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Plastic Jesus

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ISBN	9783735610225
Publisher	Kerber
Binding	Hardback
Territory	World excluding Germany, Austria, Switzerland, the USA & Canada
Size	240 mm x 185 mm
Pages	80 Pages
Illustrations	55 color
Price	£27.50

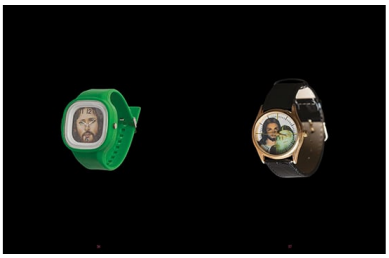
- A documentation of Coptic artefacts and holy relics from Egyptian churches and monasteries of today's mass consumerist culture
- A tribute to the power of the fantastical and an empathetic examination of lived spirituality

From 2006 to 2023, the Russian-Swedish photographer and curator Xenia Nikolskaya travelled to Egyptian churches and monasteries documenting noteworthy Coptic artefacts and holy relics. The impressive images in the collection bear witness to the profound and enigmatic connection between Coptic believers and their centuries-old traditions and rituals—but also to the changes they are undergoing in the face of today's mass consumerist culture. ***Plastic Jesus*** is both a tribute to the power of the fantastical and an empathetic examination of lived spirituality and its material expression. In this context, faith is revealed in everyday wonders, large and small, that transcend religion in the conventional sense.

Xenia Nikolskaya is an award-winning Russian-Swedish photographer, curator and educator currently based in Cairo. She has been a curator at the Russian National Centre of Photography (ROSFOTO) and Head of RIA Novosti exhibition department and photo archive. She has taught photography in the Russian Academy of Arts in St. Petersburg and also held academic positions at the American University in Cairo and Rutgers University, New Jersey. Since 2019 she is Assistant Professor of Photography at the German University in Cairo. A Fulbright fellow, Nikolskaya holds a Ph.D. from the University of Sunderland, UK. Out of the more than 40 international exhibitions in which her work has been showcased, 20 were solo shows. Her works are held in the collection of the State Hermitage Museum in St. Petersburg among other institutions. She is the author of *"Dust: Egypt's Forgotten Architecture*" (AUC Press, 2 editions) and, more recently, *"The House My Grandfather Built,"* which won the Swedish Photobook award in 2021, and editor of *"Anatoly Garanin, Soviet Union."*







Published 15th Sep 2025