

LARA PAWSON

Destruction is accelerating, tension is everywhere. We are in conflict with ourselves and with the planet. There is no escape.

When I go to a gallery or pick up a book I don't expect a way out, but I do want the experience to shift my understanding and disrupt my thought. If it does not, it has failed.

To See Stars Over Mountains (2022) is a visual diary by Vlatka Horvat. It spans 2021, with an image for each day. These are photographs with a twist. Mainly depicting Horvat's London neighbourhood of Tottenham, they show blocks of flats, tarmac roads, playing fields, streams, a canal. But each photograph has been doctored: drawn

on, sliced into, glued on, disfigured. They invite dreaming, laughing, imagining. They suggest precarity and fragility. They offer hope.

Most striking is their long-term effect. Horvat's work has opened new paths in my mind. Wherever I go I see orange curls coming out of trees, curious mirrors on roads, cut-ups and fold-outs that don't really exist. Except, now, they do.

Lara Pawson is the author of *In the Name of the People: Angola's forgotten massacre* *and the memoir* *This Is the Place to Be.*
