

The Howard A. Silverstein and Patricia Bleznak Silverstein
Photography Studio Abroad: BEIJING/CHINA/2009

东西南北

East West South North



EAST WEST SOUTH NORTH



I hear and I forget.
I see and I remember.
I do and I understand.



东西南北 East West South North

The Howard A. Silverstein and Patricia Bleznak Silverstein
Photography Studio Abroad: BEIJING/CHINA/2009
University of Pennsylvania
Department of Fine Arts
Charles Addams Fine Arts Gallery

May 21 to July 25, 2009

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The Howard A. Silverstein and Patricia Bleznak Silverstein
Photography Studios Abroad
and presented in conjunction with the exhibition
东西南北 East West South North
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www.undergradfinearts.org
www.upennphoto.blogspot.com

University of Pennsylvania

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PROGRAM COORDINATOR: Ms. Xinfeng (Joyce) Li

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Jesse Alexander Harding

Elizabeth Hoy

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Antonio McAfee

Nicholas Salvatore

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Kira Simon-Kennedy

Leigh Van Duzer

Artie Vierkant

Individual Self-Portraits of the studio participants at various Beijing locations are inspired by Tseng Kwong Chi's "East Meets West."

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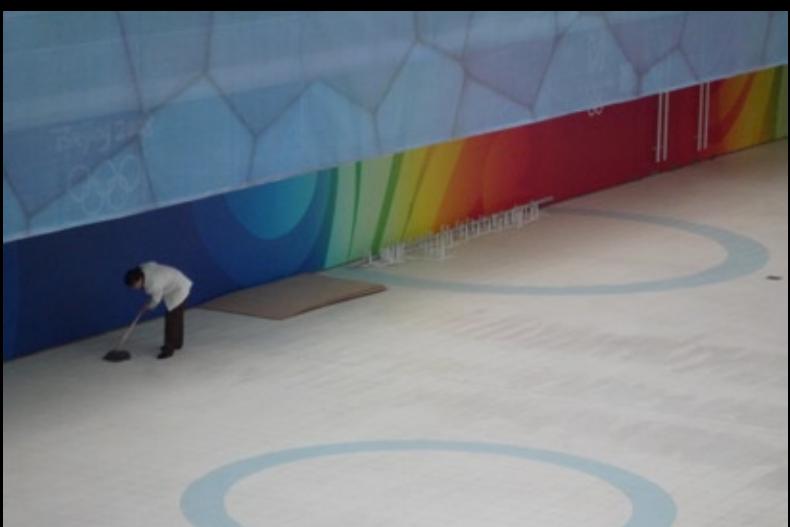
Cover Image: Tetsugo Hyakutake, "Guomaoqiao" Beijing, China 2009



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The Journey Is the Reward. Remember.

Chinese proverb



For centuries, artists and architects have considered a “grand tour” part of their personal growth. At Penn, international studios have been made possible for architecture students, as well as special travel fellowships for fine-arts students. Until now, though, international studios for young photographers have not been available.

With its emphasis upon developing and enhancing visual perception, the study of photography is enormously enriched by the opportunity to experience and work in new environments. Differences abound in lighting, materials, architecture, and landscape, as well as new cultural perspectives. Our fine arts department dreamed of and planned for a studio abroad that would provide these unique opportunities for students. Using the model of Penn Design’s international architecture studios, the participants were to be given pretravel preparation at Penn, then move to the international location, and, ultimately, return to campus to create a project built upon the work conducted abroad.

Still, it was only a dream until Penn alumni Howard A. Silverstein, W’69, and Patricia Bleznak Silverstein, C’81, offered their financial support for the photography program. This would include studios abroad in alternate years for the next five years. We were on our way!

Our first abroad studio, completed this semester and led by Gabriel Martinez, was to Beijing, China. For admission to the studio, students submitted portfolios and a project concept statement. Faculty reviewed the submissions and chose twelve graduate and undergraduate photographers representing a breadth of skills and conceptual approaches.

The spring semester studio began with intensive conversational Mandarin classes led by the incomparable Karina Chen and overseen by Dr. Mien-Hwa Chiang from the East Asian Languages and Civilizations department. Michael Bryant, photo faculty and Philadelphia Inquirer photojournalist, presented lectures and workshops on available lighting strategies and coordinated flash units. Professor Julie Davis, from Penn’s art history department, gave us a lecture and overview of Chinese art, providing context for what we were to see.

Geoffrey Gee, of Penn’s Office of International Programs, introduced us to Dr. Youli Sun, from Peking University (PKU), with which Penn enjoys an exchange relationship. Dr. Sun and his most able colleagues, Dr. Hong Li and the fabulous Joyce Xinfeng Li, provided our host-country support and connected us to the Peking University Photo Club and the Central Academy of Fine Arts (CAFA) photography department. They arranged for requested lectures by Dr. Peng Feng, from PKU and CAFA, on contemporary art, by Tsinghua University’s Dr. Jie Hu on landscape architecture—particularly the Olympic Park—and by Dr. Sun on the history of the city of Beijing. We were particularly pleased with our afternoon at CAFA with Dean Wang Chuan and the CAFA photography students.

We spent two intense and amazing weeks in Beijing. During that time, each student presented an introduction to a particular site, and completed a minimum of one thousand shots each and a large-scale, conceptually driven individual project of multiple images. Exhausted and exhilarated, we returned to Philadelphia. Preparation followed for the exhibition by the first Silverstein Studio Abroad: BEIJING/CHINA/2009, opening May 21, 2009, in Addams Fine Arts Gallery. The results are thrilling.

We are deeply indebted to Patty and Howie Silverstein for the generosity that enabled Penn photographers to undergo this unforgettable experience. Our thanks also are extended to former Penn Design dean Gary Hack, who supported this endeavor from the start, to our current dean, Marilyn Taylor, for continuing that support, to Linda Kronfeld for facilitating the entire experience, and to our marvelous hosts at Peking University.

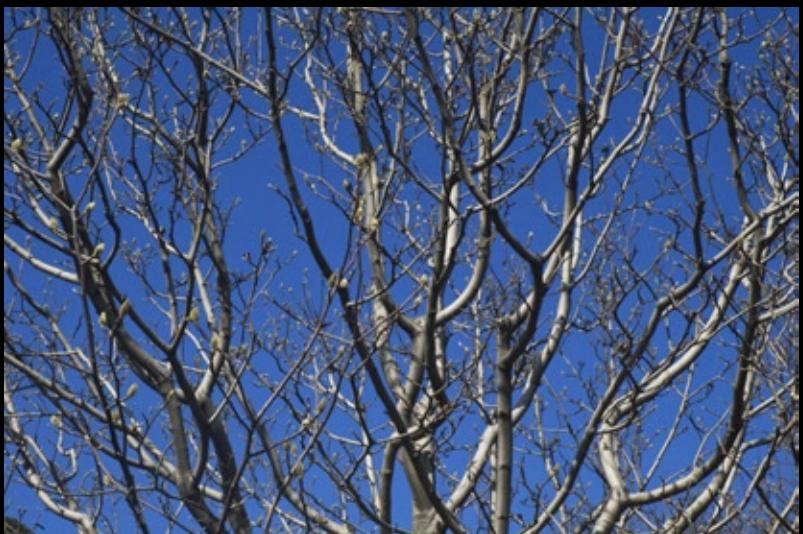
Julie Saecker Schneider
UPenn Fine Arts Photo Travel Abroad / Program Director

pages 6-7: **GREAT WALL (MUTIANYU SECTION)**, Archival inkjet print, 20"x16", 2009

page 10: **SUMMER PALACE #1**, Archival inkjet print, 20"x16", 2009

page 10: **SUMMER PALACE #2**, Archival inkjet print, 20"x16", 2009

page 11: **MING TOMBS, DINGLING SITE**, Archival inkjet print, 20"x16", 2009







Perfection...

It was a surreal and intense 8-week pre-trip immersion and preparation extravaganza. We underwent a crash course in all things China: Let's go Language, History, Art, Politics, Religion, Culture, Tradition, Etiquette, Cuisine, Cinema, etc. Along the way we also focused upon our intended personal artistic objectives, our expectations, what we were searching for, and what we wanted to learn while we were there. For further clarity, it was decided to split our visual investigations into two distinctly different camps, or assignments- the individual project devised from each artist's own personal point of view and purpose, and group project – the joy of taking pictures – where each member of the team, all 15 in the mix, was requested to snap at least 1,000 shots, of anything and everything that sparked curiosity from within.

All aspects related to both the conceptual goals and technical needs of individual endeavors were scrutinized, analyzed and exhausted, for the main purpose of being as prepared as possible, with a "no regrets" motto attached. The group project called attention to reviving that compulsive need we all used to share for the purity of the act of photographing for the heck of it. We've become so jaded, so cool for school, that we've forgotten or dismissed the pleasure of shooting (once upon a time in



America). So, regardless of the various bits and pieces of equipment we planned to bring with us to China, specifically for our individual project's technical requirements, we all also had to equip ourselves with the most appropriate and effective digital camera, to be always readily available, that would immediately allow for the spontaneous, playful and impulsive, however cliché or touristy. Some would end up carrying large format cameras in one hand and point and shoots in the other. With video and film jumbled in as well, we would be collectively packing some serious gadget heat. The countdown was on.

This is really happening... takeoff! The prep for our Beijing adventure was exciting and stressful. Every new trip provokes anxiety with all of its packing, planning, arrangements and anticipation, but the expectations for this specific journey were unique to our experience.

Many of us slept though most of the 13½-hour flight, exhausted but content with our preparations and training. The Chungking Express arrives, panda hats and all; we realized that we were unprepared for the golden blue skies. Every new day held surprises and revelations. Basically, while in Beijing, we had our cake and ate it too, with mornings spent together touring the various sights required of all American travelers to this foreign destination, and afternoons, and after dinner, set off individually to continue the search. Having both projects in mind while venturing about seemed to fulfill our visual needs, all bases covered- impulse/instinct vs. determined/analyzed. A certain balance was being realized, and contradictions established by these two seemingly different approaches to making images, and this in turn really got to the collective heart of our divergent impression of Beijing. Our images capture a blend of "classic China" coupled with more specific unexpected

investigations and situations. There exists a healthy does of paradox and contrasts- *xǐ nù āi lè* (delight, anger, sorrow and pleasure). And although, at times, some of the work may seem critical or circumstances negatively perceived (which gets at the very nature of the artistic pulse), let it be known that each of us, in our own way, love Beijing.

We found emptiness, and excitement, progress, and destruction, freedom, and constraint, consciousness, and bliss. The designation of this personal/collective experience, "EastWestNorthSouth" translated (perhaps the closest, although not perfect), means 'Everything' itself. More potent and profound than ambivalence itself, I can safely say that we all share this deep inner conflict about our journey. This publication, not quite exhibition catalog and not quite 'a two and a half weeks in the life of...', explores the reaction to Beijing as we saw it, felt it and captured it. It is filled with harmonious duality and contradictions, universal truths and local dilemmas- and joy.

Stemming from my own conflicted assessment of Beijing, I am reminded of Felix Gonzalez-Torres' brilliant Untitled "1989/1990", two stacks of posters generously offered for viewers to keep. The first states, "Somewhere better than this place," the second, "Nowhere better than this place." How perfect is that, and this? The World- East and West, North and South, Heaven and Earth, Moon and Sun.

Wish you were there...

Gabriel Martinez

UPenn Fine Arts Photo Travel Abroad / Course Instructor









EQUIPMENT MATTERS

Making sure our trip was free of technical hitches seemed daunting at first. Was it naive to bring 12 students to photograph a country that had, until recent memory, been hostile to documentation of any sort? Were our many cameras, laptops, hard drives and video cameras even going to get through customs? What about environmental factors? The pollution was said to be impenetrable. Plus we were going in March, traditionally the month for spring dust storms when a fine dust originating from sand of the Gobi desert apparently gets everywhere and into everything. This could easily prove to be a photographers perfect nightmare....

These broad fears, however, were largely unfounded. The challenges lay in the day-to-day implementation of each persons project. Each student had impressive ideas that of course went through many metamorphoses to reach a stage that could not have possibly been foreseen back in the U.S. Faced with unforeseen hurdles or spontaneous inspiration, some students changed their projects dramatically or abandoned their ideas altogether.

The major challenge was the sheer size and extent of Beijing. Even what seemed a short distance took a long time to travel. Navigating the crush of the Beijing subway with huge bags of equipment and tripods was no easy task. Setting up shots with

large format cameras or even with a DSLR, required an openness, grace and tact that perhaps we don't find ourselves using so much in our own countries.

We were also fortunate to have the assistance of Peking University students with translation, navigation, location scouting , acting, the setting up of shots and the recording of performance work. Their help was invaluable, their enthusiasm contagious.

I believe that we had incredible luck: the weather, whose clarity and dryness mitigated the problems we had feared would be caused by the pollution, couldn't have been more perfect.

We were prepared with a basic understanding of Mandarin by a very patient Karina Chen. Our tireless and cheerful guide, Li Xingfeng (Joyce), made our stay effortless. It was the students exhaustive preparations, imagination and resourcefulness, however, that made my job easy and fun!

Tasha Doremus

UPenn Fine Arts Photo Travel Abroad / Technical Assistant

page 24: (top) **GREAT WALL**, Brownie Type-C Print, 2009 (bottom) **WALL IN HUTONG** , Brownie Type-C Print, 2009

page 25: **APARTMENT BUILDING**, 4"x5" Sliced Chrome Pigment Print, 2009

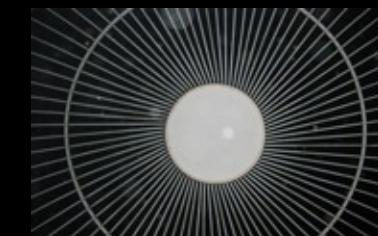
page 26: **OLYMPIC FOREST PARK**, 4"x5" Chrome Pigment Print, 2009

page 27: **CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT**, Burned 4"x5" Chrome Pigment Print, 2009









page 32: **UNTITLED 01**, Archival inkjet print, 19"x12", 2009

page 34: (top) **UNTITLED 02**, Archival inkjet print, 19"x12", 2009 (bottom) **UNTITLED 03**, Archival inkjet print, 19"x12", 2009

pages 34-35: **UNTITLED 04**, Archival inkjet print, 19"x12", 2009

pages 36-37: **UNTITLED 05**, Archival inkjet print, 19"x12", 2009



Leigh Van Duzer

First Year Fine Arts Graduate Student

In China, I was interested in photographing architecture and spaces that confirmed evidence of different histories and relationships. I examined the walls of buildings for symbolism of boundaries or protection as it related to China's long history of fortifying regions with defenses, prominent examples being the Great Wall and Ming Imperial Wall. These fortifications also presented a material past in which traces of human activity, weathering, and stages of construction or destruction were apparent. Such traces are

indicative of both the passage of time and longevity, which, from my American perspective, seems extensive. My interest is also in spaces—the interstices between buildings or in the landscape, which describe a distance from one to another or a passage leading through. These spaces related to my feelings of alienation from, or familiarity with, this foreign environment. This series is, in part, a document of place, but, for me, the importance is in the metaphors or meanings implicit in the terms *protection*, *trace*, *interstice*, and *passage*.

Leigh Van Duzer was born in Allentown, Pennsylvania in 1978. She is a photographer who lives and works in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, where she is a Master of Fine Arts Candidate at the University of Pennsylvania. She received her Bachelor of Arts from Hampshire College in 2001 and has worked as a museum and freelance photographer in New York and Washington DC. Leigh is interested in how architecture and space articulate relationships between people and their environments. Her work has been shown nationally and can be seen at www.leighvanduzer.com





pages 39-45 "I DON'T EXIST HERE." Installation, Untitled, Super8 movie
pages 39-45: "EXCESS." Installation, Untitled, Stereoscopic c-prints



Jesse Harding

Senior Fine Arts, Interactive Installation and Photography

China is a land of copresent binaries. This makes it very difficult to define the nation adequately as a whole. It is rich yet poor, cultured yet clinical, free yet bound. Despite these internal contradictions, one undeniable aspect of China is its sheer power and immensity. It is this mass that allows these binaries to exist simultaneously. To reach such a size, amazing efficiency was needed, but with the size comes the inevitability of waste and excess. It is this

copresence that gives birth to all of the rest, which, in turn, gives birth to a superlative culture of somehow calming sensory overload.

Jesse Alexander Harding, an artist originally from Portland, Oregon, tends to work in the production of machinery as well as analyzing means of informational retranslation and recapitulation. He has shown his work in numerous Philadelphia locations as well as in New York.

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page 47: **THE SQUARE**, Video, 2009

pages 48-49: **COTTON CANDY**, 1:11 minutes, Video, 2009

page 50: (top) **KITE**, 5:01 minutes, Video, 2009 (bottom) **THE CLIMB**, 1:37 minutes, Video, 2009

page 51: **BUBBLES**, 2:44 minutes, Video, 2009



Jessica Marie Clouser
2nd Year Fine Arts Graduate Student

As an artist who had never been out of the United States before this Beijing trip, the chance to go to China was an amazing opportunity for me. I was able to take the ideas I have already developed in my studio practice in Philadelphia and push them in a completely foreign and unknown place.

Using my body, I explore my adult self, taking on the role of a naive childlike character. While in Beijing, I studied the everyday lives of the people and restructured these observations into my own sense of familiarity and comfort. By performing

in an alien space, I became hypersensitive to myself as the outsider and was able to use this position to develop a series of video and photographic pieces.

My character is seen performing in such ordinary spaces as public parks or rooftops, as well as in such emotionally charged areas as Tiananmen Square and the Great Wall. There is an intense focus on the task at hand—jumping rope and flying a kite—and a struggle to complete it. There is clumsiness in each attempt

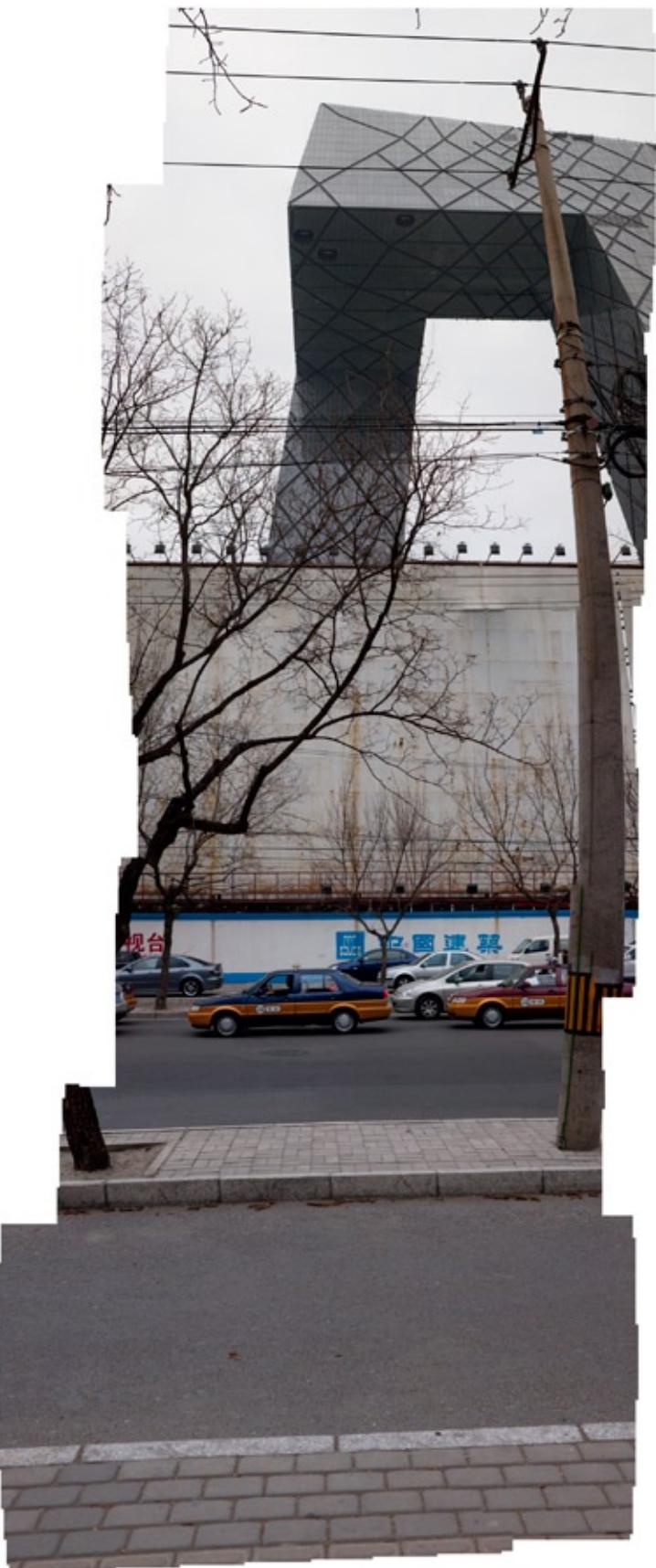
that often succumbs to frustration and dissatisfaction. Each performance ends in some kind of exhausted state. My final installation of video and photographic work allows the viewer to observe the absurdity of these activities from their own personal perspective. The significance and conclusions may vary from the incredibly lighthearted to the intensely political.

Jessica Marie Clouser was born in 1984, in Pennsylvania, and received her undergraduate degree at the Corcoran College of Art and Design in 2007. She went on to receive her master's degree in fine arts from Penn in 2009.









page 52: **CCTV #2**, Archival inkjet print, 75"x32", 2009

pages 54-55: **FOUR-POINT PANORAMA**, Archival inkjet print, 28"x52", 2009

page 56: **TEN-POINT PANORAMA (DETAIL)**, Archival inkjet print, 28"x85", 2009



Artie Vierkant

Senior Fine Arts Major, Photography/Media Art

AUTOMATED PANORAMAS

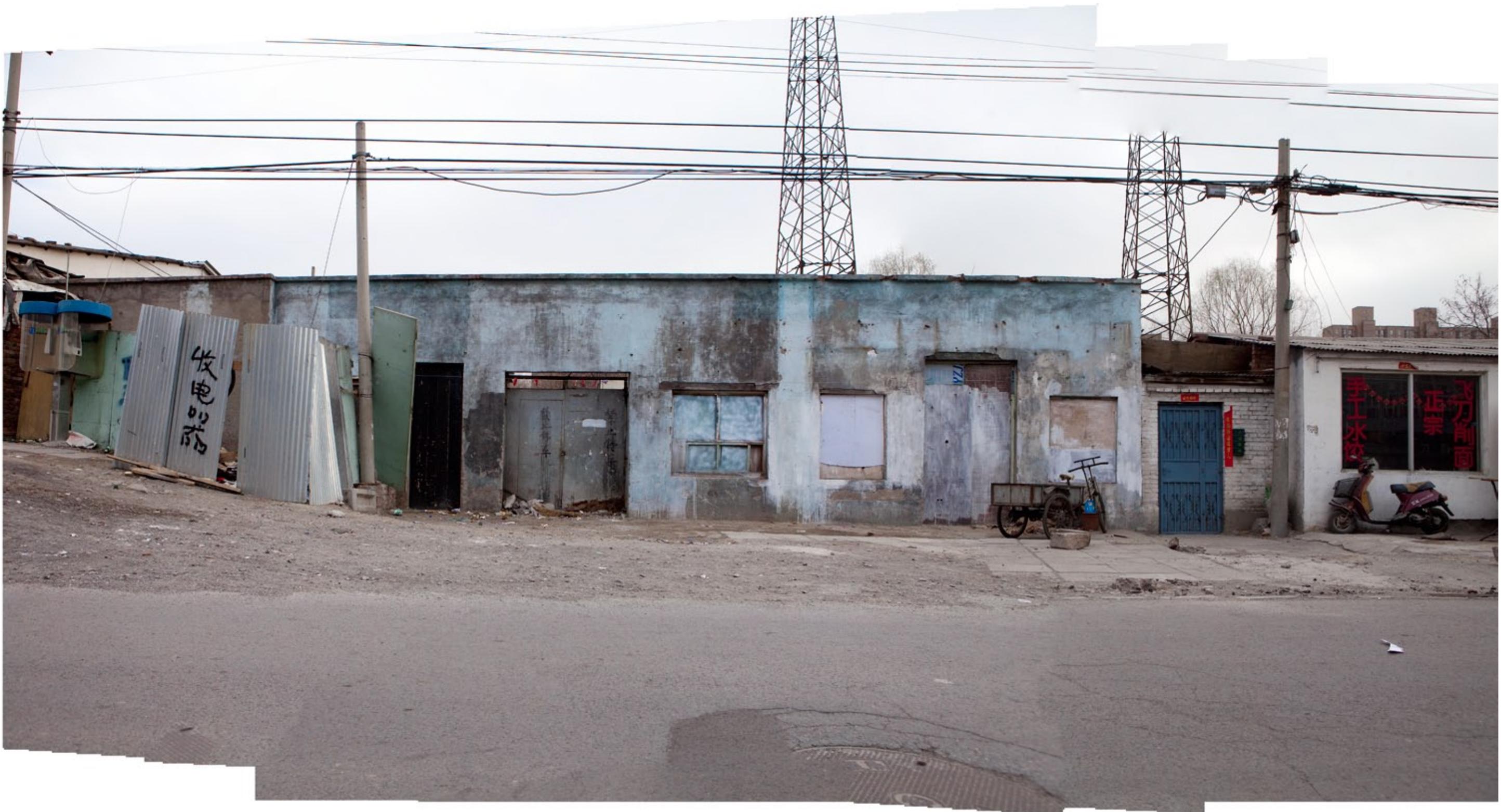
Automated Panoramas presents a sequence of architecture studies, completed in Beijing, at an interesting juncture in the physical history of the city. The construction boom spurred by the 2008 Olympics, which was followed quickly by the global economic downturn, has left Beijing completely transformed and riddled with pockets of uncompleted structures nestled between areas of glitzy consumerism and areas of urban decay.

The series is composed as a reaction to this, as well as to the trope of hyperreal photography, against the staged and manually composited imagery that

so heavily dominates contemporary art. Here, I have mimicked the form and fidelity of a contemporary tableau while subverting its creation by procedurally altering the process of capturing its constituent elements, and by generating the final image composite through software collaboration. When viewed at a distance, the images appear as crisp, panoramic representations of space. On close examination, however, the artifacts of the process of conversion become readily apparent as improbable spatial juxtapositions, wires with interrupted lines, textures that improperly mesh, and surfaces that abruptly vanish, among other jarring responses.

By displaying, in this manner, recent architectural feats alongside neglected urban areas, I hope to highlight Beijing's intended thrust toward postindustrialism and the related conversion of its architectural spaces.

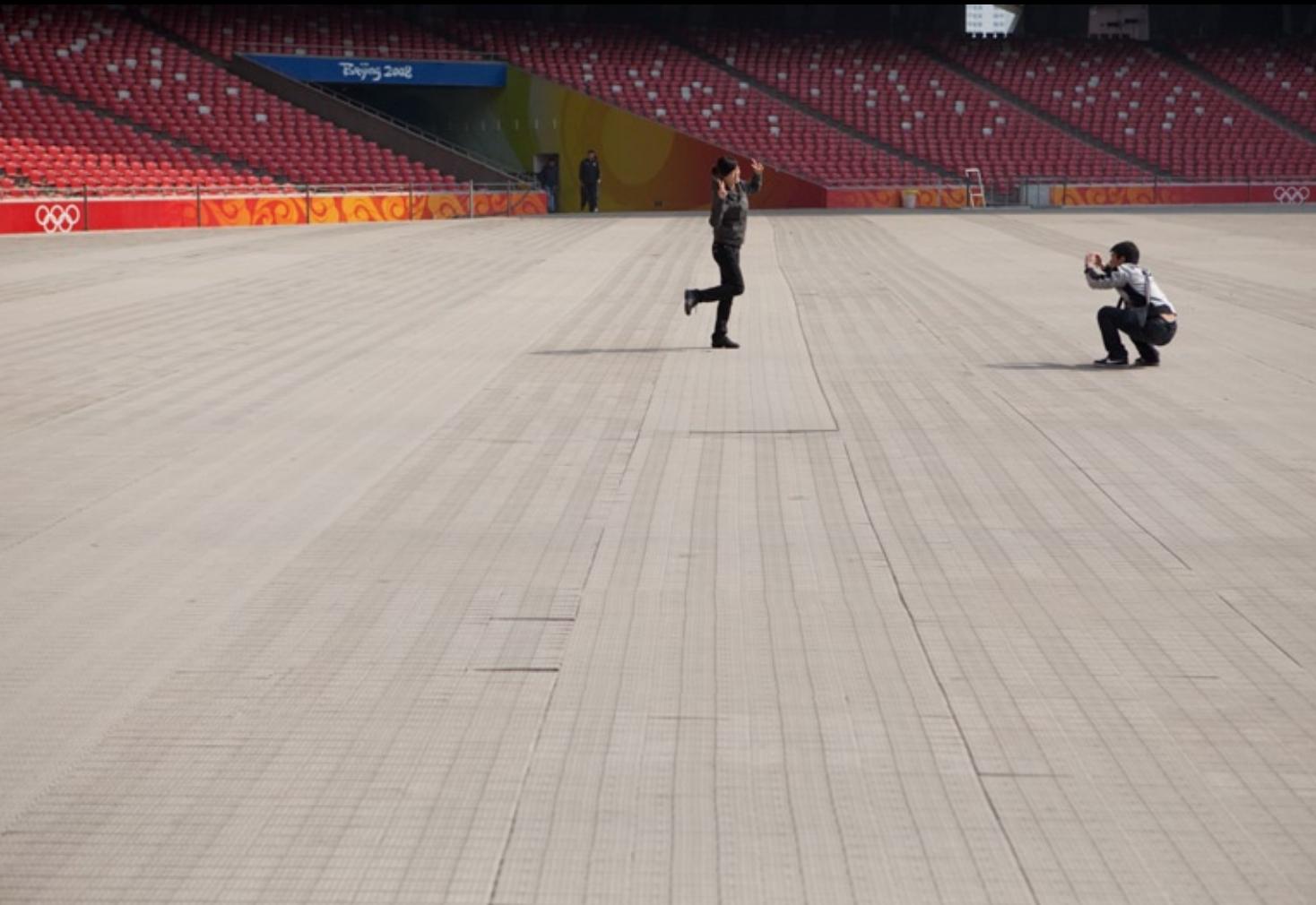
Artie Vierkant was born in Minnesota, in 1986, and grew up in Idaho before coming to Philadelphia to attend Penn. He describes his chosen medium of expression as systems of encoding, aggregation, and compression, which he sees as a crucial social factor in a world of networked information. Because of this, his projects exist in a multitude of formats and in various states between physical and electronic objects. In addition to having a number of exhibitions and awards to his credit, he has contributed as a content editor to the film and video section of the UbuWeb archive, performed electronic music, and screened videos internationally.



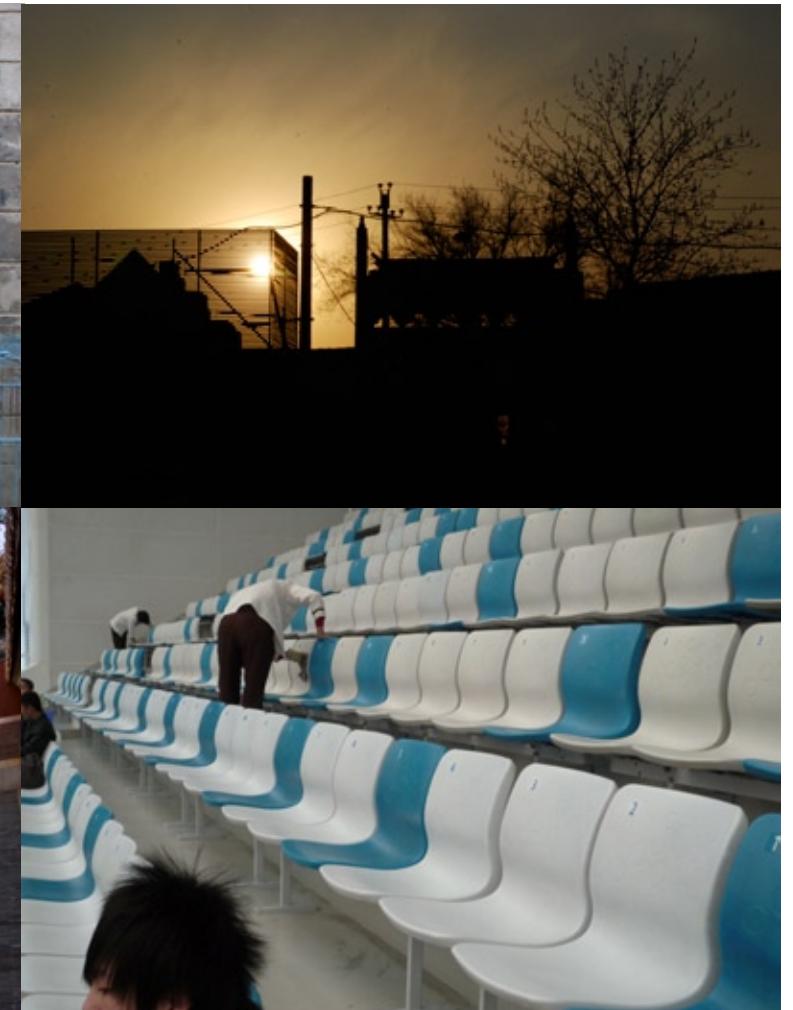
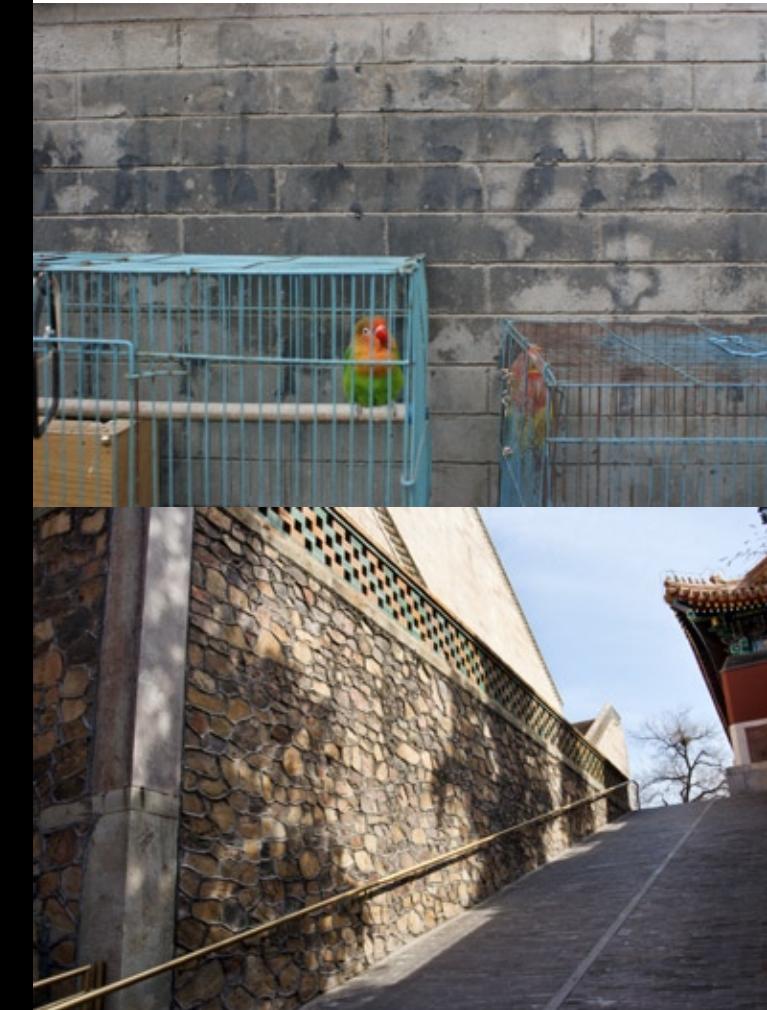
EAST WEST SOUTH NORTH



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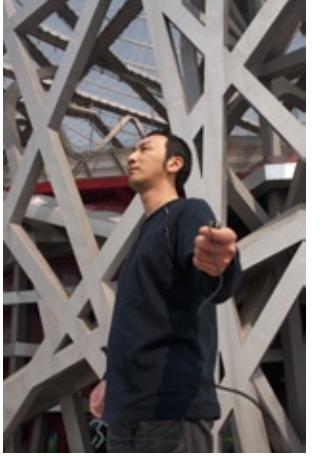


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page 63: GUOMAOQIAO, Archival Pigment Print, Beijing, China 2009
pages 64-65: TONGHUIHE, Archival Pigment Print, Beijing, China 2009
pages 66-67: TIANTONGXIYUAN, Archival Pigment Print, Beijing, China 2009



Tetsugo Hyakutake

2nd Year M.F.A., Photography/Time-Based Media

PATHOS AND IRONY: INDUSTRIAL STILL-LIFE IN CHINA

Embedded in my “aesthetic documentary” photography is the investigation of pathos in relation to historical, social, and economic issues involving urban development. Although I have explored different cities around the globe and, in particular, my home country of Japan, for this project I focused for the first time on the city of Beijing and how economic development has affected Chinese society today.

One of the major issues I examined during my two-week stay was the impact of recent Chinese industrialization leading up to the 2008 Summer Olympic Games. In photographing urban landscapes and structures of the

postindustrialization era, I felt myself frequently questioning whether or not Chinese society was advancing through its economic development. I encountered an overwhelming number of construction sites of high-rise apartments and office buildings, as well as demolition sites of old houses. *The New Beijing* promises to make the lives of Chinese people better; however, the feelings of isolation, loneliness, and emptiness were ever present in these industrial scenes. I felt that an emotional gap existed between the people and their surroundings. For instance, *New Apartment Living* shows the segregated community in new townships. Two types

of people dwell there—those who appreciate living in new, modern apartments and those who cannot adjust their former lifestyles to the surrounding walls of concrete. In my series of photographs, I strive to depict this pathos as well as other emotional complexities that go hand in hand with the advancement of modern society.

Tetsugo Hyakutake was born in Japan. After working for Fujifilm Imaging, he moved to Philadelphia to attend the University of the Arts, where he won the Promising Artist Award in 2005. He has also received the Society for Photographic Education Mid-Atlantic Region Scholarship Award (2005) and the Shades of Paper Award, sponsored by Innova Paper, for two consecutive years (2005, 2006). Hyakutake is currently represented by Gallery 339, in Philadelphia, and Alan Klotz Gallery, in New York.







page 69: **MING TOMB**, Pigment Print, 30"x30", 2009

page 70: **THE LAMA TEMPLE**, Pigment Print, 30"x30", 2009

page 71: **URN IN THE TEMPLE OF THE EARTH**, Pigment Print, 30"x30", 2009

pages 72-73: **TREES WITH PESTICIDE**, Pigment Print, 30"x30", 2009



Antonio McAfee

2nd Year, M.F.A., Photography/Interdisciplinary

FOREIGN COMPONENT

Foreign Component is an attempt to engage with a new environment to create a relationship that invalidates any differences. The photographs are an effort to connect with China's landscapes and landmarks.

Employing my body to engage with the setting was a tactic to find my place. The images are a series of self-portraits in which I try different gestures to become a part of the surroundings; in some of the images, I am mimicking nature or merging into the architecture. A way to familiarize myself with the location is to let go of identity, push it into the scene, and let light and setting influence the human form. The image *Trees with Pesticide* was influenced by constantly seeing rows of trees with white pesticide on the base. Covering the bottom half of my body in white seemed like a logical tactic to couple the body and nature.

At the start of the project, I was responding to such landmarks and landscapes as the Great Wall and the Ming Tomb. As the project progressed, I gravitated toward the Lama Temple and the Temples of Heaven, Earth, Sun, and Moon. They became a topic of concentration and the platform on which to perform. The element of the temples provided a historical context to frame my gestures. The sites provided text, diagrams, and instruments to educate visitors on ancient ceremonies. The Lama Temple had a multiple function in the series. First, it was a way to place myself among current religious practices. In one photograph, I am in the background, like a live statue disassociated from the surroundings. Second, it was a chance to take myself out of the picture and document the daily religious environment and practices. The presence of my body is an important characteristic of my studio

practice, and that engagement was influential overseas. It was a way to outline my relationship and place in the natural and spiritual terrain of China.

Antonio McAfee was born in 1983, in Stuttgart, Germany. His interdisciplinary practice, which involves sculpture, video, audio, and drawing, attempts to reinterpret traits of photography.

Antonio lives and works in Philadelphia, where he is a M.F.A. candidate at Penn. Previously, he received a B.F.A. at Corcoran College of Art and Design, in Washington, D.C. He has held positions in Corcoran's prints and photography department, the studio of painter iona rozeal brown, the private photography collection of Volkmar K. Wentzel, Capital Hill Arts Workshop, Numark Gallery, Ellipse Art Center, Mu Projects, and various art galleries. He is the recipient of the Dedalus M.F.A. Painting and Sculpture Fellowship, Chair's Scholarship, and Best Thesis Exhibition (Corcoran College of Art and Design). He has been published in Mono and was cocurator, contributing essayist, and research assistant for Through You: Photography Selections from the Martin Z. Margulies Collection at the University of Pennsylvania.

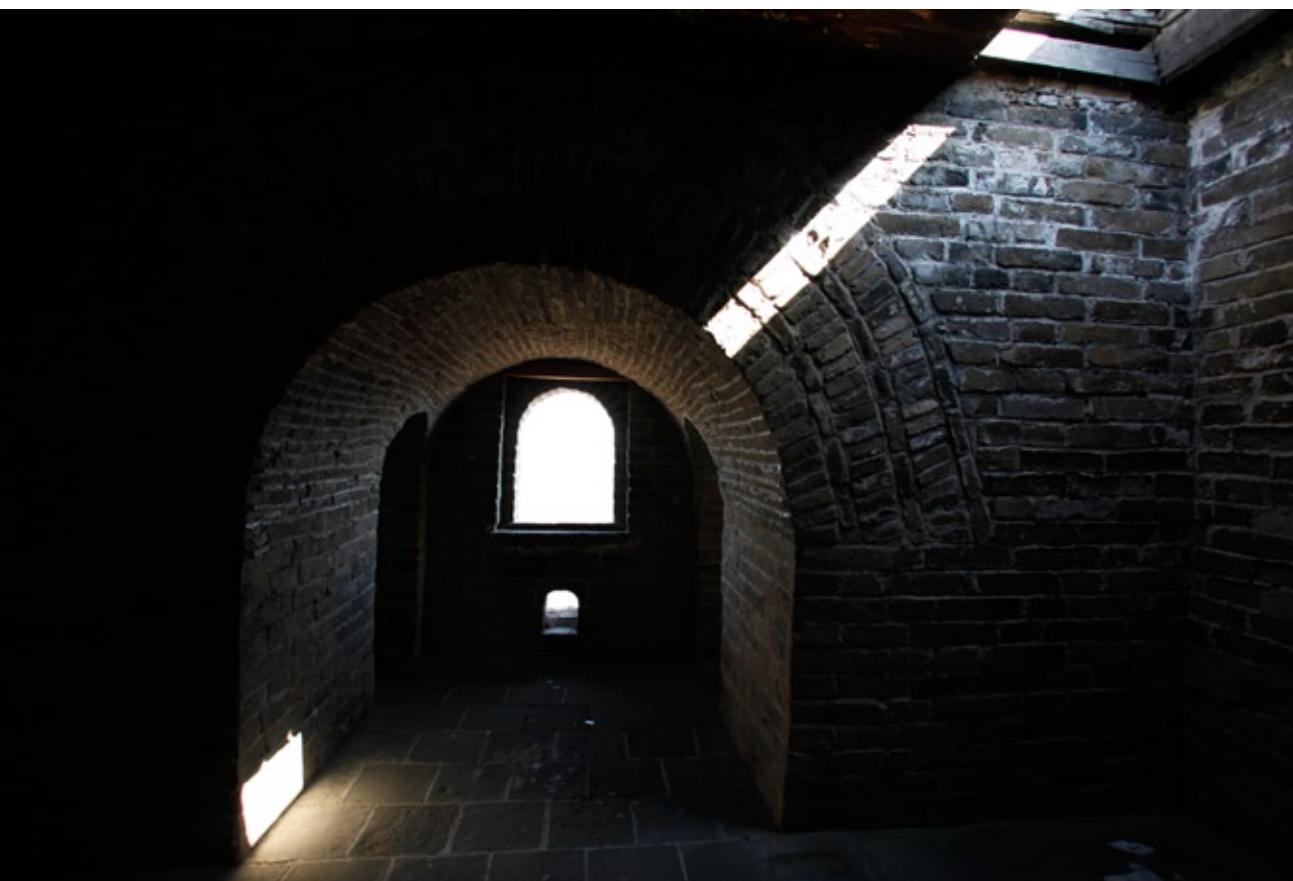
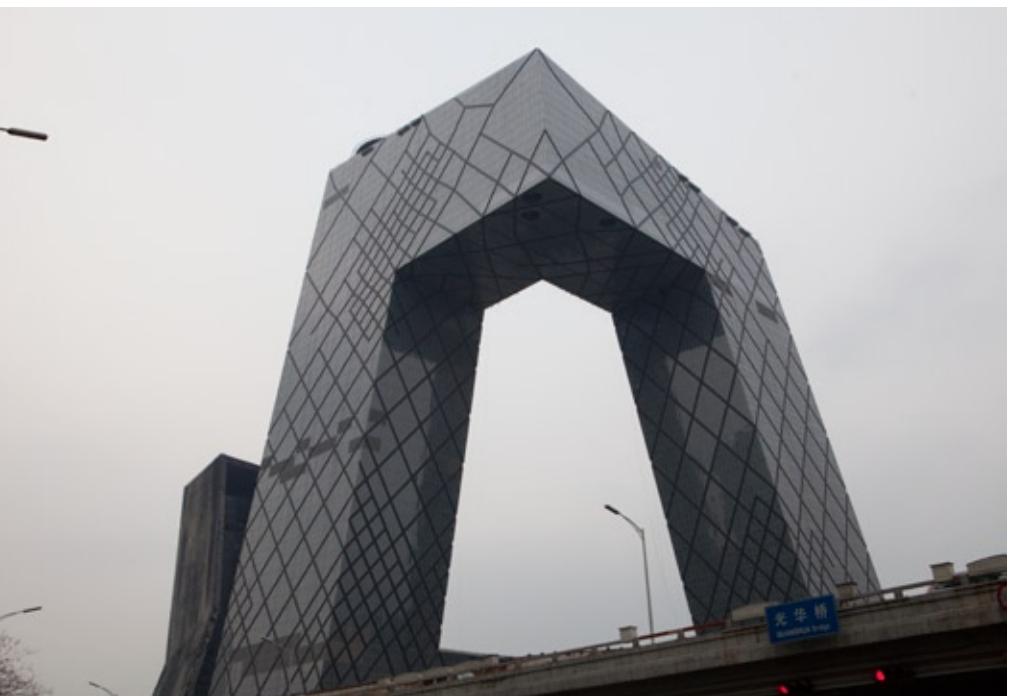


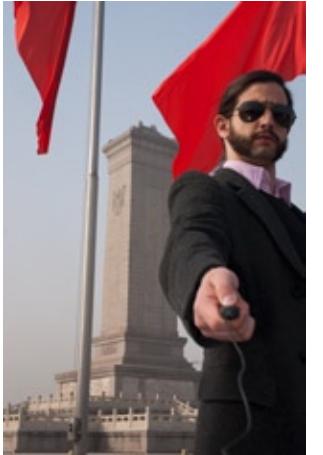




东西南北

EAST WEST SOUTH NORTH





Nicholas Salvatore
Senior Fine Arts Major, Photography

THE ROCK-STAR DIARIES: TWO THOUSAND MYSPACE PHOTOS IN BEIJING

Beijing is party central.

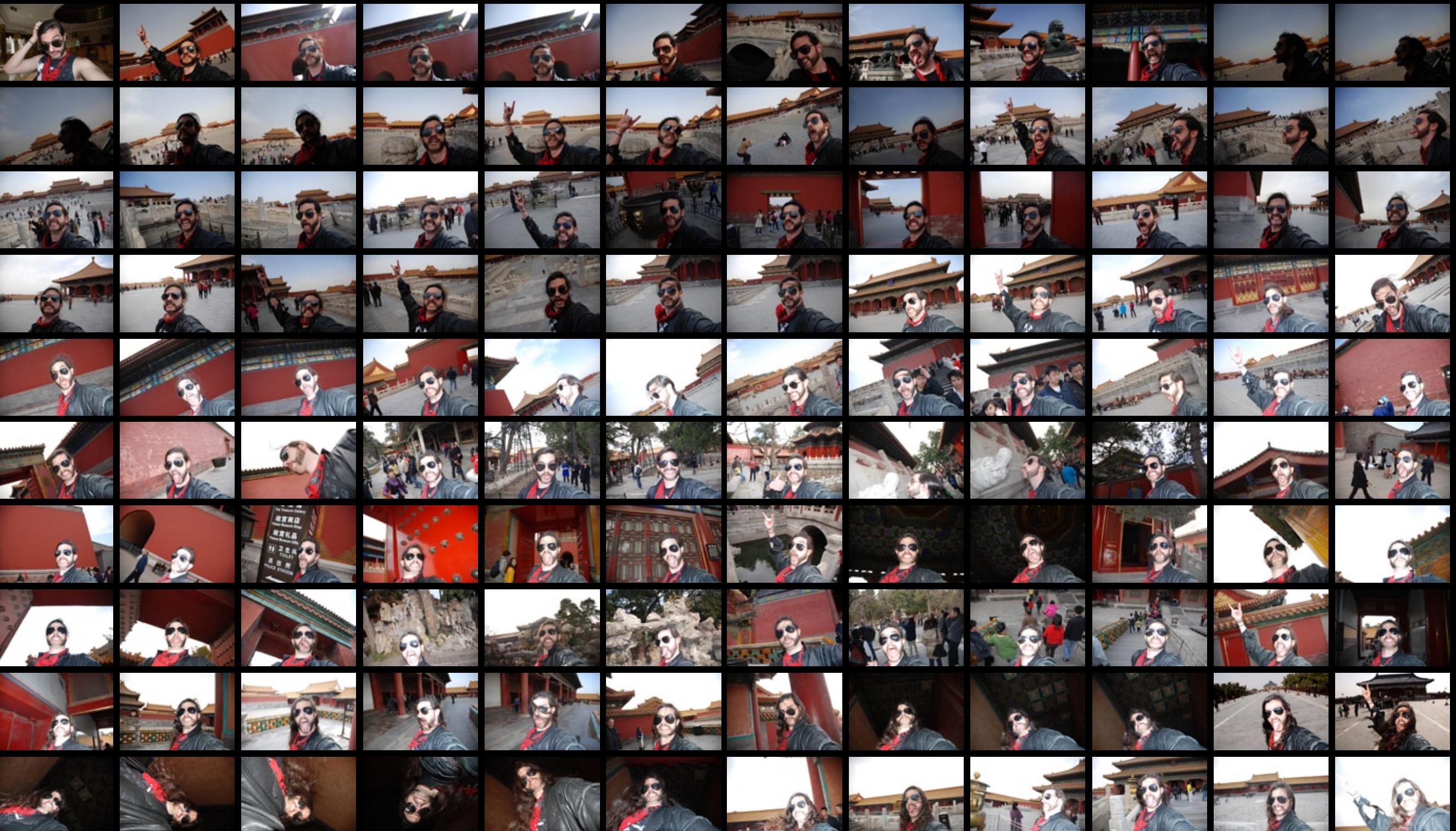
Trying to kill some time on tour, an American rock star hits the streets looking for trouble. He's an outsider even among the swarms of tourists, but that won't stop him from charging into every sightseeing spot he can find and snapping some rad tour pix. "Cultural exchange" doesn't mean much when you're a brain-dead rocker on the other end of a language barrier. Stardom is easy enough to translate.

So what if the visit comes across more like an invasion? Who cares? This is rock and roll! Being the center of the

universe is awesome! The best way to see the world is when it revolves around you.

Nicholas Salvatore was born in Philadelphia, in 1985, and raised in the suburbs of Washington, D.C. Although his practice is rooted in photography, he also works with digitally manipulated video, animated gif files, and installation, and recently has begun experimenting with stereoscopic 3D video. His work is primarily concerned with the mediation of bodies and personae through information technology. He has also worked in the intersection of contemporary poetics and the visual arts, contributing to *Ubu Roi in Second Life* at the Institute of Contemporary Art and *Cover without a Record*, a publication translating Christian Marclay's visual art into text-based work. He lives and works in Philadelphia.











page 86: 男孩好女孩好, 比例和谐更美好 BOYS ARE GOOD, GIRLS ARE GOOD; HARMONIOUS PROPORTIONS ARE EVEN BETTER, 2009
 pages 88-89: 蓝天之下你我他, 关爱女孩靠大家 BLUE SKIES ABOVE YOU, ME, AND THEM; THE CARE OF GIRLS DEPENDS ON EVERYONE, 2009

page 90: top 女孩男孩都是民族的希望 GIRLS AND BOYS ARE ALL THE NATION'S HOPE, 2009 bottom left 生男生女一样好, 人口素质最重要 HAVING GIRLS IS AS GOOD AS HAVING BOYS; THE QUALITY OF THE POPULATION IS MOST IMPORTANT, 2009
 bottom right 生男生女一样好, 女儿也是传后人 HAVING GIRLS IS AS GOOD AS HAVING BOYS; GIRLS ARE ALSO DESCENDANTS, 2009

page 91: 消除性别歧视, 促进家庭和谐 ELIMINATE SEXUAL DISCRIMINATION; ENCOURAGE PEACEFUL FAMILIES, 2009



Kira Simon Kennedy
Sophomore Fine Arts Major

时代不同了
TIMES ARE DIFFERENT NOW

"The National Population and Family Planning Commission issued a circular demanding local officials to substitute stiff, offensive and bad-taste slogans with 190 recommended ones which it said had been selected from a national collection campaign."

Xinhua News Agency,
August 5, 2007

我: 对不起, 我可以给她照现吗?

父母: 啊可以, 可以。
看看阿姨, 笑一个, 笑一个!

我: 她非常可爱。谢谢你们。

Excuse me, may I please take her picture ?

Yes, yes, you can. Look at auntie, smile !

She is adorable, thank you.

Kira is currently a Sophomore Fine Arts Photography and Chinese double major at the University of Pennsylvania.

蓝天之下你我他，关爱女孩靠大家





page 93: **UNTITLED**, Detail, Digital inkjet print, 24"x20", 2009
page 94: **UNTITLED**, Detail, Digital inkjet print, 24"x38", 2009
page 95: **UNTITLED**, Detail, Digital inkjet print, 24"x20", 2009
page 96: **UNTITLED**, Detail, Digital inkjet print, 24"x20", 2009



Larry Shprintz

Senior Associate Student, Fine Arts, Photography

The subject of my investigation is the people of Beijing, who are unique and yet the same as people in the Western world. I have attempted to document various activities of daily life, including aspects of commuting, people's occupations, and how the citizenry spends its leisure time. It was important to include men, women, and children. When and where possible, I have emphasized time-honored cultural values through the depiction of traditional activities and practices.

The bicycle holds a special place in my project, because much of the population of Beijing still depends on it for transportation. Vast numbers of bikes appear on the streets in an infinite variety of configurations. The bicycle

culture is a bridge between the new and the traditional, and provides special insight into the changing way of life in China's urban centers. On a technical level, one of the devices I have employed to capture the character of the people of Beijing is a large-aperture setting in conjunction with a telephoto lens. This produces the optical phenomenon in which the perspective is flattened and the principal subject is separated from its surroundings. The effect

has been of particular value in obtaining a series of candid, semiformal portraits of the people of the city.

This visit to Beijing has provided the opportunity to record a moment in a rapidly changing continuum.

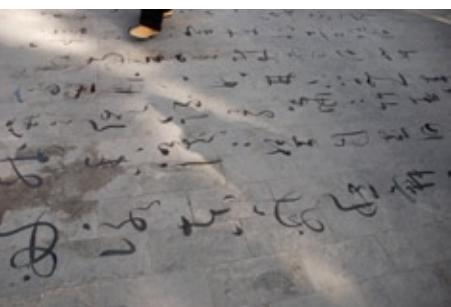
Born in Philadelphia, in 1927, Larry Shprintz was trained as a chemical engineer (B.S. ChE., University of Pennsylvania; M.S. ChE., Drexel University) and had a forty-year industrial career. He was elected a Fellow of the American Institute of Chemical Engineers. Since retirement, he has studied art at Penn.

A U.S. Army photographer, he has had a lifetime interest in sculpture, printmaking, and photography. His sculpture received both the Jared Award (1990) and the Burrisson Award (1991). During his years at Penn, he has become an innovative printmaker and participated in major print shows (1993 to 2007). Solo exhibitions have included Mostly Masks at the Morgan Gallery (2004) and Origami Monoprints at the Burrisson Gallery (2007). His prints and photographs are in many private collections.













- page 102: **OBSERVING WORKERS TEND PARK NEAR ZHICHUNLU STATION**, Pigment Print on Rice Paper, 24"x12", 2009
 page 104: **PASSING THROUGH WANJING AT MIDDAY**, Pigment Print on Rice Paper, 24"x12", 2009
 page 105: **APPROACHING APARTMENTS NEAR HUJIALOU STATION**, Pigment Print on Rice Paper, 24"x12", 2009
 page 106: **CONTEMPLATING CHARRED HOTEL ON CLOUDLESS DAY IN CHAOYANG DISTRICT**, Pigment Print on Rice Paper, 24"x12", 2009
 page 107: **WANDERING NEAR CONSTRUCTION SIGHT AT SHOYOAJU STATION**, Pigment Print on Rice Paper, 24"x12", 2009



Matthew Thomas Cianfrani
Senior Fine Arts Major, Photography

I first visited China in the summer of 2008. During my three-month stay in Shanghai, I lived in an apartment that overlooked an empty lot in the outer ring of the city. By the time I was ready to leave, that empty lot was filled with a fully operational shopping mall that would pale beside its American counterparts. Everyday, for three months, I watched the building's development at a surreal, almost time-lapse speed. When I came home at night, I saw the sparks of welding torches dotting along the hulking structure of scaffolding and green mesh covering. This lasted until sunrise.

When I returned to China in 2009 as part of this Beijing Photography Travel Abroad

opportunity, I went with the intention of exploring a traditional Chinese attitude/philosophy toward art-making as a means of addressing issues of modernity. Using the photograph as brush and the computer as canvas, I have invoked the tradition of twelfth-century neo-Confucian ink painting. These expressions of landscape and form result in a complex aesthetic directly linked to a philosophy that exalts harmony, natural order, and spiritual reality. The same cannot be said for the new urban context of the Beijing landscape.

China's rapid expansion should be commended at once as an achievement of humanity and also be considered as a caveat to the perils of overzealous and

untamed urbanization. While new opportunities and experiences are being offered to the people of China, so are new limitations being placed upon their lives.

Matthew Thomas Cianfrani was born in rural Pennsylvania. After high school Matthew spent a brief period in London, England. Upon his return to Philadelphia he began his undergraduate career at Penn as a Fine Arts Photography major. Matthew has since had the great fortune to travel extensively in China including Hong Kong, Shanghai, Yunnan Province and southern Tibet. After graduate Matthew plans to continue his academic and artist practice in Beijing.





page 109: **NORTH**, Digital C-Print, 20"x20", 2009

pages 110-111: **EAST AND WEST**, Digital C-Print, 20"x30", 2009

pages 112-113: **SOUTH**, Digital C-Print, 20"x30", 2009



Nsenga A. Knight

2nd Year M.F.A., Photography/Interdisciplinary

NIUJIE PURITY AND TRUTH: WORDS, LINES, AND BREAKS

A Qing Zhen Si is a place of purity and truth; it is a Chinese mosque. Niujie Qing Zhen Si, built more than one thousand years ago, is the oldest and largest mosque in Beijing.

As the Hui (Chinese Muslim) saying goes, it is "totally Chinese on the outside and totally Muslim on the inside." Its pagodas, gardens, and feng shui architecture exemplify the ideologies of peace and harmony at the heart of Chinese and Islamic ideology. Like all Beijing places that have endured, the history of this mosque is complex and layered.

I traveled to Beijing intending to photograph the calligraphy that I expected to see inside the Niujie Qing Zhen Si—a style

that combines Chinese brushstroke sensibilities with Arabic text. I had made friends with a Hui student named Dawood; he introduced me to an elder of the mosque. The elder gave us a brief tour of the calligraphy in the mosque, pointing out words I might never have noticed on my own. When we reached the very front of the mosque, he indicated writing that I could barely see—the writing in the ceiling, within the triangles that formed the inside of the mosque's front pagoda.

Standing beneath these words, engulfed and enraptured by them, the elder explained that the Niujie Qing Zhen Si had been destroyed during the Cultural

Revolution, and these words were what had endured. To the naked eye, they are merely beautiful old words that glorify the Creator and the Great Sage. But, to the photographic eye, which records history, captures light, and abstracts meaning and significance from the most seemingly normal of things, the marks left by these old and enduring words in the Niujie Qing Zhen Si bear witness to the story of Islam in Beijing.

By engaging personal memory, cinema, performance, and varying ideologies, Nsenga Knight reinterprets history and designates new functions for objects, actions, and situations. Much of her current work is a conversation between materiality and abstraction.

Born and raised in Brooklyn, New York, Nsenga Knight earned a B.A. in film from Howard University in 2003.





أَبْدَلَ الصُّرُكَ الْمُسَمَّ
شَعْرَ وَبِي وَبِسْرَ الْمُو
وَرَأَتِتَ السَّمَاءَ
مَذْلُوكَهُ الْمُدِيَ



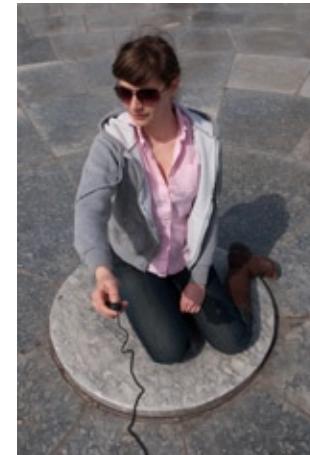
page 114: **ALIGNMENT**, Mixed Media, Site Specific Installation, Dimensions Variable, 2009

page 116: **PATH**, White Tiles, Site Specific Installation, Dimensions Variable, 2009

page 117: **GATEWAY**, Bricks, Wood, and Stone, North View of Installation, Dimensions Variable, 2009

page 118: **ONE WHO KNOWS FATE DOES NOT STAND BENEATH A HIGH AND DANGEROUS WALL**, Bricks and Stone, Site Specific Installation, Dimensions Variable, 2009

page 119: **FRAME**, Mixed Media, Site Specific Installation, Dimensions Variable, 2009



Elizabeth Hoy

2nd Year M.F.A., Sculpture/Interdisciplinary

MATTER OF A BLANK PAST

Trees were growing out of the rooftops. One of the locations had been abandoned for decades. I am drawn to the possibilities that exist in both construction and demolition sites. While in Beijing, I created fleeting, ephemeral interventions within construction/demolition sites. Building up, working into, and pulling out surfaces, the pieces are excavations—recovering, exploring, constructing, and destroying. Manipulated materials, found on-site, became my sculptures, which altered or mimicked the built architecture surrounding them.

The history of the site, the materials, the layout of the city, and the modernization of Beijing are all elements of this work. Together, these parts build a site that is specific

to human interaction. Surfaces play off one another, simultaneously creating intimate and open spaces. Small gestures within the human architectural scale invite the viewer to inspect. Process led me to what the work became, emerging from trial, error, and play. Each piece is an investigation that lets the space around the work lead to its development. In my studio, or within an abandoned building, I am curious about the previous inhabitants; I am interested in re-creating and examining how the environment was used before. As I work, I am aware that my rebuilding of history may be incorrect. I may find old paint chips or ripped-out walls and assume a past that is different from the documented one.

What kind of shapes, light, and restrictions can the pieces and materials engage in? How do the materials relate to architecture and cultural history? What does my inability to read the site mean? What does my misinterpretation of the space or history suggest?

Elizabeth Hoy, born in New Hampshire and raised in southeastern Massachusetts, now lives and works in Philadelphia. In 2003, she received a B.A. with honors from Wesleyan University, and will graduate this May from Penn with a M.F.A. An interdisciplinary artist, she works with installations, drawing, painting, and video. Hoy was awarded a travel fellowship for a residency at the Royal College of Art, London, in 2008, and was nominated for the 2009 Joan Mitchell Foundation M.F.A. Grant. Her work has been exhibited in the Northeast, including shows at the Ice Box Project Space, in Philadelphia, and both Michael Steinberg Fine Art and the Prince St. Gallery in New York.







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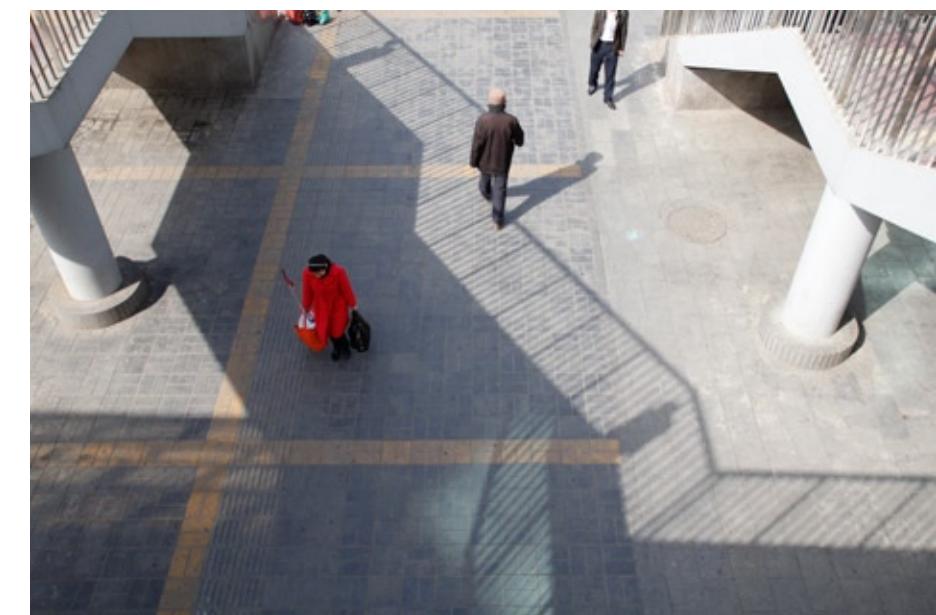
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