陝北。瞎子説書 Loess Plateau • Itinerant Blind Storytellers

Lynn Yen-Burgermeister

陝北・瞎子説書

Loess Plateau Itinerant Blind Storytellers

2001-2003



嚴慶昭 Lynn Yen-Burgermeister

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To Gerard — who gives me love, freedom and inspiration 獻給哲若—他給了我愛、自由和靈感

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陝北・瞎子説書

嚴慶昭

來中國將近四年,其中很多的時間去了陝北,黄土高原。像 重復讀一本好書,我一次又一次地回到那個地方,研讀它 土地的皺褶,感受它山風的方向和訊息。遇着年老的長者, 向他們殷殷查詢某個古老的,失落的年代...

許多人問我,爲什么選擇了陝北? 我常無言以對。直覺吧! 像我做的許多事一樣。事后去想爲什么,總是加入了自己 的解釋和猜測,不如當初的那種隨心所欲,來得真切。

再次回陝北,就確實知道爲什么了:爲的是那分難得的純 樸。山水和人物一樣的樸實,却又有一種能够充塞於天地 之間的氣息。那也許是因爲,這是一塊幾千年來人們試着 去征服,以爲征服了,却仍然僅僅在大自然的鼻息裏求生 存的土地。而人,也正因爲搏鬥着,兩眼凝聚着一種精神, 面孔上寫着一種不願屈服的神情。

我把這種表情拍下來, 作爲座右銘。

我拍"瞎子說書",原本是單純地想拍一組有特色的人物,一種口頭藝術。這些書匠,却將我領到了黄土高原的最深處,讓我窺視了那裏古老的思想和信仰,原始而粗礦的生活環境。而一直以來,這些書匠爲這些窮僻的地方帶來了娛樂和教育,更是傳播新聞和信息的媒體。

今天,當社會不斷地朝現代化進步的同時,這種古老的傳媒方式正在逐漸凋零。當電遍及到中國的每個角落時,電視會占據了每個人的目光。也許,那個荒僻的村子裏的父老,會在太陽下山后,打開電視,聽一段他們熟悉的書?

無論如何,那些個點着蠟說書的夜晚,將讓我永遠無法忘懷。幾個瞎子書匠,用他們的音樂和故事將衆人和天地諸神——降伏了。那空間裏流動着光和影、神靈和情感,而我是記録師...

我拍了很多他們的肖像,雖然找不到他們瞳仁中的焦點,却 不斷地發現他們心中特别明亮的光。從很多角度來說,他 們并不比我們更瞎。

2003年 北京

Loess Plateau · Itinerant Blind Storytellers

Lynn Yen-Burgermeister

It has been almost four years now since I came to China, and I spent much of that time in Shaanbei, on the Loess Plateau. I went back over and over again, like rereading a good book, probing the cracks of the barren hills, decoding the messages in the wind, and occasionally, chatting with a couple of ancient souls about some lost era...

People often asked me, what made me choose Shaanbei? Out of instinct, perhaps, or a wild idea without reason, just like how I often decide things. Reasoning after the fact often creates an intention, where there may have been none.

When I returned to Shaanbei the second time, I knew then exactly the reason: for its rare simplicity, which permeates the landscape and people. And yet there is something bold, and breathtaking in the atmosphere. Is it the strength of this land against men's effort to tame it for thousands of years? And the people, because of this struggle, have in their eyes something intense and on their face something unyielding.

I photographed these expressions and kept them as mottoes.

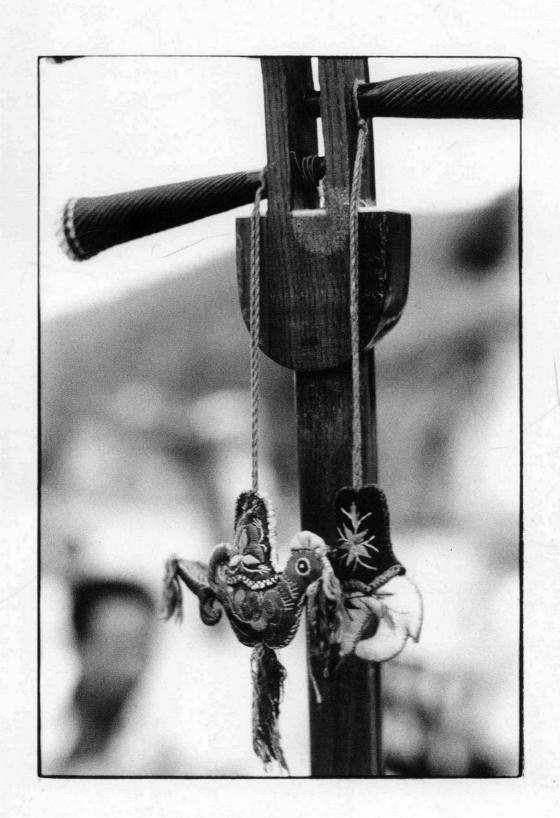
When I decided to follow the blind storytellers, I simply expected to shoot a series of interesting images of this oral art. But these men took me into the loneliest corners of the Loess Plateau, where ancient lifestyles and beliefs were revealed to me. And in these inaccessible villages, storytelling has for ages, played a role in education and entertainment, as well as in broadcasting news and party line.

Today, as society speeds up its transformation and modernization, this ancient form of communication is quickly vanishing. Even in the most remote corners of China, as soon as electricity is present, television takes over. Perhaps, at the end of the day, those villagers I met will have to enjoy watching a familiar storytelling show on TV...

The aura of those candle-lit nights will never be erased from my memory. The power of a few blind storytellers over the spectators and unseen gods was overwhelming. The music was on; the light was dancing with the shadow, the spirits with the emotion. And I was recording history.

I took a lot of portraits of them. Though there was no focus in their eyes, I found light in their heart. In many ways, they are no blinder than us.

2003 Beijing



About Lynn and her photography

Jin Zhilin

談小琳和她的攝影

靳之林

2001年秋的一天, 我正在陜北黄土高原, 黄河畔的山峁上畫 畫。聽見下面有人説話,只見好友馮山雲領着一個一身中式 黑衣服、短打扮的女子走上來,自我介紹:"我叫嚴慶昭,您 就叫我小琳好了。"跑了一天山路來到這山大沟深、偏僻小村 的她, 質樸清純、大方隨和, 給我留下了深刻的印象。

那幾天她住在村裏的馮官家中,很得那家人喜愛。一天,她 邀我和馮山雲:"到我們家裏吃飯!", 説的是馮官家。我愣 了一下: 這個女子, 難道真是到哪裏就和那裏的人融爲一 家?! 這在我接觸的人當中, 是極少有的。

認識小琳越深, 越覺得寫她困難。也許是因爲她的質樸讓人 覺得, 大多數的形容詞對她而言都太花哨了。只能說, 在她 身邊總感覺說不出的舒服自在,像一陣山風。她雖然來自温 柔的江南,但在黄土高原的山梁上行走,却不亞於當地人;再 加上她愛獨來獨往、愛喝小酒、愛抽黑烟的性情,讓人懷疑, 她前世是否在陝北的哪個沟沟裏長大的?

看她總是背着個大攝影包,走鄉串户,不覺想象她鏡頭裏的 陝北是什么樣兒的? 待看到了她的攝影作品, 發現就和她的 人一般: 淳樸、真實、有力。第一次看到她的作品, 是一張 明信片上的一個戴着白帽的陝北老婆, 構圖很簡單, 但我當 時的感受特别清晰: 這就是生活! 她的攝影不嘩衆取寵, 乍 一看,似乎特别平實,其實她的藝術,源於生活更反映生活, 真實而有人情味。她鏡頭裏的陝北老漢,似乎就在拐角坐着, 還聞得到他的旱烟味兒。

小琳后來選擇拍攝"瞎子説書"很令人驚訝。因爲民間説書 的瞎子是社會的最低層, 很少有人去關注他們。但我想, 她 的心中没有所謂的社會階層, 她總是平視任何人。她隨着這 些民間盲藝人, 輾轉於大山深沟拐峁之間, 單獨和他們朝夕 相處,分享他們生活裏的喜樂悲傷。短短的幾個星期,和他 們建立了奇特的情誼。這也是她一貫的作風。

她不僅没有救世主的姿態, 也不是以做學問的心態去詮釋民 俗,她僅僅是作爲一個人去感受并樸實無華的記録他們。這 也是爲什么,她鏡頭裏的"瞎子"不但不給人"可憐"、"可 悲"的感覺,反而讓人覺得親切、可愛。

小琳攝影的藝術價值, 自有評論家和時間去論證。讓我們收 攏目光, 細細地來品味她的作品中所反映的人性和生活。

2003.10. 延川, 小程村

靳之林先生是中央美術學院教授,當代著名油畫家和民間美術研究專家。著有

"抓髻娃娃"、"生命之樹"和"綿綿瓜瓞"等闡述中國古老文化根源的重要書籍。 Mr. Jin Zhilin is a professor of Central Academy of Fine Arts, a well-known oil painter, and an expert on Chinese folk arts. His books "The Good Luck Dolly", "Trees of Life" and "Mian Mian Gua Die" are important works on ancient Chinese cultures, symbols

One autumn day in 2001, I was painting on the Loess Plateau, high on the hill above the Yellow River. I heard some whispers from below, and saw my friend Feng Shanyun walking up with a lady in black Chinese clothes. "Good day, I am Yen Ching Chao, just call me Lynn". Lynn, having come a long way into this remote village, impressed me with her sophisticated yet natural demeanor.

Lynn spent the following nights at the home of Feng Guan, and the entire family enjoyed having her. One day, she invited Shanyun and myself: "Please come to my place for dinner!", by which she meant the home of Feng Guan! She was the first one I encountered who feels so perfectly at-home anywhere!

The more I got to know Lynn, the more I found it difficult to describe her. Any elaborate words seem too much for the true simplicity and humbleness in her. For me, she is like a gentle mountain breeze, a real pleasure to be around. Although she is from the south, she could be just as tough as any local, when she treks on the ridges of the Plateau. And her love for traveling alone, sharing drinks and dark cigarettes with the villagers makes me wonder if she wasn't really from one of the cracks of the Loess Plateau in her past life.

Every time I see Lynn with her big camera bag, hopping from village to village. I wonder what Shaanbei must look like through her lenses. When I saw her photos, I found them to be just like her, unpretentious, true and full of strength. One of the first photos I saw was the postcard "old woman with her white hat". It was candid yet it touched me deeply: I saw real life in it! Lynn's photos reflect the beauty of everyday life; they are frank and human. The old peasants in her photos seem so real that we could almost smell the pipe smoke.

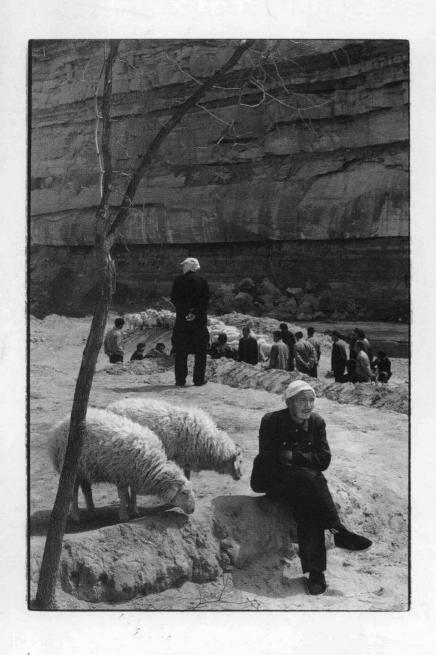
Lynn's decision to follow the itinerant blind storytellers was a surprise. For they are among one of the lowest strata of our society, most people can't care less about their existence. But to Lynn, everyone is equal. As she journeyed across the Plateau with these oral artists, she shared their joys and pains and experienced their lives; they developed a very special friendship within a few weeks.

Neither as a savior, nor as a scholar of folk art, Lynn merely recorded what she felt and saw, as a person, a friend. This is why, in her photographs, these "blind" people are not sad or pitiful, but rather lovable and warm

The artistic value of Lynn's photography will be left to the words of critics and the test of time. For now, we shall open our senses to the beauty of life and people in these photos.

10. 2003 Yanchuan, Xiao Cheng village

...這一路上雖然崎嶇顛簸,但金色的黄土高原已然一點點地向我吐露 它的高深與久遠。一串串的窑洞像深幽幽的眼,若有所訴地瞧着我,却 又不讓看進它的深處。這裏是炎黄子孫發源的土地...,而我正是爲着 探尋自己靈魂的源頭。







...The road was rough and winding, but the golden Loess Plateau was gradually revealing its majesty to me. "Yaodongs" (cave dwellings) were like dark eyes, looking at me thoughtfully without letting me in. Here was the cradle of Chinese civilizations, and I was searching for the origin of my soul.







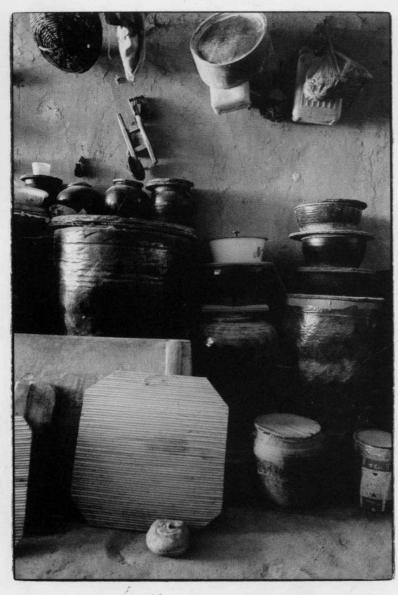
我在黄河邊上的一個窑洞裏醒來,天光正淡淡地從紙窗外渗透進來。 身邊的女人讓我也在炕上的尿桶裏撒了一泡,翻過身,繼續睡去。起 床時,炕前的風箱已然呼噜呼噜地響着,催着一縷青烟從大竈上升 起...

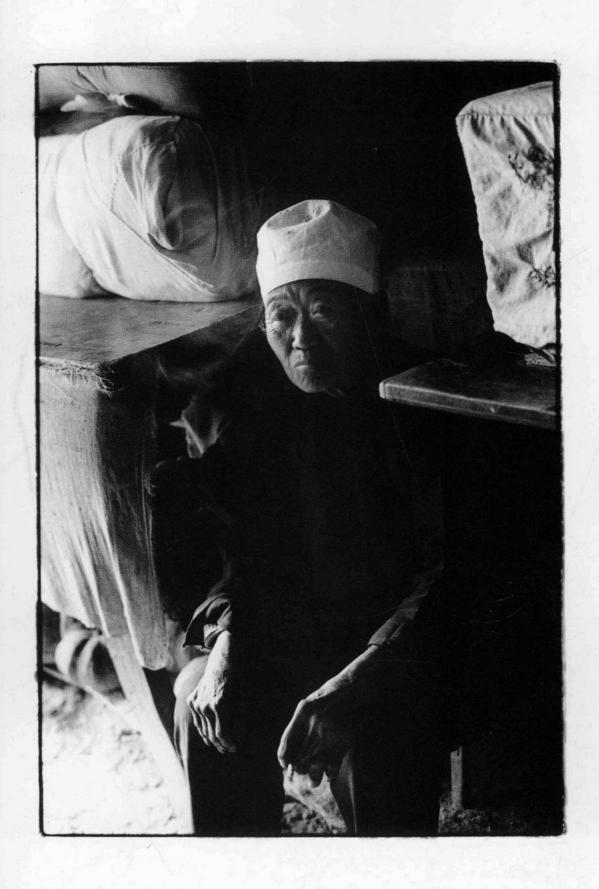
I woke up in a "yaodong" alongside the Yellow River, morning light filtering in from the paper pasted window. On the "kang" (brick bed), the woman sleeping beside me pulled the chamber pot closer and signaled me to pee; I turned around and fell asleep again. When I got up, the bellows in front of the "kang" wheezed and a puff of smoke escaped from the fire...













出門獨行久了,漸漸發覺只有衣服是最親的,親到舍不得脱下。偶爾,陽光特别好的時候,全换下來,洗出一盆盆黑呼呼的水,水裏飽和了一路來的風塵、沙土和汗水。情感再豐富一點兒的,就連這水也舍不得扔了...

When I was on a trip long enough, I would realize, how my clothes were the dearest to me. They were so dear that I had a hard time changing them. I would only peel them off and wash them when the sunshine was exceptional. The black water would be soaked with dust, sweat and tiredness from the journey. If I were more sentimental, I might even refuse to throw this water away...