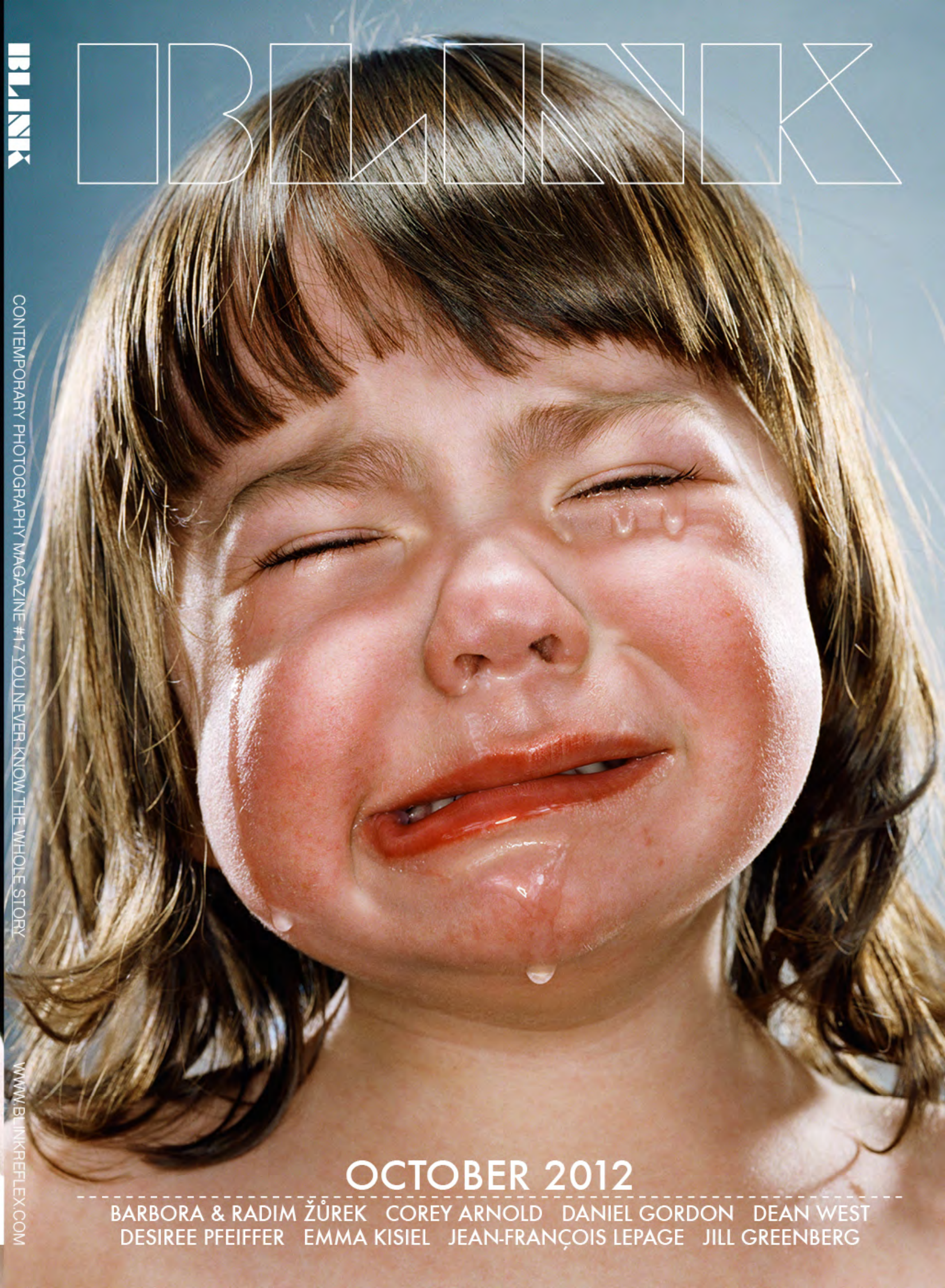


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OCTOBER 2012

BARBORA & RADIM ŽUREK COREY ARNOLD DANIEL GORDON DEAN WEST
DESIREE PFEIFFER EMMA KISIEL JEAN-FRANÇOIS LEPAGE JILL GREENBERG



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FEATURING
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DANIEL GORDON
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DESIREE PFEIFFER
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BLINK MAGAZINE FEATURES THE LATEST EXHIBITIONS AND ARTISTS IN THE INTERNATIONAL SPOTLIGHT

DESIREE PFEIFFER

Hello Desirée. Where are you staying for now?

I was born in Manhattan, New York. I currently reside in San Francisco, California.

Do you think your background and location affects your style of photography?

Yes. Growing up I moved around a lot and lived in numerous cities and states throughout the U.S. This required me to adapt to new and varied situations. However, regardless of how well I acclimated to new environments, I always felt like an outsider, and a bit detached at times. I studied my surroundings, watching people like they were in a movie. Each location was a new film set. I continue to do that now, but I control the setting. I consciously select locations, characters, and atmosphere, thereby controlling the narrative.

How did you first get into photography?

I was introduced to photography at summer camp. Afterwards, my dad gave me his old Pentax camera. Subsequently I took classes throughout high school. Because of the recognition received from teachers, friends, and family, my self-confidence increased and I discovered that photography was a medium through which I could express myself.

Tell me how the idea for your recent work 'Little 15' came about.

When I was a teenager I wanted to be Anton Corbin and take portraits of musicians. Later I realized the response their work evoked, rather than the artists themselves, was the more interesting subject matter. 'Little 15' is a collection of photographs inspired by the soundtrack of my teenage years. Each song and accompanying image captures a poignant moment during my adolescence, and involves my interpretation of what I recall the song signifying.

What narrative do you hope to convey?

Although there is not a single conscious narrative, I am attempting to convey a range of emotions while projecting an overall sense of magical realism,

i.e., creating an environment in which fantastical and real elements merge.

What's the meaning behind the title?

'Little 15' is the title of a Depeche Mode song that is personally significant. At 15, I left for boarding school in a state far away from both parents, my dad gave me my first camera, and I decided I wanted to be a photographer.

When will it be done?

It's half shot now, and I hope to have it completed by Spring 2013.

How do you choose your subjects?

I have specific characters in mind when I conceive ideas. I then look for friends and acquaintances who fit that image.

How do you build a relationship with the subjects you are photographing?

I don't have a particular approach, but I try to put people at ease (as someone who doesn't like being on the other side of the camera, I realize the experience can be uncomfortable). I explain the concept or mood I'm trying to convey beforehand so they have a sense of what I am trying to achieve. Moreover, because my subjects aren't professional models, I provide constant direction so they don't feel pressured to perform. Additionally, I try to make the experience collaborative by soliciting input.

What equipment do you use to shoot?

I shoot both film & digital. I use either a Mamiya 7-11 range finder (film) or a Canon EOS-1Ds Mark III (digital). I'm not a purist and use whatever lends itself to the image. 'Little 15' has been completely digital, but the other included images were shot on film (120 & 35mm). With lighting I like to combine strobe and available light. I keep it pretty simple because I do most things on location, usually without an assistant.

What catches your eye the most in the everyday?

I enjoy moments when people don't realize they're being watched. Their

guard is down, revealing a more accurate personal picture, instead of the outward appearance we hope to project. For example, once on a crowded morning bus I saw three women, each sitting in a different section of the bus, quietly crying. They were being discreet, turning their heads away towards the window. As tears fell down their cheeks, their stares shifted towards the ground. It was so chilling and foreign that I questioned whether it was performance art. Simply recalling that image affects me.

Do you have any favorite artists who inspire you?

Sarah Moon, Jeff Wall, Julie Blackmon, Gregory Crewdson, Nadav Kander, Caravaggio, David Lynch, Diane Arbus, Lars von Trier.

What is photography for you?

Art is one of the few things robots can't do as well as humans. It is the end product of human experience. Our lives are shaped by encounters and emotions. Like sponges we absorb our surrounding environment. How we experience and interpret these occurrences, separately and collectively, is unique. Hopefully I can produce images that are not only visually interesting, but also distinct and personal; something that represents me long after I can no longer represent myself.

What do you plan on doing next?

I've been working simultaneously on a studio portrait project. I've been photographing friends, acquaintances, and strangers on a weekly basis. Because I normally shoot on location with an implied narrative, I wanted to connect with people one-on-one and not rely on an environment to tell a story. The idea is to challenge myself by doing something completely different. My plan is to continue shooting until June 2013. After 'Little 15' and the studio portrait project are complete, I may try my hand at video or documentary work.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT DESIREE PFEIFFER
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