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大象之路

在翻开这本书的时候，我们首先要提醒您的是：这不只是一本摄影画册，就像这书的名字一样：“大象之路”给人的错觉仿佛有关大型哺乳动物的科学手册，其实这是一群中国的视觉艺术家使用照相机这个工具创造的艺术影像。有关的是你眼睛所能看到的一切世象，也是他们用手镜头照亮的人心最幽深处的风景。

这些勇敢的拍摄者们选择了和“摄影”这个传统名词进行斗争的姿态，他们不屑于用相机简单地将事物传递到受众面前的教条。他们发现，所谓“摄影”在如今早已失去了“真实”的表象——这个“摄影”曾经最重要的特征。在这个可以进行大量复制和伪造的时代，摄影里的所谓“真实”已经成为了某种象征，气若游丝地徘徊在某些需要象征意义的时刻，不堪重负地承担着某些摄影在被发明的时刻就已经决定了一些可悲的义务。可悲之处正如波德莱尔在1859年发出的刻薄嘲笑：“摄影永远也承担不起艺术功能，并且只会将艺术拉入歧途……所以摄影必须重拾它原有的义务，尽她作为艺术和科学的小女仆的职责。”这话如同咒语曾经使中国的无数摄影者望而却步，在忠实记录表象世界的死胡同里心甘情愿地自我放逐。

可是，今天这群勇敢的摄影者出现了，如同大象般对这个咒语加以无情的践踏，他们带着不可抗拒的力量前行，这种前行带着某些毁灭性的意义，甚至带有强悍而凶恶的破坏力；可是从那被毁的废墟上，竟出乎意料地生长出了透明的水晶宫殿，闪烁着灵性的光芒。fotoyard摄影网站以及这里所展示的作品中，有些影像是传统意义上的摄影吗？不，这是魔术，而魔法本身就是他们作为视觉艺术家的生命中爆发出的奇迹。在创造的过程中渐渐精通了魔术的他们明白：惟一要做的，便是直面自我，揭开被一再虚饰的真实，让携带着光明的直觉成为唯一的引导，向那古老昏暗的人性的内核宣战；人的灵魂充满矛盾并且无穷地深潜，这种执著的探索带来的就是那深潜之处的灵光乍现，他们在创造之余，也正被这种探索所带来的奇迹所深深震撼。

你看见的，也许永远无法用语言描述，我们凭什么相信我们的照相机可以截取和复制它们？能被记录的仅仅只是内心的体验，我们可以相信的只有自我心灵的悸动。回望世间，所有的艺术丰碑，哪一座不是存在并构建于许许多多的敏感者的心灵体验之中？这种构筑是痛苦的，痛苦在我们内心的矛盾，这是艺术创造的过程带给每个探索者的宿命——他们各自孤独地，无可挽回地走在自我的高空钢索之上。

然而正如所有创造一样，这宿命也同样成为了一种力量，创作者们不自觉地感受到自我正向清晰和光明靠近；现实中存在的一切表象都失去了原来的意义，而现实之外真理正在昭示着谜底。于是，直觉成为了我们的眼睛，也必将取代我们的原始视觉，自然界里的一切既是谜语也是谜底，从宇宙洪荒到一颗沙砾，从镜子里的眼泪到昨夜的迷梦，所有事物的意义将更加宽广辽阔，无穷无尽。

轰然间我们听懂了老子穿越了千年时光的低语：大象无形！

在这个面目模糊的时代里，让一切都成为自我的表象，而自我也终将折射出一切。

马良

2006.4.26

The Way

We would like to remind you: this is not just a book of photography. As the name of the book might have suggested, "The Way" is more than a road on a map. In fact this is a collection of art forms created by a group of Chinese visual artists using a tool called camera. Included are not only physical forms that you could see, but also the landscapes of human mind, illuminated by lenses these artists command.

These brave photographers have chosen a stance, to rescue "Photography" from its traditional meaning. To merely deliver an object's physical form to a viewer is beneath them. They have realized that the so called "photography" has shed its original skin: fidelity to appearances, which used to be the most vital characteristic of photography. Today's world is full of massive reproduction and forgery. The "fidelity" in appearances in photography has become a symbol, kept alive by a few symbolic moments. It was a tragic baggage bestowed upon photography at the day of its invention. The tragedy was illustrated plainly by Baudelaire's cynical voice in 1859, "If photography is allowed to supplement art in some of its functions, it will soon have supplanted or corrupted it altogether... Photography must return to its true duty, which is the handmaid to the arts and science." This curse had intimidated many Chinese photographers, who voluntarily imprisoned themselves in the dead-end alley way--obediently recording fidelity of appearances.

Now, this group of brave photographers has descended upon this curse with all their mights, they carried with them an unstoppable inertia. An inertia that has a subversive undercurrent, heavy-handed and maybe destructive. Miraculously, growing out of the ruins they caused is a translucent crystal palace, radiate of humanity.

Can some of the photos from fotoyard.com and this book be called photography from the traditional definition? No, they are more like magic. The magic itself was born out of their creators', these visual artists', life force. Through the process of creation, they slowly understood their own magic. The magic is all they need to

do, which is to face their true selves, without any disguise, let their instinct be the only guiding light, declare war on humanity's own ancient soul. Our soul is full of contradictions, yet it also has infinite potential. The reward of a insistent soul searching is to have the chance glance at the flickering light of wisdom. These courageous adventurers, during their creative journeys, were themselves impressed by this miracle.

What they saw might never be describable in language, how could they believe they could capture and reproduce them using their cameras? What could be captured might just be their own sensation, all they could believe in are the tremor in their own hearts. Looking back at all the artistic masterpieces, weren't they all formed and existed in many sensitive hearts? The formation itself was painful. They were painful because of their contradictory nature. It is the fate for all the creative artists -- they have no choice but to walk on their own rope in the sky, alone.

Like all sources of creativity, the fate alone becomes a strength. The creators were instinctively aware of themselves' approaching to lucidity and light. Mere appearances in reality no longer bind them. The real truth beneath the so called reality has revealed its secret. Then, instinct become their eyes. They replaced their physical vision. Riddles and answers become one, from the universe to a single sand, from tears in a mirror to last night's dream, meanings of the world become broader, infinite.

Suddenly they understood Lao Zi's whisper traveled through thousands years of time tunnel: The Way has no form!

In this muddled time, let everything become self appearance, and self can finally reflect everything.

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