

Liang Yue

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Going to Sleep, Photo, 2004, 100x125cm



Circle Light, Photo, 2004, 125x150cm

Liang Yue's photographic work negotiates the complex symbolic terrain between exteriority and interiority, memory and reality, and the public and the private. Her open-ended series of photos *Several Dusks* (2003) and *Lily's Afternoon* (2003) focus on moments drawn from ordinary life, yet a sense of foreboding pervades all of them. Liang Yue observes and elaborates on a uniquely ambiguous, uneasy assortment of Shanghai's public space, but with a detached and remote viewpoint. The images are shot in twilight, just before nightfall, and are linked to an elusive time and the question of presence. The snap-shot aesthetic makes it difficult to think of it as specific to a single place. The recurring images are a partial and instant view of the city. Her scenes of distant frenzy co-mingle possibility and problem, and leave the viewer uncertain about their specific mood and theme. The contrast between familiarity and strangeness is greatly pronounced, and it is precisely this feeling of contradiction that makes her photos so fascinating and attractive.

Liang Yue's recent work similarly balances between the inclusive and the introvert. The photos *In Summer* (2005) and *On the Bridge* (2006) are produced in the context of the poetic impossible rather than in the metropolitan context. Here, the images are devoid of human beings. What we see are empty streets and unoccupied interiors without any visual over-saturation. Liang Yue opens up a vast realm of associations and forces the collapse of one specific and determinate meaning. The *Untitled Red* series (2005) comprises monochromatic red-tone photographs that similarly, at a glance, walk a fine line between figuration and abstraction. Yet the difficulty in reading these images owes less to any inherent formal opacity than a kind of counterintuitive distancing effect.

Liang Yue was born in Shanghai in 1979. She graduated from the Shanghai Art Academy in 2001. Today she lives and works in Shanghai. Recent exhibitions include *The Thirteen: Chinese Video Now*, PS1 Contemporary Art Center, Long Island City, New York, USA (2006), *China Contemporary – Architecture, Art and Visual Culture*, Netherlands Photomuseum, Rotterdam, The Netherlands (2006), *Restless – Photography and New Media*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Shanghai, China (2006), *Stop Dazing*, BizArt, Shanghai, China (2005), *Conceptual Photography from the Peoples Republic of China*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Denver/Colorado, USA, and *China Now*, MoMA Film at the Gramercy Theatre, New York, USA (2004).