



Wang Jinsong 王劲松

Wang Jinsong is perhaps best known as an oil painter of the 'Cynical Realism' movement, who later developed as a visual artist, through the mediums of photography and video. This progression stemmed from his utilisation of the camera as a tool to study ideas for projects. His interest in the implications of government policies on social conditions and contemporary Chinese society continue to be the focal point of his work. In 1996, he began to document a generation of Chinese families who were under the one-child policy introduced in 1973, as a result he created the *One Child Policy* series, which consists of a collection of paintings, each one depicting the three person family, with either the parents or the child remaining incompletely painted and somewhat transparent. The work depicts an example of this stereotypical model at a different point in their lives, giving each work their own sense of time. In 2006, he revisited this topic and created the artwork *Standard Family*, which consists of the 200 photographs he had taken of the single child families. Careful observation of the lifestyle, fashion, and inherited features of each model family reveal their present and future situations. Lately, Wang Jinsong has reverted to his first love and ideal medium: traditional ink painting, which marks a change from his previous avant-garde work.

His first series, *Standard Family*, documented a generation of Chinese families and the development of contemporary Chinese society under the one-child policy, which was introduced in 1973. This consisted of 200 images of single-child families, mother and father flanking their child. In his *One Child Policy* series exhibited at Schoeni Art Gallery's 8+8-1, *Selected Paintings by 15 Contemporary Artists*, the three-person family, including one single child, is the motif. Through multiple painting techniques, each work depicts an example of this stereotypical model at a different point in their lives, giving each work their own sense of time. Careful observation of the lifestyle, fashion, and inherited features of each model family reveal their present and future situations. Other issues explored in Wang Jinsong's work include the wholesale demolition of old buildings, the 'Westernisation' of the Chinese people, and the vexed cultural relationship of modern China with its glorious past. The destiny of the aged population and the situations of old-age couples living by themselves was explored through photographing retired couples living in Beijing who are representative of different social classes, from workers to university professors.

Wang Jinsong was born in 1963 in Heilongjiang Province, China. In 1987, he graduated with a Bachelor in Fine Arts from the Ink Painting Department of the Zhejiang Fine Arts Academy (now known as National Academy of Fine Arts) in Hangzhou. He lives and works in Beijing, where he also teaches at the Fine Arts Department of the Beijing Institute of Education. His works have been widely exhibited worldwide, notably in Chicago (as early as 1997), Vancouver, London, and Berlin. He has had international solo exhibitions— in Beijing, Shanghai, Indonesia, Seoul, New York, and Madrid to name a few—and over 40 group exhibitions in Japan, Australia, Europe, and the United States.