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Yangtze: *The Long River* depicts the world's third longest river, an important part of China's economy.



A Stirring Photo Essay On China's Longest River

NADAV KANDER'S AWARD-WINNING PHOTOGRAPHS OFFER A PORTRAIT OF THE YANGTZE, FILLED WITH UNEASY BEAUTY.



The Yangtze River--officially, the third-longest river in the world--generates almost a quarter of China's GDP. More people live along its banks than live in the United States (roughly one in every 18 people on Earth). And almost all of it has been transformed by the Three Gorges dam, the largest dam in history and a massive source of electricity for the growing country. Entire towns now lie submerged underneath the river's new banks, and over a million people have been displaced. The river is thus a symbol of China's modern face, built upon its most legendary waterway, which makes it a superb subject for photographer [Nadav Kander's](#) series, *Yangtze: The Long River*.

along its banks. His subjects are ant-like, confronted with the massiveness of the river and the rising infrastructure around it.

Kander compares himself to great sublime landscape painters like [Casper David Friedrich](#), who depicted tiny figures lost in the ferocity of nature. But rather than cowering before the elements, Kander's subjects quail before "the might of China," and more specifically, the state. He minces few words about the subtext of the photos, which he believes are warnings of environmental and cultural crises ahead. "China is a nation that appears to be severing its roots by destroying its past in the wake of the sheer force of its moving 'forward' at such an astounding and unnatural pace," he writes. "A people scarring their country, and a country scarring its people." Only last week, the river turned a [shocking shade](#) of beet red, a hue that has yet to be explained by experts.



The Long River has won some of photography's most prestigious awards, and next month it will make its debut in New York at [Flowers Gallery](#). Ironically, though only five years have passed since the images were shot, they depict landscapes that have since changed drastically. "They really do feel like pictures that can never be taken again," the photographer says.

KELSEY CAMPBELL-DOLLAGHAN
Kelsey is a designer, illustrator, and cyclist based in Greenpoint, Brooklyn. Previously, she was the editor of [Architizer](#). [Kelsey Campbell-Dollaghan](#) - CONTINUED >

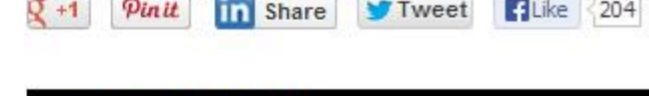


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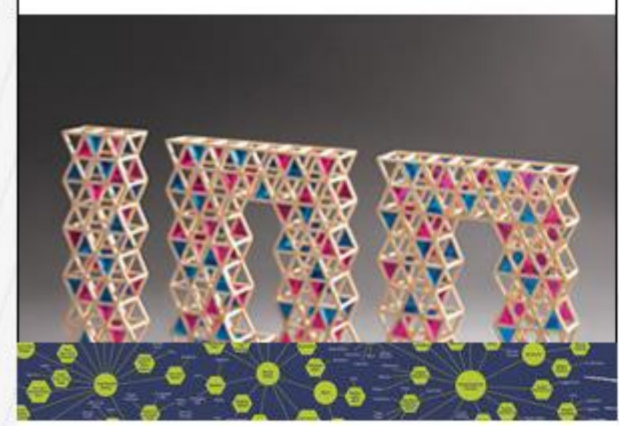
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