

Hu Yang

胡杨



Huang Doudou (Shanghainese Dancer)

I work as the art director and leading role of the troupe. I'm quite busy and even don't have time for practicing. I have to practice while working, two birds with one stone. I want time to go abroad for further studies and improve my skills. My pain is that I can't have a normal life.



Hu Zhizhong (Shanghainese Laid-off Worker)

I didn't have anything to do when I was laid off and then I took up dancing as setting-up exercise. I take a nap every day. My husband works at a supermarket and our son is a student of a technical secondary school. We live on my husband's salary and are financially depressed. We didn't want to spend money on wall paper and therefore we decorated the wall with the posters, isn't it typical? We hope our boy will have a bright future and earn a lot of money.



Sun Bingchang (Shanghainese Retired Worker)

I didn't have anything to do after my retirement, and therefore, I started this home hotel business and provide a place to stay for those people who come from other provinces and don't have much money. I help the children in depressed areas with the money I earn, I miss the national leaders of the previous generation.



Chen Baowen (Shanghainese Board Director)

I'm a self-supporting egoist. I have beautiful dreams and I like travelling around the world. I'm happy about my present life and want to find Mr. Right. And I don't have pains.



**Tan Hongzhang (Shanghainese Retires Engineer)
Chen Lingmei (Shanghainese Retired Worker)**

We've heard news about the government's pulling down the house, but nothing has happened yet. Now I don't care much, anyhow we won't be able to afford an apartment downtown. However, apartments in the suburbs are too far away and it's inconvenient for me to find any mah-jongg playmates. Now we live with our elder son in this shikumen house, it's small but the traffic is very convenient. Our younger son lives with his wife's family. Our greatest pain is about the housing.



Li You (Shanghainese Office Clerk)

I work in a foreign company and have a lot of pressure. The only thing I want to do after work is to have a bath for two hours and then watch a DVD.

ShanghART 香格纳画廊

50 Moganshan Rd. Bldg 16 & 18
Shanghai, 200060, China
Tel: 0086-21-63593923
Fax: 0086-21-63594570
E-mail: info@shanghartgallery.com
www.shanghartgallery.com

Hu Yang's extensive photographic publication *Shanghai Living* documents the interior habitual spaces of 500 families living in today's Shanghai. A selection of 100 of the images were first displayed at ShanghART Gallery and caused an unforeseen public attention due to their rare and particular presentation of intimate and protected private spaces.

The featured photographs participate in an anthropological and sociological approach that attempts to describe the dramatic changes of domestic living that occurred following the process of modernization and the open door policy. The photographs work as cultural documents as well as aesthetic objects that give us a highly interesting, almost voyeuristic, view of a diversity of private spheres. Ranging from the poor migrant worker's dwellings to the domiciles of foreign diplomats and successful business people. The photos presented are contextualized with captions quoting the inhabitants answers generating from conversations with the photographer prior to the shoot. In these conversations, Hu Yang focused on the same three elemental questions: How is your life situation now? What is your wish/hope? And, finally, what is the biggest pain/trouble?

The accumulative quantitative of images inherent to the *Shanghai Living* series almost work as an archive: all subjects and interiors, whether rich or poor, are equally treated. One might, naturally, question the supposed objectivity, authenticity and transparent truthfulness of the documentary photos. Just like in any other form of visual representation, the intentions and stylistic strategies are, at the end, always a subjective choice made by the photographer. Nevertheless, these intimate private spaces do not come across as staged settings, and unlike exterior views of the city, these are spaces that are not otherwise open to the public. Finally, it is up to the spectator to manage and interpret these contemporary iconographies of modern Shanghai habitat.

Hu Yang's recent exhibitions include *China Contemporary, Art, Architecture and Visual Culture* at Netherlands Photomuseum, Rotterdam, The Netherlands (2006), *The Sixth International Photography Month in Moscow: Photobiennale 2006*, Moscow House of Photography, Moscow, Russia (2006), *Shifting Views: Chinese Urban Documentary Photography*, Michigan University, Michigan, USA (2005), *Re(-)viewing the City*, 2005 Guangzhou Photo Biennale, Guangdong Art Museum, Guangzhou, China (2005), and *Hu Yang, Shanghai Living*, ShanghART Gallery, H-Space, Shanghai, China (2005).



Shanghai Living, Photo, 2005
45x 60 cm