

上海人 SHANGHAINESE 1990-2000

陆元敏 | 上海文艺出版社 | LU YUANMIN | SHANGHAI LITERATURE & ART PUBLISHING HOUSE

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图书在版编目(CIP)数据

上海人 1990~2000/陆元敏. - 上海:上海文艺出版社,2003.4

ISBN 7-5321-2530-0

I. 上… II. 陆… III. ①摄影集-中国-现代②上海市-概况-1990~2000 IV. J421

中国版本图书馆 CIP 数据核字(2003)第 021456 号

上海人 1990~2000

陆元敏

上海文艺出版社出版、发行

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网址:www.slcm.com

新华书店经销 上海丽佳制版印刷有限公司印刷

开本 625×889 1/16 印张 12 图文 192 面

2003 年 4 月第 1 版 2003 年 4 月第 1 次印刷

印数:1—5,100 册

ISBN 7-5321-2530-0/J·161 定价:58.00 元

告读者 如发现本书有质量问题请与印刷厂质量科联系

T:021-64855582

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群展 | 2002 年 东+西——中国当代艺术展，奥地利 | 都市与人，中国 | 亚洲摄影双年展，韩国 | 2001 年 失真的城市，中国 | 内面的都市，中国 | 2000 年 第五届上海国际摄影展黑白摄影联展，中国 | 1997 年 中国现代摄影展，德国 | 1996 年 中国当代摄影家五人展，日本 | 1994 年 黑白上海人十人展，中国 | 1993 年 中国摄影家作品展，1993，法国

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鸣谢 | 陈艳, 关兰, 何涛, 江梅, 姜亚公
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翻译 | 李芊, Margaret Hiatt Rosen

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS | Chen Yan, Lynda Kwan,
He Tao, Jiang Mei, Zhang Bo, Lei Dongjun, Li Xu,
Qi Lan, Shi Han Qing, Tian Shu, Trista Mu,
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绕不过去的上海人

姜 伟

不久前的一个下午，我和陆元敏坐在一家书店喝茶，闲谈之中，他说到有些人放着身边那些寻常但鲜活的人和物视而不见，绕过去，他的意思我明白：很多的摄影或其他什么艺术作品，总想表述宏大场景和拍案惊奇。

他说他弄不懂，他说这些话时，一如既往地低调、平和。

我点着一枝烟，桌上就放着一堆陆元敏的照片，都是寻常人家里那些寻常的人，有时我感觉这些人出现在这些照片里，就像鸟在窝里，也许这正是陆元敏想到达的。没有闪光灯，光影是润染的，人总是处在最合适、最惬意的位置，35mm最普通的镜头，和人眼看到的一样宽、一样深，很像电影里的长镜头，维持着空间的完整性，尽可能避免主观的贪大求全来干扰客体的自然呈现，有素朴的魅力。这种看似单调的画面所释放的讯息是多重的，歧义的，其讯息，端赖观者参予和择取，一个片刻一个镜头，连接片刻之间的，并非因果关系，而是潜流于镜头底下的张力，弥漫于画面之中的气息，观者得一路回溯，翻耕，不停与整个生活经验对话。

所以单一镜头里，可能倏忽已十年。

照片里的人，都是上海人。说到上海人，过去的就是大亨、政客、商贾、红伶、冒险家，鸳鸯蝴蝶、夜色撩人，而现在的，白领、小资、红马夹，新天地流光溢彩，陆家嘴车水马龙，都说上海是风花雪月的，人们总是津津乐道于上海的享乐细节，在那些华丽和繁荣的表象下，虚构放大着跌宕起伏、来历不明的神话故事，如果不沉下心细看，难免会无视那沉郁的苍穹下贴肤痛痒的人生，我们很少关注这样的人生，隔绝着

这些的是对现实的巨大幻觉，这由时尚、习惯、虚伪和陈词滥调构成的无穷无尽的隔绝如黑洞一般吸去了所有的光，向我们有意无意隐藏了这个世界的秘密，这秘密是历史也是现实，更是无法回避的生存境况。

很多年前，我第一次从电视里看到《三岔口》，舞台明亮光柱里，两个人屏息敛气、全神贯注地互相搜寻，寒光逼人的刀锋就贴着对方的头顶划过，他们对面凝视，就是不能穿过那虚拟的黑暗看到对方，这曾让当时的我大为焦躁，而现时，我可能已经理解了《三岔口》的预置规则：他们绝不能看到对方，就像人和历史和现实之间横亘着利益构成的明亮的黑暗。但他们必然会感到对方的存在，同时，被对方驱迫的感觉也使他们尖锐地感到了自己的存在。

陆元敏如果不想被这种驱迫感压垮的话，就得想出、找到最准确地借力使力的方法和结构，摄影，如果不仅是一门手艺而是艺术的话，就需既像大象那么大，也可像针眼那么小，还得像天空一样辽阔，大地一样厚实，陆元敏毫无假借地带领我们去亲历最具体的人性和具体的生存，他必须让上海神话的创造者在命运中一步一步地令人信服地走过，这恰恰是现在很多所谓的艺术家力不胜任的事，也恰恰是陆元敏的长项，他拿起相机，并非全为了辨识芜杂宽阔的生活，他不知道他所守望的还会不会存在，这更是一个姿态，这姿态指涉着摄影艺术的全部意义——一种庄严、持久、执著的“无所事事”，一种与时间的深情联系。

这组作品的聚集起始于为陆元敏个展的宣传准备，应北京一家人文杂志之邀，我挑选了陆元敏众多类型作品中人物占重要位置的二十几张照片，后觉得意犹未尽，索性反

复征求，终成现在规模。

记不清有多少次望着这些照片，发呆，感动不已。几十年前，罗伯特·弗兰克目光如炬：“要制作权威性的当代文件，视觉效果应当使解说无效”，前半句是说给陆元敏听的，后半句是警告我的，事实上，我倒从没有逐一解说这组作品的企图，诸如时间、地点、姓名以及身世等等，我很远就绕开了这些，但我不能绕开他们的凝视和身影，我想我认识照片里的人，我拿不出绝顶的矫情假装自己从来没有看见过这些人。

往事如烟。我父亲有一位同事，彼此很投机，两家又住得近，来往就多，这位杨教授比我父亲年长，我叫他杨伯伯，听父亲说过他早年曾毕业于德国一所著名的大学。我小时候经常随父亲去玩，他家是一幢老式的洋房，不是很夸张的那种，人小，到处窜，印象最深的是他家大卧房的天花板，竟有一大面镜子，正对着床，这让我很是惊讶，杨伯伯有一个女儿，比我大几岁，她的小小的房间我去过，总有很多的洋娃娃，窗户挂着淡色的纱，长长的流苏，她还弹钢琴。后来，杨伯伯被打成反动学术权威，钢琴自然也被抄走了，房子里也陆续搬来了好几户人家，添了热闹，但我们也渐渐去得少了。我记得杨伯伯在和父亲谈到儿女的将来时，总是叹息：这双弹钢琴的手恐怕得去拿榔头了。岁月流过去，杨伯伯和我父亲相继去世，在父亲的追悼会上，他女儿得到音讯赶来，告诉我因和邻居不睦搬家了，没说几句，就这样，两家不知不觉没有了来往。直到一年前，我在接儿子的校门口，意外地遇见了杨伯伯的女儿，她的女儿在此借读，以后又陆续碰见，她总是行色匆匆，从她口中我得知：以前的老房子市政动迁拆掉了，也没分到多少钱，她和丈夫、女儿现住在较远的地方，她确实到过工厂，后来考上了师范，她丈夫就是她的同学，现在一所中学做教师，她本人曾在一家企业做

财务，企业不景气，下岗了，现在一家温州老板的建材行里干老本行，两人的收入有限，又不长于钻营，但绝不放松对女儿的教育培养，有好几次，校门口人声嘈杂，她叮嘱女儿午饭前洗手，测验不要粗心，别忘了雨伞，从口袋里拿出几元钱关照妈妈来晚了先买个面包吃，她的每一个举措都给我真实、勤勉的感染，有一次我问她：“现在还弹琴吗？”她笑得自然而安详：“这是啥辰光的事了！不过，前几年，我们给女儿买了一架钢琴，倒也没有逼她，她自己欢喜的，依看看，我们现在全副精力都放在女儿身上，连做一次头发还要算算呢，能不乘空调车的尽量不乘，一个月下来女儿的牛奶费有了。”我不由想起幼年时她睡房里有流苏的纱帘，还有天花板上的大镜子。这就是我所认识的上海人，他们在剧变和艰辛的生活中依然有着自己的快乐、幸福，活得合于伦理、立于尊严。

——这样说吧，陆元敏的照片保存了20世纪最后十年这个重要转型期间普普通通上海人的生活常态和精神面貌，是具有历史意识的文献，是我们之所以成为我们的有力见证，这话对于很多时尚、唯美、前卫、成功或坚决想要时尚、唯美、前卫和成功的人来讲听着肯定不太顺耳，不妨再讲讲，对于他们，已经习惯把历史意识悬置起来，想起它会感到不自在、不痛快，它妨碍了在事情的表层进行着的欢快滑翔和移花接木，并且极有可能使自己在外人看来像个不谙世事的傻瓜。而我总认为通过历史的针眼，可以寻找到痛痒的深度和出处，正如黄仁宇说的那样“会看到全本的戏剧在眼前展开”，“只要定出时间的前端及后端，其间的里程碑会展现出一致的直线进展，没有一件事会被隐藏或消除。”当然，历史作为适合利用的“现成品”已加入太多的调料，使得原汁原味好像变得遥不可及。正因为这些问题的存在，使陆元敏的这种在场方式显得因与我们自身关联如此之大而壮丽无比。

上海人和其创造的世界像一条长河，不能件件从头说起，而陆元敏从拍岸波涛中躬取涓滴，眼看着，让其在个人体验中慢慢澄明如镜，这是一个很让自己感动的过程，当人物皆一一建立起来撼他不动时，结果虽可能只是吉光片羽，那都是结实的、显现的部分让我们看见，其他的让我们想象，那么环绕这些人现在未来衍生的任何状况都是有机的，与我们有时重叠，有时交叉，有时老死不相往来，凡摄影的皆已过去，可偶或从那遗烬逾邈里闪出瞬间灵光，游魂为变，就足以让我们心弦为之一动了，而陆元敏，应该就在那酣畅呈现浸染透彻了的片刻里，忘其所以。多萝茜娅·兰格说：“摄影家终归成为摄影家，驯狮者终归成为驯狮者，这绝不偶然”，我搓着手想说：是的是的，同时谢天谢地，这世界不缺驯狮者。

我看着照片上的这些人和他们所在的环境，感到亲切、熟悉，同时也感到巨大的陌生，见得越多，越觉得在这一切下面肯定有更广阔更深邃的事物是我没有见到、难以接近的，我时时意识到它们的存在。人间万象，纷繁多姿，没有这种无限的多样性就没有上海人，他们琐屑微渺的喜怒哀乐、冷暖辗转的灵肉浮沉，深如海，不可测。

陆元敏的照片似乎是缅怀的游荡，其实是强悍的敏锐，虽然密度大了些，但确是淋漓。摄影是记述，这个说法不错，只是不错得好像什么也没说。与其说记述，不如说摄影是对设置的障碍的穿透，摄影忌绕，绕过障碍，似乎很讨巧，很聪明，很皆大欢喜，久了，就像穿小弄可到大街，但一路上的深宅大院我们永远参不透。

陆元敏的强悍，即在于不绕。

Not to be Ignored

Jiang Wei

One afternoon, not long ago, I sat in a local bookstore drinking tea and chatting comfortably with the photographer, Lu Yuan Min. Lu had been talking about how he felt people frequently turned a blind eye to the very people around them, especially the common folk who walk among us everyday. I knew what he meant. I also felt that, too frequently, photography, along with other art forms, offered up only spectacular scenery and romance to us the public.

Shaking his head, Lu Yuan Min said he did not know why this was the case. As he uttered these words of dismay, I watched his face. As always, his appearance appeared to be calm and peaceful.

Later, lighting a cigarette, I stare at the people in the photographs taken by Lu. These are all ordinary people from ordinary families. To me, these people in the photographs look like birds in their nests. Maybe this is where Lu is leading us. Simplicity. There is nothing that is ostentatious here, no dyed shadows, no camera tricks. The people in these photographs are at ease, at home in their environments. The 35mm camera lens, the most commonly used lens, records the exact breath and depth as the human eye sees. Like the long shot in the movies, this lens records the wholeness of the space, trying hard to present the true nature of the objects before it; trying hard to prevent obscuring distance from the observed subjects. This is a

simple charm. And the messages conveyed by these "ordinary" pictures are multiple and various, inviting the observer inside to look again. One shot, one moment in time. Each photograph stands alone; yet is linked to each other by Lu's firm intention. It is the strength behind the camera that comes forward to capture the atmosphere floating around the moment. These photographs, indeed, lead us to our own life experiences, encouraging us to dig down and recall our own lives. With one look here, ten years fly by.

The people in the photographs are Shanghainese. These are not the usual Shanghainese that everyone talks about: the tycoons, the politicians, the businessmen, the movie stars, all the adventurers, the romantic and sensational. Everywhere today, there is talk about the "white collars", the bourgeoisie, the stockbrokers, the spectacle of Xin Tian Di and the prosperity of Lu Jia Zui. Shanghai, everyone agrees, is a city both dynamic and romantic. We are all keen to enjoy the appearance of prosperity and fall prey to exaggerating the dramatic, but unsubstantiated, fairy stories that abound. If one does not slow down and observe carefully, it is easy to ignore those among us who live under gloomy skies. We seldom care to see that kind of life around us. Are we blocked by our grand illusion of reality? Perhaps the endless isolation, created by fashion, customs, hypocrisy and cliché, has absorbed all the light, like a black hole, and hides a secret world from us. This secret also has

a history, a reality, and, indeed, a living environment that should not be avoided.

Many years ago, I saw a Peking Opera called, "The Three Crossroads" on the television. The two actors, each holding his breath, searched with great concentration for the other in the bright lights of the stage. Swords swung just above their heads. Their eyes stared ahead, but each could not see through the virtual darkness to find the other. At the time, this sight made me really anxious. Today, I think I understand the message of "The Three Crossroads". The actors in this opera were meant not to see each other, just like the bright darkness blocks humans, history and reality from each other. But the actors could feel the existence of the other, and that pressure made them realize the existence of themselves.

If Lu Yuan Min does not want to be broken down and isolated like the actors in the opera, he must, himself, search and find the most accurate means to utilize his strengths. Photography, when it rises to an art form, has the ability to be both huge in impact and subtle in scope. Lu, in his photographs, leads us to experience everyday life with everyday people. He shows us lives without decoration. On these pages he depicts the first small steps that eventually grew to become what is called today "the Shanghai miracle." Other artists might strive for this effect, for Lu it is his strong point. His camera does more than just record a world different from our

"modern" one. He reaches out and captures images that today might be gone. This is art in photography.

This collection of work came to my attention as I prepared a selection of Lu Yuan Min's work for solo exhibition. Invited by a cultural magazine in Beijing, I selected over 20 photographs representing a variety of Lu's work. Later, I felt that this was just not enough material, so I went back and selected more examples, finally reaching the number shown here.

I cannot remember how many times, I gazed at these photographs. I was so completely enraptured. I remembered the photographer Robert Frank, who many years ago predicted that visual communication would have a greater impact over the written. To me, words cannot express what Lu shows in his photographs. So, there will be no great explanations from me here, no listing of details regarding this work. Just as I did, you are invited to look at these images and try not to ignore their gaze. I know these people in these photographs. I cannot pretend I have never seen them before.

Years ago, my father had a colleague who was also a close friend. The two families lived close to each other, and they met often. Professor Yang was older than my father. I called him Uncle Yang. According to my father, Uncle Yang graduated

from a well-known German University. Often, when I was young, I would go to Uncle Yang's house with my father. It was an old-style "western" house, but not a grand one. I was a curious boy, and I explored everywhere in the house. I was deeply impressed by the ceiling of the main bedroom. I was surprised to see a large mirror hung above the bed.

Uncle Yang had a daughter several years older than me. I was also allowed to visit her little room that was filled with dolls. I remember light colored curtains with long, dripping tassels. I remember this daughter played the piano. Time passed, and Uncle Yang was to be condemned as a "reactionary academic authority". The piano was confiscated. Several families moved into the house, adding noise and strangeness, so we went to visit there less and less. I still remember Uncle Yang chatting with my father about the future of us children. Would the hands that played the piano now have to hold a hammer?

When my father died, Uncle Yang's daughter came to the funeral. She told me her family had moved away from the big house because they could not get along with their new neighbors.

After the funeral, I did not see her Xiao Yang for quite a while, until one day we

happened to meet at the gate of my son's school. Her daughter was also studying at this school. From then on, we often met as we dropped off our children. Xiao Yang was always in a hurry. But I heard some of her story. I learned that the old house had been torn down under the municipal moving mandate. The family did not receive much compensation for the house. Today she lives with her husband and daughter quite far from downtown. As her father predicted, Xiao Yang worked for a while in a factory before finally being admitted to a Normal University. There, she met her husband who is currently a high school teacher. After her graduation, she worked as an accountant in a local firm until she was laid off due to poor management in the firm. Now she works as an accountant in a shop selling building materials.

Xiao Yang says that her family's opportunities are quite limited because they can only save a little money. Everything extra goes to the care and education of their beloved daughter. Frequently, I would observe her among the crowd at the school gate, instructing her daughter to wash her hands before meals, not to be too careless about her tests, not forget to bring an umbrella. I would see her handing her daughter a few yuan to buy bread if she was late to come home after school. Every single gesture and smile touched me deeply. Once I asked Xiao Yang, "Do you still play the piano?" She smiled. "For me, that's something from a long time ago. But we bought a piano for our daughter several years ago. The luckiest thing is that she

loves playing herself. Yes, we have put all we have into her. I have to pinch pennies even when I think about going to the hairdresser. I take the normal bus, not the air-conditioned one. I can save money for milk for my daughter that way." I think of the long tassels on the curtains of her bedroom and that giant mirror on the ceiling. Which kind of Shanghainese do I admire? Some one who has managed to find happiness and joy, to live ethically and respectfully even as life strikes its unpredictable blows.

Let me put it this way, Lu's photographs represent the everyday life of ordinary Shanghainese during the last ten years of the 20th century, the important decade of transition. It is a document with an historical awareness, a powerful witness to events that have made us who we are now. Maybe some, the newly fashionable, the newly successful, will not agree with my assessment. Perhaps they are blind to any historical events that could make them upset or unhappy. Awareness blocks riding pleasantly upon the appearance of things.

I have always considered that history helps one find depth and awareness. As Ray Huang says, "The whole drama will unfold in front of you. You only need the beginning and the end of a time frame. The milestones will be revealed along the trail of time; nothing eventually can be hidden or omitted." Of course, our present