

Portrait Hot: Taikang Photography Collection

2017.3.16 – 2017.5.13

Curators: Tang Xin, Su Wenxiang, Li Jia

Artistic Director: Tang Xin

Taikang Space (Red No.1-B2, Caochangdi, Cuigezhuang, Chaoyang District, Beijing, CHINA)

Photographers & Photostudios/Agencies:

A FONG, Chen Juanmei, Cheng Mo, Chu Ying, Dai Gezhi, Deng Xuefeng, Dong Wenmo, Du Xiuxian, Fan Jie, Gao Fan, Gao Manlin, Han Lei, Ji Lianbo, Hou Bo, Jiang Duo, Jiang Guoliang, Li Zhiming, Liu Zheng, Lv Houmin, Luo Yang, Ma Liuming, Meng Qingbiao, Meng Zhaorui, Jun Ling, Qian Sijie, Ren Shulin, Shi Panqi, Shi Shaohua, Wang Shibao, Wu Peng, Wu Yinxian, Wu Huaxue, Yang Jixiang, Yao Jingcai, Zhan Yaofu, Zhang Dali, Zhang Hai'er, Zhao Jiayuan, Zheng Jingkan, Polit-Sheer-Form-Office etc.

A Fong Photographer, Beijing Film Factory, Bao Chang Photo Studio, Dabei Photo Studio, Dong Feng Photostudio, International Art Portrait Photo Studio, QiXin Photo Studio in Hankou, I and Me Photo Studio in Hangzhou, Red Flag Photostudio, Kunming Picture Agency, Political Department of Kunming Military Zone, Kunming People's Photo Studio, GuangHua Photo Studio in NanJing, Kung Yu Ting in Peking, Metropolitan Photostudio in Shanghai, Guangming Photo Studio in ShangHai, Tai Fang Photo Shop in Pekin, Ying Cheong in Tientsin, DingZhang Photo Studio in Tientsin, Tong Sheng Photo Shop, Wou Kong Photo Studio, GuangHua Photo Studio in Wuchang, Yung Kang Kown in Wuchang, Central News Photography Bureau, Xinhua News Agency etc.

As a part of the human body, the face undertakes a vital role. When the body is wrapped and hidden under clothes, the face becomes the only significant feature to recognize and distinguish different people. As an indispensable counterpart of the naked body, the importance of the naked face is obvious. The praise or reflection of the face has been an essential theme for long in art and literature, especially plastic art. As the appearance separating us from the unreachable essence, the face has become a barrier which all painters, photographers and contemporary artists are obliged to deal with. It is the only choice yet such a must for them that they would consider the face as a topic, a space, rich in political meanings.

Having been considered as art from the mid 19th century, photography has been naturally and continuously creating and recording portraits, undertaking the job which seems endless to painting. Portrait photography puts various clothes on the naked face – the appearance – from the sacred grace of the camera. These clothes may refer to recognizable classes, identities or even races. Before the advent of digital age, camera has been viewed as a sophisticated machine operated with expertise as well as an agent of a semi-divine, visualized regime determining the shape of our quotidian life. Camera captures human image. It records, archives, perpetuates, even sanctifies. It explores the sophisticated engagement between archive and oblivion, politics and a gaze, man and the changeable currents driven by the monsoons of human affair...

This exhibition is a photography research program of Taikang Space. Based on an enrichment of photographic archives provided by Taikang art collection, the exhibition will present diverse portraits from the late 20th century until the new era. The portraits will show a series of transformation of the spiritual status of Chinese people during more than 100 years, and could also be understood as a brief depiction of our tempestuous history since last century.