

# WANG WUSHENG

## CELESTIAL REALM

EXHIBITION INFORMATION FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MARCH 7 - APRIL 27, 2013

RECEPTION FOR THE ARTIST:

THURSDAY, MARCH 7, 6-8 PM

NEW YORK – Barry Friedman Ltd. is pleased to present “Celestial Realm” a solo exhibition of large-scale black and white photography by the contemporary Chinese artist Wang Wusheng. This will be Wang’s first solo exhibition at Barry Friedman Ltd. and his second exhibition in New York. In 2005, the Permanent Missions of China and Japan to the United Nations presented, “Spirit of the East”, a two-person exhibition of Wang Wusheng’s photographs along with paintings by the late Japanese master artist Kail Higashiyama in the General Assembly’s Visitor’s Lobby.

“Celestial Realm” will open with a reception for the artist on Thursday, March 7, 2013, from 6:00-8:00pm, and will be on view through April 27, 2013. Accompanying the exhibition is a stunning hardcover 240-page monograph, “*Celestial Realm: The Yellow Mountains of China*,” with an introduction by the noted art historian Wu Hung (Abbeville Press, 2005)



*Mt. Huangshan - Uprising Peak, taken at Gongyang Mountain Slope, 1984, Archival pigment print*

For almost four decades Wang Wusheng has photographed China’s renowned Mt. Huangshan mountain range, also known as the Yellow Mountains. Located in the southern part of Anhui province in China, Mt. Huangshan, with an incredible seventy-two peaks, has often been described as the world’s most beautiful and enchanting mountain range and has been the subject of Chinese artists for centuries. Born and raised in the foothills of this dramatic landscape, Wusheng’s photographs recall the artist’s early memories, as well as traditional Chinese ink drawings of mountains, sky and clouds. Wusheng’s enigmatic and ethereal photographs explore utopian visions, conveying a sense of timelessness. The stark contrast between sky and earth and the intense luminosity of the clouds in Wang’s photographs create landscapes of an “other” world.

In describing one of Wusheng’s photographs of Wolf’s Peak, Wu Hung writes, “The image is a symphony of dark and light and of substance and emptiness. The strange, vertical peak emerges from a gossamer mist that veils a deep abyss. Its impressive height is suggested by the silhouette of tall trees in the foreground, yet is dwarfed by the huge precipices looming above it. The image retains almost all the essential features and qualities of an immortal mountain in traditional Chinese art: a particular iconography of mountain peaks, the fundamental role of clouds and mist, a heightened feeling of mystery, and a sense of infinity generated by a mountain represented as both macrocosm and microcosm.” Wu Hung explains, “His pictures are gorgeous, but their beauty does not come directly from the natural scenery. Rather, the mountain’s natural wonders have been transformed into artistic spectacles through the artist’s commitment to the medium of black-and-white photography, his insistent pursuit of dynamic movement and metamorphic images, and his deep emotional engagement with his subject.”

Wang Wusheng was honored with a full-scale solo exhibition at the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna in 1998. It was the museum’s first exhibition for a living artist and its first exhibition of artistic photography. A large exhibition catalogue accompanied the exhibition.

Wusheng’s work is represented in the permanent of the National Art Museum of China, Beijing; Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna, Austria; and the Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.

Born in 1945 in Wuhu, China, Wusheng attended Anhui Normal University during the Cultural Revolution and graduated with a degree in Physics. He was sent to an army reclamation farm for re-education in 1968. After 3 years he found his lifelong passion, photography. Beginning in 1973, Wang worked as a photographer for a news magazine in Anhui Province and in 1974, he began photographing Mt. Huangshan. In 1981, he decided to become a freelance photographer and immigrated to Japan where there was an option for such a career. After receiving a grant from the Japan Foundation Endowment for Japanese art in 1983, Wusheng studied at the Art Institute of Nihon University, followed by three years at Tokyo Arts University. He returned to China in 2007 and is currently based in Shanghai and Tokyo.

For visuals or more information, please contact Carole Hochman at 212-239-8600.

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