



*artasiapacific*

## Galleries

### LOMBARD FREID GALLERY

**Cao Fei**

**NEW YORK**

We see the apocalypse everywhere these days: overcrowded megacities crippled by drought, power outages, protests, terrorist attacks or lethal-levels of pollution. Cao Fei's new stop-motion film, *La Town* (2014), depicts an anonymous city that looks a lot like yours, and like ours, with a generic French-English name—except there, all kinds of calamity have unfolded. *La Town*-ians are depicted with toy figurines; the distressed, beleaguered cityscapes in detailed architectural models. The atmosphere is neo-noir, with dramatic music accompanying scenes of carnage (vehicular accidents), gruesome crime (ax murders) and social strife (phalanxes of riot police). Disembodied voices of a man and a woman have an abstract conversation in French (how better to express ennui?). As the 42-minute film unfolds, the mythical town—wrecked by an unknown disaster, and with its hopes for survival dimming—becomes us. *HGM*

