



PRESS RELEASE:
ALLSOPP CONTEMPORARY & LAVINIA CALZA
LUO YONGJIN: POINTS OF VIEW, CURATED BY DR. MONICA DEMATTÉ

9th June – 8th July 2006

Luo Yongjin is an artist of a thousand curiosities; of inexhaustible energy, animated by a great love of reality – or rather the love of reality's infinite possibilities that can be modified, personalized and rendered more interesting. Dr Monica Dematté.

Allsopp Contemporary and Lavinia Calza are delighted to announce their forthcoming exhibition of over fifty photographic prints by Shanghai based artist Luo Yongjin. The exhibition, which will include large format landscapes and still-lives, will be the artist's first solo show in the UK.

Luo Yongjin's photographs hover between two very distinct points of view. The artist's landscapes and urban scenes are primarily informed by China's rapidly changing nature as he off sets its rich cultural heritage with more recent urban development. In the late 1990s Luo Yongjin began a series devoted to architecture where a single shot taken from a single viewpoint seems substituted by a long, superimposed series of images extending in time and space like contemporary mosaics. These images convey the speed and hysteria of rapid growth within the simplicity and stillness of a black and white image.

More recently Luo Yongjin has immersed himself in exploring the lesser known areas of his vast country. The result is a series of works that reveal the artist's ability to pick out the subtle poetry that permeates the everyday as well as life's grotesque, absurd and ridiculous nuances. The motif on the side of a building, a misty landscape or a young boy sitting, staring out to sea – all take on a new significance when captured by Luo Yongjin's elegant and refined eye.

Ideas relating to the frozen narrative, documentary and authorship have been recurring themes in photography's somewhat confused history of self-definition and its standing within the fine arts. Furthermore, China's own position as a new cultural and commercial force with its rapidly changing urban landscape – its new blend of foreign commodities and ideologies is itself a starting point for individual discovery and self-definition. Luo Yongjin encapsulates these two powerful histories – he is both aware and attuned to the context within which he stands. Yet from that context and understanding he is able and willing to offer his own snapshot of the world around him, allowing us to look at his world from a new point of view.

Luo Yongjin has been a professor at Shanghai's Art Academy since 2000. Recent solo exhibitions have been held in Italy (Grimaldi Foundation, 2005), France, (Lille, 2004) and Bangkok (100 Tomson Gallery, 2003). Recent group shows include 'BETWEEN PAST AND FUTURE, New Photography and Video from China', (Victoria and Albert Museum, London, 2005); 'TIAN AN MEN', (Photography Museum, Amsterdam, 2005). Luo Yongjin lives and works in Shanghai.