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Wei Bi, Untitled, 2004

International Discoveries II

November 5 - December 19, 2009

Houston, Texas

FOTOFEST

1113 Vine Street, Houston, Texas, USA

HOUSTON, TEXAS - SEPTEMBER 25, 2009 - Spirit money for the souls of the deceased. Parisian children at a masquerade party. Japanese pine forests. Suburbs in northern Mexico. Memories of a Chinese prison. These are part of ***International Discoveries II***, a new exhibit being unveiled by FotoFest in Houston, Texas.

International Discoveries II is the second exhibition in a series created by FotoFest in 2007 to showcase new contemporary talent discovered by FotoFest curatorial staff at photography events across the world. *International Discoveries II* opens **November 5, 2009, 6 - 9pm at FotoFest, 1113 Vine Street in Houston, Texas**. This exhibition is free and open to the public. Gallery hours are Monday – Friday 10am – 5pm; Saturday noon – 5pm.

“Against the currents of instant replay and digital animations, *International Discoveries* gives voice to the complexities of still time and the beauty of the paper-based print,” says FotoFest’s lead curator Wendy Watriss. “It focuses our attention on the single image, an object or a single moment in life.”

Nine artists from four continents are featured in the exhibition: **Wei Bi** (China); **Alejandro Cartagena** (Mexico); **Minstrel Kuik Ching Chieh** (Malaysia and France); **Christine Laptuta** (Canada and the United States); **Rizwan Mirza** (United Kingdom); **Vee Speers** (Australia and France); **Kurt Tong** (United Kingdom and China); **Takeshi Shikama** (Japan); **MiMi Youn** (United Kingdom and Korea).

International Discoveries II reflects a simultaneous turning to the past and the future, which characterizes so much of contemporary photo-based art. The prints in the exhibit display the delicate formalism of 19th century palladium and platinum printing, the intimacy of the mid-20th century Polaroid process, and 21st century large-format inkjet technology.

These works are marked by a contemporary hybridism of form and content, mixing the modern technologies and social realities of industrial societies with the spirituality and sensibilities of more traditional cultures.

“The discovery and presentation of these artists is made possible by the recent emergence of photographic gatherings throughout the world and the current interconnections between international photography festivals, Biennials and commercial art fairs.” says Fred Baldwin, FotoFest Co-founder.

“The works in this exhibition have been selected over the past 15 months from photography events and portfolio reviews in **Singapore** (Singapore International Photography Festival, 2008); **Daegu, Korea** (Daegu Photo Biennial2008); **Birmingham, England** (Rhubarb-Rhubarb) ; **Guangzhou, China** (Guangzhou 2009 Photo Biennial); **Paris, France** (Paris Photo); **Portland, Oregon** (Photo Lucida); **Mexico City, Mexico** (XII FotoBienial).”

Since its founding in 1983, FotoFest has been a leader in international exchange. In 2000, FotoFest was a principal force in the formation of the international **Festival of Light (festivaloflight.net)** network, uniting 22 festivals around the world from Buenos Aires, Argentina to Odense, Denmark, Montreal, Canada and Moscow, Russia. FotoFest’s well-known Meeting Place portfolio review for artists has been replicated by events in 20 countries in Europe, North America, Latin America, Asia and Australia. The *International Discoveries* series is a product of these international interconnections and collaborations between festivals.

***International Discoveries II* is on view at FotoFest, 1113 Vine Street, Houston, Texas 77002, Monday - Friday 10am - 5pm, Saturday noon-5pm. Admission to FotoFest exhibitions is free.**

For more information on FotoFest Exhibitions and other programs, please visit www.fotofest.org.

For further information, interviews and visuals, please contact:

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FOTOFEST 2008-2009 SPONSORS

The Brown Foundation, The Houston Endowment Inc., The City of Houston through the Houston Arts Alliance, The Wortham Foundation, Vine Street Studios, FotoFest Board of Directors, iLand Internet Solutions, Hexagroup, KUHF 88.7 FM

ABOUT FOTOFEST

Founded in 1983, FotoFest is an international non-profit organization promoting photographic arts and education in Houston, Texas. FotoFest is recognized for its discovery and presentation of important talent, contemporary and historical, from around the world, its commitment to presenting important social ideas through the photographic arts, its groundbreaking exhibitions and its portfolio review program, The International Meeting Place. FotoFest has curated and commissioned exhibitions of photo-based art from Latin America, Asia, Europe, the Middle East and North Africa. In addition to year-round art exhibitions and programming, FotoFest’s school-based education program, Literacy Through Photography, uses photography to stimulate visual literacy, writing, and analytical thinking.

The FotoFest Biennial is the first International Biennial of Photography and Photo-related Art in the United States. Through the FotoFest Biennial and its year-round art programs, FotoFest is known as a Platform for Art and Ideas, combining museum-quality art with important social and aesthetic issues. FotoFest curated exhibitions give priority to the works of important but little-known photographic artists from the U.S. and around the world.



LEFT: MiMi Youn, *Alone*, 2008

RIGHT: MiMi Youn, *I am Falling*, 2007