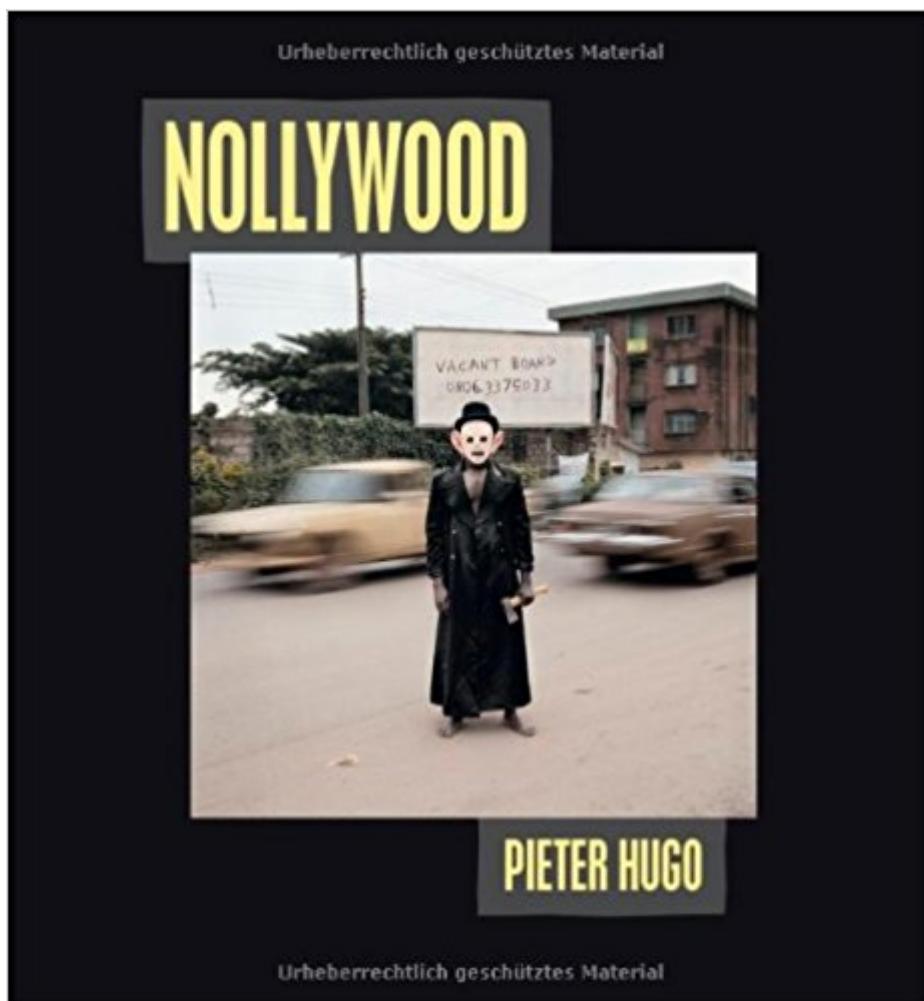


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# Nollywood



## **Synopsis**

The Nigerian film industry is the third largest in the world, after those of the United States and India. Nigerian films often deal with the moral dilemmas facing modern Africans today and tell stories familiar to African families: of religion, violence, AIDS, and economic hardship. Much as he did with his previous book, the hugely successful *The Hyena & Other Men*, Pieter Hugo documents the intense and incredibly colorful world of Nollywood from an unusual angle. His images are staged representations of Nigerian film sets, featuring local actors who recreate themes and characters from Nollywood films: young men in military fatigues; witch doctors, healers and saints; hunters with their kill; prostitutes in their rooms. The result is a series of surreal tableaux rooted in local symbolic imagery. Accompanying the photographs are texts by Chris Abani, whose short fiction piece captures the chaos of the filmmaking process, and an essay by Zina Saro-Wiwa on Nollywood's explosive growth and what it means to Nigerians. Presented in a simple and restrained format, Hugo's gorgeous photographs reveal a little-known phenomenon to a wider audience.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

I just saw this book this afternoon and bought it as soon as I got home. Say what you will about Hugo, for me he manages, most of the time, to walk a very thin line between something that manages to get my attention and very poor taste. There is a very subtle quality to many of his images that somehow hooks my interest. His work isn't great photography and its far from art. But it does grab, and for me that's enough.

nice book. there are a few stunning images, so that in itself makes this book. some of the images loose the balance between theatrical and documentary and come close on repeated viewing to being goofy. most images have a great sense of composition and light.

First of all, I like the subject of this book. I did not know of the existence of "this world". The photo's are very good. Pieter Hugo shows, after his really superb first book "The Hyena and other man" that he is one of the best photographers of Africa!

What a gigantic douche bag Pieter Hugo is! Hey, if you want to grab a camera and go on an anthropological safari stalking Nollywood game in Nigeria, be my guest. Only 500 other people have done so in the last five years. What is irritating is that the photographs are almost entirely of Hugo's imagination of what a Nollywood set should be like. Which would be fine if he were doing so purely as an "art" project and not claiming to "documents the intense and incredibly colorful world of Nollywood." You CANNOT document by staging phantasmagorical scenes using bit actors. Time Magazine makes it even worse by placing some of the more lurid (and frankly ludicrous) pictures in a slideshow entitled "Nollywood: The Stars of Nigeria's Movie Biz" - when the entire collection is peopled by complete unknowns. Again, I'm not pissed off by Hugo staging and taking these pictures (I'm not impressed by his concepts either, but then again, it isn't 1922 and I'm not a poorly traveled ignoramus from the West with no internet access). It's presenting them as some version of reality that falls into an odious pattern that recurs with Africa - particularly the product description that claims that "Hugo's gorgeous photographs reveal a little-known phenomenon to a wider audience." Wow, I'd have guessed that more people know way more about Nollywood than about Mr. Hugo (only MILLIONS of people watch Nollywood movies every year), but I guess if it's not being defined or interpreted by a white guy for western audiences, then it doesn't really exist, does it? Welcome, Mr. Hugo to the pantheon of "discoverers" like Mungo Park and Stanley. And shame on Zina and Chris for being party to this - yeah, I didn't read your pieces, but the vast majority of the "wider audience" won't either, so nothing you wrote could blunt the ignorance that's been spread so far.

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