

## AS ENTERTAINING AS POSSIBLE

## WANG CHUNCHEN

The central theme of this year's Lianzhou Foto Festival, "As Entertaining As Possible", is seemingly as playful to our ears as a same-titled song by a Taiwanese singer. Nevertheless, if the context of this phrase was not understood correctly, it would not be possible to grasp its true meaning. Just as its counterpart in music where passionate voices are openly expressed with great affection to the listeners, in the realm of photography it signifies the extremity to which the significance and essence of the art form shall be taken. Going yet another step further, it leads us to the outlandish state of consumerism which has become one of the most prevalent social values in our society today. This is indeed the kind of real-life issues that demand serious attention and consideration from all of us.

This year's theme is intended to be a play on the everyday absurdities of our consumerist society, where the expressiveness of one's excessive desire has reached an unprecedented height. The country of France, being the birthplace of photography, is also where such social phenomenon is often being criticized and reflected upon. It's not a coincidence that we are putting these two subject matters together, as we remind ourselves through the essential function of photography what appropriate attitudes and positions shall be held towards a modern world vastly driven by principles of consumption.

Naturally, the invention of photography was to reveal and reflect the world in the most truthful manner, as human beings could not be permanently separated from the world to which they belong. In order to reflect the world to the most accurate extent as possible, our ancestors had constantly strived to come up with creative tools that would help us better understand the world we live in. This in turn has greatly facilitated the self-affirmation of our modern society. As a matter of fact, technological advances have indeed been one of the most important factors behind the recent development of modern society, and our ways of living and relationship with each other have also evolved significantly along the way. Undoubtedly, our society has transformed to become more civilized than ever before, but at the same time, what is undeniable is that it has also morphed into a complex social system that takes away significant amount of resources from Mother Nature.

LIANZHOU FOTO  
连州国际摄影年展

Coastal City, Nanshan, Shenzhen, 27th Sep 2014.  
Li Zhengde, from the "The New Chinese" series. Courtesy of the artist.



Las Vegas Casino  
Maurice Durville, from the "America 60" series. Courtesy of the artist.



Smoke Break, Camp America  
Debi Cornwall, from the "Welcome to Camp America" series.  
Courtesy of the artist.

As modern civilization is constantly taking great strides forward, it's also repeatedly self-doubting and questioning itself at the same time. This type of critical reflections is continually evolving and strengthening from generation to generation. Without the social movements and revolutions against capitalism in the 19th century, the development of modern society would have gone on a completely different route. It's precisely our ability to self-reflect and sense of consciousness that allow our society to progress through such ideological heritage. In the 1920s, there was Walter Benjamin and his reflection of the age of mechanical reproduction; in the 60s Guy Debord and his criticism of the "Society of the Spectacle"; then in the 70s and 80s Jean Baudrillard came up with the idea of "consumer society" and extended his criticism through the theory of "simulacra and simulation"; and now Jacques Rancière and his association of image with society. All these ideas and theories have together formed a continuous train of thought that extends till today.

Since the beginning of modernization, numerous ideological peaks have been reached over abstruse forests of ideas and philosophies. The title "As Entertaining As Possible", as an appropriation of language, points to the aforementioned paradox of consumerism that continues to exist in our society today. The viewers shall make no mistake in recognizing this point when they look at some of the works of invited artists that are exhibited at this year's festival. These works are intended to reveal the inner conflicts and contradictions behind the spectacles that are on display. The liveliness and flamboyance that these images exhibit on the surface do not really speak truth about their essence, but rather serve as a visual representation of what is being pursued in our society today. The effulgence and splendor under the artists' lenses have the ability to take the viewers to an intellectual space that is far beyond their visual perception. What are being presented in front of us are not simply beautiful images, but a universal psychological urgency and a tension of desire. By conveying the seriousness of these images to the viewers, the artists have effectively created a dialogue between the world and themselves. On the other hand, the photographic works on their own have also turned into symbols of the world permeated by marks of time. In essence, this is the collective memory of our history that is being permanently frozen.

In the society of the spectacle saturated with the notion of being as entertaining as possible, the art form of photography is situated midway between the realistic fantasy and virtual reality, intertwined by what may seem to be real and unreal. Behind this conception lies the idea of "everywhere is anywhere is everything is anything" that shapes our perception about ourselves and the world that we live in. Beyond photography, this world does not really exist.



Door Viewer Sample Units from A&H Brass  
Lam Pok Yin, Jeff & Chong Ng, from the "The Untimely Apparatus of Two Amateur Photographers" series. Courtesy of the artist.



N\$80  
Max Siedentopf, from the "Funny Money" series. Courtesy of the artist.



The window frames were similar to the viewfinders of the camera  
Yang Yuan Yuan, from the "At the Place of Crossed Sights" series. Courtesy of the artist.



Jean-Christian Bourcart, from the "Camden" series. Courtesy of the artist.



## EXHIBITIONS

### "AS ENTERTAINING AS POSSIBLE" THEME EXHIBITION :

Curator: Wang Chunchen and François Cheval

Christian Milovanoff (France), "Le Jardin"  
Marina Gadonneix (France), "Remote Control"  
MM Yu (Philippines), "Waste not, want not"  
Maurice Durville (France), "America 60"  
Max Siedentopf (Netherlands), "Slapdash supercars" "Funny Money"  
Eric Pickersgill (USA), "Removed"  
Juno Calypso (UK), "Joyce"  
Denis Darzacq (France), "Hyper"  
Jean-Luc Cramatte (Switzerland) and Jacob Nzudie (The Republic of Cameroun), "Supermarket"  
Jean-Christian Bourcart (France), "Camden"  
Li Zhengde (China), "The New Chinese"  
Yuan Tianwen (China), "Real Estate"  
Chen Canrong (China), "Empty Room"  
Ouyang Shizhong (China), "New Zone - Tuhao Series"  
Ni Weihua (China), "Landscape Wall"  
Zhang Xiaowu (China), "Rural Recreation"  
Geng Yi (China), "Notes on Embroidered Bodies 2011"

### SPECIAL EXHIBITION :

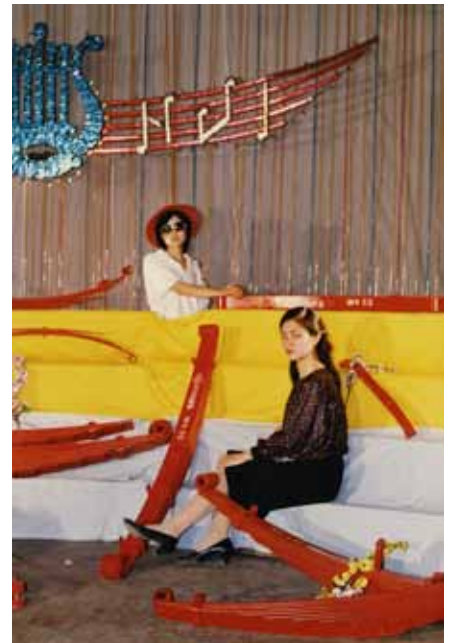
Sandro Miller (USA), "Malkovich, Malkovich, Malkovich: Homage to Photographic Masters"

### GROUP EXHIBITION :

"The Criteria for Individuals"

Curator: Fan Lin

Feng Yuan (China), "Submarine of Time - Southern Gateway"  
Qin Jin (China), "White Foam"  
Shang Tun (China), "Yummy Donuts"  
Xi Hua (China), "Yoga"  
Yang Xiaoman (China), "Lottery"  
Dragon Zheng (China), "Air Chrysalis"



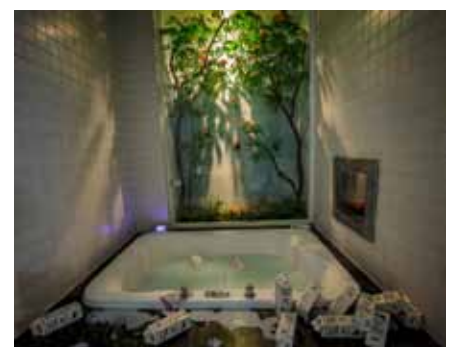
Wang Yuanling, from the "Hello Hualongqiao" series. Courtesy of the artist.



Christian Milovanoff, from the "Le Jardin" series. Courtesy of the artist.



Marina Gadonneix, from the "Remote Control" series. Courtesy of the artist.



Chen Shu-Chen, from the "After" series. Courtesy of the artist.

## "YET ANOTHER GAZE - A NEW HORIZON FOR MODERN TAIWANESE PHOTOGRAPHY"

Curator: Shen Chao-Liang

Chen Shu-Chen (Taiwan), "After"  
Lo Sheng-Wen (Taiwan), "White Bear"  
Lee Yeh-Lin (Taiwan), "Listening to the Dark"  
Arron Hsiao (Taiwan), "Train Project"  
Tou Yun-Fei (Taiwan), "Memento Mori"  
Chen I-Hsuen (Taiwan), "Nowhere in Taiwan"  
Lee Ya-Yen (Taiwan), "Flash of Whispering"  
Chen Po-I (Taiwan), "Remains"  
Lee Li-Chung (Taiwan), "Space out"  
Huang Chien-Hua (Taiwan), "Transcoder"

### SOLO EXHIBITION :

Du Zi (China), Land Fill  
Wang Yuanling (China), "Hello Hualongqiao"  
Debi Cornwall (USA), "Welcome to Camp America"  
Akiko Takizawa (Japan), "Nocturnal Grievance"  
Yusuke Yamatani (Japan), "Rama Lama Ding Dong"  
Eriko Koga (Japan), "Tryadhvan"  
Fu Meng (China), "Between"  
Yang Yuanyuan (China), "At the Place of Crossed Sights"  
Lam Pok Yin, Jeff (Hong Kong) & Chong Ng (Singapore), "The Untimely Apparatus of Two Amateur Photographers"  
Christian Lutz (Switzerland), "Insert Coins"  
Tim Parchikov (Russia), "Suspense"  
Sergey Chilikov (Russia), "Photoprovocations"  
Wang Xiangdong (China), "Man of the Year"  
Yosuke Morimoto (Japan), Yoyogipark, Shibuya-ku, Tokyo  
Miki Hasegawa (Japan), "Quiet..."  
Hiroshi Okamoto (Japan), "Recruitment"  
Zheng Gangfeng (China), "Aftershock or Butterfly Effect: Wenzhou Dilemma after 2008"  
Li Zhi (China), "Into the Mountains 2014/2016"  
Lang Lixing (China), Ice Blink  
Li Yidi (China), "Honey Bunny's Album"  
Zhang Xuebo (China): "Babel Tower"  
Chen Wenjun & Jiang Yanmei (China), "Me and Me"

### DOCUMENTARY SOLO SECTION:

An Ge (China), "Battlefront of Laoshan"  
Li Baijun (China), "The Yellow River Beach"  
Huang Liping (China), Floodplain  
Historical Photos of Lianzhou



MM Yu, from the "Waste Not, Want Not" series. Courtesy of the artist.



Jean-Luc Cramatte & Jacob Nzudie, from the "Supermarket" series. Courtesy of the artist.



Dragon Zheng, from the "Air Chrysalis" series. Courtesy of the artist



Ni Weihua, still image from video "Landscape Wall".  
Courtesy of the artist.



Marina Gadonneix, from the "Remote Control" series.  
Courtesy of the artist.



## ABOUT THE FESTIVAL

The theme exhibition of Lianzhou Foto Festival 2016 will present a list of photography art works that intended to reveal the inner conflicts and contradictions behind the spectacles, liveliness and flamboyance on the surface, but serve as a visual representation of what is being pursued in our society today. Co-curated by Wang Chunchen, Head of the Department of Curatorial Research of CAFA Art Museum Beijing, and François Cheval the director of Museum Nicéphore Niépce, the theme exhibition includes photography artists such as Christian Milovanoff, Jean-Luc Cramatte and Jacob Nzudie, Denis Darzacq, Li Zhengde, Ni Weihua, Juno Calypso, Eric Pickersgill and more.

Other highlights include: 'The Criteria for Individuals' a multi-media exhibition curated by Fan Lin; Sandro Miller exhibition 'Malkovich, Malkovich, Malkovich: Homage to Photographic Masters'; Group exhibition of young Taiwanese photographers 'Yet Another Gaze' curated by Shen Chao-Liang; solo exhibitions from Wang Yuanling, Du Zi, Debi Cornwall, Sergey Chilikov, Eriko Koga and more.

The twelfth edition of Lianzhou Foto will take place from Nov. 19th, 2016 to Dec. 9th, 2016 at the city of Lianzhou, to present nearly eight thousand pieces of photographs, created by established and emerg-ing photographers from around the world. More than two thousand artists, critics, collectors and cul-tural elites are expected to attend the festival.

**Director:** Duan Yuting

**Chief Curator:** Wang Chunchen, François Cheval (France)

**Curators:** Zhang Xiangou, Fan Lin, Shen Chao-Liang (Taiwan), Lucille Reyboz (France), Yusuke Nakanishi (Ja-pan), Olga Sviblova (Russia), Michel Philippot (France)



Alberto Korda "Che Guevara" (1960)  
Sandro Miller, from the "Malkovich, Malkovich, Malkovich" series. Courtesy of the artist.



Diergaarde Blijdorp Rotterdam, The Netherlands  
Lo Sheng-Wen, from the "White Bear" series. Courtesy of the artist.



Ouyang Shizhong, from the "New Zone - Tuhaos Series".  
Courtesy of the artist.

Bureau de presse :  
Relations Media  
Catherine Philippot & Prune Philippot  
248 Bd Raspail - 75014 Paris  
+33 (0)1 40 47 63 42  
cathphilippot@relations-media.com  
prunephilippot@relations-media.com  
www.relations-media.com