

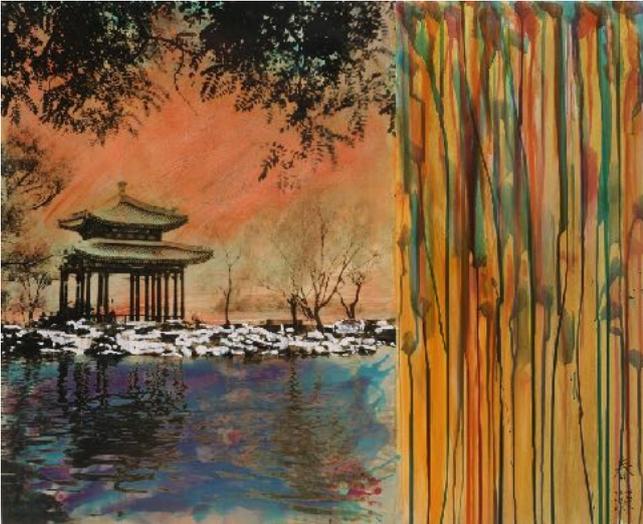
M97

M97 @ PARIS PHOTO

November 8 - 11, 2018

Grand Palais - Booth A34

M97 Gallery Shanghai is pleased to participate in the 2018 edition of Paris Photo. For this year's exhibition, M97 is presenting a thematic group show with recent works by gallery artists **Sun Yanchu, Cai Dongdong, Wang Ningde, Dong Wensheng.**



Sun Yanchu was born in 1978 in China's central Henan Province and now lives and works in Zhengzhou, the provincial capital. He has been awarded several international art prizes, including the MIO Photo (Morumura Yasumasa) Special Award in 2010, the Lianzhou International Photo Festival New Photography Award in 2011, and the Jinan International Photo Biennale Best Photographer Award in 2012.

Sun Yanchu takes on the photographic medium as the raw material for experimenting on the image and endlessly drawing out the web of his obsessions as an artist. In the beginning he alters his own prints, from the Obsessed series (2011), later working with

photos gathered in flea markets. With his recent series and book "Ficciones", he subjects photos to plastic experiments of all kinds, mixing gold leaf, water color, acrylic, even soy sauce, aging and altering the original content of these unknown photographs. Often small in size, they become a pretext for starting a story or a tale that develops beyond the restricted frame of the drawing, creating with paintbrush or pen doubly fictitious landscapes and narratives collected from discarded histories and anonymous family albums.

Sun Yanchu also experiments with darkroom chemicals and photographic papers in the tradition of Chinese ink painting in his ongoing body of work "Developer Paintings" 2013-18. An accomplished darkroom printer as well as painter, Sun Yanchu works with brush and intuition to control the chemicals, temperature, light exposure and developing process to bring out the unique effects found in his developer paintings. The artist says the process of this creation and the results after development - the layers of black ink and color gradation effect - very much resemble traditional Chinese painting and calligraphy, which the artist has been exposed to since childhood. Sun Yanchu's 'Developer Painting' works are a mixture of his passion for both traditional Chinese painting and the modern western invention of photography.



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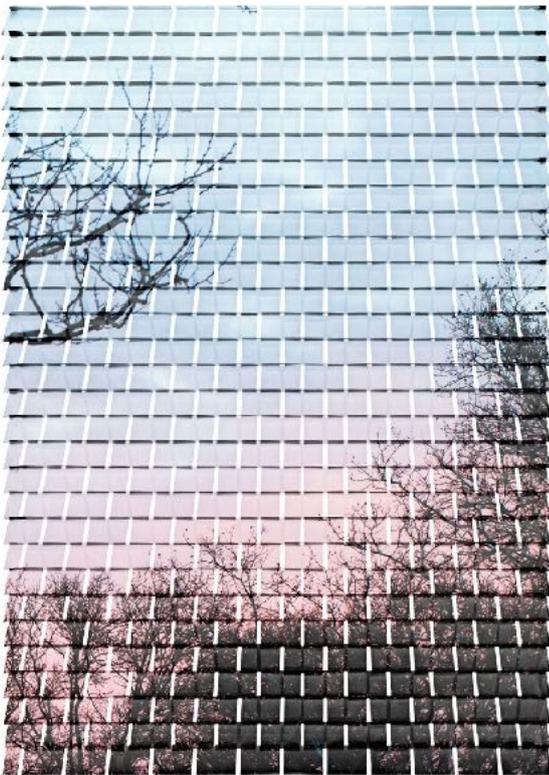
With a background in photography and image production theory, **Cai Dongdong's** practice reaches beyond photography to become a topology of the image. In Cai's installations, the photograph may serve strictly as a reference point or a gateway towards the story Cai is constructing or reconstructing.

In a dilemma where photography is controlled and abducted by the object's original structure, is it possible to create an image typology? In Cai Dongdong's works we can peek at another space hidden in the image. Through the connection between image experiment and topology, Cai processes and alters his pictures, and this disturbance is a method by which he opens and links another space and element for contemplation and reflection.

In a small group of works titled "Obstacle", **Cai Dongdong** (b. 1978) creates a rigidity with sculptural elements in the photographic surface blocking the desired flow of human interaction presumed to exist in the subject and narrative depicted in the 'real' photograph. This intrusion and manipulation by the artist of both the physical photograph and conceptual image underscores a malleability of meaning and construction in not just the photographic image but in the reality we construct for ourselves based on desire and real life circumstance.

"These works were sourced from my artworks over the previous years ... piled up like chicken ribs, so I operated on them, like a surgeon. I applied various methods according to different pictures: engravings, rubbing, curling, or making an installation of photographs with other objects. I tried all I can do to save these pictures by giving them new meanings. Each picture was printed by hand. I looked them over and over to explore their inner dramatic structures, or even another space/dimension. These creations blur the boundary between a photograph's physical experience and cognitive experience. The photograph's dimension is extended and when regarded as a pure object, the print becomes a tangible place for creation and contemplation."





Wang Ningde (b. 1972) is one of the foremost artists working with the photographic medium in China today. Since graduating from the Luxun Fine Arts Academy, Wang Ningde's artistic practice has consistently set out to explore the core fundamental elements of photography: light, paper, materials, image and the nature of "writing with light". In *FORM OF LIGHT* Wang Ningde goes a step further to deconstruct the original image form and representation to later reconstruct it for the viewer as an abstract and inverted photographic mirage. Wang Ningde began working on the *Form of Light* series following his own intellectual curiosity about language and photography as a means of expression. With the purpose of distilling the essence of the image, Wang Ningde employs photographs of simple images (trees, clouds, a dog) to then subject their paper representation to a meticulous process of measuring, cutting and installing in order to filter and project said image through light and shadow. These works are works about photography, not photographic works with the purpose to express a narrative, but to provoke questions of how we perceive an image, a picture. The following words provide clues to interpreting Wang's *Form of Light* works: reality and illusion; light and shadow; horizontal and vertical; fragmented and whole; solid and empty; with and without...

Dong Wensheng (b. 1970) names among his influences traditional Chinese art, porcelain and poetry, as well as physics, Nietzsche, and Robert Rauschenberg. His work echoes Freud's observation that the uncanny is "nothing new or alien, but something which ... has become alienated from [the mind] only through the process of repression". Dong Wensheng constructs intimate, mystical poems for the world of his photographs, reflected in his real yet elusive images. He introduces into his witchcraft of photography a pessimistic or even morbid mentality of traditional Chinese intellectuals, and makes them become the core spirit of his artworks. In his photographs, these elements keep repeating: the growing moss, stones, rivers, human bodies, tattoos, skulls, sacrificial earthenware in tombs, artificial pines, etc. He is like a stage artist, allowing these props to take on a new role.

