



For Immediate Release:

FOTOFEST PRESENTS

INTERNATIONAL DISCOVERIES IV

**INTERNATIONAL TALENT DISCOVERED AT PHOTOGRAPHY EVENTS
AROUND THE WORLD**

**March 21 -
May 4, 2013**

OPENING RECEPTION:

**Thursday,
March 21, 2013
7-9pm**

ARTIST TALKS:

**Saturday, March 23, 2013, 2pm
Saturday, April 20, 2013, 2pm**

PERFORMANCE:

Friday, April 19, 2013, 7pm

FotoFest

**1113 Vine Street
Houston, Texas 77002**



Kim Tae Dong, *Day Break - 033, 2011*. From the series *Day Break*

HOUSTON, TEXAS, MARCH 4, 2013 – Thirteen exciting new artistic discoveries from around the world will present their work in FotoFest’s new exhibition, *International Discoveries IV*.

The SHILO Group from the Ukraine turns the story and arrest of the popular former Prime Minister Yuliya Tymoschenko into a provocative parody of politics in that country. Young Korean artist Kim Tae Dong gives a haunting reflection of urban life at night in Seoul. Patrick Gries from France and Belgium explores the fragile beauty of young albino children in Tanzania, Africa.

“This exhibition is about discovery and exchange,” says FotoFest Senior Curator Wendy Watriss. “It is a showcase for one of FotoFest’s key goals, exposing new and developing talent to a new audience and bringing the world to Houston.”

***International Discoveries IV* opens with an artist reception Thursday, March 21, 2013, 7 - 9pm, at FotoFest’s Headquarters Gallery, 1113 Vine Street, in downtown Houston. The exhibition will be on view through May 4, 2013.**

Artists from Korea, China, Norway and France will be at the Opening. For most of these artists, the *International Discoveries IV* show, is their first in the United States. This is the fourth in a popular exhibition series between FotoFest Biennials showcasing new talent across the world and the international network of events which involve FotoFest.

“The photography festivals, commercial trade fairs and international exchanges where we encounter these artists make it possible for artists to expose their work to U.S. and international art professionals,” says Frederick Baldwin, FotoFest Chairman.



Eldar Zeytullaev, Untitled, 2011. From the series *Planta Sapiens*

The thirteen artists featured in the *International Discoveries IV* exhibition are: **Nils Olav Bøe** (Norway); **Kim Tae Dong** (Korea); **Patrick Gries** (Belgium / France); **FLORA** (France); **He Xiao Hua** (China); **Claudia Presentado** (Uruguay / Argentina); **Fernando Di Sisto** (Argentina); **Ian Teh** (China /U.K.); **Suzanne Wellm** (Denmark); **Eldar Zeytullaev** (Russia); and **The SHILO Group** (Russia/Ukraine/Germany/ Austria), a collaborative group of artists **Vlad Krasnoshchok**, **Sergiy Lebedynskyy** and **Vadym Trykoz**.

The work of the French artist FLORA is a poetic and personal tale of journeys across the world told in the delicate tones of old photographic processes. Claudia Presentado shows unusual and emotional close-ups of flowers and trees in gardens. Nils Olav Bøe creates otherworldly narratives with three-dimensional models.

Ian Teh’s panoramas portray the dire beauty of contaminated landscapes in the coal mining regions of China’s Shanxi Province. He Xiao Hua creates ironic and comic commentary on corruption and social perversion in China. Eldar Zeytullaev celebrates the skeletal delicacy of flowering plants in a style reminiscent of Karl Blossfeldt.

Fernando Di Sisto’s work ventures into the chiaroscuro of modern cities. Suzanne Wellm explores intimate and unusual juxtapositions of the everyday objects of memory and life.

ADDITIONAL PROGRAMMING

Following the Artist Reception and Opening, Thursday March 21, 2013, there will be **two Saturday Matinee Artists Talks at the FotoFest Headquarters Gallery:**

Saturday, March 23 at 2pm - Ian Teh, Nils Olav Bøe, Kim Tae Dong, FLORA, Patrick Gries, and He Xiao Hua

Saturday, April 20 at 2pm - Fernando Di Sisto, Claudia Presentado, The SHILO Group and Eldar Zeytullaev

The SHILO Group will also present a special performance in conjunction with their photographic project, **Friday, April 19, 2013 at 7pm at FotoFest Headquarters.** The performance is recommended for mature audiences.

Patrick Gries and FLORA will present **a lecture at the University of St. Thomas, Friday, March 22 at 6pm** in the Ahern Room at the Crooker Center. The lecture is presented by FotoFest in collaboration with Center for International Studies at the University of St. Thomas as part of the **French Cultures Festival 2013** organized by the Consul General of France in Houston.

Additional talks and presentations with the artists in the *International Discoveries IV* exhibition are being planned. Details on these programs, when confirmed, will be available on the **FotoFest homepage at www.fotofest.org.**

FOTOFEST INTERNATIONAL

The FotoFest Headquarters Gallery is located at 1113 Vine Street in downtown Houston, Texas 77002. FotoFest exhibitions are free and open to the public six days per week, Monday-Wednesday and Friday: 10am-5pm; Thursdays: 10am-7pm; and Saturday: noon-5pm. For more information, please call 713-223-5522 ext 19 or visit www.fotofest.org.

Founded in 1983 by photographers Frederick Baldwin and Wendy Watriss, FotoFest is a year-round, international non-profit organization promoting the photographic arts and education. FotoFest started the first and longest-running international citywide festival of photography in the U.S. The Biennial festivals and FotoFest's year-long programming are known for their presentation of important talent, contemporary and historical, from around the world. In selecting its exhibitions and related art programs, FotoFest has a strong commitment to aesthetic quality and important social ideas. FotoFest has curated and commissioned exhibitions of photo-based art from Latin America, Asia, Europe, the Middle East and North Africa. Its Biennial portfolio review, the Meeting Place, is considered one of the best in the world. In addition to its year-round art programming, FotoFest's school-based education program, Literacy Through Photography, uses photography to stimulate visual literacy, writing and analytical thinking.

FOTOFEST 2012 - 2013 MAJOR SPONSORS

Houston Endowment Inc; City of Houston through the Houston Arts Alliance; National Endowment for the Arts; Brown Foundation, Inc.; The Wortham Foundation; Iris Art Foundation; The Cullen Foundation; FotoFest Board of Directors; arts>Brookfield and Brookfield Office Properties; Judith and Gamble Baldwin; Texas Commission on the Arts; Trust for Mutual Understanding; HexaGroup; iLand Internet Solutions; Vine Street Studios; Weingarten Realty; Frazier King.



Patrick Gries (Belgium / France), *Milu KUJAGA*, 2010
From the series *In/Visibility*



Fernando Di Sisto, *Untitled*, 2010. From the series *Uno*

ARTIST DESCRIPTIONS

Nils Olav Bøe (Norway)

Nils Olav Bøe's series *Constructed Landscape* is a staged reality; a play without words. His tiny tableaus – miniature trees, lamp posts, houses and trees – question reality and its perception. The absence of people in the scenes raises questions. What is the nature of this place? Can it be trusted? Could it be devious? Nils Olav Bøe was encountered at the Odense FotoTriennial 2012 in Odense, Denmark.

Kim Tae Dong (Korea)

Kim Tae Dong's portraits of strangers are made during late night walks in the city. Lone figures stand under dark skies and are illuminated by the urban glow of street lights and bus shelters. All the figures appear in transit, frozen for the moment it takes to expose the photograph. Their origins are unknown, but one may imagine the destinations are the same – moving silently and alone through the city at night towards that mysterious place. FotoFest Curators met Kim Tae Dong at the Deagu PhotoBiennial in Daegu, Korea.

Patrick Gries (Belgium / France)

Albinos are a misunderstood and often demonized group. In the African country of Tanzania, they lack civil status; officially unrecognized they legally don't exist and are subject to murder and mutilations at the hands of others. Their white skin; the result of a congenital disorder characterized by complete or partial absence of pigment in the skin, hair and eyes; is seen as a curse, and therefore they are stigmatized. Mr. Gries' portraits of albinos, taken in Tanzania, are sensitive and striking, attempting to give identity and dignity to this much maligned group. The work exists at the intersection of art, social anthropology and politics. Patrick Gries attended the Odense FotoTriennial 2012 in Odense, Denmark.

Nils Olav Bøe, *Constructed Landscape 7*, 2004
From the series *Constructed Landscape*



FLORA (FRANCE)

The work of FLORA (aka Flora Merillion), is a photographic and emotional chronicle of three trips taken by the artist – to Australia, India and Japan. While ostensibly a travelogue across two continents, the images are actually more about a spiritual geography and a personal chronology. The photographs are soft, poetic and intimate, even when they depict landscapes rather than people. They read like memories, blurred by love and loss. FLORA participated in the FotoFest organized Lens Culture FotoFest Paris Portfolio Review in Paris, France in 2012.

He Xiao Hua (China)

Chinese photographer He Xiao Hua's series *National Scar* presents his wry view of daily life in China today. He ironically pairs his own photographs with text appropriated from the renegade and illegal advertisements, pasted and painted on walls in cities across the country. The pairings are cheeky and smart, full of visual puns. A goose carcass, freshly butchered and de-feathered, hangs from a fence next to man; the advertising copy offers "Professional Mourning Service at Funeral." He Xiao Hua was introduced to FotoFest Creative Directors at the CANAL 5, Creativity Campus, Changzhou, China.



Ian Teh, *Coal, Ash and Snow*. Wuhai, Inner Mongolia, 2009- 2010. From the series *Traces*

Claudia Presentado (Argentina)

Claudia Presentado's series *The Garden* are recreations of childhood memories from her own gardens, and hours spent playing amid and watching the plants, flowers, leaves. They are remembrances of the colors, textures, tones and smells of the natural world. The images track the passage of the seasons and the changing light and weather. These changes fascinated her as a child and as an adult, she sees them as a symbol of her own growth and change from playful child to mature woman. FotoFest curators encountered Ms. Presentado at the Encuentros Abiertos festival in Buenos Aires, Argentina in 2011.

Fernando Di Sisto (Argentina)

Fernando Di Sisto's photographs abstract the concrete and steel landscapes of the modern city. Glass, brick, wire and pipe merge and transect each other – dividing the view with color, texture and light. The images are made in nameless cities and suburbs that could as easily be Singapore as it could be Lima. They are cold, but not lifeless – vibrant with the color of paint and rust; clean swept sidewalks and trended lawns. FotoFest Curators saw Mr. Di Sisto's work at the Encuentros Abiertos festival in Buenos Aires, Argentina in 2011.

Ian Teh (China /U.K.)

Ian Teh photographs in some of the most industrialized regions of China, including the city of Linfen in Shanxi province, considered one of the most polluted cities in the world. It gained that title after rapid and unregulated industrial growth in the 1990s transformed it from what was considered a pastoral and pristine agricultural paradise. Linfen is home to many of the country's 150,000,000 peasant migrant workers, enduring dangerous jobs in the numerous, small scale and unmonitored coal mines. Mr. Teh's photographs document the land and people of China's coal industry – fueling the urbanization and industrialization of the world's most populace country. Ultimately, glow of China's power-hungry metropolises can be traced back to the hinterland and its migrant workers. Ian Teh's work was seen at the Lens Culture FotoFest Paris 2012 Portfolio Review in Paris, France.

Suzanne Wellm (Denmark)

Susanne Wellm's photographs are intimate and intriguing, showing tight detailed views, seemingly caught in the periphery and presented without context. They are each the start of an unknown narrative; which the artist expects the viewer to complete. She is admittedly inspired by film and quotes filmmaker Wim Wenders in her statement: "Every photograph is... the first frame of a movie." FotoFest found Ms. Wellm at the Odense FotoTriennial in Odense, Denmark.

Eldar Zeytullaev (Russia)

The title of Eldar Zeytullaev's series, *Planta Sapiens*, alludes to his approach. His stark black and white "portraits" of plants is a real attempt to convey their "personality traits" – temper, aggression, patience, or empathy. Tender and twisting vines are contrasted with offensive thistles and thorns; and soft flower blossoms. The plants are, of course, surrogates for people and our multitude of personalities, equally hard to record with certainty in a photograph. Mr. Zeytullaev participated in two Russian portfolio review events: the FotoFest organized Portfolio Review Russia in Moscow, 2011; and the Photovisa International Photofestival in Krasnodar, Russia.

The SHILO Group [Vlad Krasnoshchok, Sergiy Lebedynskyy and Vadym Trykoz] (Russia/Ukraine/Germany/Austria)

The SHILO Group was founded by artists Vladyslav Krasnoshchok, Sergiy Lebedynskyy and Vadym Trykoz, with Aleksey Sobolev, in September, 2010 in the Ukrainian city of Kharkiv, a city known for its vibrant and influential arts and culture. Each is a professional by trade (a surgeon, an engineer and a scientist respectively), and an artist by vocation. They are all self-taught street photographers, and are influenced by Kharkiv artists of a previous generation, including the internationally known Boris Mikhailov. Their work is independent, critical and humorous.

The series *Timoshenko's Escape*, references Yuliya Tymoschenko, the ex- Prime Minister of Ukraine, imprisoned in Kharkiv after being convicted of abuse of power for a lucrative oil and gas contract she signed with Russia. The artists imagine Ms. Timoschenko has escaped from the prison and roams the city at night. Impressed by the beauty of Kharkiv, she decides to stay there forever. Sergey Lebedynskyy's solo work will also be featured, documenting Arabat Spit, a thermal spring resort abandoned after the fall of the Soviet Union, and in the process of being revitalized today.

Vlad Krasnoschok was a featured artist, with a different body of work, at the FotoFest 2012 Biennial. FotoFest Curators reviewed these projects at the Lens Culture FotoFest Paris Portfolio Review in 2012



The SHILO Group, Untitled, 2012. From the series *Timoschenko's Escape*