



ART

NEON TIGERS

Big Asian cities are a thriving mixture of the old and hypermodern: ancient temples and gleaming modern skyscrapers, huge outdoor flatscreens looming above outdoor markets, overworked businessmen hurrying down streets past loitering, hipster teens. In his new exhibit and book, *Neon Tigers*, photographer Peter Bialobrzeski merges the seven Asian cities of Bangkok, Kuala Lumpur, Hong Kong, Shanghai, Jakarta, Singapore, and Shenzhen into a supersaturated, visual survey. Asia's emerging "Tiger Cities" started to fascinate the German photographer back in the mid-1990s. "I was riding a cab from the Bangkok airport into town on an elevated motorway, where above looked like a smoggy futuristic dream world, while below the old Bangkok was still alive," he says. "From that point, I felt a desire to photograph the new Asia." The photographer's studies in sociology are apparent in his photographs of these seemingly utopian cities. In one photo we are placed in a manicured courtyard underneath a massive highway intersection. Yet, in another photograph, we are above this highway system, watching thousands of cars whir by; the courtyard is now just a speck far below the skyscrapers and urban development. As with the "Tiger Cities" themselves, when these contrasting images are combined, the result is a surreal, dizzying intersection of the sacred and the modern. KRYSTINA SIBLEY

Peter Bialobrzeski's *Neon Tigers* is now available as a full-color book by Hatje Cantz Publishers.