

胡武功



— FOTOE小黑书·纪实经典 —

FOTOE Documentary Photography Classic

胡武功

HU WUGONG



THE WORLD
OF MORTALS

1966 - 2009



南方日报出版社

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编者序

摄影是艺术吗？也许是，也许不是；又或部分，部分不是。但是一直以来我们总被概括性地告知摄影当然是一门艺术，因而“艺术”天然蕴含的创作属性便成就了如今越发失去羁绊的眼花缭乱的摄影大杂耍，这也使摄影中“非艺术”的部分一直挥不去某种自困与疑惑，或者说，令摄影的本质受到相当程度的遮蔽。

作为一个比较边缘的门类，这些年来摄影一直在不停拓展自我表现空间。在观念实验化、技术傻瓜化甚或材质多元化的支撑下，在日益频繁的摄影节或综合影展的裹挟下，人们既有的摄影认知边界一再弯曲变幻——有太多深沉的、亢奋的、虔诚乃至近乎自虐的、梦游般的、无所不用其极的、百无聊赖的、诡异的或者精于商业利益算计的图像扑面而来，致使人们的感官不得不屡屡遭受“突破”。在看似越来越宽阔的摄影之河上，委实有着太多的水纹、浪花或者泡沫，而在这煞是壮观的欢腾之下，又是些什么呢？

也许就像一句老话所言：泡沫在河面上翻滚，河水在下面静静流淌。缭乱众象之下，是不是有着某些更为恒定、更加接近本质的存在？作为“艺术的摄影”的背面，“非艺术摄影”的存在又是何种景观？这也正是这套“FOTOE小黑书·纪实经典”指向的目标。所谓的“非艺术”摄影，也即是“非创作”的摄影，其外延并不费解，大致上，纪实摄影、新闻摄影、肖像摄影、记录摄影等，当都在其列。相对于河面上的

多姿多彩，“河面以下的场景”也许更有助于我们比较切实地靠近摄影的特质。

无疑，这套小型图录的选取规模远远不足以涵盖整个“非创作”摄影的全面景观；而同样无疑的还有，这些入选的作品与作者都是公认的最具标志性的当代中国纪实摄影的代表。但愿当我们被牵引、穿行于这些来自不同主体、不同视点而又都同样并不伴随喧嚣与尖叫的图像中间时，便能返回或直达一个无须争论就应豁达的质朴的视觉定义：真实乃摄影之本质，而被浓缩或被理解的真实，则是摄影质量之所系。

我们无意非将摄影截然区间成“创作的”与“非创作的”两个领域不可，换言之，借助这种多少难免粗略的划分，也只是有图表述的方便罢了。事实上，因认知、因环境、因情状等等而异，“创作”元素从来不可能完全绝迹于纪实摄影，这就像流水与泡沫无法断然分开来一样。被视为纪实摄影大师的卡帕，不也曾透过他的“杰作”《倒下的战士》暗地里的摆拍，自戕式地戏弄了“非创作的”的信条？从本系列图录撷取的早期图像中，读者一点儿也不难窥见个别“创作”的痕迹，这恰好印证了“创作”与“非创作”偶有混淆，确是自然而然的不争之实；但一旦对这些图像形成“历史地观看”时，其整体的图注则就会变成纪实摄影的进程，还真的就是一个挣脱“创作”的进程。

■ Preface

Is photography a form of art? Perhaps yes, and perhaps no; perhaps partly yes, and partly no. Yet, we have been told for long that it is generally assumed to be undoubtedly a form of art since "art", by nature, implies creativity, which has given rise to the ongoing versatile unbounded bundles of today's photography. This has virtually resulted in the unwanted presence of the so-called "self-confinedness" and "perplexity" of its non-artistic facet, or, to a great extent, falsely characterized the nature of photography.

Being a relatively marginal discipline, photography has been exploring its self-expressiveness over the past decades. However, under the current streams of conceptual experimentation, operational automation and material diversification in photography, and under the influence of increasingly frequent photography festivals or large-scale exhibitions, the original borderline of people's cognition has been undergoing constant changes and been revolutionized, with much diversified photographic works of various sorts, ranging from serious, excited, pious, almost self-tortured, dream-hovering, unscrupulous, totally-exhausted to the mysterious or commercial-benefit-oriented types, which have actually created great challenges to our sense of the world. Over the seemingly great water of photography, there exist lots of ripples, waves or foams, but what on earth underlies such a scene of jubilation?

Perhaps an old saying provides a witty answer: over the water tosses the rolling foam, while underneath silently runs the deep water. Out of a scene of kaleidoscope, is there anything more constant, invariable, and closer to the existing truth? What is the wonder of the non-artistic photography – the counterpart of artistic photography? This is also what the present "FOTOE Documentary Photography Classic" focuses. The so-called non-artistic photography, i.e. non-creative photography – such as documentary, photo-journalism, portrait photography and chrono-photography – is not hard to define. Compared with the colorful scenes over the

surface, perhaps "the scene underneath" may be more helpful for us to access the nature of photography.

Unquestionably, photos in such a small series are far from enough to present a panoramic view of the non-artistic photography, and, by the same token, these works of art along with their authors have been generally recognized as the most important representatives of the contemporary Chinese documentary photography. When we are attracted, roaming through all these images pertaining to various viewpoints from distinct photographers as well as free from the hustle and bustle, we could possibly return or direct to a crystal clear and plain visual definition: the nature of photography lies in its truthfulness while its quality depends upon the facts that have been condensed or comprehended.

However, we have no intention here to classify photography into two distinctive categories: the creative and non-creative. By adopting such (more or less) sketchy labels, we are only aiming at the general convenience of explanation. In fact, subject to the differences in understanding, context and circumstance, the elements of creativity can never be dissociated from documentary photography, just as the foams on the great water can not be utterly separated from the flowing river. Even Robert Capa, the master of documentary photography, once deliberately played tricks on the non-creative belief of documentary photography by secretly posing for his master piece *Fallen Soldier*. In the same way, it is not difficult for viewers to perceive original creativities from the photo-series, especially those taken in the earlier years. It thus proves that creative and non-creative elements can sometimes co-exist naturally within the same piece of works. But only when these images are perceived from "historical perspectives", their overall explanatory text will be a chronological process of the development in documentary photography --- the actual process of breaking away from the creativity.

序

胡武功

“文革”中停课，方可在校园乱窜。使我这个不善交际的美院附中学生终于结交了大学的油画教授谌北新。我很羡慕他那台相机，便整日往他那里跑。他见我勤快，就让我当下手，帮他拍模特、洗照片。没想到，从那以后，我竟然一生再没有离开过照相。

起初，我是舍不得拿自己买的胶卷为别人拍照的，因为那都是我从每月8元伙食费中节省出来的。但天性使我偶尔也把镜头对准社会事物，于是在这本书中才有了20世纪60年代中期的那些照片。

虽然从拿起相机至今已经40年了，但是前20年却是在混混沌沌中度过的。当然这混沌比清晰而坚定地拍照“主旋律”要宽容许多，拍主旋律的影像大都是没有影像主旋律的，拍者的大脑仿佛被安装了有特定程序的芯片。我也曾努力接受过这样的芯片，最终却抛弃了。如若不抛弃，坚持拍40年，走向极致，今日另换一个阅览的芯片，那将又是一种什么情形呢？！

实际上，人生是不可能有“如果”的。我不但曾经在混混沌沌中度过，更在从混沌力争自觉的痛苦中煎熬。好不容易明白了一点做事做人做照片的道理，生命却开始衰老了。

我的照片所反映的内容，都是大俗场景下的大俗事物，因此都是些最形而下的影

像。这些影像反映着中国人最基本的生活方式，它们或原始，或粗糙，或演变，但都是实实在在的，都是中国文明的体现，不像今天已变为后西方文化主导下的次生文化生存方式。

20年前有人说我不懂艺术，我说我是在照相；10年前有人说我不会摄影，我说我是在记录；今天有人说我落后陈旧，我说我很“现代”。当小便池都登上艺术殿堂，成为人们推崇的“现代艺术”经典时，我这些中国人生的土俗切片，难道不现代吗？！

中国社会30年的变革，正改变着3000年的农业文明，许多传统的生存方式和习俗实现了灿烂的消亡。就像人间每天都有一个物种的生物临危和消亡一样，我们没有能力制止它们逝去，但我们有可能记录下它们的曾经存在。因此，记录我的所见及其消逝的过程，是相机的功能，也是我的爱好。我用了几十年的精力从事这件事情，因此，可以说这些影像是我生命的体现。

的确，这个世界变化太急快。我们根本没有辨清曲直原委，事物就过去了；我们还无暇看清自己的人生，就被改变了。我们贪婪，我们浮躁，我们焦虑，我们恐惧。只有我们能静下心来时，才可能在我们人生的影像中，体验出我们的生命韵律和人生成败。

Preface

Hu Wugong

Classes were suspended during the Cultural Revolution, and I had enough time to wander around on the campus. It was also at that time, I, a farouche student in the Affiliated High School of College of Fine Arts, got a chance to meet Shen Beixin, professor in oil painting. I admired him for his camera, and at the same time I wanted to learn how to take pictures from him, so I went to his apartment almost every day. As a result, he finally agreed to let me work as his assistant, taking pictures for the models and developing films. Since then, photography has been part of my whole life.

At the beginning, I grudged taking picture for others, for the films were very expensive in those days, and I had to save 8 yuan from my board expenses every month to buy them. Maybe out of a kind of instinctive, I occasionally turned my heed to the social events around me. That is why the photos about the middle 1960s are also presented in this book.

Though I have taken photography career for 40 years, I spent most of my former twenty years in a confusing and bewildering state. Different from me, there were some photographers whose minds seemed to be installed with a programmed chip ordering them only to shoot the mainstream of the society, and cherishing the instruction in mind, these photographers were not hesitating to shoot as they were told. Compared with them, the confusing and bewildering state, on the contrary, promised me a more lenient shooting condition. As the matter of fact I had also tried to persuade myself to accept 'the programmed chip', but still rejected it finally. To me, shooting the dominating mainstream of a society means that the photographers have to be controlled and manipulated by the social mainstream, and thus they can never pour their individual creative spirit into their photos. Supposing I stuck to the so-called mainstream photography for 40 years, then looking back on what I have taken, what kind of feelings would I have? In reality, there is no "supposing" in life. I had once lived in confusion and perplexity, and I suffered a great deal in trying to get rid of them and gaining my awakening. Regrettably, I was no longer young when I finally came to realize something about the essence of the photography and the true meaning of the life.

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My photographs are a miniature of the ordinary social events in ordinary backgrounds. They mirror the fundamental lifestyle of Chinese people. Be they original, unprocessed, or evolving, they reflect true and real Chinese culture and real Chinese civilization, rather than the secondary culture affiliated to the dominated western culture as it is today.

Twenty years ago, I was criticized for knowing nothing about art, I said I was only taking photos; ten years ago, I was criticized for knowing little about photography, I replied I was only documenting the real events around me; today, when I am criticized for being out of fashion, I retort that I am very "modern". Why should not look upon these original shots of portraying the Chinese people's real life as modern in the times when the picture of even the toilet can become the "modern masterpiece" in the art palace?

The three-thousand history of agricultural civilization has been changing with the social reform in the past 30 years, during which many traditional ways of life and customs have died out. We can do nothing to prevent them from disappearing just in the same way that we can do nothing to stop some species of rare animals from perishing on Earth. Yet we can do something to record their once existence and to trace the process of their extinction with the help of the camera. Shooting what I saw is my hobby, and recording the way how they changed and died out is the function of the camera. Up till now I have dedicated myself to this career for decades, and thus these photos can be taken as the reflection of my life.

It is true that this world is changing, and changing so fast. A lot of things have melted away in front of our eyes before we can distinguish what is right and what is wrong, and our lives have also dramatically changed before we have time to grasp its true meaning. We are greedy, we are impatient, we are anxious, and we are scared. In my opinion, it is only when we calm down and stay in a serene mental state that can we taste the ups and downs in life and enjoy the melodies of life.

I



1966 · 北京 1966年红卫兵掀起大串联，千万师生接受毛主席接见并在天安门拍留念照。

1966 Beijing Thousands of teachers and students received by Chairman Mao and taking photos on Tian'anmen Square.



1967·陕西西安 用口琴吹奏毛主席颂歌的女孩。“文革”期间人人都要学会唱语录歌、跳忠字舞。

1967 Xi'an, Shaanxi A girl playing the ode to Chairman Mao on harmonica.



1967·陕西西安 “文革”高潮时，撒传单、贴标语、上街游行成为革命群众的家常便饭。

1967 Xi'an, Shaanxi A common practice during the Cultural Revolution: handing out flyers, pasting posters and parading.