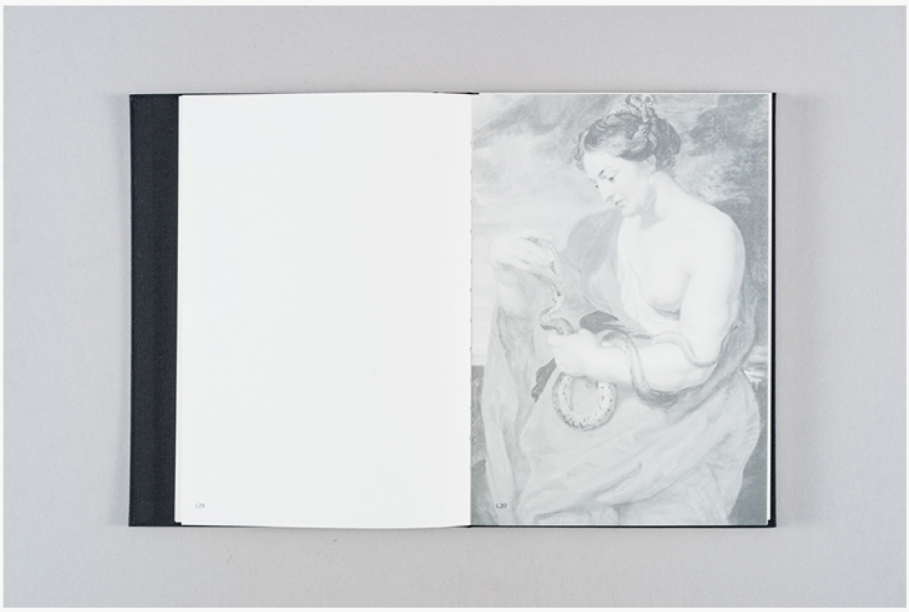

Giorgio di Noto: *The Iceberg*

Work / Publication

Giorgio di Noto surfed the dark web for photos of drugs for his mysterious new publication

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Words by Bryony Stone, Tuesday 06 February 2018

The internet is an iceberg, or so argues Rome-based photographer Giorgio di Noto. Cresting the waves, its white tip: the surface web. Lurking beneath, the hidden 90%, a bulky mass we cannot see or fully know, the deep web. Encrypted, anonymous, the deep web is a door into the intoxicatingly lawless world of the illicit, a virtual space where anything can be bought or sold, from firearms to people and everything in between.

“I started to study the dark net because I was interested in it as a means to bypass the censorship in some countries,” Giorgio di Noto explains. “To access the Dark Web you need Tor, a free browser which enables anonymous communication. It’s quite easy to do that, then I studied and spent time to understand how to surf the dark web and find what I looked for. The first access is very easy, what’s a little bit more complicated is to go deeper, because you don’t have a standard search engine.”

Giorgio’s mysterious latest publication *The Iceberg*, published by Edition Patrick Frey, brings together stock images with original photographs sourced from across the dark web with one crucial difference between the two: that the original photographs are printed in invisible ink and can be viewed only with the assistance of ultraviolet light, which is also used by drug enforcers to better identify the presence of narcotics.

“For this project I focused on the black markets and the drug representations because I wanted to work with original images created and uploaded only for the darknet by their users themselves, images nobody can see and never saw on the regular web,” Giorgio tells It’s Nice That. “It is like an impossible archive of something that exists

online just for a while, almost inaccessible that nobody wants to be archived or saved. And in this case, they are pictures used to advertise drugs."

Giorgio undertook months of research across "thousands" of listings used to sell drugs. "I was interested in way the sellers use pictures and images to represent their product and more in general what kind of images and visual contents you can find in this anonymous and hidden realm," he says. "I was especially interested in the original pictures made by the sellers themselves and the public domain pictures (which are printed in back and white in the book); sometimes they're used as a metaphor or a visual reference for their product."

For illumination purposes, the book comes with a handy UV pen.

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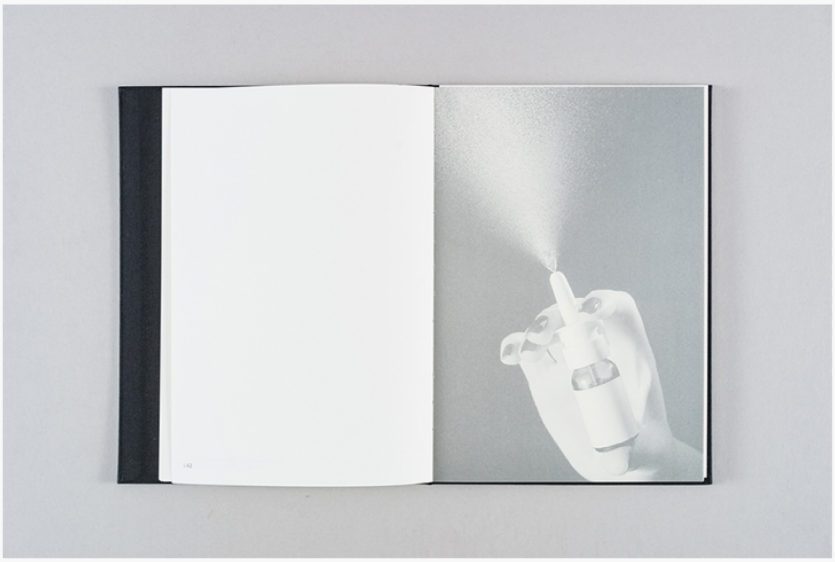

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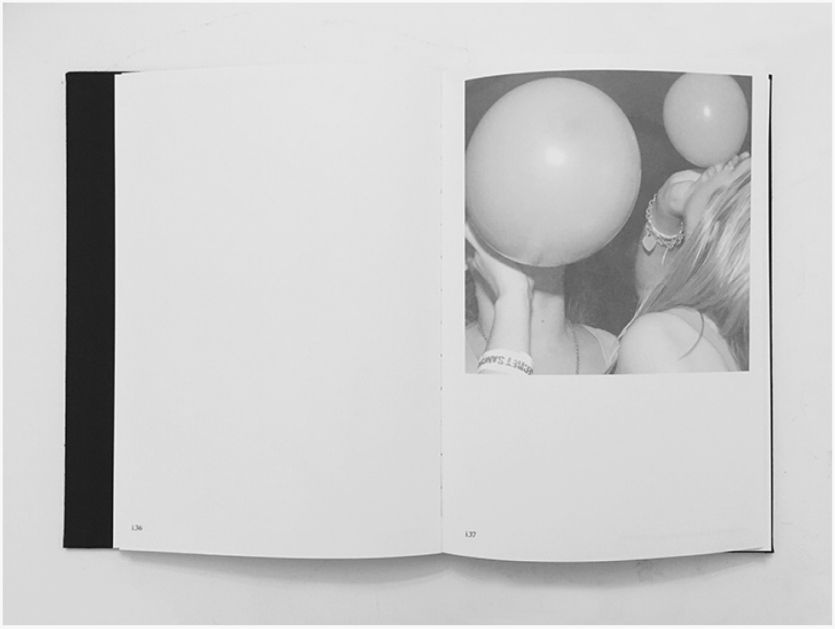

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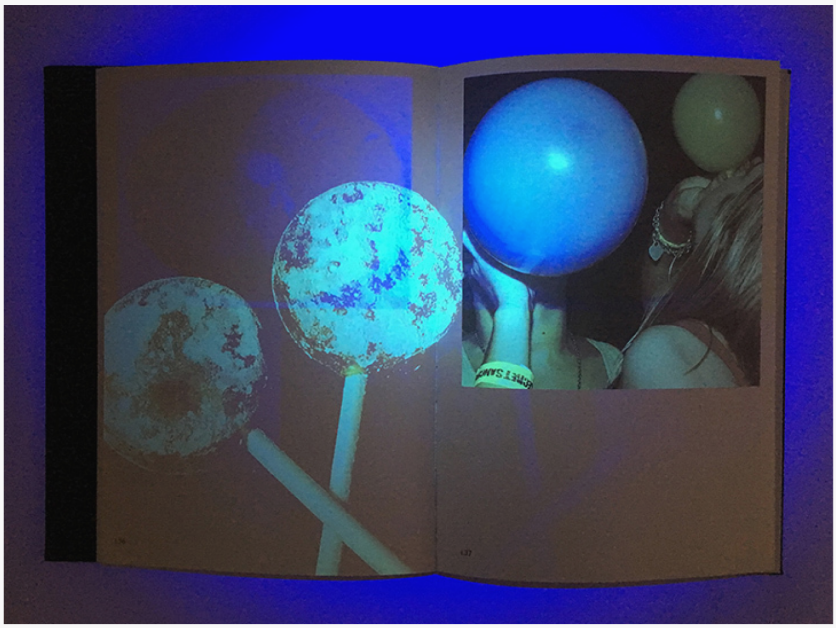

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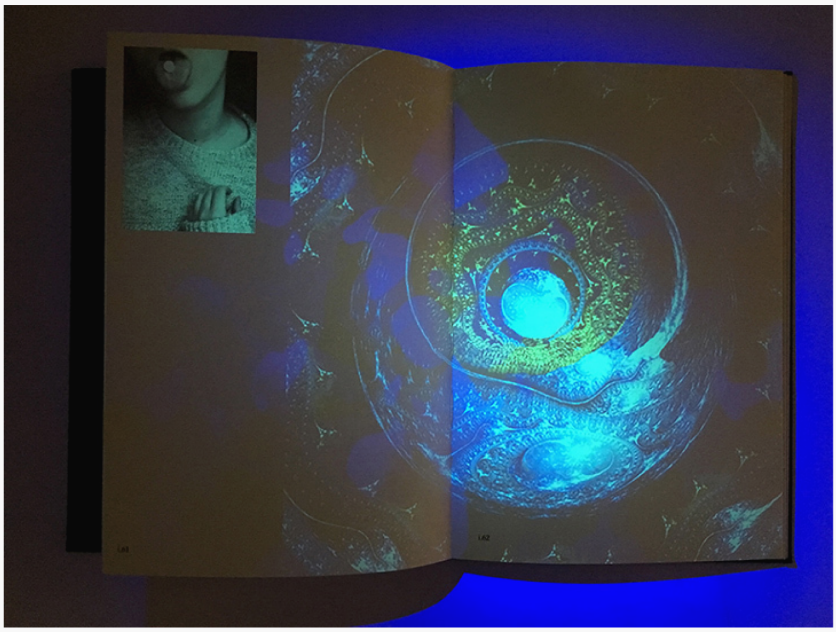

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www.giorgiodinoto.com

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