



154 1/2 north la brea avenue
los angeles, california 90036
323 931-1311
www.dnjpgallery.net

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

EXHIBITION: Contemporary Photography from China
SHOW DATES: July 26 – September 6, 2008
RECEPTION: Saturday, July 26, 6-8 pm
GALLERY HOURS: Tuesday – Saturday, 10am – 6pm

DNJ Gallery is pleased to announce its upcoming the exhibition, "Contemporary Photography from China" which includes the work of 8 emerging artists living and working in China. Lei Benben, Song Chao, Wang Fuchun, Gao Hongxun, Jiang Jian, Wang Tong, Chen Xiaoling and Pei Xuehong approach the medium of photography in very distinct ways, but their photographs, in turn, reflect altering responses to the changes taking place in China's economy, society and culture. A percentage of exhibition sales will be donated to earthquake relief assistance through the Chinese Consulate General in Los Angeles.

Guest curator, Wang Rui, is an international photography curator and coordinator, freelance photographer, critic and photography historian. He has published a significant amount of articles on both photography history and criticism, and has imparted many lectures on the subject of photography as the guest professor in various universities and institutes. Wang Rui also has been the chief executive of the 2006 Pingyao International Forum on Photography and 2008 China (Jinan) Contemporary International Photography Biennial.

Since the end of the Cultural Revolution in 1976, photography in China has made many advances. The medium's versatility and almost instantaneous nature have become synonymous with the celerity of change in China. Over the next 30 years, photography would at first be used as propaganda tool and then evolve into images of ideas about consumerism. Art photography became more popular in the 1980's, especially as living standards and personal wealth increased. In the mid-1990s, Chinese photography was linked to an ongoing avant-garde art movement, often referred to by Chinese artists and critics as "experimental photography."

In this exhibition, Wang Fuchun's and Wang Tong's nostalgic, black and white images, document two forms of transportation: the train and the bicycle. "The goal is ... to experience life, to think about life, to prove life and to exhibit life," states Tong. Both artists portray an important aspect of life in China, especially considering that trains are the most common means of travel and bicycles are one of the most desired methods.

Jiang Jian's portraits of the people of the farming community of the Henan Province engages the viewer in the rich cultural history of an area of China where civilization has thrived for thousands of years. Henan has always had farming in its history; today it is still the largest agricultural province of China. The residents of this community mix modern necessities in their homes with the simplicities of the past. Similarly, Pei Xuehong's all-encompassing panoramic pictures again give us a greater insight of China's busy city streets; demonstrating the thin line where past and present collide.

Once a miner himself, photographer Song Chao captures his peers at work with simple, truthful portraits of miners and their families. Reminiscent of Richard Avedon's portraits, Song Chao creates pictures of these people against a white background, emphasizing his subjects' reactions to the camera. These images play an significant role in the life of a miner, bringing a photograph of the family underground serves as a constant reminder of the need to use caution in such a dangerous environment.

The final three artists included in this exhibit represent this current phase of Chinese art. These men and women reveal a confidence, which expand the borders of traditional photography. Gao Hongxun's series "Hanging and Floating" digitally removes objects from the scenes of his subjects; creating a world where people literally "hang" and "float" in the air. Chen Xiaoling's background in television plays an important role in her tableaux. In each dramatically lit scene, she poses herself in a modern scenario - kitchen, tennis court, office, bedroom. In the image's counterpart, she is gone and only her clothing remains. Lei Benben is in each of her brightly colored photographs, but we do not see any specific part of her. Her presence in each image is a dark reflection of her body into a pool of water. It is a documentation of a performance of which we are only seeing the mere reflection. For more information or images, please contact the gallery.