

Qin Yifeng

[10] [3] [7] [3]



Qin Yifeng was born in 1961 in Qinghai, China, and moved to Shanghai with his parents the following year. He was actively involved in the '85 New Wave movement in the 1980s and began his career with abstract painting. He holds a post as Associate Professor at Shanghai University. As a Ming-Dynasty furniture collector, he published a monograph about the plain Ming-style furniture in 2009.

His main solo exhibitions include: Negative Reading | Reading Negatives, White Cube, Hong Kong (2019); Qin Yifeng's Works, Yuz Museum, Shanghai (2017); Line & Field, Mind Set Art Center, Taipei (2016); Line Field, C-Space, Beijing (2014); Line Field-Qinyifeng's Art Works, Eastlink Gallery, Shanghai (2005); Resent Works of Qin Yifeng, Red Gate Gallery, Beijing (1996); and his first solo exhibition "Qin Yifeng's Works" at the College of Fine Arts, Shanghai University (1994).

Selected group exhibitions include: The Tenth Anniversary of the to Absoluteness Long Museum, Long Museum, Shanghai (2022); Chinese Colours: Eastward Turn to Absoluteness, Long Museum, Shanghai (2021); Simultaneous Eidos, the 1st Guangzhou Image Triennial, Guangdong Museum of Art, Guangzhou (2017); The world is yours, as well as ours White Cube, London (2016); Prayer Beads and Brushwork, Beijing Tokyo Art Project, Beijing (2003); East & West-Chinese Contemporary Art Exhibition, Vienna Künstlerhaus (2002); Xing Er Shang 2001, Shanghai Art Museum (2001); Shanghai Modern Art Exhibition, Walsh Gallery, Chicago, Illinois (2000); 'China/Avant-Garde Exhibition', National Art Museum of China, Beijing (1989); Modern Art by Six Artists, Fudan University, Shanghai (1985).

Qin was awarded the gold medal in the landscape design competition at the 10th National Art Exhibition, hosted by the National Art Museum of China in 2004.

Qin Yifeng: [10] [3] [7] [3]

1.

In the space, four groups of light boxes are set up to display a varied number of negatives: 10, 3, 7, 3. Each group takes several shots of the remnants of a plain Ming-style furniture until the taken negatives, erasing light and dark projection, three-dimensional perspective, and spatial depth, and compressed into a gray surface as much as possible.

This is what the artist Qin Yifeng has attempted for many years—using a large-format camera to create a kind of radical flatness on 8×10 film. Thus, metering daylight on a daily base, a three-dimensional vision also that violates optical refraction without the help of artificial light source, exits from the dogmatic framework of reproduction. As Qin Yifeng's language, these negatives that tend to be flat cannot be embedded in commonly agreed empirical standards. Thus, they can only be arranged in the sequence according to their own differences, and the most ideal one can be selected from them by comparison.

2.

In other words, the absence of standards is the result of Qin Yifeng's introduction of multiple contradiction into photography: using camera to resist the depth of field, using negative film to invert black and white, or out of intuition to see things disappear in the clearest image. Thus, despite daylight changes, the film Ilford Delta 100 is Qin Yifeng's image matrix because its mildest optical sensitivity precipitates the finest silver halide particles, paradoxically enough to validate the artist's hypothesis.

In this way, the 8×10 particle plane, rather than photography, is a theater of decay Qin Yifeng created according to the property of silver salt particles; the character in the play, the remnants of the plain furniture, both clearly indicate the life texture of tree and converge under the aesthetic contour of Ming artisans. The natural order and cultural order are mutually constrained on the same surface and decay simultaneously in time. It is difficult to

demonstrate this future-oriented decay in any three-dimensional space, so

it is no wonder that Qin Yifeng uses exposure time to modulate a tight gray flat, in order to eliminate the intervention of narrative and guide the wooden object to a pure particle endgame.

3.

As a viewer, what the naked eyes seen is the evenly articulated gray surface of the wooden object, but the real reading must be achieved with the help of a magnifying glass. Under the silent gray tones, particles of different orders resist or dissipate according to their encoding, reaching the peak of tension on the edge of the remnants; Qin Yifeng also uses earthworm clay to make up the wooden object, trying to weaken its materiality. In other words, he intends to counteract the silver salt particles with the powder of clay, completing the most dramatic decaying transition with the slightest material intervention.

This means that, before shooting, Qin Yifeng has focused on the negatives. Imagining in his mind the light-sensitive accumulation of particles, deducing the possibility of gray flatness in reverse, all these contradictory engineering of reverse point to the negative as a starting point—the negative is the place where Qin Yifeng negotiates the meaning of nature through photography, and it is also his foundation position—when the negative brings the information to the surface degree zero, here language begins again.



MAGICIAN SPACE

魔金石空间





[2020_03_12 12:00 cloudy] (Four Joint 1/4)

2020

8x10 gelatin silver salt negative film, giclée

print, natural light exposure for 4'

110x137.5cm (Giclée print)

*5 pieces of negative films in total

**The whole serie includes 10 pieces of
negative films, with 4 giclée prints in total



[2020_03_09 11: 29 rain]
Object has a lighter tone



[2020_03_09 14: 22 rain]
Object has a lighter tone



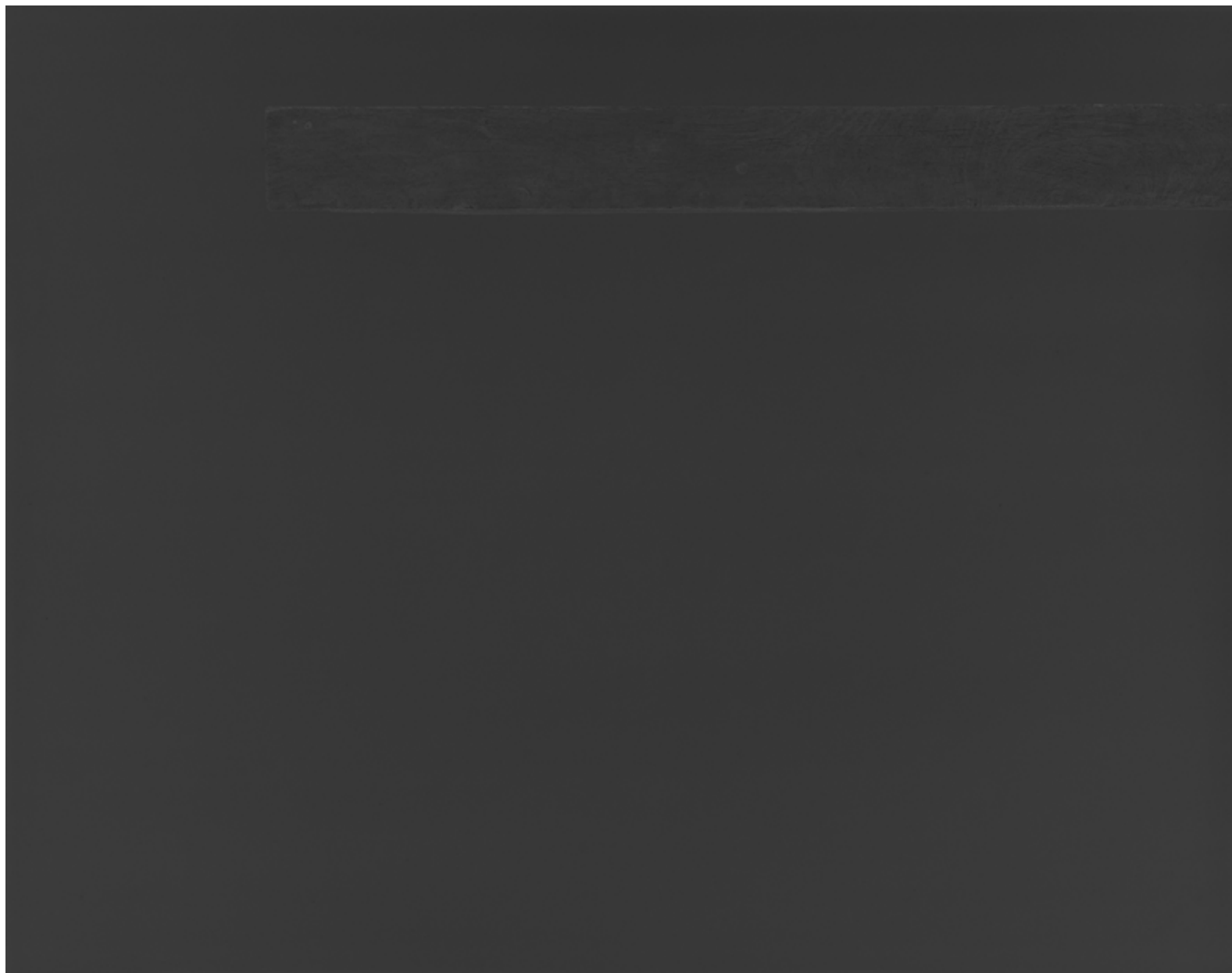
[2020_03_10 11: 37 cloudy]
Object has a lighter tone



[2020_03_11 11: 36 cloudless]
Object has a darker tone



[2020_03_12 12: 00 cloudy]



[2020_03_15 10: 45 cloudless] (Four Joint 2/4)

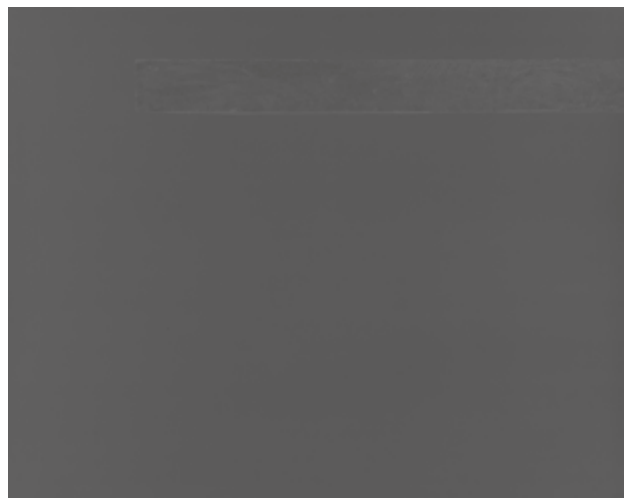
2020

8x10 gelatin silver salt negative film, giclée

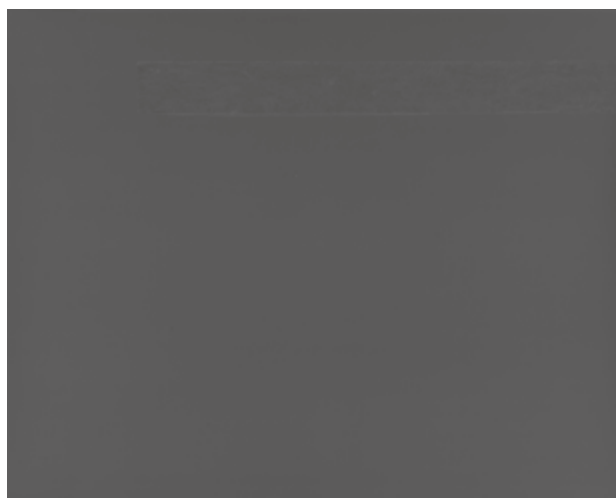
print, natural light exposure for 32"

110x137.5cm (Giclée print)

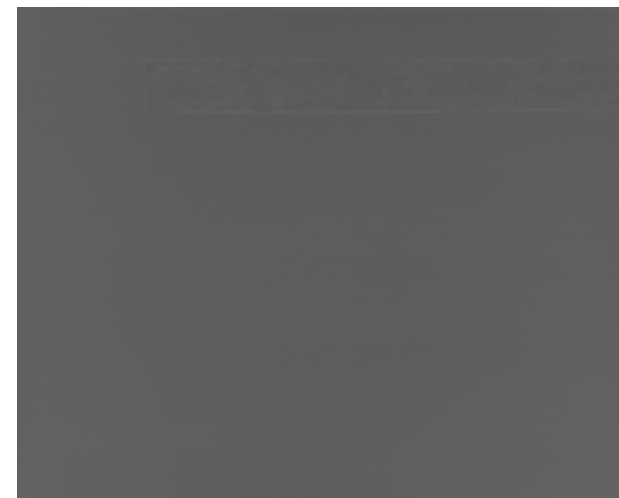
*3 pieces of negative films in total



[2020_03_13 11: 45 cloudy]
Right side of the object has a lighter tone



[2020_03_14 10: 36 cloudless]
Right side of the object has a lighter tone



[2020_03_15 10: 45 cloudless]



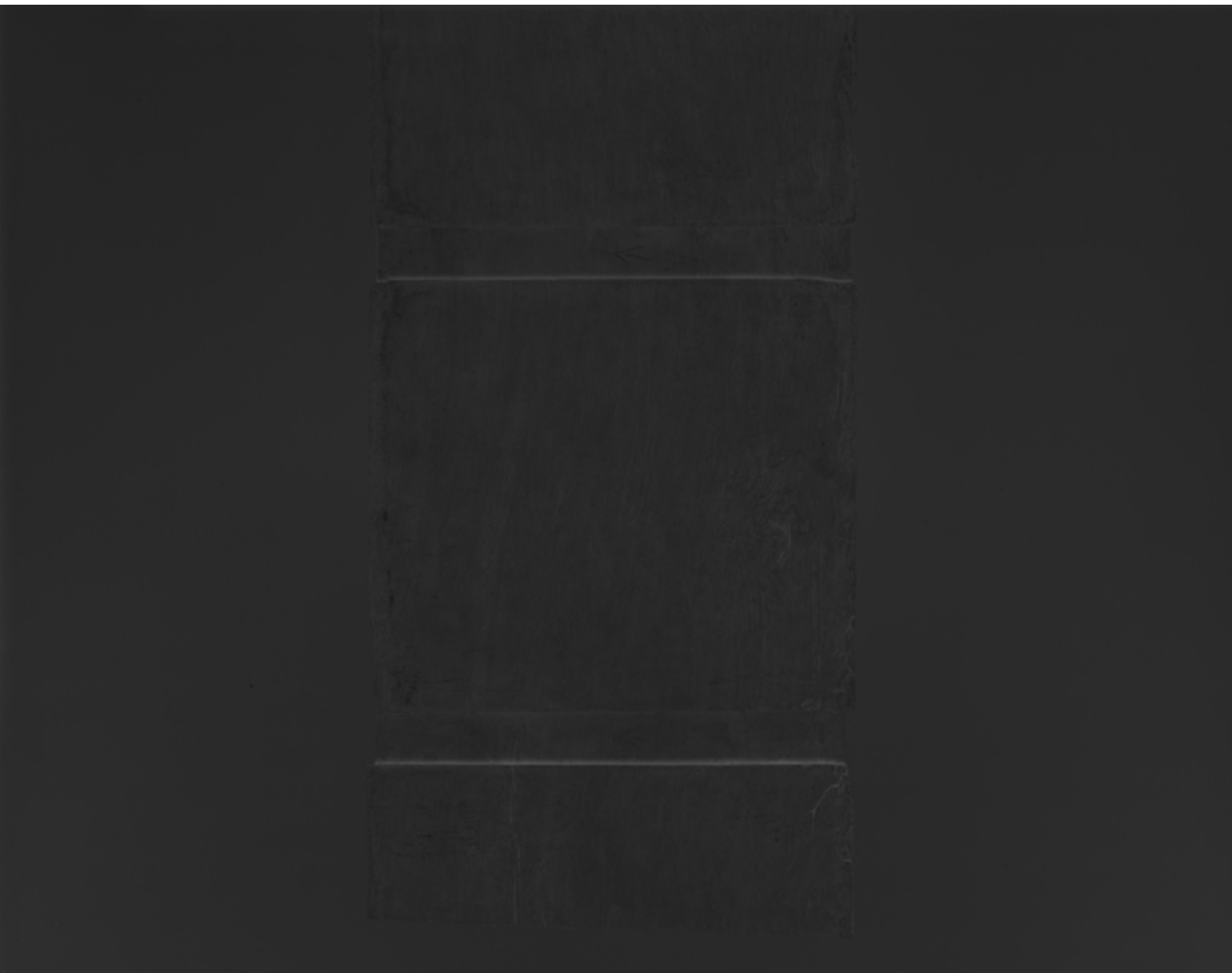
[2020_03_06 08: 53 cloudless] (Four Joint 3/4)
2020
8x10 gelatin silver salt negative film, giclée
print, natural light exposure for 1'22"
110x137.5cm (Giclée print)

[2020_03_08 09: 30 cloudy] (Four Joint 4/4)
2020
8x10 gelatin silver salt negative film, giclée
print, natural light exposure for 2'40"
110x137.5cm (Giclée print)





Installation view of light box
4 sets of negative films (5+3+1+1)



[2022_02_19 11: 17 cloudy]

2022

8x10 gelatin silver salt negative film, giclée

print, natural light exposure for 5'

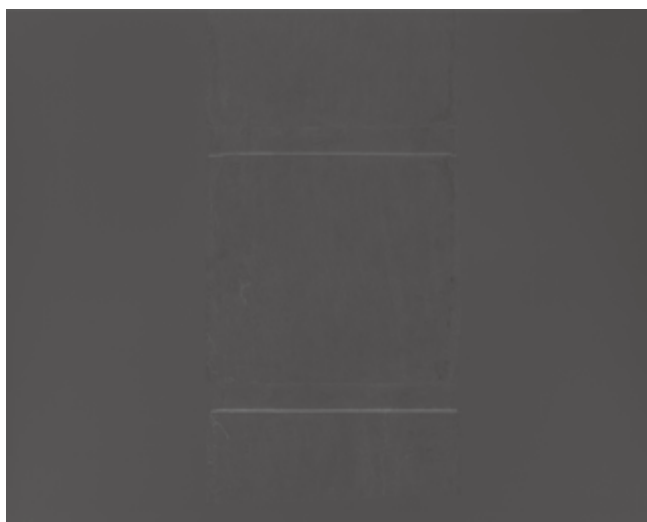
110x137.5cm (Giclée print)

*3 pieces of negative films in total

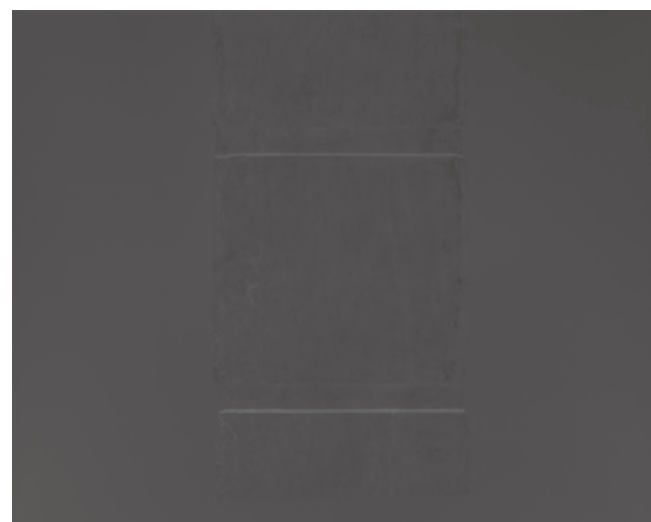




[2020_02_17 11: 32 cloudy]
Object has a lighter tone



[2020_02_18 11: 54 cloudy]
Object has a darker tone



[2022_02_19 11: 17 cloudy]



[2022_03_09 11: 36 cloudless]

2022

8x10 gelatin silver salt negative film, giclée
print, natural light exposure for 41"

110x137.5cm (Giclée print)

*7 pieces of negative films in total



MAGICIAN SPACE 魔金石空间





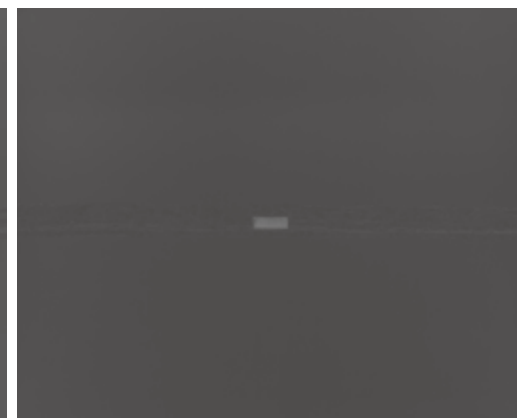
[2022_02_23 11: 30 cloudless]
Left side of the object has a darker tone



[2022_02_24 11: 25 cloudless]
Horizontal line on the object
has a lighter tone



[2022_03_08 11: 37 cloudless]
Left and right sides of the object
have darker tones



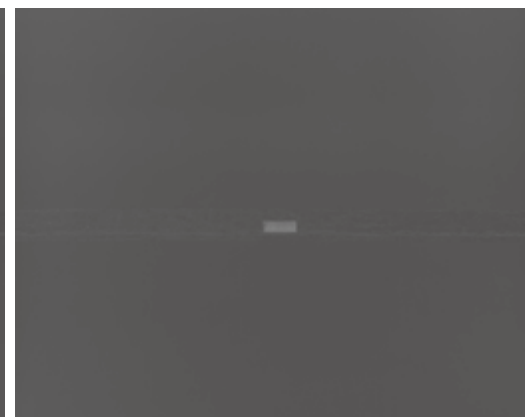
[2022_03_09 11: 36 cloudless]
Left side of the object has a darker tone



[2022_03_10 11: 55 cloudless]
Left and right sides of the object
have darker tones



[2022_03_11 11: 36 cloudless]
Right side of the object has a darker tone



[2022_03_16 11: 36 cloudless]

[2020_06_01 11: 43 cloudless]

2020

8x10 gelatin silver salt negative film, giclée
print, natural light exposure for 1'9"

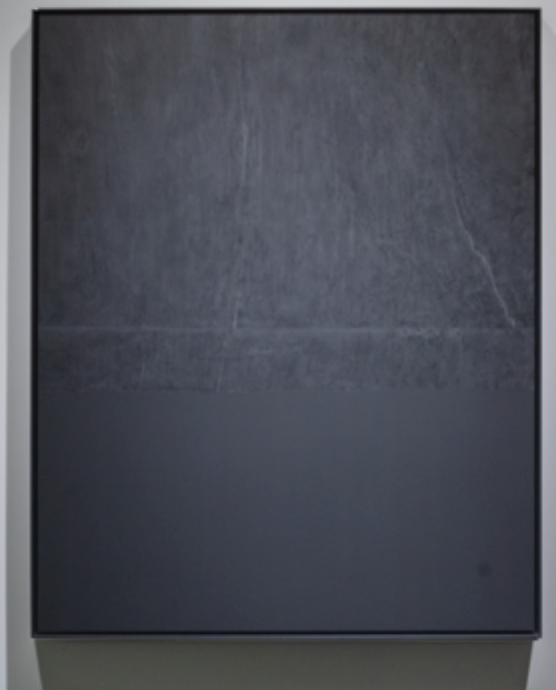
110x137.5cm (Giclée print)

*3 pieces of negative films in total



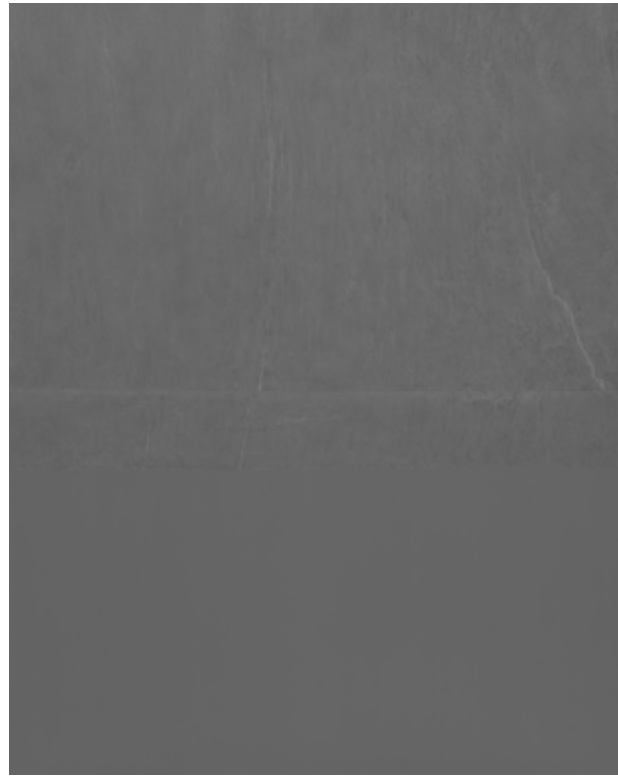
MAGICIAN SPACE 魔金石空间

[2020_06_01 11: 43 cloudless] detail





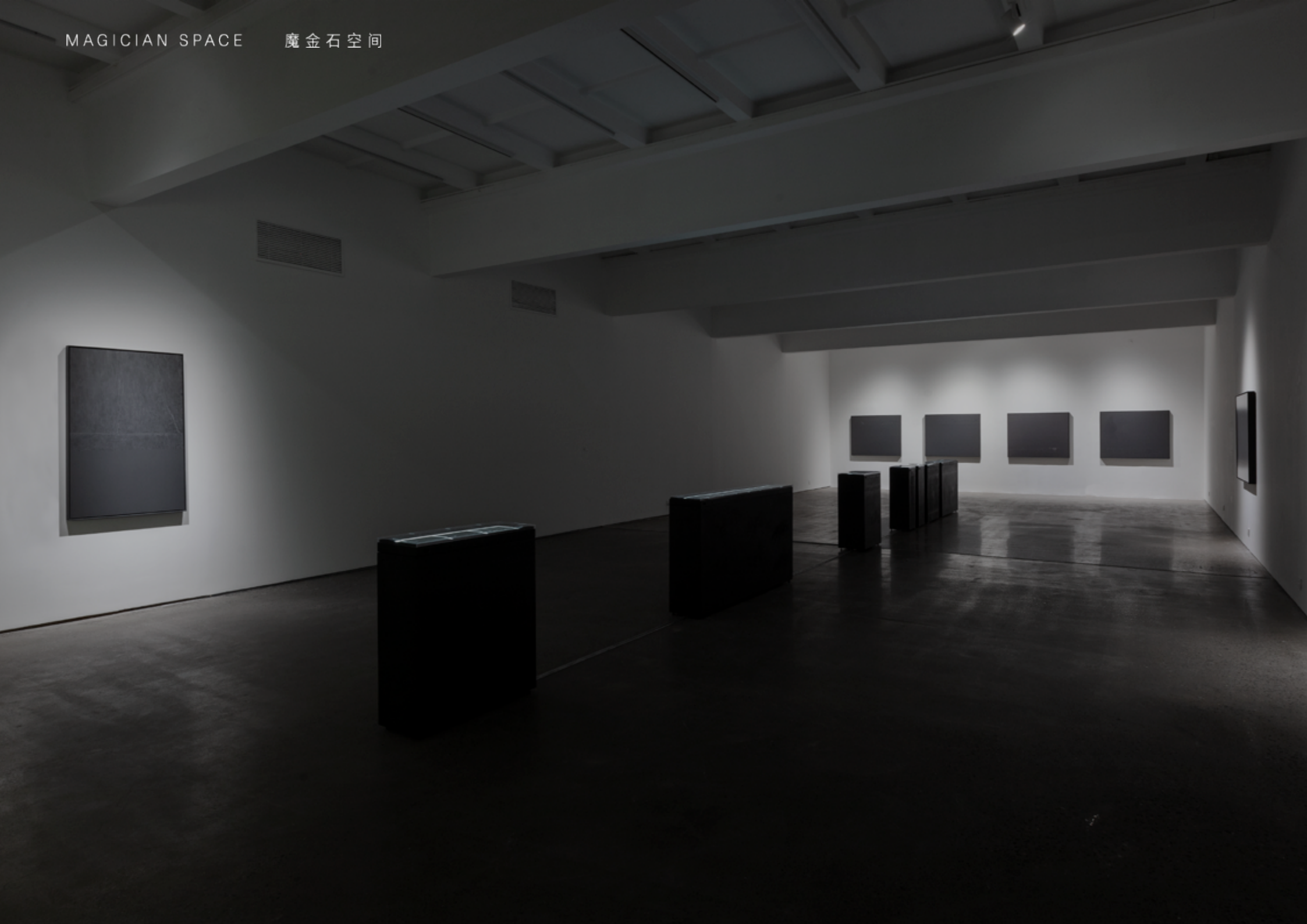
[2020_05_29 11: 32 cloudy]
Object has a darker tone



[2020_05_31 11: 29 cloudless]
Object has a lighter tone

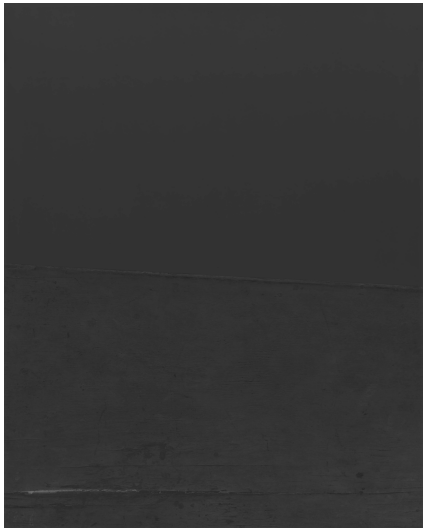


[2020_06_01 11: 43 cloudless]



[2019_11_01 11:08 cloudless]
2019
8x10 gelatin silver salt negative film, giclée
print, natural light exposure for 56"
110x137.5cm (Giclée print)
*5 pieces of negative films in total

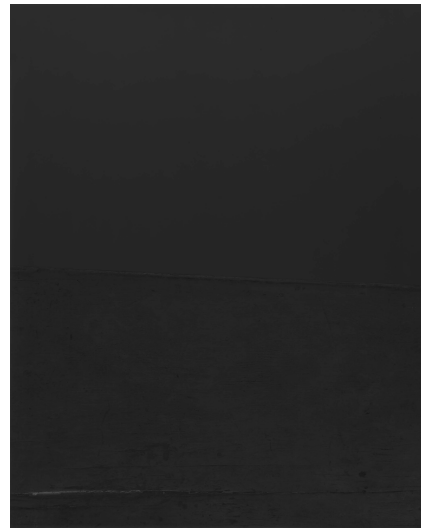




[2019_11_01 11:08 cloudless]
Object has a lighter tone



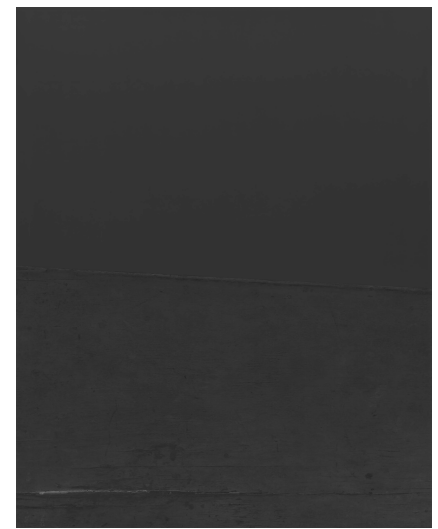
[2019_10_29 11:40 cloudless]
Object has a darker tone



[2019_10_30 10:50 cloudless]
Object has a darker tone



[2019_10_31 10:53 cloudless]
Object has a lighter tone



[2019_11_01 11:08 cloudless]

[2022_02_02 11: 22 rain]

2022

8x10 gelatin silver salt negative film, giclée

print, natural light exposure for 25'30"

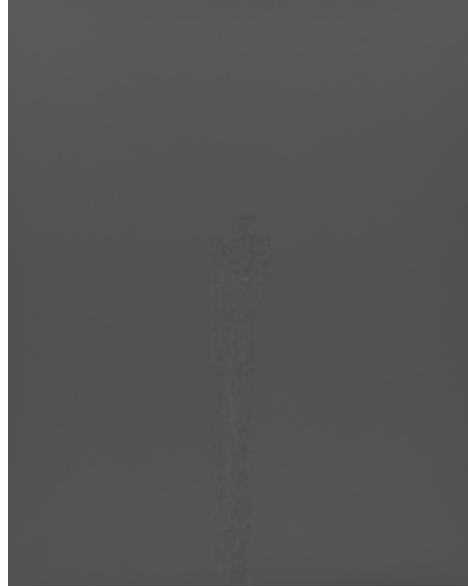
110x137.5cm (Giclée print)

*8 pieces of negative films in total

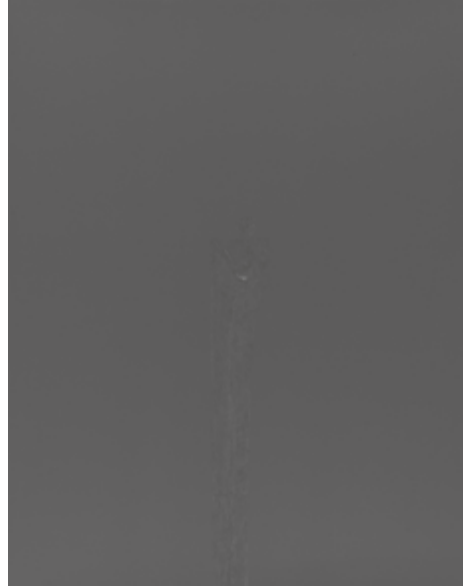




[2022_01_18 11:06 cloudy]
Object has a lighter tone



[2022_01_19 11:09 cloudless]
Top of the object has a darker tone



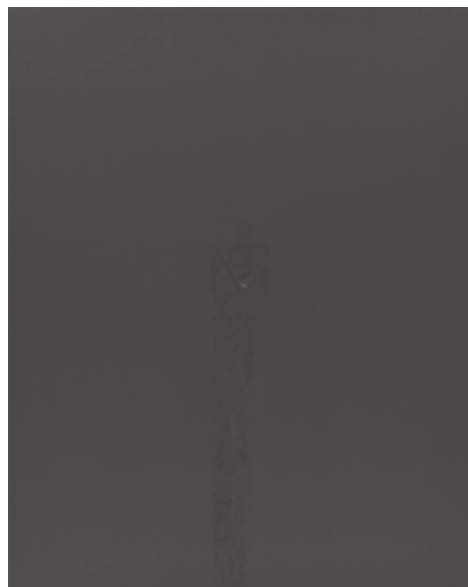
[2022_01_20 11:08 cloudy]
Object has a lighter tone



[2022_01_21 11:05 cloudy]
Top of the object is solid



[2022_01_25 11:05 cloudy]
Object has a lighter tone



[2022_01_26 11:13 rain]
Object has a darker tone



[2022_01_27 11:02 cloudy]
Edge of the object has a lighter tone, dust



[2022_02_02 11:22 rain]

Brief History

Born in 1961, artist Qin Yifeng was a participant in the 85 New Wave and began his career as an abstract painter. In his painting style "Xian Chang" (field of lines), established in 1992, Qin Yifeng discusses how to express the cube with the most basic lines, thinking about the composition of lines and surfaces, and the relationship between plane and three dimensions. This attempt to express the contradictory qualities of things in the most concise and precise language has always been the core of Qin Yifeng's creations.

Since 1995, Qin Yifeng has been studying and collecting plain Ming-style furniture. These pieces of furniture were made by unknown craftsmen four or five hundred years ago. They are a small but important part of Ming dynasty furniture. Plain furniture has always been used by the literati for their own use. There is no redundant carving and painting decoration, and it is beautiful and durable. The aesthetics in it reflects the attitude and survival strategy of human beings towards nature. Since 2006, Qin Yifeng started to produce a book that carefully sorting through his collection of furniture, and it was when he was taking pictures of the furniture for the book, the legs of a Ming-style square table were in front of him, the idea of "expressing three-dimensionality in flat surface" came to him again. Since then, he has been exploring photography for 10 years.

Qin Yifeng's creations are a dialogue between human and nature, where the artist captures the survival values that the remnants point to, with his contradictory photographic language. Qin Yifeng thinks about the traces of life left behind from an artistic point of view, to see the decaying information transformed into language, with open-ended answers. His compliance with natural conditions for creation is closely related to the furniture left behind hundreds of years ago. Compared with today's faster and more convenient rhythm of time, the slower strategy of natural survival gives him more time and space. Time becomes an important factor in Qin Yifeng's works, and this factor is combined with industrialized photographic equipment eventually

generates an unexpected result.

Method

In his suburban studio, far from urban life, Qin Yifeng chooses to shoot at noon every day. Under the help of natural light, waiting for the moment when daylight shines evenly on the subject, erasing light and darkness as well as shadows. This fleeting moment of natural light condition means that he can only shoot once a day, but Qin Yifeng believes that it is more important to form a relationship with nature than to pursue efficiency. Therefore, he records the weather of the day and the exposure time of the shot as the title of his work, introducing the changes of nature into the narrative of his work.

In order to achieve a "flat" visual effect, Qin Yifeng photographed over a hundred square table legs from 2010 and 2014. He uses a large-format camera to take photos, and he requires that the resulting works should be unfamiliar to him, so that he can stay away from the conceptual and empirical framework of photography. In each shooting, he would carefully mark the shooting process as a basis for reference and correction for future shootings. After the shoot, he would develop the film on the same day, read it carefully on the light box, and compare it repeatedly with the previous film. This comparison procedure was done because the images he shot did not meet the standard photographic judging criteria, so he has to focus on viewing to find the most ideal plane from the subtle differences between the works.

For Qin Yifeng, photography generally aims for leaving a three-dimensional image in its nature of three-dimensionality and objectivity. But Qin wanted to create a new language of contradiction with camera: a flat surface erasing light and dark projection, three-dimensional perspective, and spatial depth. He invested himself into a game with nature, technology and time. In over a decade of practice, he has repeatedly explored his theory with the hardware equipment such as cameras, lenses, films, fluids, backgrounds and

printing paper, as well as the shooting environment such as the time of day and lighting conditions.

The subject Qin Yifeng chose is the remnants of plain Ming-style furniture that has undergone decay. For the artist, decay is an issue that must be confronted: a tree felled by artisans in Ming dynasty, made into furniture and passed on to modern society can be seen as both the corpse of a tree and the beginning of a new life. Through natural weathering, human destruction and restoration over the centuries, the two systems of tree textures and the aesthetics of arts and crafts fight against each other in the remnants and decay together in time. By photographing these pieces of furniture, Qin Yifeng also attempts to touch on the concepts of life cycle and its end.

Stages of Negative

For an artist, a new artistic language is a start of creation, but the process of maturing it has to go through different stages. When the idea of 'negative' was first born, Qin Yifeng had his work developed by a photo agency, but five different films were corrected to give a same result. In response, Qin began to re-learn every part of photography - the characteristics of different lenses, different countries' films, papers, and how they were developed. Eventually, he adopted 8x10 film with traditional silver salt imaging as the main part of his work, which gradually developed into three stages:

Stage One: shift things from three-dimensional to flat, weakening the relationship between light and dark and eliminating projection.

Stage Two: take negatives as the work. Keep the image flat in a clear but deconstructing way when compressing the space as much as possible.

Stage Three: make the image de-materialised as far as possible so that the object goes deeper into the frame in a state of near disappearance.

Thus, in Qin Yifeng's work, the negatives serve as a position that inverts normal experience into something new, and its paradoxical nature is embedded precisely in the inverse thinking. The negative presents both the strangeness of the familiar artefacts and the base of the flat image he envisages. As for the artist, he focuses on the introduction of multiple contradiction into photography: using camera to resist the depth of field, using negative film to invert black and white, or to see things disappear in the clearest image. For this reason, Qin Yifeng always uses film with the mildest sensitivity as the base for his images, regardless of the daily changes in weather and daylight. This is because it is capable of precipitating the finest silver halide particles, producing a new language of contradiction.

From the third stage onwards, Qin Yifeng chooses to use earthworm clay as a 'pigment' to adjust the greyness of the subject, and the powder of the clay would diminish the materiality. The earthworm clay has a natural metabolic and cyclical quality, in the same time, it also covers the 'made-up' furniture with fine powder, making the objects fade away on the film. In this way, the 8x10 particle plane, rather than photography, is a theater of decay Qin Yifeng created according to the property of silver salt particles. It is the result of his inverse extrapolation of flat images after an in-depth study of the principles of photography. The photographed furniture expresses the decay of the natural order and cultural order decay simultaneously in time, pointing to the unknown. It is difficult to demonstrate this future-oriented decay in any three-dimensional space, so it is no wonder that Qin Yifeng uses exposure time to modulate a tight gray flat, in order to eliminate the intervention of narrative and guide the wooden object to a pure particle endgame.

Qin Yifeng

- 1961 Born in Qinghai
- 1962 Settled down in Shanghai
- 1983 Graduated from Shanghai Arts and Crafts College
- 1989 Graduated from the Fine Arts College of Shanghai University
Instructor at Fine Arts College of Shanghai University

Solo Exhibitions

- 1994 Qin Yifeng's Works, Fine Arts College of Shanghai University
- 1996 Resent Works of Qin Yifeng, Red Gate Gallery, Beijing
- 1999 Qin Yifeng's Art Works, Chinese Contemporary Gallery, London
- 2000 Control and Random, Red Gate Gallery, Beijing
- 2005 Line Field-Qinyifeng's Art Works, Eastlink Gallery, Shanghai
- 2009 Releasing show for the book Round and Square--Austere Furniture of Ming Dynasty, am Art Space, Shanghai
- 2014 Line Field, C-Space, Beijing
- 2016 Line & Field, Mind Set Art Center, Taipei
- 2017 Qin Yifeng's Works, YUZ Museum, Shanghai
- 2019 Negative Reading|Reading Negatives, White Cube, Hong Kong
- 2021 Xian Zai An Yin, MUD Gallery, Shanghai
- 2022 Disillusion, LightSociety, Beijing

Group Exhibitions

- 1985 Modern Painting of Six Artists, Shanghai Fudan University
- 1986 Concave and Convex Exhibition, Culture Center in Shanghai Xu Hui District
- 1986 M Performance, Culture Center in Shanghai Hongkou District

- 1989 Chinese Contemporary Art Exhibition, National Art Museum of China
- 1995 Works of Six Artists in Shanghai, ShangART Gallery
- 1997 Invisible Existence, Fine Art College of Shanghai University
- 1998 20+1 Exhibition of Contemporary Chinese Art, International Exhibition Center, Tokyo
- 2000 Shanghai Modern Art Exhibition, Chicago
- 2001 Xing Er Shang 2001, Shanghai Art Museum
- 2002 East & West-Chinese Contemporary Art Exhibition, Vienna
- 2003 The First Beijing International Art Biennale, National Art Museum of China
- 2003 Prayer Beads and Brushwork, BATP, Beijing
- 2016 Temporary Museum, Museum of Shanghai Academy of Fine Arts
- 2016 The world is yours, as well as ours, White Cube, London
- 2017 Line. Field. Landscape, C-Space, Beijing
- 2017 Simultaneous Eidos, Guangzhou Image Triennial 2017
- 2017 Tracing the Part and Shaping the Future, PowerLong Museum
- 2018 Shanghai 30 years Contemporary Art Literature Exhibition (1979-2010), Ming Yuan Art Museum
- 2019 Selected group exhibitions include LOOK Photo Biennial 2019 "Peer-to-Peer", Liverpool, U.K
- 2021 Chinese Colours: Eastward Turn to Absoluteness, Long Museum, Shanghai
- 2022 The Tenth Anniversary of The to Absoluteness Long Museum, Long Museum, Shanghai

COLLECTTIONS

- 1999 Canvas Foundation, Holland
- 2001 Shanghai Art Museum
- 2002 Shanghai Art Museum
- 2006 Lehman Brothers Holdings Inc.
- 2007 The Fine Art College of Shanghai University
- 2008 Z-Art Center, Shanghai
- 2020 Zhi Art Museum
- 2020 Long Museum
- 2021 APSMUSEUM
- 2022 LightSociety

AWARDS

- 2004 10th National Art Exhibition, National Art Museum of China
Won the gold medal for landscape design competition

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