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BOOKS

Jennifer Shaw's 'Hurricane Story'



By **Scott Andrews**
 PUBLISHED: SEPTEMBER 7, 2011

Photographs of children's toys threw yet another fatiguing stain of kitsch into the cultural wash over the last decade, but a stunning exception is Jennifer Shaw's use of plastic action figures in "Hurricane Story," her memoir of two month's flight and survival after Hurricane Katrina's landfall in New Orleans. When the storm hit, Shaw was nine months pregnant. During her family's escape by truck from the city, she gave birth to a son, who joined Shaw, her husband, and their cats and dogs on a 6,000-mile ramble through the country before returning to the Crescent City. To tell her story, Shaw staged a series of 46 tableaux, adding terse lines of text next to the photographs. Photographed with a plastic Holga camera fitted with a magnifier strapped over the lens, the haunting images have an extremely short depth of field, leaving most of the darkly colored photos in dreamlike blur. Unlike the majority of Katrina stories, which have portrayed

the storm's ruin of New Orleans or reflected on the lack of support to rebuild the city, Shaw's narrative is told in circular form. As in fables and fairytales, her story is filled with almost unbelievable challenges, but the tale concludes with a beginning. After chaos and loss, a new cycle begins.

"Hurricane Story," by Jennifer Shaw, is published by Broken Levee Books, an imprint of Chin Music Press, Seattle and Tokyo. The photographs and text of the book are also on view as a Fotoseptiembre exhibition at the Instituto Cultural de México through October 24.

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HOTEL HAVANA'S OCHO LOUNGE AND RESTAURANT HOSTS ALEJANDRO ESCOVEDO RESIDENCY

Ocho Lounge & Restaurant invite you experience the musical talent of San Antonio born producer, singer, songwriter and musician Alejandro Escovedo, performing on 3 Wednesdays in September. City: San Antonio, Location Other: Ocho Lounge at Havana Hotel

"WindowWorks 11.2: Potter-Belmar Labs"

San Antonio-based artists Leslie Raymond and Jason Jay Stevens (aka Potter-Belmar Labs) take over Artpace's Main Avenue windows with "Thirteen Vistas in Arid Lands."

FOTOSEPTIEMBRE: Malin Vulcano: "LookShe: Booby Trap"

TWIN PRODUCTIONS

Sunday, 8/28

NEKROMANTIX

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Black Label Johnny The trend I'm seeing here is a difficulty bringing in the "alternative" and "indie" bands. I blame the radio stations. There are no stations playing real alternative music in SA on regular...

After decades of neglect, could San Antonio become a live-music capital again? · 3 hours ago

Martha My Dear Knocked Lil' Wayne right off the #1 spot on iTunes. LIL WAYNE FANS CAN SUCK IT!!!!