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Xing Danwen

A Personal Diary

February 18 – March 27, 2010

Reception with the artist: Thursday, March 4, 2010 5:30 pm to 7:30 pm

It is an honor and a privilege to announce our upcoming exhibition with contemporary Chinese photographer Xing Danwen. In her first US solo exhibition of this oeuvre, Xing presents a portion of her series *A Personal Diary*, which chronicles the rise of the avant-garde and the emergence of performance art in Beijing's East Village artist community in the 1990's. This important body of work by one of China's most influential female artists is just now being introduced for public exhibition. Over the past decade, Chinese artists have received significant recognition, much of which has been market-driven. *A Personal Diary* provides insight into an under-recognized yet seminal moment in China's recent past, providing a much-needed scholarly approach to the Country's rich history of contemporary art.

The 1990's were a time period marked by greater freedom of expression for artists in China, creating a forum for the development and growth of new ideas. Xing herself was one of the few Chinese artists in the late 80's and 90's who was exploring the boundaries of photography and performance. She writes: "It was the transition for China from a traditional art scene to a more international presence. In the early 1990s many visual artists who worked as painters suddenly took off their clothes, performing naked in public; musicians from traditional and folk music backgrounds brought Rock and Jazz into many underground bars. They brought revolution to the tradition and looked for more avant-garde forms of art."

As a photographer, Xing documented the performance art and happenings of such artists as Zhang Huan, Xu Bing, Wang Jin, Song Dong, Rong Rong, Ma Liuming, and Fang Lijun. These artists, along with Xing herself, would soon become important figures both within China's art scene and the art world at large. *A Personal Diary* extends the importance of their work during this radical underground moment in Beijing and provides a basis for the expansion and growth of the current art movement in China.

Xing Danwen was born in Xi'an, China and attended the Central Academy of Fine Arts in Beijing from 1989 – 1992. In 1998, she temporarily moved to New York with a grant and fellowship from the Asian Cultural Council and earned her MFA from the School of Visual Arts. She has since expanded her practice to include mixed media, video and multi-media installations. She has exhibited internationally at such institutions as the Whitney Museum of American Art, the Centre Pompidou, the International Center for Photography, the Victoria and Albert Museum, the First Yokohama Triennale and the Sydney Biennale of 2004.

A feature on the artist will appear in the February issue of *Art in America* with an article by Richard Vine. Xing Danwen will also be speaking at San Francisco Camerawork on the evening of March 2nd.

IMAGES AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST