

FENG JIANGUO: VISION OF THE WEST

冯建国作品集

西部旅路：1996～2006



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CHINA PHOTOGRAPHIC PUBLISHING HOUSE

FENG JIANGUO

佛祖释迦牟尼12岁等身像

释迦牟尼12岁等身镏金铜像，是佛祖释迦牟尼在世时由其弟子依照他12岁的身量大小塑造，并亲自由释迦牟尼加持过的铜质佛像。据史书记载，公元4世纪，古印度法王达摩波罗为了答谢中国秦王苻坚，赠送了这尊12岁等身佛像。到了唐朝，文成公主将其作为修习佛法的本尊带到了吐蕃，先是供奉于拉萨小昭寺，后供奉于大昭寺，成为佛教信徒十分崇敬的佛尊，也同时成为到拉萨朝圣者的至尊。

Full Length Statue of Buddha Sakyamuni at the Age of 12

The full length gold-plating copper statue of Buddha Sakyamuni at the age of 12 was produced by his disciples when he was still alive according to his twelve-year-old size. The Buddha himself had directed the opening ceremony. According to historical records, in the 4th Century, the ancient Indian King Dharmapala gave the statue as a present to the then King Fujian of the Qin Dynasty in China to show his gratitude. In the Tang Dynasty (617-906), Princess Wencheng brought the statue to Tubo for the purpose of cultivating Buddhism. The statue was originally placed at the Ramoche Monastery and then at the Jokhang Monastery in Lhasa, becoming the statue most respected by Buddhists and the pilgrims in Lhasa.



佛祖释迦牟尼12岁等身像，大昭寺，拉萨，2003
FULL LENGTH STATUE OF BUDDHA SAKYAMUNI AT THE AGE OF 12,
JOKHANG MONASTERY, LHASA, TIBET, 2003

冯建国作品集

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FENG JIANGUO CLASSIC IMAGES

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序言

冯建国8×10大画幅黑白摄影

宋建民（中国摄影出版社总编辑）

摄影也是一种语言体系。它用影像对客观事物进行叙述、刻画和描写。如果说得再深入一些，它应该还包括了交流、传播等一系列的语言特点。就像人类的文字语言一样，几乎正常的人都能使用日常生活中的语言，但能够准确、清晰和熟练地阐述自己的思想、感受，驾驭语言达到艺术境界，就非一般人能够做到了。冯建国先生在使用摄影语言进行创作，尤其是在大画幅黑白摄影领域，已然达到较高的艺术境界，成为当代中国较有影响的摄影艺术家。

欣赏冯建国先生的作品，往往为其作品中的艺术气氛所感染。

首先是艺术感。任何艺术都是社会生活的反映，摄影艺术也不例外。摄影反映社会生活的方式大致有两个主要方向，一是证明，一是显示。证明是推理、综合、分析、演绎、判断等一系列抽象的、逻辑的论证方法和过程；而显示则是具体的、形象的描述，形象性是摄影艺术的基本特征。一些摄影照片证明特征明显，或成为了文字的附属，或自身“立此存照”，缺少独立的艺术性。摄影艺术作品是直观可感的，它用形象表达，最明显的特点是感性显示，艺术家通过对现实生活鲜活的显示，启发读者的想象。冯建国先生的作品，显示特征极其明显，几乎没有证明的痕迹，艺术感明显。

其次是作品的质感表现。我们说，摄影作品和美术作品同属视觉艺术，在创作时，构成作品的点、线、面、色调的使用，构图、用光、反差等方面的规则等等，很多元素是极为相同的，因为它们的主题形象均来源于人类的自然生活，“自然是唯一的女神”（法国雕塑家罗丹语）。但摄影与美术又有一些区别，甚至接近于本质的区别，那就是摄影作品质感和真实感特性的使用，这是美术作品不具备的。欣赏质感是人类满足眼睛仔细观看欲望的需要。摄影史上，有很多摄影艺术家从捍卫摄影的纯洁性出发，坚持使用大画幅相机，这实际是坚持摄影艺术的质感特性。为了充分表现质感，冯建国先生选择了8×10大画幅技术型相机。此类相机是摄影术发明以来传统相机中成熟和具有代表性的技术型相机，它的细节质感表现极为出色。但操控8×10相机是件比较复杂和麻烦的事，很多人望而却步，甚至有些人是不适合使用它的。冯建国先生生性敦厚，心思缜密，具儒雅气质，性格中却又坚韧和锲而不舍，与8×10相机相得益彰，成为他艺术创作的利器。

再其次是作品中的节奏感。节奏感是艺术作品中感染人的又一个要素。衡量摄影作品的艺术标准中，审美价值是其中一个非常重要的标准。审美价值主要体现在欣赏艺术作品时给欣赏者带来的感受，是一个很复杂的心理过程。冯建国先生的作品节奏舒缓，景物对比平和，景物关系恬淡沉静，浪漫优雅，能够引发读者健康和积极的愉悦情绪。人类对艺术的理解和感受很多时候是一致的，但中西方也有很大不同。西方的再现和中国的表现，是艺术显示中两种既有关联又有区别的表达式和欣赏方式。再现要求更加地实证一些，表现则更加倾向于意会一些。犹如话剧与京剧，话剧再现的倾向明显，京剧表现的倾向明显，它们代表了中西方两种艺术观念的取向。冯建国先生的作品，基调中自然风光要素多于人文纪实要素，再现自然的同时融进了自己的表现理念，舒缓的节奏恰恰适应了这种表达式。就像中式服装和中国茶所蕴含的中国文人处事的理念，圆润、舒缓、平和、回味。欣赏冯建国先生的作品让人再一次想起了大洋彼岸的亚当斯。读亚当斯的作品，其质感和节奏感是那样的优美，尤其其他的节奏感，像贝多芬的D大调般轻柔曼妙。亚当斯在中国的影响甚至超过在美国的影响，其中一个重要原因是否与亚当斯的表达式与中国的欣赏习惯有某种不谋而合有关呢？

第四是作品的风格。风格也是摄影艺术作品的精神特色。风格的形成是衡量一位艺术家成熟的标志，也是衡量摄影作品的另一个艺术标准。冯建国先生的作品形式上秀丽工整，严谨朴实；内容上和谐美好，没有矛盾冲突。同时，8×10本身特有的精确要求和控制，于作品内容与形式的统一所呈现出来的艺术特征及高超的工艺特性，也形成了他自身外在的创作个性。这在其作品的表现手法和艺术语言上有着非常强烈的体现。有人认为这在国外不希奇，但在中国大很多人不注重严谨和完美工艺特性的情况下，它的意义甚至超出了作品本身。

当然，一位艺术家风格的最终形成和判断，是一个不断积累的过程。从根本上说，还要使自己与他在自身的感受和发现上区别开来。自身的感受和发现是艺术作品精神独特性和思想独特性的精髓，是艺术家高于生活，引领公众向艺术王国迈进，同时又被公众接纳和承认的关键所在。应该说，艺术的发展规律中，继承和发展始终是一条不能逾越的路径，也是激发艺术家灵感与创作激情的一个动力。冯建国先生正值当年，正值他的创作高峰期。我相信，沿着这条路，最终大家会见到一位摄影艺术的大家。

FOREWORD
FENG JIANGUO 8×10 LARGE FORMAT
BLACK AND WHITE PHOTOGRAPHY

SONG JIANMIN (China Photographic Publishing House Chief Editor)

Photography, too, is a kind of language system. It narrates, portrays and describes objective things with images. In more in-depth words, it includes a series of language characteristics such as exchange and transmission. As for the languages of mankind, ordinary people can use the language in daily life, but few are able to express their own thoughts and feelings accurately, clearly and artistically. When using the language of photography, Mr. Feng Jianguo has already reached higher artistic state, especially in the field of large format photography, becoming an influential photographer in contemporary China.

When appreciating Mr. Feng Jianguo's works, we are often impressed with the artistic atmosphere within.

Sense of art is the primary thing to mention. Art is the reflection of social life, so is photography. Photography reflects social life in two ways: testification and revelation. While testification is the abstract and logical approach and process of reasoning, summarizing, analyzing, deducing and judging, revelation is a kind of concrete and visual description, which is the basic feature of photography. Some photos are characterized by testification obviously, subordinate to letters or a pure record of reality, lacking of independent artistry. Photographic works, visible with images, are characterized most with emotional indications. Artist arouses thus the audiences' imagination by his vivid description of the real life. Mr. Feng Jianguo's works, almost no trail of testification and obviously featured by revelation, are impressing strongly with the sense of art.

Secondly, it's the texture of the works that counts. We often say that the works of photography and the fine arts are both within the scope of visual arts. While creating a work, the usage of dot, line, plane and shade of color, along with the rules for composition, light application and contrast, is extremely the same because the created theme images all stem from our daily life. "The nature is the only goddess," (says Rodin, the famous French sculptor.) But there exist some differences between fine arts and photography, which are even essential. That would be the texture and realistic sense shown in photography works, which are not to be found in the works of fine arts. Appreciating the texture is to meet the need for mankind to watch carefully. In the history of photography, a lot of photographers have insisted on using the large format cameras in order to defend the purity of photography. Actually, it is kind of insisting on the characteristic of texture in photography works. To display the texture thoroughly, Mr. Feng Jianguo has chosen the technological camera with the format of 8 x 10 inches. The camera is a kind of representative technological machine since photography was invented, which is extremely outstanding in displaying the texture of details. When it comes down to operate an 8X10 camera, complicated to some extent, a lot of people hang back, and even some prove to be unsuitable to use it. With the gentle and considerate disposition, meticulous thought, cultured temperament as well as his tenacity and perseverance, Mr. Feng jianguo has combined himself perfectly with the 8X10 camera, which has ultimately become the best tool for his artistic creation.

Thirdly it is the rhythm of the works. The rhythm is another key element to make impressed in an artistic work. Aesthetic value, a complicated psychological course mainly lying on the feelings felt when appreciating the artistic works, is one of the important standards

of the artistic criteria for evaluating photography works. With relaxed rhythm, gentle contrast, romantic and graceful relations in the scenery, Mr. Feng Jianguo's works can cause positive and healthy mood for the audience. In understanding and appreciating art works, people are inclined to be unanimous. However, there are also great differences between the Chinese and Western people. The reproduction in the West and the expressionism in China are two kinds of methods for expressing and appreciating, which are related with differences. Reproduction is required to be more evident. And expressionism, however, is more inclined to sensation. Take drama and Beijing opera for example. The former is obviously inclined to reproduce, while the latter is to expressionism. They have represented the orientation of two kinds of artistic concepts in China and the West. With scenic elements outweighing the documentary ones in the fundamental key, Mr. Feng Jianguo has infused his own expression into the reproduction of the nature, which the relaxed rhythm has suited perfectly. It is just like the idea of handling affairs by the Chinese scholars vested in Chinese-fashion garments and Chinese tea: mellow, relaxed, and gentle with aftertaste. Appreciating Mr. Feng Jianguo's works reminds people of Ansel Adams in the opposite seashore. The graceful texture and rhythm in Adams' works, especially the latter, are so impressing that it may occur to you the D major key of Beethoven. One of the reasons that Adams has a greater influence in China than in the U.S.A., I wonder, lies in the similarity between Adams' mode of expression and Chinese people's habits on aesthetic preference.

Fourthly it's the style of the works. Style is also the spiritual characteristic of an photographic work. The formulation of a style is not only a mark to evaluate whether an artist is mature or not, but also another artistic criterion to evaluate photography works. In terms of style, Mr. Feng Jianguo's works are harmonious in content, while graceful and neat, rigorous and sincere in form. The unique accuracy and specific control of the 8×10 camera, along with the artistic and superior craft characteristics shown in the unified content and form, have featured his individual creation. It is strongly shown in the expressing way and artistic language of his works. Some people do not think this is rare abroad, but the fact that most people in China do not pay attention to the rigorousness and perfection of the art work enables the implication gone beyond the works themselves.

Certainly, the final formation and judgement of an artist's style is a course of continuous accumulation. Fundamentally speaking, it is also to distinguish his own feelings and discovery with those of others. One's own impression and discovery are the soul of the uniqueness characterized by the spirit and thoughts in an artistic work, with which the artist would be able to lead the public towards the kingdom of art, and out of which to become the key factor for the public to accept and recognize at the same time. We should say that inheritance and development, acting as a motive force to excite an artist's inspiration and passion in creation, are not to be gone beyond according to the law of artistic development, Mr. Feng Jianguo is now in his prime period in life and at the peak of creation. I believe that we will eventually witness a master in the art of photography along this way.

前言

我的香格里拉·1996~2006

冯建国

世事因应，大凡都可归结为一样缘分。回想十年前，当我第一次扛着笨重的8×10座机，从东京飞往北京，再飞抵乌鲁木齐，沿着西域丝绸之路，开始了我的中国西部之旅。懵懂之中感觉心中总揣着一种遥远的向往，或许是帕米尔高原那千年冰山的呼唤，或许是塔克拉玛干沙漠那远古驼铃的回响，还有青藏高原那朝圣的脚步，诵经的吟唱……

值得庆幸的是，从那时起，我与摄影结下了此生不解之缘，与中国西部结下了一份难舍的情结。十年的光阴，引领我在神奇的中国大西部印证下无数执着和探索的足迹。我执意地通过8×10英寸一方独特的取景框和黑白胶片，在一望无际的戈壁滩中，寻找心中一片渴望已久的绿洲，在万水千山的天界雪域，去寻找梦萦中的一块圣地，那就是我的香格里拉。

人生是否苦短，往往取决于你对待生活的态度。人，总免不了要适应世俗，但精神的家园却是一片既自由而又空灵的世界，每一个人都可以自由地翱翔。每次在西域边陲或是高原雪域，久久面对那苍茫的原野或是默默的磕长头的朝圣者，天上人间，人与自然，总是那么浑然一体。博大、原始、精深的大西部总会给我每一次造访带来无数的遐想和铭心的启迪。

摄影是一种观看世界的独特方式。一台古老而又沉重的相机和由它带来的几分笨拙而又充满凝重感的观看世界的方式，正好对应了我在中国西部寻梦的心境与朝圣的仪式，这既是我对摄影的一种理解，也是对摄影的一样追求。

十年的足迹，早已随风消逝在茫茫的大西部，但我却通过我的相机，留下了一帧帧沉淀了历史和文化年轮、并伴随时代悄然嬗变的西部影像，这既是传说中的香格里拉，又是现实中的香格里拉，更是我心中的香格里拉。

PREFACE

MY SHANGRILA: 1996-2006

FENG JIANGUO

The cause and effect of all things in this world is mostly originated dependently. Ten years ago, I shouldered for the first time my heavy 8×10 large format camera flying from Tokyo to Beijing and then to Urumchi, starting my journey in the western area of China along the Silk Road. I was confused at that time yet had a faint expectation, resulting probably from the call of one-thousand-year-old icy mountains on the Pamirs, from the distant echoes of ancient camel bells in the Taklimakan Desert, from the footsteps of pilgrims on the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau, or from the chanting of prayers...

Since then, one thing is for sure, that I took up photography as my career and formed a close tie with the western area of China. During the last ten years, I've constantly explored the magic west and looked for a long desired oasis among vast desert through my 8×10 inches ground glass and through black and white films, searching my dream sacred place in a snow world. That place is my Shangrila.

Whether life is transient and full of sufferings depends on your attitude towards life. Living in this world, nobody is free from common custom; but our spiritual home is a free and sublime world, in which everyone can fly freely. Whenever I went to the western border area or ice-capped mountains on the plateau, I would devote my mind to the vast plain and to those silent pilgrims showing their respects by prostrating themselves all the way to the palace. The heaven and the earth, as well as the people and the nature, are perfectly connected and combined. The vast, original and profound western area unfailingly enlightens me and bestows me with numerous fancies during my each visit.

Taking pictures is a special way of observing the world. An old and heavy camera, with its clumsy yet serious method of observation, serves well my purpose of seeking dreams in the west and corresponds with the ritual of pilgrimage. This is my understanding and pursuance of photography.

My footprints left in the last ten years have already gone with the wind in the vast west. But thanks to my camera, I have endowed the western images with rich historical and cultural connotations, which have also reflected the changes of times. These pictures have created a legendary Shangrila, a real Shangrila, and my dream Shangrila.