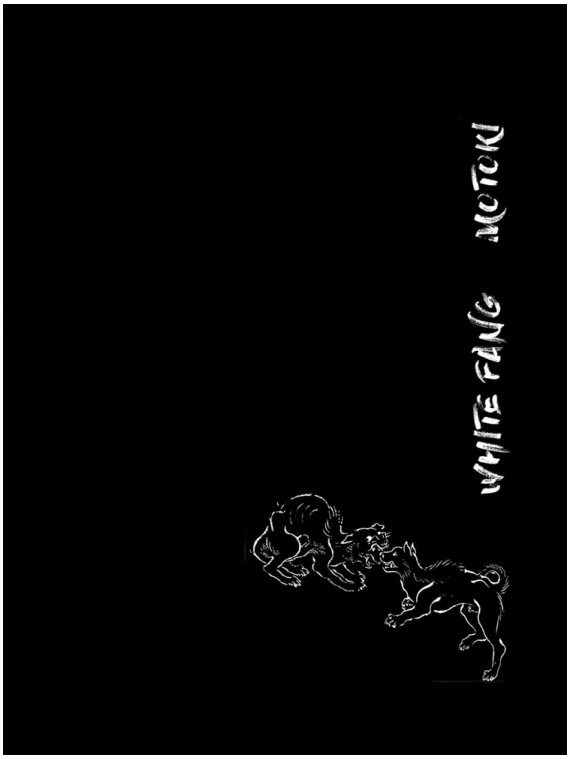
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Kumiko Motoki

White Fang

Kumiko Motoki

ISBN	9783862065844
Publisher	Verlag Kettler
Binding	Paperback / softback
Size	328 mm x 244 mm
Pages	48 Pages
Illustrations	15 color, 20 b&w
Price	£28.00

- A stark photographic representation of dogfighting in Japan
- This book achieved second place in an internationally renowned competition, The Dummy Award

For the Dummy Award, an international jury of experts annually selects the best unpublished photobook dummies in Kassel. The publishing house Verlag Kettler, cooperation partner of the Fotobookfestival, will publish the books of the first and second prize winners. This book was one of the two works published after the 2015 competition. Dog fighting is a controversial and illegal form of gambling. These days, the business of training pets to fight like machines is banned in most countries, and for good reason. But legislation has not prevented matches from being organised. These matches become a space in which the lines between man and beast are blurred. The Japanese call this strange encounter *Inui Ai*, or 'Dog Meeting'. In 2014, the photographer Kumiko Motoki travelled to Aomori in the north of Japan, where the first dog fight after World War II took place in 1950. Of all places, it was this wintry, snow-covered town in the middle of nowhere in which this bizarre tradition was resumed years later. In her artistic approach, Motoki has successfully found a mode of presentation befitting the event and place. Colour photos show portraits of dogs and their owners and reveal the preparations just before a match. By contrast, she captures the brutal tussle between the animals in blurred black-and-white pictures that zoom in on particular details. An insert in the middle of the book presents the history of dog fighting in Japan. The title *White Fang* brings Jack London's novel to mind. Just as dog fights turn the relationship between humans and animals upside down, the novelist also tells the story of a metamorphosis: a wild dog is transformed into a civilized creature accustomed to the company of humans. Understanding the ambiguous roles of humanity and beast is difficult, and Kumiko Motoki's pictures provoke an open question: who is wild and who domesticated in this bizarre liaison? Text in English and Japanese.

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