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PAOLO VENTURA'S AUTOMATON OF VENICE

Posted by Maria Lokke

The master diorama craftsman and photographer [Paolo Ventura](#)'s latest work is adapted from a children's tale that takes place during the Nazi occupation of Italy. The photographs tell the story of an elderly watchmaker who builds an automaton to keep him company during the evacuation of the Venice ghetto. "I wanted to create a city that was at once familiar and unknown," Ventura told me, "almost as if you walked through Venice, opened a gate, and discovered something you'd never seen before. This is a Venice I would have liked to have seen, but that no longer exists. Maybe it never really existed at all—except in my fantasy."

A selection of photos from "The Automaton" is currently on view at [Hasted Kraeutler](#); a book, available at the gallery, brings the full, heartbreaking story together. Here's a look.

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