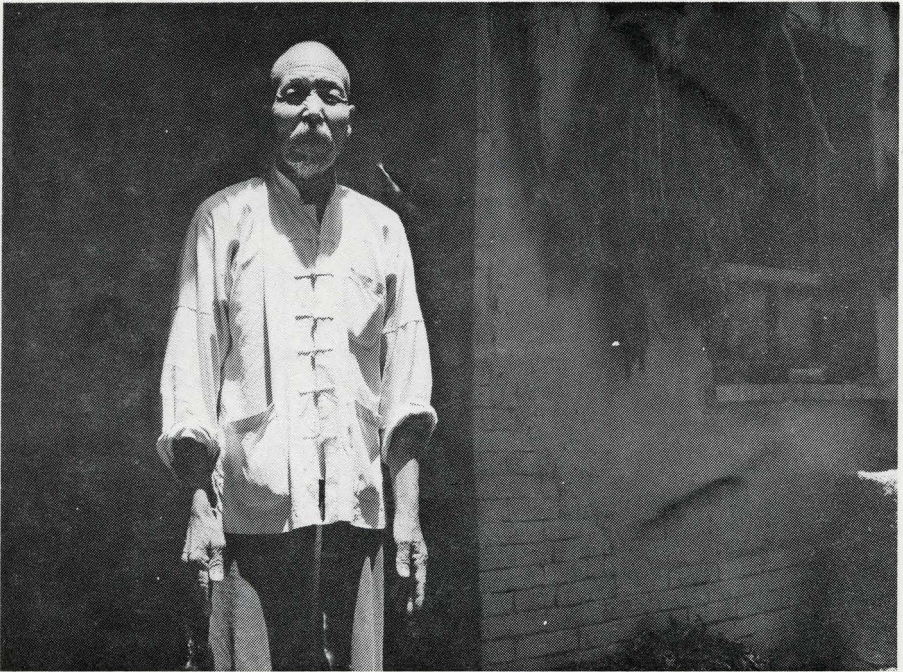


# china



**CHINA : A SELECTION OF PHOTOGRAPHS BY**

**Shayne Clarke**

**David Ellis**

**Vivienne Hale**

**Marion Hardman**

**Geoff Parr**

**Cover : " The Barefoot Doctor " by Geoff Parr.**

On a visit to China, one cannot help but observe at some time or another the orderly assembly arranged before a patient but persistent Chinese photographer who records the visit to the Summer Palace or some other famous tourist attraction. Indeed westerners in China have all no doubt witnessed or recorded the bus driver standing beside his bus, in full light, facing the camera and smiling modestly, or the guides and interpreters who have arranged themselves according to height, legs slightly apart, formerly at ease in the manner typical of a nineteenth century studio portrait.

Whilst there is an engaging naivety in this, there is also a significant degree of astuteness for it is not only, as Susan Sontag has said (*New York Review of Books*, 23rd June, 1977) that the Chinese are in the first stages of camera culture, but that the Chinese have recognised that photography is a means to the surrogate possession of the real. If one can project ones own image of oneself into the photograph then the reality is all the more potent and for such a nation as China there is the need for any specific situation to be as complete a statement as possible and to exemplify the singular nature of the socio-political framework. There is no place for the random observation and there is a wariness of the 'arrested image' in China: the subject should not be prey to the momentary whim of the photographer and there should be no room for free interpretation.

And yet it is true that even the most insignificant or insubstantial subject matter can be imbued with qualities which far transcend material existence. Alfred Stieglitz, for instance, produced a series of cloud images during the 1920's which are at once insubstantial material and yet were intended to be metaphors for states of being and emotion that lie in the realms of metaphysical speculation. Stieglitz argued that the viewer of a photograph is too often beguiled by the sheer physical representation of the "real", a situation which a painter is usually able to escape. Indeed the things one looks for in a painting, the colour, tone, texture, form, symbols, etc. are too often forgotten when one is confronted by a photograph where analogy with other physical events becomes the overriding concern. But to confront the image as a reality in itself is particularly important. Weston's *Peppers* for instance, is a photograph which is spell-binding in its sensuality, although the subject itself is quite mundane: it is through the manipulation of light, knowledge of tone and a marvellous eye for metaphor that Weston transforms the subject in such a way that it becomes almost impossible to see it with any degree of objectivity, and one is thrown back upon ones own intuitive responses.

This exhibition of photographs by Shayne Clark, David Ellis, Vivienne Hale, Marion Hardman and Geoff Parr is the result of a visit to China in July, 1977. It lays no claims to tell it all - to have done so in three weeks would have been futile - but it does document China in the Seventies and, at the same time, it contains images which allow the viewer to enter into the subjective world of photographic image-making.

Unlike the Chinese view of photography which seeks to encapsulate ideas in very specific, easily read terms that articulate a common feeling or goal, each of these photographers has responded quite differently to China and these responses are often subtle. None seem to have been drawn to anger or sorrow; all at one time or another have been drawn to record the grandeur of the landscape and the remarkable physical organisation of space; there is humour and wit and occasional frustration; there is a keen awareness that westerners are foreigners and this is often recorded quite ironically. The viewer's recognition of the way in which these feelings are expressed may give some idea of what constitutes China for the foreigner, and the way in which these photographers have sought to find their own way as image-makers and as recorders of visual information.

**JONATHAN HOLMES**  
June, 1978.

## LIST OF EXHIBITS

1. Shumchun
2. Guangzhou (Kwangchow)
3. Fu-shun (outside Guangzhou)
4. National Institute of the Peasant Movement, Guangzhou
5. Hangzhou (Hangchow)
6. Shang-wang Tea Brigade (outside Hangzhou)
7. Pagoda of the Six Harmonies, Hangzhou
8. Shanghai
9. Callisthenics, Shanghai
10. Xi'an (Sian)
11. Xi'an Sports University
12. A Village of the peasant painters of Hu County, near Xi'an
13. Callisthenics class, Xi'an
14. Callisthenics instructor, Xi'an
15. Ceiling, Huaqing Hot Spring, near Xi'an
16. Ceiling, Bell Tower, Xi'an
17. Beijing (Peking)
18. Tian'anmen Square, Beijing
19. Tian'anmen Square and the Great Hall of the People
20. Marx and Engels, Tian'anmen Square
21. Palace Museum [(Forbidden City) on the perimeter of Tian'anmen Square]
22. Peking Arts and Crafts Factory
23. Summer Palace, Peking
24. Avenue of Stone Animals, Ming Tombs, near Peking
25. The Great Wall of China

## A TASMANIAN SCHOOL OF ART EXHIBITION

**A. SHAYNE CLARK**

Shayne Clark, a photography major, is in his fourth year of study for a Degree in Visual Arts.

**B. DAVID ELLIS**

David Ellis, graduated in 1977 with a Degree in Visual Arts, having specialised in photography. He has received an Arts and Crafts Fellowship from the Tasmanian Arts Advisory Board for 1978.

**Publications -**

'Light Vision' - July 1978

**Exhibitions -**

'New Australian Photography' - Photographers Gallery, Melbourne, July 1978

**Collections -**

Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery  
Phillip Morris Collection  
Visual Arts Board Art Purchase Programme

**C. VIVIENNE HALE**

Vivienne Hale graduated in 1977 with a Degree in Visual Arts (Visual Art Teaching) and is currently teaching in Launceston.

**Publications -**

'Light Vision' - July 1978

**Exhibitions -**

'New Australian Photography' - Photographers Gallery, Melbourne, July 1978

**Collections -**

Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery  
Phillip Morris Collection  
Visual Arts Board Art Purchase Programme

**D. MARION HARDMAN**

Marion Hardman graduated from the School of Art in 1973 and has taught there in a part-time capacity since 1974. She received a Creative Fellowship from the Visual Arts Board, Australia Council, 1975.

**Publications -**

Involved in planning, design and production for 'Green Bans' as well as the 132 black and white plates - 1975

'Australian Photography' - 1976

Swiss 'Camera' - a portfolio January 1976

'Creative Camera' - March 1978

**Exhibitions -**

'Green Bans' - Arts Council of N.S.W. Darlinghurst 1975  
Photographers Gallery, South Yarra 1976

'Wimmin' - National Gallery of Victoria 1975

'Down Under, Down Under Show' - Brummels, Toorak 1976

'Modern Australian Photography' - National Gallery of Victoria 1976

'Ten Viewpoints' - Australian Centre for Photography, Sydney 1976-77

'Photographs from Earth' - George Paton Gallery, Melbourne University 1978

**Collections -**

National Gallery of Victoria  
Swinburne Institute, Melbourne  
Rusden State College  
University of Tasmania  
Phillip Morris Collection  
Visual Arts Board Art Purchase Programme

**E. GEOFF PARR**

Senior Lecturer, Tasmanian School of Art, Tasmanian College of Advanced Education  
Member, Visual Arts Board, Australia Council 1974-77  
Chairman, V.A.B. Education Sub-committee 1975-77  
Chairman, Tertiary Art Education Study (Visual Arts) 1977-78

**Publications -**

'Australian Photography 1976'

'New Photography Australia'

'Creative Camera' - March 1978

**Exhibitions include -**

'Down Under, Down Under Show' - Brummels, Toorak, 1976

'Modern Australian Photography' - National Gallery of Victoria 1976

One man show - Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery 1976

**Collections -**

Australian National Gallery, Canberra  
National Gallery of Victoria  
Australia Centre for Photography  
University of Tasmania  
Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery  
Art Gallery of South Australia

