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Paolo Ventura's Short Stories

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The Man in the Suitcase 1, 2013

The Italian photographer Paolo Ventura is known for constructing and photographing stylized dioramas to tell visual stories with a cinematic quality. “Automaton,” a series featured previously on Photo Booth, is a retelling of a story from his childhood, set in Nazi-occupied Italy.

In 2013, Ventura, who had been living in New York, returned to Tuscany, where a smaller apartment prompted him to use painted backdrops rather than full dioramas. One series, “The Suitcase,” presented like a flipbook, depicts Ventura as he disappears into a suitcase on the floor. Another, “Bird Watcher,” features Ventura’s son. Though they are less elaborate than the scenes of “Automaton,” Ventura says that he finds the stories more immediate. They reflect, he told me, a recurring theme in his work: “the fear of losing someone I love.”

“Short Stories,” a solo exhibit of Ventura’s work, is running at the Gallery Baton, in Seoul, South Korea, through March 6th.

BY THE NEW YORKER