



tales *of Our Time*

TWO CONTEMPORARY ARTISTS FROM CHINA

置身其中 Chen Qiulin & Weng Fen
陈秋林、翁奋

tales *of Our Time*
TWO CONTEMPORARY ARTISTS FROM CHINA
置身其中 Chen Qiulin & Weng Fen
陈秋林、翁奋

August 29 – October 8, 2011

Curator: Dr. Meiqin Wang

Curatorial Team:

(Students from Art Department Exhibition Design Class ART 342/542, Spring 2010)

Curatorial research: Achiamar Lee-Rivera & Erica Waltemade

Education and public outreach: Olivia Gonzalez

Installation design: Monica Esquivel & Yessica Perez

Multimedia presentation: Ashley Mullen

Graphics: Tamim Alsecait & Whitney Barker

Exhibition website: Christopher Will

www.csun.edu/artgalleries

California State University
Northridge | **MIKE CURB**
Art Galleries | COLLEGE OF ARTS, MEDIA
AND COMMUNICATION

18111 Nordhoff St., Northridge, CA 91330-8299 | 818-677-2226

Acknowledgments

The CSUN Art Galleries are pleased to present the exhibition “Tales of Our Time: Two Contemporary Artists from China,” featuring the work of Qiulin Chen and Fen Weng. Professor of Art History, Dr. Meiqin Wang proposed this exhibition as a project for her students in the Art Department’s Exhibition Design Class.

We would like to thank Dr. Robert Buckner, Dean of the Mike Curb College of Arts, Media, and Communication for his continued support, as well as Dr. Kenneth Sakatani, Art Department Chair, and Michelle Giacomuzzi, Exhibitions Coordinator.

The Instructionally Related Activities committee at CSUN generously provided funds for this catalog, Naifang Zeng prepared its straightforward and contemporary design, and Professor Karen Schifman meticulously proofread this document. The China Institute at CSUN provided translators for lectures and workshops and helped publicize these events through its extensive network.

The graduate and undergraduate students in Dr. Wang’s Spring 2010 class participated in every aspect of this exhibition, including curatorial research, public outreach, and installation design. We extend our sincere appreciation to them for their diligent efforts.

Finally, we are most grateful to Dr. Meiqin Wang for her curatorial expertise, attention to detail, and her extensive knowledge of contemporary Chinese art, as well as to the artists Qiulin Chen and Fen Weng for their insightful, socially conscious, and thought-provoking artwork.

Jim Sweeters
Director
CSUN Art Galleries

Curator’s Statement

An exhibition that explores urbanization and its impact in contemporary China through the art of internationally established Chinese artists Chen Qiulin and Weng Fen. The exhibit presents about forty pieces of major photographic and video art works created by the two artists since the beginning of the twenty-first century, a decade that witnesses the ever-dramatic processes of urbanization and modernization of the Chinese world. The two artists have taken as their subject matter the massive ongoing transformation of Chinese society and the resulting impact on individuals, families, communities, villages, cities, landscapes and skylines. Coming from individual observation, experience, and reflection of the most relevant reality of contemporary China—urbanization and its disparate effects—the art by Chen and Weng invites conversation and contemplation upon a changing China and how people interact with the shifting living environment.

Dr. Meiqin Wang
Assistant Professor of Art History
California State University Northridge

Contents

ESSAYS

- 4 **Portraying China: Urbanization in Progress**
Dr. Meiqin Wang
- 9 **To Race Against the Disappearing:
On Chen Qiulin's Art**
Erica J Waltemade
- 13 **Reflecting on the Past in Times of
Modernity: The Art of Weng Fen**
Achiamar Lee-Rivera

ARTWORKS

- 16 **Chen Qiulin**
- 31 **Weng Fen**

BIOGRAPHIES

- 43 **Chen Qiulin**
- 45 **Weng Fen**

Dr. Meiqin Wang

Portraying China: Urbanization in Progress

The extraordinary economic development and revolutionary social transformation in China since it launched its reform and opening-up policy in the late 1970s has been a subject of public interest and academic research worldwide. Experts and scholars from various fields have examined the massive and unprecedented changes taking place in this world's most populous country and explored their implications to its people as well as to the rest of the world. Many have focused on the experiences of the Chinese people who are living at the center of a rapidly developing land that shows no sign of slowing down its speed of modernization. Of all major social movements prompted by the economic reform and modernizing endeavor, urbanization has played a particularly important role in orchestrating the rapid and extensive transformation in China. The speed and scale of Chinese urbanization in contemporary times are themselves staggering. Beginning with 193 cities in 1978, the number of cities in China reached 655 by the end of 2007.¹ Similarly, beginning with an urban population of 191 million in 1980, the number reached 594 million by 2007 and this number did not even include millions of migrant workers.² Arguably, the enormous ongoing urban expansion is a consequence of China's rapidly growing economy. In the meantime, the process of urban development itself is a significant drive that further transforms the economic, political, and cultural landscapes of China.

Since the late 1990s, urbanization has taken up a new momentum with the accelerated Chinese economy and the gradual integration of China into the international communities.³ A significant portion of contemporary Chinese art created since the beginning of the twenty-first century is dedicated to urbanization and its impact on Chinese people at both individual and social levels. Massive migration, expanding cities, and disappearing traditional communities together with long-established life-styles have become the most immediate reality that millions of Chinese people have to deal with. These movements have also become a dominant focus in the art of many Chinese artists as they contemplate the rapidly changing social and natural environments in China. Their artistic endeavors document, articulate, and highlight the disparate effects of urbanization on both the physical landscape of China and the psychological state of its population. As such their work constitutes an invaluable part of contemporary Chinese culture.

Emerging at the turn of the new century, Weng Fen and Chen Qiulin have taken as their subject matter urbanization and the resulting impact on individuals, families, communities, villages, cities, landscapes and skylines in China. Both artists examine and explore the changes, both on physical and psychological levels, of the relationship between people and places amid the ongoing economic and social restructuring efforts. The loss, confusion, struggle, aspiration, and hope that Chinese people have experienced in responding to the unstoppable changing reality are documented in their multi-media works. Examined together, their art departs from the majority of contemporary Chinese art circulating in the West since the 1990s that centers on stereotypical political icons or clichéd oriental imageries. Coming from individual observation, experience, and reflection of the most relevant reality of contemporary China, the art by Weng and Chen invites conversation and contemplation upon a changing China and how people interact with the shifting living environment. Engaging with a wide range of media, including performance, photography, video, installation, sculpture, and animation, they have created iconic images of China as it enters into the first decade of the twenty-first century.

Individually, however, Weng and Chen depict the unprecedented transformations of China from distinctive perspectives and each has created epic images in documenting and expressing their perception of urbanization in progress. Weng Fen's art portrays cities in their new appearance with splendid high-rise buildings. The speedy growth of cities epitomizes the rapid development of the Chinese economy and the sweeping power of modernization, for which Weng experienced with his own eyes in his home province Hainan. In the 1980s, the Chinese government designated five Special Economic Zones in southeast China as the site of experimentation for market economy, among which Hainan was the biggest (figure 01).⁴ It was in these Special Economic Zones where the first unprecedented economic success was achieved and modern Chinese cities were built. The successful experience of the coastal regions in southeast China was soon followed by cities on the east coast such as Shanghai, and then by cities in the northeast such as Beijing in the 1990s, and eventually by cities in central and western China at the beginning of the twenty-first century.



Figure 01: The map of China, in red mark, showing the location of the five Special Economic Zones designated in the 1980s: Xiamen, Shantou, Shenzhen, Zhuhai, and Hainan. The first four zones are cities while Hainan is a province.

Constant business travel across different cities in these booming economic regions in the southeast provided Weng Fen with first hand experience, both visual and emotional, of the speed and

unevenness of which cities were expanded and rural regions shrunken. When he started making contemporary art, that previous experience became the best subject matter. Many of his artworks are derived from his past memory of the speed and spectacle of China's urbanization. Furthermore, that memory is constantly reinforced by the ongoing reality as the expansion of cities never stops. He sees the same process as he travels from Haikou in Hainan province to Shenzhen in the neighboring province Guangdong, and then northward to Shanghai and Beijing, and then down southwestward to cities in central China. In a way, his art is related to the everyday experiences of the majority living amid the fast expansion of cities and is a continuation of the psychological and emotional dialogues between the artist and the changing architectural and natural environments. His images explore new aspirations of common Chinese citizens, including his own family, who have come accustomed to modern city life, as seen in his *Family Aspirations* series. In other series that focus directly on the architectural environment of the urbanites, his camera captures the unstoppable horizontal and vertical expansions of cities that aggressively encroach on neighboring regions and skylines.

Weng casts his attention on the apparently bright side of China's urbanization and choreographs the interaction between people, in most cases schoolgirls, and the newly built living environment. Hope and anticipation, however, are mixed with a certain degree of ambiguity. In several of his series, the splendor of nature fully manifests itself through the brilliant skylines, against which the imposing skyscrapers exemplify the process of modernization in contemporary China, symbolizing speed, power, and masculinity. The presence of young girls in school uniform, however, projects a sense of purity, vulnerability, and femininity. Their presence brings a quality of softness and uncertainty to the otherwise steadfastness of development and progress. The ambiguity and anonymousness of their presence is emphasized here as we only see the back of the girls. Are they looking with earnestness and admiration or are they confused? It is not clear. Nonetheless, their gestures seem to suggest the very state of being attracted to the urban buildings that are establishing in front of them. In these seemingly simple and bright compositions, one sees multiple dialogues and relationships: the solid and the void, the Yin and the Yang, sky and earth, nature and human construction.

The attractiveness of urban and modern life posts a tremendous lure to people on the other side—here we may interpret it as the countryside, the un-developed, and the un-urbanized—as seen in his *Sitting on the Wall* series. In the *Bird's Eye View* series, the desire to be part of the developed world seems to have been fulfilled when the schoolgirls are now integrated into the urban world, contemplating upon the magnificence of their cities from the top of a high-rise building. The artist eventually transfers his actors to nature, where they now look at lake, sea, and landscape, as seen in his *Staring at the Lake* and *Staring at the Sea* series. Is he suggesting that the man-made urbanscape is an equal subject of contemplation as that of nature and his people can freely transfer between the two? Or is he projecting his vision of seeing the beauty of nature through the innocent eyes of the young girls? Is he calculating the time when this nature will also disappear and be replaced by man-made structures? Or is he predicting a better future, as in his recent series *Future*, when these teenagers grow up and become the major force of moving our society forward? No matter what kind of question one may pose, the artist invites his audience to look with intensity, just as the people in his artworks do.

The art of Chen Qiulin mainly centers on the destruction of rural villages and old city neighborhoods, which is deemed necessary to make way for new constructions, either modern cities or new public projects that facilitate modern life. Chen grew up in a small town in central China along the Yangzi River called Wanxian, where the process of modernization and urbanization began at least one decade later than that of southeast China.⁵ Consequently, Chen and other residents

there have just begun to witness the destructive side of this massive movement, which naturally sets a somber tone to most of her artworks. Unlike Weng Fen, whose works project a hopeful and futuristic vision, Chen Qiulin's many works evoke feelings of loss, melancholy and sadness. Many of them are derived from the physical and mental consequence of the construction of the Three Gorges Dam project on the Yangzi River in China (figure 02). The Three Gorges Dam, the most ambitious hydropower plant that human beings have ever built on this planet, was mainly conceived to control the devastating flooding during the rainy seasons and to harness the energy of the river for producing electricity. The completed major part of the project in 2008 has fundamentally changed the geography and environment of areas along the Yangzi River in central China, as many places were intentionally flooded to create an enormous reservoir.



Figure 02:

The map of China showing the location of the Yangzi River, the Three Gorges Dam, and Wanxian, Chen Qiulin's hometown. Wanxian, like many other small towns and villages and cities along the Yangzi River, is now under water.

With the construction of the Three Gorges Dam project, more than one million people were relocated and numerous cities, towns and villages were demolished and their sites are now under water.⁶ Chen observes the destruction of houses and communities and the resulting chaos and desolation. Instead of documenting the overwhelming and disturbing process of massive displacement, she explores the mental struggle of ordinary individuals, including herself, who seem to have difficulty accepting the new reality and who try to hold on to what is no longer existent, as seen in her *Hometown* and *I am an Angel* series. These individuals are walking, searching, contemplating, or simply conducting daily rituals as if nothing has changed. It seems that the artist is trying to create a sense of normality that can satisfy the searching soul. However, the normality individuals endeavor to maintain makes their presence abnormal since the old context has been demolished.

Demolition comes along with the construction movement as new cities and towns have been built to accommodate the displaced population. The Three Gorges Dam related process of demolition/construction is met with the increasing impact of urbanization that has turned the entire country of China into a construction site. Chen's photographic and video artworks document the changes of the geographical landscape in central China where people have lived for generations. These artworks also capture the psychological struggles they have endured as they try to redefine their relationship with the new environment. An unexpected natural disaster exacerbated the dramatic changes that were already brought up by human desires: the 2008 Sichuan earthquake that hit central China with a magnitude of 7.9. Without giving any explicit judgment of the changes, either man-made or nature-inflicted, Chen discovers and records the dilapidated structures, abandoned neighborhoods,

and unsettling sceneries with a rather intimate and personal sensibility. The artist herself appears quite often in her artworks, wearing costumes that are apparently out of place or out of time, as seen in her photographic works *The Moment* and *Twilight*. That may be her perception of the relationship between the changing physical environment and the people who have lived there. Attempts to maintain the old hometown, to linger in the once familiar surroundings, and to revive the memory of past experiences seem pathetic, futile, and unrealistic in the face of rampant expansion of modern cities. The centuries old notion and practice of coming back to the sweet old hometown like a leaf that falls back to its root of origin is no longer possible in the revolutionary transformation of Chinese society. Many places that were dear homes are now either construction sites or under water, and memories that link people with their neighbors and with these places are disappearing. In several of her series such as the video work *River, River* and *The Garden*, Chen's camera follows the traces of people who try to come to terms with their new environment. She reflects upon the conflict and negotiation between the longing for the familiar, local, and traditional and the desire for the new, global, and modern.

These contrasting portrayals of urbanization and its impact by Weng Fen and Chen Qiulin are not only products of their individual perspective and experience, but they are also visual documents of the uneven and multiple effects of urbanization as it evolves in China. Urban expansion is a continuous process in China, and according to some experts the process will only get more intense in the future decade. Hundreds of new cities and tens of thousands of new skyscrapers will need to be built to accommodate the increasing urban population.⁷ As such, the issues explored in the art works of Weng Fen and Chen Qiulin will remain relevant for China for years to come.

Notes

- ¹ "The Number of Cities in China Reached 655," *People's Daily Online*, November 5, 2008. <<http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/90001/90776/90882/6528090.html>> (Accessed April 2, 2010).
- ² These numbers are obtained from the World Bank research website. <<http://go.worldbank.org/7SSF2QHK0>> (Accessed April 2, 2010).
- ³ According to current statistics, the growth of urban population actually started to slow down in the 1990s, but the effect of successive decades' urban migration has yet to fully exert its influence in Chinese society.
- ⁴ The other Special Economic Zones are Zhuhai, Shenzhen, Shantou, and Xiamen.
- ⁵ See chapter three "Regional Modernization," in *China Modernization Report 2002* (Beijing: Peking University Press, 2002).
- ⁶ Wang, Huazhong, "Dam Forces Relocations of 300,000 More," *ChinaDaily*, January 21, 2010.
- ⁷ "China's urban population to reach 800 to 900 million by 2020," *People's Daily Online*, September 15, 2004. <http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/200409/16/eng20040916_157275.html> (Accessed April 5, 2010)

Erica J Waltemade

To Race Against the Disappearing: On Chen Qiulin's Art

As an emerging young artist from China, Chen Qiulin impresses her viewers with her multi-media works that explore the theme of urbanization. Through her artistic vision we can see that the constant tumultuous development of urban landscapes come hand in hand with destruction of the rustic and familiar landscapes. Through Chen's work we are given a deeply personal perception of the monumental changes happening in China. Her artworks are a record of her direct experience and recollections. Life as she had known it was disappearing and growing more and more unfamiliar by the day because of urbanization and in particular because of the Three Gorges Dam Project.

The Three Gorges Dam Project is the world's largest hydropower plant that spans the Yangtze River in the Hubei province. The dam was built to produce hydroelectricity, to increase the river's navigation capacity, and to reduce the potential for floods downstream by providing flood storage space.¹ From its inception, the project was met with controversy about the impact that it would have on the environment as well as on the people of the region. The massive project sets records for the number of people it displaced, which was over 1.2 million, and also the number of cities and towns that were flooded, which was 13 cities, 140 towns, and 1,350 villages.² With such devastating results, it is no wonder that this project had such a significant impact on the lives of so many of China's people, including Chen. Most of her work in this exhibit is about her perception of the process and results of the Three Gorges Dam Project.

Chen was born in 1975 in Hubei Province, China. She grew up in the town of Wanxian, which is situated on the banks of the Yangtze River, right in the path of the dam. At the age of 23 she attended the Sichuan Fine Arts Institute in Chongqing, studying the traditional art of Chinese woodblock printing until she graduated in 2000. She was working for a film company painting billboards when she soon came across performance art.³ Chen's encounter with performance art had

a significant impact on her choice to abandon her formal training of the traditional art of woodblock printing and to work with contemporary artistic mediums such as performance, video installation, and photography. Most of the artworks included in this exhibition are photographic and video of original performance pieces she did on several locations in China.

The impact of the Three Gorges Dam project has been a theme in most of Chen's video performances and photographs. There are many ways of dealing with such life-altering events such as the execution of this dam, and Chen's idea was to make these performance videos as a way to record the areas that were to be submerged and never to be seen again. The artist is quoted as saying, "To record is to indulge in the disappearing."⁴ Her race against the inevitability of the disappearance of the villages at different stages provides a timeline for understanding the project.

In 2002 Chen set out to record *Farewell Poem*, which was an homage to her hometown. The video was shot within a 14-day period and is broken up into three sections.⁵ The first part deals with the lives of the emigrants in a city that is being torn down. The second part records the remains of the Three Gorges region, parts that were destroyed and parts that were going to be destroyed. It also films a Beijing opera playing *Farewell to my Concubine*, a tale about two male 20th century Chinese opera actors, one who plays a female role and the other his love interest. It is evident why Chen would choose such a story to stage among the wreckage of the dam.⁶ The characters in this opera have been struggling with an identity crisis and their tale ends tragically and without hope. The people of this region that are affected by the dam project are all displaced and have been forced to abandon their hometowns together with a part of their identities. The short film, which was dedicated to the artist's parents and the people from this region, is set against two different historical backgrounds that both share the same feeling of helplessness. Chen executed these performance pieces without any formal training, which is a true testament to her talent and artistic vision.

Chen began filming *River, River* in 2005. The impact of the Three Gorges Dam was felt all around her, leading to huge demolitions and the mass migration of millions of people. After two years, the banks of the river were flat and empty, waiting to be rebuilt with modern docks and high buildings. The artist saw *River, River* as a continuation of the work she did in *Farewell Poem*, at the next stage in the development of the dam project.⁷ The film features elaborately dressed figures from the Sichuan opera in construction sites, in which the mingling of the past and the present communicates a feeling of displacement.

The next video performance she did in 2006 was titled *Color Line*, which also resulted in a series of photographs *I am Angel*. The performance features the artist wandering through the city of Wanzhou's urban wasteland, through the rubble and demolition of the forgotten ghost city. She wears a costume of angel wings and a dress made of commonly seen red and blue tarp. Chen chose this material because it is a cheap, lightweight, and functional as it is used to make luggage. These bags are very popular among migrant workers who use them during their travels, and have become a recognized symbol of these people. The narrative follows her watch over a group of local schoolboys dressed in traditional looking uniforms made of the same material. The work has no dialogue, only an abstract soundtrack playing as these forlorn looking characters wander aimlessly through a landscape destined to be submerged as part of the Three Gorges Dam project.⁸ The photographs that accompany this video are images of the artist dressed in this angel costume seemingly lost amid the vast piles of rubble and ruin. The compositional element of the photographs in this series brings about a melancholy response by sharply contrasting the delicate, beautiful angel against the harsh wreckage of the leveled city. In the photograph *I am Angel No.3*, the angel is shown standing on a pile of rubble in an abandoned building looking up toward the opened window

above her. The image is particularly compelling with the figure looking up toward the light against the abrasiveness of the gritty surroundings; this seems to suggest hope.

A year later, Chen completed her next photo and film series *The Garden*. In this work, the artist's aesthetic and emotional development is evident. The overall appearance of images is more polished and crisp than those of her earlier work. Chen's perspective of everything has changed, as well as the cities she has visited. In this series, Chen likens the construction of a new Wanxian (the old one being submerged) to the blooming flowers of the garden. One of the best examples of this comparison is seen in the composition of the photograph, *The Garden No. 4*. In the background of the photograph we see high-rise buildings being constructed, while the foreground presents a sea of migrant workers and their potted peonies, parallel to the extreme verticality of the buildings. The people of this region were returning and were unsure of the unfamiliar surroundings. Where there once were dilapidated homes and buildings now stood great high-rises. Generally, the use of the peony flower in Chinese culture is a powerful symbol of love, beauty, and wealth; while plastic flowers are simple objects used as ornamentation. In this case they remind us that even dreams for a better life, love, beauty, and wealth can be simulated.⁹ One of the most interesting qualities about the photos and video of *The Garden* is the artist's color choices. The entire landscape and all of the migrant worker's clothing are very dull and grey, which makes the pink of the plastic flowers extremely dramatic.

Given the artist's work to this point, we are able to see how the each video performance correlates to the stages of the construction of the dam, from start to finish. Also we see the subject matter and storyline have grown from the artist dealing with distress and despondent confusion of an abandoned village anticipating the flood to her dealing with the sobering reality of the flood that had since taken place, and the hope of a rebuilding a bright future.

Not long after the full realization of the Three Gorges Dam was completed, the most devastating earthquake to hit China in three decades altered the region again. With a staggering magnitude of 7.9 and an official death toll of 87,150 people, the impact this had on the Chinese people was indeed overwhelming.¹⁰ Using an abandoned factory destroyed by the earthquake, Chen made her final video and photography series shown at this exhibition, entitled *Peach Blossom*.

Chen had two objectives in the *Peach Blossom* series: on the one hand, hopes to bring more concern to the disaster areas and make people want to help those in need; on the other hand, to use the earthquake as only the background of the work, not the theme. The focus of this work is to continue in her artistic practice of using her very personal point of view to interpret the relationship between people's lives and how they are changed by the aftermath of these momentous circumstances.¹¹ The artist is dressed in a contemporary white wedding dress. Traditionally, Chinese women have worn red dresses during wedding ceremonies. It is common, however, in contemporary Chinese society to adapt the western tradition of wearing white. It is interesting to note that in Chinese culture, white is the color of mourning and associated with death. Given the context of the photograph, set in the aftermath of a devastating earthquake, her color choice of white, which is a common color she uses in her art, could be in association with mourning, which would establish a duality of meanings within the work. Again in this series Chen uses herself as a subject, her small, delicate figure in pristine white juxtaposed against the harsh darkness of the abandoned, destroyed factory.

Chen's videos and photos deal with such powerful and haunting dual concepts within each frame: purity and destruction, tradition and progress, old and new, and urbanization and nature among them. Her works are not only a literal documentation of a changing landscape, but they are also

manifestations of her experience, vision, as well as her way of paying tribute to the past. As her work progresses, we see her acceptance and even the hope of what is to come. These images and videos are so compelling that they almost force us to really empathize with not only her, but also with the people of this region who were all displaced. Although we may not be able to understand what it is like to be living with the rapid degree of change taking place specifically in China, we understand the feelings of displacement, hopelessness, and acceptance.

Notes

- ¹ Peter Bosshard, "Three Gorges Dam," International Rivers Organization, <http://www.internationalrivers.org/node/356>. (Accessed April 6, 2010.)
- ² Ibid.
- ³ France Pepper, "Chen Qiulin," Hammer Museum, http://hammer.ucla.edu/exhibitions/detail/exhibition_id/168 (Accessed April 7, 2010).
- ⁴ Selina Ting, "Interview: Chen Qiulin on Memory and Social Change," *InitiART Magazine* Summer 09, http://www.initiartmagazine.com/issue01/issue01_ITcql.html (Accessed April 10, 2010).
- ⁵ Artist Statement.
- ⁶ As a child, Chen accompanied her grandfather, a Sichuan opera enthusiast, to many performances. That explains why she chose *Farewell to my Concubine*, which was performed by a famous local troupe, to express her farewell to Wanxian. Information acquired from the Hammer Museum essay on Chen Qiulin by France Pepper, http://hammer.ucla.edu/exhibitions/detail/exhibition_id/168 (Accessed April 22, 2010).
- ⁷ Artist statement.
- ⁸ Long March Space, "Migration-Chen Qiulin Solo Exhibition," Long March Space Gallery, Beijing, http://www.longmarchspace.com/zhanhui/HRAFF-Australia/e_index.html. (Accessed April 6, 2010).
- ⁹ One Art World, "Chen Qiulin Presented by Max Protetch, 2007," <http://oneartworld.com/Max+Protetch/Chen+Qulin+2007.html>
- ¹⁰ USGS, "Magnitude 7.9 - Eastern Sichuan, China," US Geological Survey, <http://earthquake.usgs.gov/earthquakes/eqinthenews/2008/us2008ryan/#summary>
- ¹¹ Artist statement.

Achiamar Lee-Rivera

Reflecting on the Past in Times of Modernity: The Art of Weng Fen

Weng Fen is an artist from China whose art responds closely to major issues of Chinese society in contemporary times. Many of his artworks, in different media such as photography and video, have to be understood in light of China's continuous effort to modernize itself since the 1980s and the resulting changes in every aspect of Chinese society. Since the 1990s, urbanization has become a top priority in cities across China and this effort in modernization is currently one of the most distinctive features of this country. In order to execute such a large-scale reconstruction project, many older cities throughout China have been completely destroyed and their inhabitants relocated. Consequentially, many sites of historical and cultural importance have been lost. After massive destruction, these sites have been reconstructed into modernized and somewhat homogenous cities. Projects like these have been occurring at such a high rate that not only is urbanization merely a government plan for China's future, but now an integrated part of everyday life and culture throughout the country. While many people who are affected by urbanization projects are content with the status quo, these projects [leading to a complete relocation of thousands of families] have caused a major disruption and destabilization in the social structure and lifestyle of Chinese people that once seemed so unwavering. Problems like these, however, are masked by China's thriving economic growth.

In the field of the contemporary art world in China, many Chinese artists choose to address cultural identity in their art, so it is no surprise that the subject of urbanization [which is today almost synonymous with China] can be found in the artwork of many contemporary artists. Weng Fen is one such artist that finds much of his inspiration in the ever-developing Chinese urban landscape. Having witnessed dramatic urban expansion first-hand in his hometown of Haikou in southern China, Weng creates photographs illustrating the impact of these changes on the mentality of urban residents, while also revealing their conflicting hopeful expectations and the reality of the situation surrounding them.

When it comes to understanding his work, Weng really values the viewer's personal perspective, their own history, and their own experience. Together this collection of works initially suggests an optimistic vision for China's future; however, Weng invites the viewer to look beyond the surface and reflect on what they truly see before them. As seen in his photograph, *Family Aspirations* is a depiction of the newly modern Chinese family and what they aspire for in their constantly "progressing" society. Weng sheds light on the mentalities of these contemporary families concerning issues like patriotism, health, education, and overall life goals by disguising his own family into different scenes. As their lives shift from an "old world" to a new progressive one, Weng reveals the effects such changes may have on urban individuals and their families. As their surroundings change, the people change, new goals and desires begin to emerge. With a simple, yet comical approach Weng's series can be seen as social commentary. In *Wish for Patriotism*, it seems as though Weng is satirically revisiting the stereotypical and political art that was once popular in China.¹ The other works in the series appear to have a common thread through them. Both *Wish for Academic Degree* and *Wish for Good Health* are two important factors for the "ultimate goal" of a *white-collar* life. In *Wish for a White Collar Life*, Weng and his wife pose in their professional attire with his and her briefcases. Between them stands their daughter wearing formal, yet youthful clothing while carrying her own small purse. The "white-collar life," as he puts it, is the new lifestyle many would like to attain and by having a proper education and maintaining one's health

one can accomplish such a dream. This series is a clear example of the Chinese family's desire to join this new world developing around them.

Weng's works are never free of his personal history and his family; therefore, incorporating his personal life is key to his artistic creation. He gives the viewer access to both his private and public life by including his wife, daughter, and himself as the representation of these hopeful sentiments. In this way, Weng hopes to unite his life with his art.

Born and raised in the Hainan province of China, Weng experienced China's urban transformation first hand. One of the first projects that ignited his career involved photographing schoolgirls sitting on walls in a number of cities in southern China that were experiencing urbanization. The photographs in this *Sitting on the Wall-Haikou* series are all from the capital of the Hainan province and Weng's hometown, Haikou. In these photographs, taken over a period of ten years, Weng brings before the viewer the evolution of an urban landscape. With the vertical lines created by the rising skyscrapers combined with the green foliage [in the foreground of the image] and the light blue skies, he touches on the coexistence of the traditional and modern life and the unbalanced nature surrounding the two. The placement of a lone schoolgirl on a wall creates the juxtaposition of a still and reflective moment with the perpetually modernizing city. As the girl sits there, transfixed by what's before her, the viewer is placed behind her as if joining in on her moment of reflection.

Inspired by an artist project that took place in 2006 in the Lakes District of England, Weng again utilized the personal and cultural perspectives of his own family in order to examine the issues existing in other countries while comparing them to China's own problems. The project commemorated the 70th anniversary of the book *The Silent Traveler* by the Chinese poet Chiang Yee. A book that was extremely popular in its time, it offered the English people an opportunity to learn about a Chinese visitor's perception of their homeland. During his stay in the Lakes District, Weng reflected on his surroundings and exchanged ideas with local residents, all the while recording his observations by means of photography, video, and writing. Through the course of these interactions, Weng discovered the disparities existing between Chinese and British attitudes towards nature. He realized the problematic contradiction that existed in the Chinese mindset on nature. With popular old sayings in China such as: "One cannot make an omelet without breaking eggs," "Where there is a will there is a way," and "Harmony between man and nature," Weng came to question, "Can we find an effective and balanced way in those concepts and traditional wisdom to guide the harmonic relationship between the economic boom and the urbanization of today?"² Questions such as these caused Weng to think more about the reconstruction projects occurring throughout China, including the widely discussed Three Gorges Dam Project.³ Weng began to really contemplate these issues and often discussed them with a friend during his stay. Ultimately, Weng asked himself, "How should we do it if we don't approach [it] like this?"⁴

In *Staring at the Lake* series, Weng places schoolgirls as well as his family in nature, with their backs to the viewer, staring out onto grand lakescapes. The viewer, placed behind the young girls and family, is invited to either observe or even participate in this moment of reflection. The young schoolgirls in *Staring at the Lake-1* literally have nature at the edge of their feet. With the lake directly before them, it is as if the girls are taking a moment to consider that what is before them now might soon cease to exist. In between two worlds, an older China and the new China, the girls face their cultural past while realizing their inevitable future.

Staring at the Sea is similar to the previous series in that Weng places the young girls in a moment of contemplation. However, this series is also his response to the bustling intensity of constant

urbanization. In these works, Weng signifies the yearning for serenity within a cycle of incessant transformation. Once again, the young schoolgirls represent that desire for a tranquil moment in conjunction with the eager anticipation one may have for the future. He questions if a balance can be found amongst the two. How is it that one can be whole-heartedly enthusiastic for the inevitable urban evolution, while longing for that transitory moment of peace?

With his ongoing photographic project *Future*, Weng sought out to honor the brightest young girls from high schools in different cities throughout China. He chose to photograph one girl from each city, in profile, with her city as the background. Weng's consistent use of young schoolgirls can be assumed as a strong belief in the young girls as the "future" of China. Using these bright girls as his subject gives the viewer hope for an even brighter future. Weng incorporates a part of himself by including his daughter in the series as the representative for Beijing.

Akin to his *Sitting on the Wall, Bird's Eye View* series appears to be another juxtaposition of a still moment and a relentlessly progressing city. However, now the stronger juxtaposition lies between the schoolgirls and their representation of purity and vulnerability with the overwhelmingly powerful constructs encompassing their surroundings. The young girls have been taken from nature and are put in somewhat of a "concrete jungle"; they are now apart of the "new world" they were anticipating. Emotions are subtle, yet these pieces can provoke a strong reaction in the viewer, who is once again placed behind the young girls. While these works initially seem hopeful in meaning, the viewer is placed in almost a state of helplessness behind the girls and their moment of reflection, a moment of reflection that is not necessarily because of "...being in an ecstasy of delight...on the development process toward modernization, [but on the] inevitable experience [of] a timeless solitude and great mental burden."⁵

Throughout Weng's series one can easily assume his pieces revolve around hopeful sentiments for China's future, however, when examined further one will find that anticipation muddled with ambiguity. Weng's works not only call the viewer to contemplate, but invite conversation to take place in the discovery of meaning. Although the destructive process that involves urbanization may be absent from his imagery, it is a fundamental issue that lies at the very heart of this collection of works.

Notes

- ¹ Chinese government has heavily invested in educating its citizens to be patriotic and in the past when the state had a sole control of art production, patriotism was definitely a major theme represented in many art works and advocated nationwide through reproduction of these art works.
- ² Gu Zhengqing, "Weng Peijun's Beautiful New World-On His Installation 'Building with Eggs'," Redskyart Space. <http://www.redsky-hk.com/html/EN_article_Weng%20PeiJun's%20Beautiful%20New%20World.htm> (Accessed April 12, 2010)
- ³ Originally conceived in 1919, the Three Gorges Dam Project is the world's largest hydropower project that resulted in the displacement of more than 1.2 million people. See Peter Bosshard, "Three Gorges Dam," International Rivers Organization. <<http://www.internationalrivers.org/node/356>> (Accessed April 12, 2010.)
- ⁴ Josef Ng, "Interview with Weng Fen," Redskyart Space. <http://www.redsky-hk.com/html/EN_article_Interview%20with%20Weng%20Fen-Josef%20Ng.htm> (Accessed April 12, 2010)
- ⁵ Gu Zhengqing, "Weng Peijun's Beautiful New World-On His Installation 'Building with Eggs'."

ARTWORKS
CHEN QIULIN 陈秋林



Ruins Series, No.1
2002
Photograph
27 x 33 in / 57.86 x 86 cm

Hometown
2002
Photograph
16 x 48 in / 40.6 x 121.9 cm

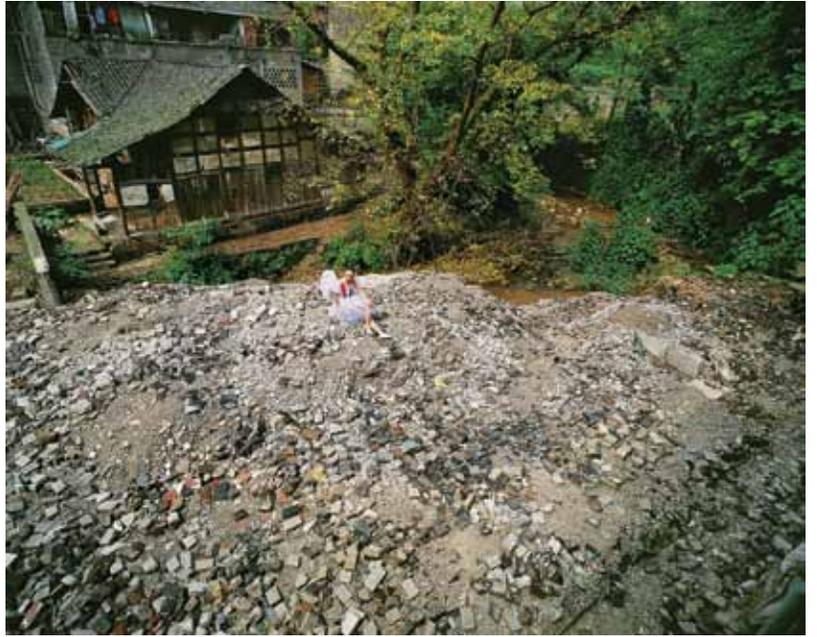




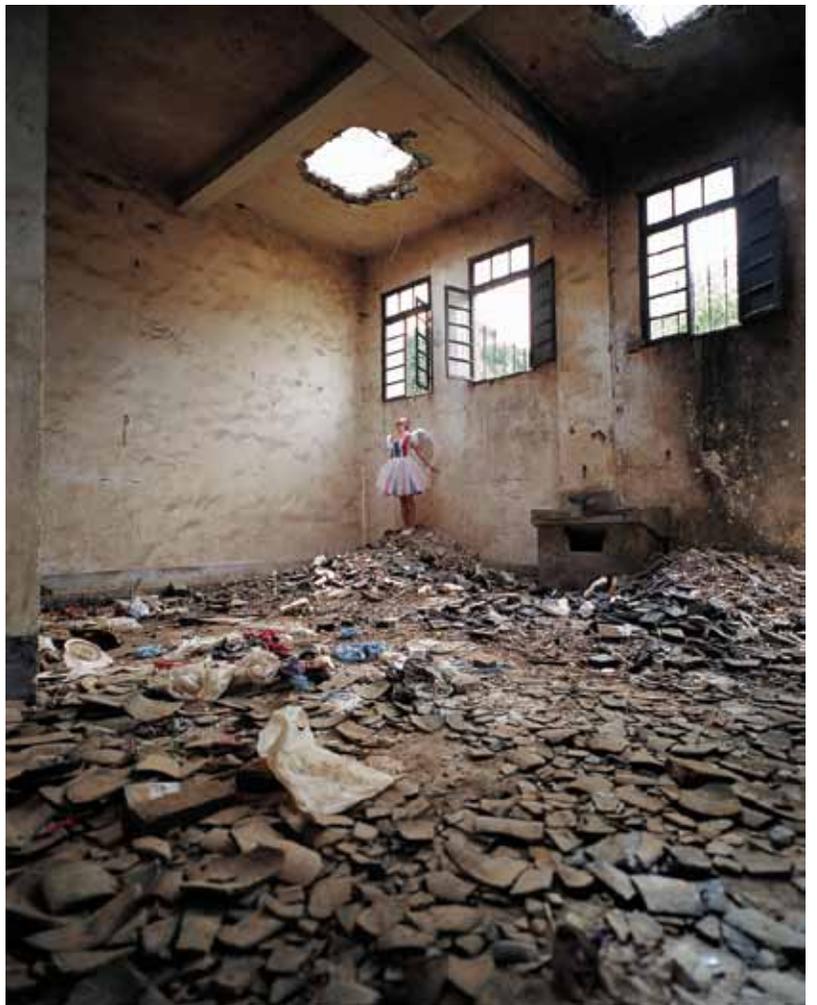
Ellisis's Series No.2
2002
Photograph
33 x 49.60 in / 83.8 x 126 cm



Ellisis's Series No.3
2002
Photograph
34 x 27 in / 86 x 57.86 cm



I Am An Angel No. 1
2006
Photograph
32.24 x 40.23 in / 81.9 x 102.2 cm



I Am An Angel No. 3
2006
Photograph
39.37 x 31.50 in / 100 x 80 cm



Green Landscape No. 1
Photograph
2006
39.37 x 31.50 in / 100 x 80 cm



Green Landscape No. 2
Photograph
2006
39.37 x 31.50 in / 100 x 80 cm



The Garden No. 1
2007
Photograph
32.28 x 39.37 in / 82 x 100 cm



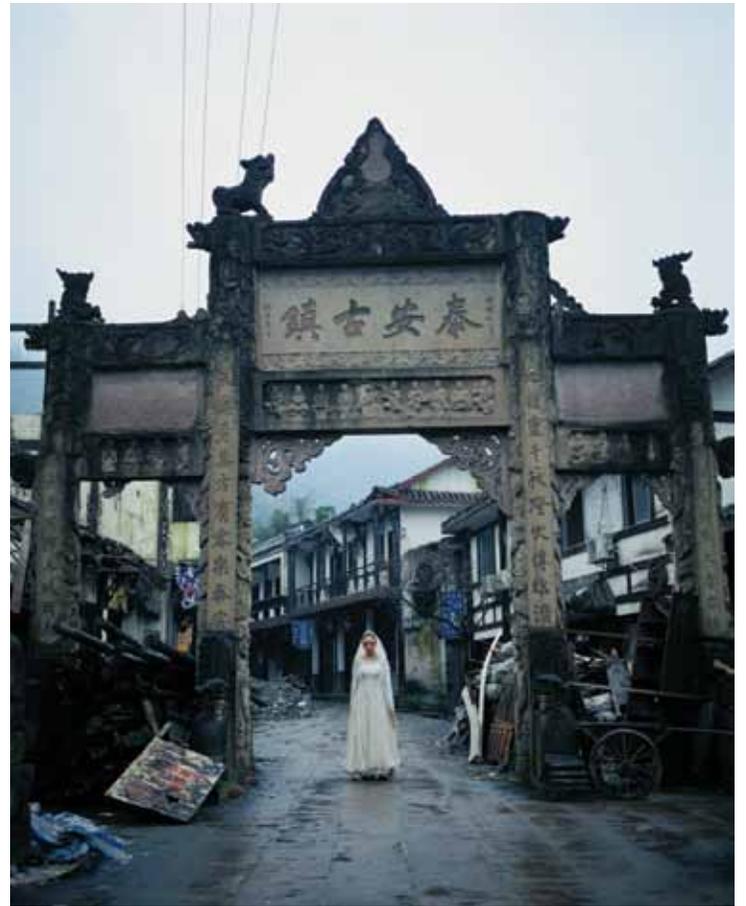
The Garden No. 4
2007
Photograph
48.81 x 60.1 in / 124 x 152.7 cm



The Moment
Photograph
2009
60.6 x 48.8 in / 154 x 124 cm



Solidified Scenery
Photograph
2009
48.8 x 60.6 in / 124 x 154 cm



Old Archway
2009
Photograph
60.6 x 48.8 in / 154 x 124 cm



Twilight
Photograph
2009
48.8 x 60.6 in / 124 x 154 cm



Dawning Bell
Photograph
2009
60.6 x 48.8 in / 154x124 cm



Stills from *Ellis's Series*
Performance Video
2001
11 minutes



Stills from *Farewell Poem*

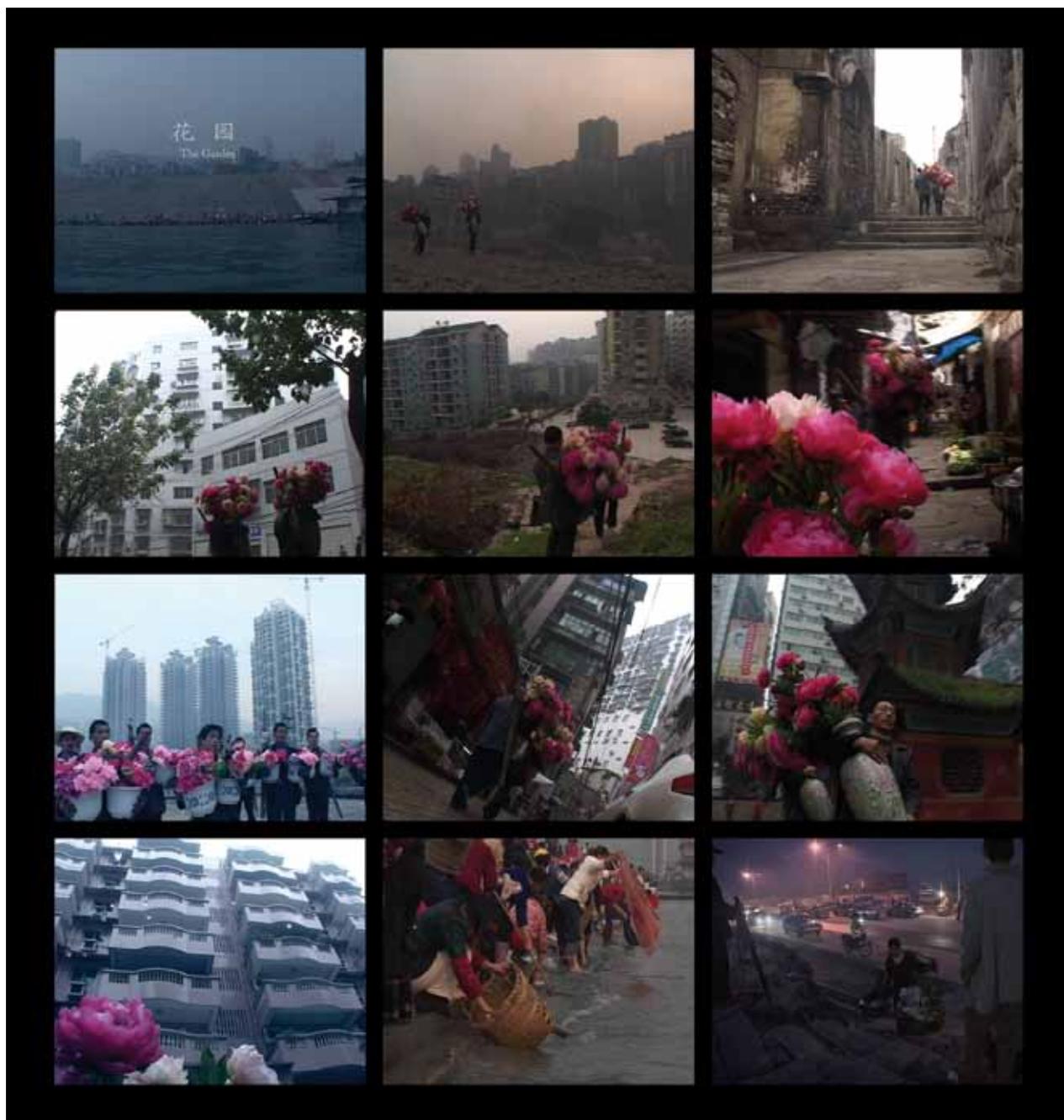
Video

2002

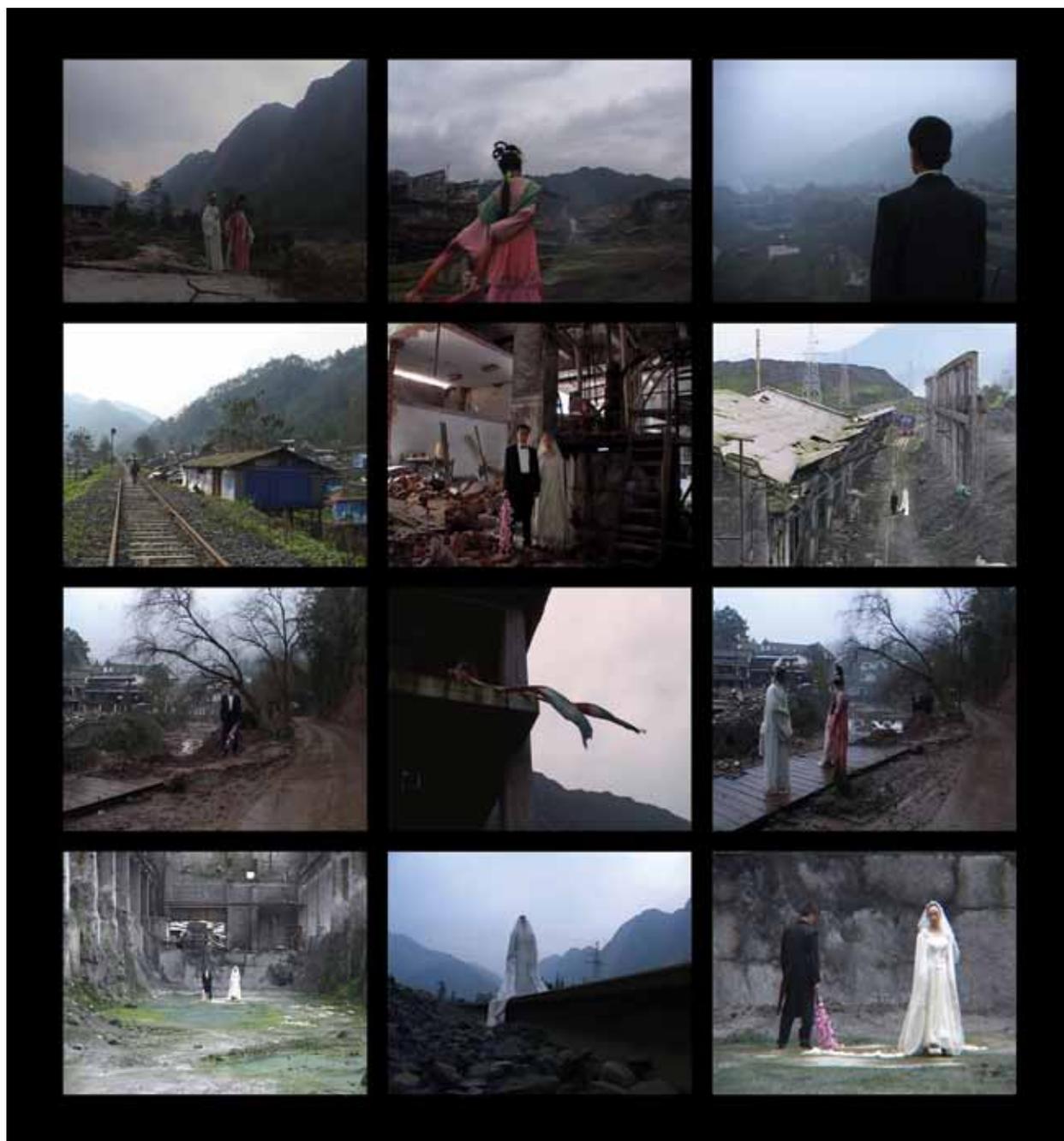
9 minutes



Stills from *Color Line*
Video
2006
8 minutes 8 seconds



Stills from *The Garden*
Video
2007
14 minutes 45 seconds



Stills from *Peach Blossom*
Video
2009
16 minutes 37 seconds

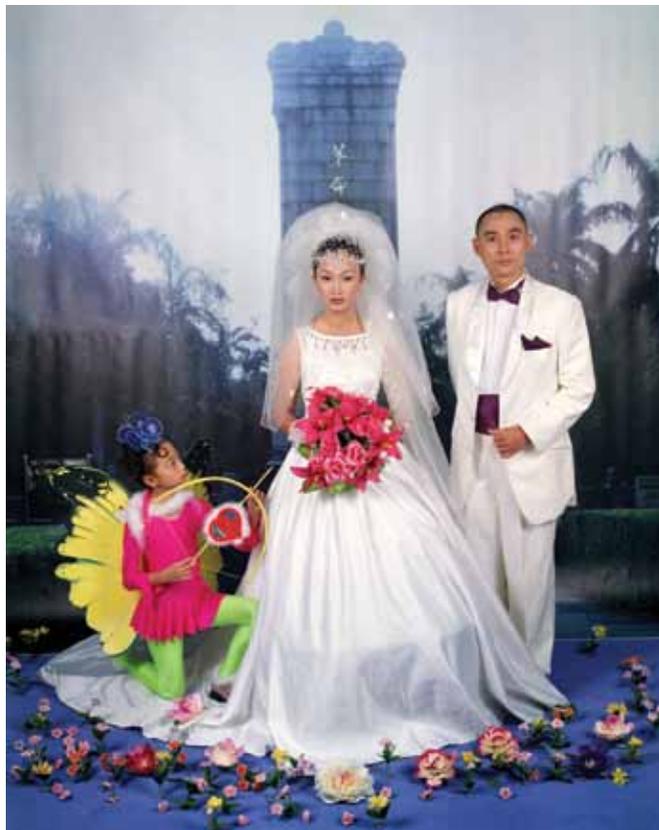
ARTWORKS
WENG FEN 翁 奋



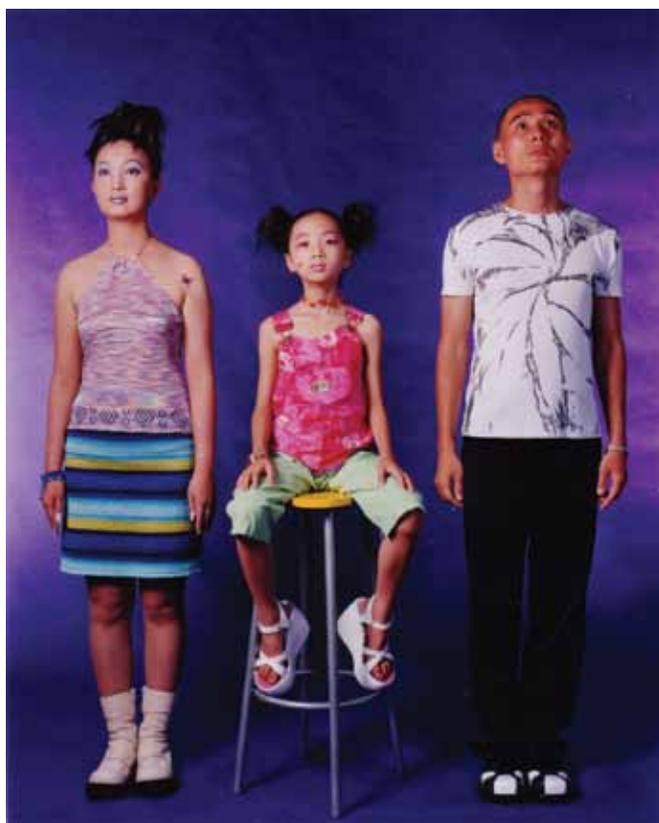
Family Aspirations—Wish for Patriotism
2000
Photograph
24.4 x 19.7 in / 62 x 50 cm



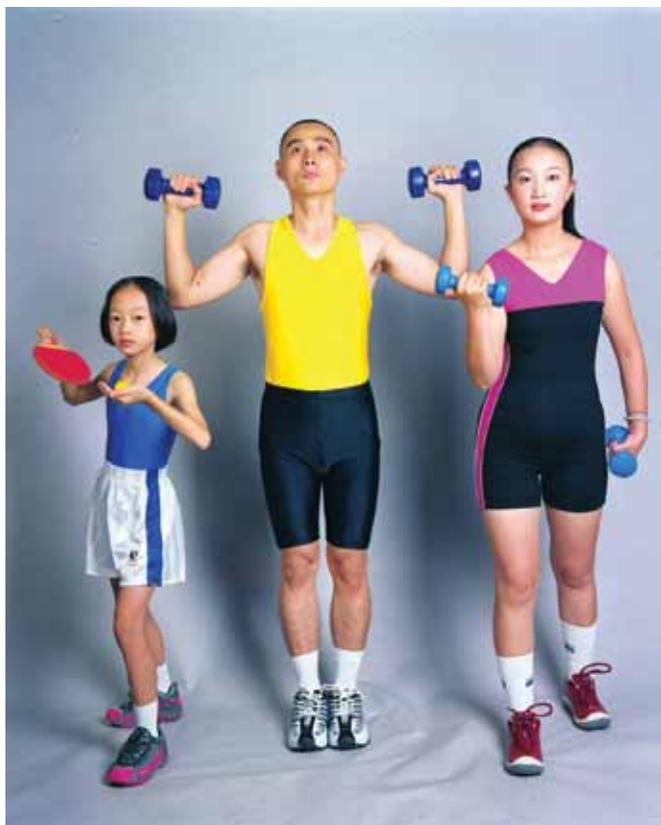
Family Aspirations—Wish for Academic Degree
2000
Photograph
24.4 x 19.7 in / 62 x 50 cm



Family Aspirations—Wish for Good Marriage
2002
Photograph
24.4 x 19.7 in / 62 x 50 cm



Family Aspirations—Wish for Fashion
2002
Photograph
24.4 x 19.7 in / 62 x 50 cm



Family Aspirations—Wish for Good Health
2002
Photograph
24.4 x 19.7 in / 62 x 50 cm



Family Aspirations—Wish for White Collar Life
2002
Photograph
24.4 x 19.7 in / 62 x 50 cm



Sitting on the Wall-Haikou 2001
2001
Photograph
31.4 x 39.3 in / 81 x 100 cm



Sitting on the Wall-Haikou 2003
2003
Photograph
31.4 x 39.3 in / 81 x 100 cm



Sitting on the Wall-Haikou 2005
2005
Photograph
31.4 x 39.3 in / 81 x 100 cm



Sitting on the Wall-Haikou 2007
2007
Photograph
31.4 x 39.3 in / 81 x 100 cm



Sitting on the Wall-Haikou 2008
2008
Photograph
31.4 x 39.3 in / 81 x 100 cm



Sitting on the Wall-Haikou 2010
2010
Photograph
31.4 x 39.3 in / 81 x 100 cm



Bird's Eye View—Beijing 8
2007
Photograph
49.2 x 63 in / 125 x 160 cm



Bird's Eye View—Beijing 9
2007
Photograph
49.2 x 63 in / 125 x 160 cm

Staring at the Sea 6
2005
Photograph
31.4 x 39.3 in / 80 x 100 cm



Staring at the Lake 1
2006
Photograph
31.4 x 39.3 in / 80 x 100 cm





Future-Beijing
2009
Photograph
39.3 x 39.3 in / 100 x 100 cm



Future-Taibei
2009
Photograph
39.3 x 39.3 in / 100 x 100 cm



Stills from *Our Future Is Not A Dream*
2000
Video
8 minutes 17 seconds



Stills from *I Am Afraid That People Never Will Understand Each Other*
2009
Video
10 minutes 24 seconds

BIOGRAPHY

CHEN QIULIN 陈秋林

- 1975 Born in Hubei province, China.
2000 Graduated from Sichuan Academy of Fine Arts, China

SELECTED SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2009 *Chen Qiulin*, Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, USA
2009 *Chen Qiulin*, Max Protetch Gallery, New York, USA
2007 *Chen Qiulin: Recent Work*, University Art Museum, University of Albany, Albany, USA
2007 *The Garden*, Max Protetch Gallery, New York, USA
2006 *Migration*, Long March Space, Beijing, China
2005 *Big Factory*, Shanghai, China
2004 *The Tofu of February 14th*, Chengdu, China
2002 *Internet Affairs*, Chengdu, China

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2010 *The Land Between Us*, The Whitworth Art Gallery, The University of Manchester, Manchester, England
2010 *Fat Art 2010*, Sanlitun Village, Beijing, China
2010 *Reshaping History—Chinart From 2000–2009*, China National Convention Center, Beijing, China
2010 *The 4th Beijing International Art Biennale*, National Fine Arts Museum of China, Beijing, China
2010 *Across the Horizon—the Exhibition of Chinese Contemporary Art*,
The Chilean National Museum of Fine Arts, Santiago, Chile
2009 *The 6th Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art (ATP6)*,
Queensland Art Gallery & Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane, Australia
2009 *Ancient Paths, Modern Voices: Video Work by Gao Shiqiang and Chen Qiulin*,
Orange County Museum of Art, Los Angeles, USA
2009 *Chen Qiulin Installation Work—Boat*, Chengdu Arts Home, Chengdu, China
2009 *Obstruction*, A Thousand Plateaus Art Space, Chengdu, China
2009 *A Certain Kind of Post-Modernism*, A Thousand Plateaus Art Space, Chengdu, China
2009 *Up Close, Far Away: Junge Chinesische Kunst*, Heidelberger Kunstverein, Heidelberg, Germany
2009 *Flower Power*, Villa Giulia, Verbania, Italy
2009 *YIPAI*, Today Art Museum, Beijing, China
2008 *Gwangju Biennale*, Gwangju, South Korea
2008 *Two Chinas; Chen Qiulin & Yun-Fei Ji*, Worcester Art Museum, Worcester, USA
2008 *Look at Me! The Performative Impulse in Recent Chinese Photography*,
Williams Center Art Gallery, Easton, USA
2007 *Displacement—The Three Gorges Dam and Contemporary Chinese Art*, Smart Museum, Chicago, USA
2007 *Echoes: Chengdu New Visual Art Documentary Exhibition*,
A Thousand Plateaus Art Space, Chengdu, China
2007 *China Power Station Part II*, Astrup Fearnley Museum of Modern Art, Oslo, Norway
2007 *Attention: Chinese Contemporary China Photography*,
Artium: Basque Centre—Museum of Contemporary Art, Vitoria-Gasteiz, Spain
2007 *Starting from the Southwest: Contemporary Art in Southwest China 1985–2007*,
Guangdong Museum, Guangzhou, China
2007 *The Four Direction of Speaking and Hearing*, Guizhou Biennial, Guiyang Museum, Guiyang, China

- 2007 *RED HOT: Asian Art Today from the Chaney Family Collection*, The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, USA
- 2006 *Internal Injuries 2*, Marella Gallery, Milan, Italy
- 2006 *Ruins: New Video and Photography from China*,
INOVA at UWM Peck School of the Arts, Milwaukee, USA
- 2006 *This is not for you: Diskurse der Skulptur, T-B A21 Collection*, Thyssen-Bornemisza Art, Vienna, Austria
- 2006 *Alllooksame?*, *Art from China, Japan and Korea*, Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo, Turin, Italy
- 2006 *Women in a Society of Dual Sexuality: The Exhibition of Contemporary Chinese Female Artists*,
Tang Gallery in Silom Galleria, Bangkok, Thailand
- 2006 *Great Performances: Contemporary Chinese Photography*, Max Protetch Gallery, New York, USA
- 2006 *The Tenth Anniversary Exhibition of the Chinese Contemporary Art Gallery*,
Chinese Contemporary Art Gallery, Beijing, China
- 2005 *Loft of Language: Eight Female Artists in China*, Three Quarters Gallery, Beijing, China
- 2005 *On Going*, Shenzhen Sculpture Institute, Shenzhen, China
- 2005 *Blue House Artists: Five Artists from Chengdu*, Chinese Contemporary Art Gallery, Beijing, China
- 2005 *After 1970: Chinese Contemporary Art*, Shanghai, China
- 2005 *Montpellier Biennial of Chinese Contemporary Art*, Montpellier, France
- 2005 *Internal Injuries*, Marella Gallery, Beijing, China
- 2005 *The Wall: Reshaping 20 Years of Contemporary Chinese Art*,
China Millennium Art Museum, Beijing, China; Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, USA
- 2005 *Chinese Characters: 20 Years of Modern Chinese Calligraphy*,
China Millennium Art Museum, Beijing, China
- 2005 *The Sixth Open Performing Arts Festival*, Chengdu, China
- 2005 *Pingyao International Photography Festival*, Pingyao, China
- 2005 *Inward Gazes: Chinese Performance Art Documentary*, Macao Art Museum, Macao, China
- 2005 *Art Basel Miami*, Miami, USA
- 2005 *China-Wochen: Junge chinesische Kunst*, Neue Galerie Landshut, Landshut, Germany
- 2004 *Picture Talking: Experimental Video Art*, Kunming, China
- 2004 *Celebrating Women, Inaugural Exhibition of IMOW*, San Francisco, USA
- 2004 *Uninterrupted-04: Chinese Construction*, Chongqing, China
- 2004 *Nation Complex Contemporary*, Duolun Museum, Shanghai, China
- 2004 *Ten Gross-Brick*, Blue Space Gallery, Chengdu, China
- 2003 *Experiences of Old Liberated Areas*, Zhude Memorial, Yilong, China
- 2003 *Listening to Women Telling Men's Stories*, Chongqing, China
- 2003 *Philosophy of White and Black*, Chengdu Stadium, Chengdu, China
- 2003 *China-Japan Performing Art Festival*, Sichuan Academy of Fine Arts, Chengdu, China
- 2003 *135m135*, Sichuan Art Museum, Chengdu, China
- 2003 *Plural Viewpoints*, Art Scene Gallery, Shanghai, China
- 2002 *Existence-Sublimation*, Atelier of He Duoling, Chengdu, China
- 2002 *Harvest: Chinese Contemporary Art*, Agricultural Exhibition Centre, Beijing, China
- 2001 *Parabola*, Chengdu, China

BIOGRAPHY

WENG FEN 翁奋

- 1961 Born in Hainan province, China.
1985 Graduated from Guangzhou Academy of Fine Arts, China

SELECTED SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2010 *Likeness of The Otherness: Weng Fen*, Galeria Arsenal, Bialystok, Poland
2010 *Likeness of The Otherness: Weng Fen*, Beijing Li-Space, Beijing, China
2010 *Experimentalism A Solo Exhibition of Weng Fen*, White Box Museum Of Art, Beijing, China
2009 *Retrospective 2001–2005 Weng Fen*, YU Gallery, Paris, France
2009 *Weng Fen Exhibition*, Keumsan Gallery, Seoul, South Korea
2009 *Fataurbana–Weng Fen*, Centrum Kultury ZAMEK, Poznan, Poland
2008 *Weng Fen–Beautiful new world*, JamJar Gallery, Dubai, United Arab Emirates
2008 *Weng Fen–My Olympics*, Contemporary Art Society, Rome, Italy
2007 *My Olympics*, Tang Contemporary Art, Beijing, China
2007 *Weng Fen*, Tang Contemporary Art, Bangkok, Bangkok
2006 *Weng Peijun (Weng Fen)–Time is Money*, Galerie Urs Meile, Beijing–Lucerne, Lucerne, Switzerland
2005 *Weng Fen's Virtual World*, Tang Gallery, Bangkok, Thailand
2004 *Chinese Viewing the World: Staring at the Sea by Weng Fen*, Tang Gallery, Bangkok, Thailand
2003 *Weng Fen*, Marella Arte Contemporanea, Milan, Italy

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2010 *Between Here and There: Passages in Contemporary Photography*, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, USA
2010 *At the Crossroad–Contemporary Artworks From Collection of GDMoA*, National Taiwan Museum of Fine Arts, Taiwan
2010 *Reshaping History–Chinart From 2000–2009*, China National Convention Center, Beijing, China
2010 *Here, There–The World in Motion, An contemporary art exhibition of China–Korea–France*, Art Museum of Lu Xun Art Academy, ShenYang; Beijing Li-Space, Beijing, China
2010 *A Positive View–The Third Edition*, Somerset House, London, England
2010 *CHAILE TRAVEL–Scenes I*, Taishan Village, Wenchang, China
2009 *The Home Court*, White Box Museum Of Art, Beijing, China
2009 *Art In Busan 2009: Inter–City*, Busan Museum Of Art, Busan, Korea
2009 *Boondocks–Internationales Kunstprojekt zur Gartenregion 2009*, Kulturzentrum Faust, Hannover, Germany
2009 *Stairway to Heaven*, H&R Block Artspace at Kansas City Art Institute, Kansas, USA
2009 *Spectacle–To Each His Own*, MOCA Taipei, Taipei, Taiwan
2008 *Mediation Biennale 08*, Poznan, Poland
2008 *Mahjong: Contemporary Chinese Art from the Sigg Collection*, Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive BAM/PFA, Berkeley, USA
2008 *Stairway to Heaven*, Bates College Museum of Art, Lewiston, USA
2008 *China New Vision. Chinese Contemporary Art Collections from Shanghai Art Museum*, Centro de Arte Moderna e Contemporanea della Spezia, La Spezia, Italy
2008 *New World Order–Contemporary Installation Art and Photography from China*, Groninger Museum, Groningen, Netherlands

- 2008 *China Design Now*, Victoria and Albert Museum, London, England
- 2008 *China Under Construction II*, Deborah Colton Gallery, Houston, USA
- 2008 *Cina contemporanea Arte fra identità e trasformazioni*, Palazzo delle Esposizioni, Rome, Italy
- 2007 *La Cina è Vicina*, PAN–Palazzo delle Arti di Napoli, Naples, Italy
- 2007 *RED HOT–Asian Art Today from the Chaney Family Collection*,
Museum of Fine Arts Houston, Houston, USA
- 2007 *China Under Construction–Contemporary Art from the People’s Republic*,
Deborah Colton Gallery, Houston, USA
- 2007 *The Year of the Golden Pig–Contemporary Chinese Art from the Sigg Collection*,
Lewis Glucksman Gallery, Cork, Ireland
- 2007 *De leur temps(2) Art Contemporain Et Collections Privées*, Musee de Grenoble, Grenoble, France
- 2007 *Thermocline of Art. New Asian Waves*, Zentrum für Kunst und Medientechnologie Karlsruhe, Germany
- 2007 *Blind Date*, Zhu Qizhan Art Museum, Shanghai, China
- 2006 *City Expressions*, Tallinn Art Hall, Tallinn, Estonia
- 2006 *Double-Sound Cracker*, Tang Contemporary Art, Beijing, China
- 2006 *The Beautiful New World*, Dimension Art Center, Beijing, China
- 2006 *Between Past and Future: New Photography and Video from China*,
Nasher Museum of Art, Durham, USA
- 2006 *Regenesis: An Exhibition of Contemporary Art*, Museum of Contemporary Art Haikou, Haikou, China
- 2006 *The Intention of the Public*, Redskyart Space, Haikou, China
- 2006 *Between Past and Future: New Photography and Video from China*,
Haus der Kulturen der Welt, Berlin, Germany
- 2006 *The Sixth International Photography Month in Moscow: Photobiennale 2006*,
Moscow House of Photography, Moscow, Russia
- 2005 *Double Vision–1st Lianzhou International Photo Festival*, Lianzhou, China
- 2005 *Grounding Reality*, Seoul Art Center, Seoul, Korea
- 2005 *Two Asias, Two Europes*, Shanghai Duolun Modern Art Museum, Shanghai, China
- 2005 *Building, Eu The Second Reality–Photographs From China*,
Piazza of the Berlaymont European Commission, Brussels, Belgium
- 2005 *To Each His Own*, 798-0 Factory, Beijing, China
- 2005 *Asia–City Net*, Seoul Art Museum, Seoul, Korea
- 2005 *Zooming Into Focus*, Singapore Art Museum, Singapore
- 2005 *Follow Me–Chinese Art at the Threshold of the New Millennium*, Mori Art Museum Tokyo, Japan
- 2005 *Unspeakable Happiness*, Museo Tamaya, Mexico City, Mexico
- 2005 *Always To the Front–China Contemporary Art*, Taipei Guangdu Art Museum, Taipei, Taiwan
- 2005 *Body Temperature: Chinese Contemporary Art*, Nordjyllands Kunstmuseum, Nordjyllands, Denmark
- 2005 *Living in Interesting Times*, Open Art Museum, Haifa, Israel
- 2005 *Re-Viewing the City: 2005 Guangzhou Photography Biennial*,
Guangdong Museum of Art, Guangzhou, China
- 2005 *Viewpoints: Chinese Photography Today*, Chambers Fine Art, New York, USA
- 2004 *Die Chinese: Contemporary Photographs and Video in China*, Kunstmuseum Wolfsburg, Germany
- 2004 *Between Past and Future: New Photography and Video from China*,
International Center of Photography, New York, USA
- 2004 *Posers*, Courtyard Gallery, Beijing, China
- 2004 *Me, Me, Me!* Courtyard Gallery, Beijing, China
- 2004 *Chinese Body*, Marseille, France
- 2004 *Chinese Eye–Contemporary Photography From China*, Contemporary at the Annex, New York, USA
- 2004 *Gods Becoming Men*, Frissiras Museum, Athens, Greece
- 2004 *Chinese Contemporary Photography*, MOCA Taipei, Taiwan
- 2003 *New Zone–Chinese Art*, Zacheta Nation Gallery of Art, Warsaw, Poland
- 2003 *Zooming Into Focus*, San Diego State University Gallery, San Diego Museum of Art, San Diego, USA
- 2003 *Open Sky*, Shanghai Duolun Museum of Modern Art, Shanghai, China
- 2003 *From Desires to Where?* Tang Gallery, Bangkok, Thailand
- 2003 *Alors, la Chine?* Centre Pompidou, Paris, France

- 2003 *How Big is the World?*, Kaohsiung Museum of Fine Art, Kaohsiung, Taiwan
2003 *Out Of the Red*, Marella Arte Contemporanea, Milan, Italy
2003 *ARCO*, Madrid, Spain
2002 *First Guangzhou Triennial*, Guangdong Museum of Art, Guangzhou, China
2002 *Shanghai Biennale*, Shanghai Art Museum, Shanghai, China
2002 *Paris-Beijing*, Espace Cardin, Paris, France
2002 *Everyday Attitude-Pingyao International Photography Festival*, Pingyao, China
2002 *New Photography From China*, Courtyard Gallery, Beijing, China
2002 *Chinese Modernity*, Museo de Arte Brasileira-MAB, Sao Paulo, Brazil
2002 *How Big is the World?*, OK Contemporary Art Centre, Linz, Austria
2001 *First Chengdu Biennale*, Chengdu Contemporary Art Museum, Chengdu, China
2001 *Virtual Future*, Guangdong Museum of Art, Guangzhou, China
2001 *L'album de la Famille China September de la Photo*, Galerie Soardi, Nice, France
2000 *China Avant-garde Artists Documents Exhibition*, Fukuoka Museum Of Art, Japan
2000 *Normal and Abnormal*, Yuangong Art Gallery, Shanghai, China
1999 *Post-Sense Sensibility: Alien Bodies & Delusion*, Beijing, China

tales *of Our Time*
TWO CONTEMPORARY ARTISTS FROM CHINA
置身其中 Chen Qiulin & Weng Fen
陈秋林、翁奋

Editor: Dr. Meiqin Wang

Proofreader: Karen Schifman

Designer: Naifang Zeng

©2011, all rights reserved

