

Photography: Another Way of Seeing 摄影：另一种观看之道

谢利姆·阿尔瓦拉多 (Shelim Alvarado)
克里斯塔·贝恩斯坦 (Krista Beinstein)
纳特·福克纳 (Nat Faulkner)
冯晨 (Feng Chen)
叶冰 (Ye Bing)
张之栋 (Zhang Zhidong)

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ZIAN Gallery

20-2 Chekengwu, Yuhang District, Hangzhou, China

Photography is a medium so familiar to us that we think we know it inside and out. After all, everyone knows how to take a photo. We all have cell phones and take pictures whenever we want.

Young kids instinctively know how to pose for selfies and how to hold the phone in just the right way to take a really good one. Images stream by us all day, everyday - on social media, on television, on the internet - we see thousands each day. We are trained to know a good one from a bad one too, since we get so much practice looking at them. It's stunning when you think about how many we can take in and register in a split second.

But every once in a while an image stops us in our tracks. It does something more. The exhibition, ***Photography: Another Way of Seeing***, brings together six artists from around the world with the aim of doing just that.

We hope the different works these artists present might intrigue you in ways you wouldn't have imagined —and perhaps even stir something in you. Some of these artists push the medium in unexpected directions while others wring out new possibilities from classical forms. A quirky sensibility links them all as they insist on not only being looked at but on really being seen.

In her work, Shelim Alvarado frequently explores the body aiming to capturing some of the mysterious types of sensations it can produce. In the series of hat portraits presented here, Alvarado invites us to do more than engage with the physical construction of each hat — though that alone can be an architectural tour de force. She also stirs in us an imaginary sense of the hat's former owner, whose aura seem to hover over each photograph like a phantom limb filling an empty space. What lingers is both a sensation of what once was and an open-ended mystery left for us to consider.

When Krista Beinstein moved from Vienna to Hamburg in the 1990's, she began creating costumes that her friends and lovers would model and perform in, inhabiting each one like a character from a play. The photographs she made of them wearing her costumes — sea monsters, space aliens and glamour pusses — have a knack of waking up the childlike imagination in a surprising number of people.

Nat Faulkner works with the most basic components of photography - chemicals, paper, light- and uses them to interrogate the medium's foundational assumptions. Working by hand in his studio-cum-darkroom, he recombines these elements with a rough, raw elegance and the results are strangely ambiguous. Recognizable objects appear in his prints, but everything is blown up, zoomed in, and distorted until the familiar tips into abstraction.

Feng Chen moves beyond the single image, using prompts from his imagination to manipulate artificial intelligence into generating an endless stream of images. He considers these images secondary — the real artwork, in his view, is the program he built to produce them. He distributes the ephemera freely, offering it as a gesture of generosity and an invitation for viewers to reflect on creativity and the many forms it can take.

Working in silver gelatin, London-based Hangzhou native Ye Bing brings a quiet emotional charge to the classical forms of still life and landscape. Bing embeds an autobiographical moment within each image, layering these canonical forms with the complexity and texture of our times.

Zhang Zhidong works hands-on, arranging unusual objects into abstract compositions, which he then captures in photography. The images read from afar seem to be indecipherable montages, built for the joy their rich color and form. Closer up, as the individual elements become discernible we see repetition, almost ritualistically. The effect is of a quiet but surreal still life. But get right up on them and the logic breaks down. What does a stack of cantaloup rinds have to do with a handful of straight pins or a hundred bubble gum bubbles with a Christmas cactus?

We hope you enjoy exploring *Photography: Another Way of Seeing* and the constellation of ideas it opens up. The six artists work across a range of visual languages, touching on subjects as broad as the interplay of material and light, the blur between the real and the artificial, and the tension between the staged and the spontaneous — reminding us how much of the world around us remains unknown and still waiting to be seen.

Organized by John Morace, Tarik Kentouche & Lorenz Liebig

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