

IMMEDIATE PRESS RELEASE

“Memory and Fiction” by Wong Wo Bik

11 January - 4 February 2012

Opening Reception: Tuesday, 10 January 2012, 6:30 to 8:30pm
Artist will be present.

Venue: Blindspot Gallery (24-26A, Aberdeen Street, Central)
Opening hours: Tuesday to Saturday, 11:00am to 7:00pm
Closed on public holidays



Blindspot Gallery is proud to present “Memory and Fiction”, featuring Wong Wo Bik, one of Hong Kong’s most accomplished photographers, as well as one of a small number of female photographers active in the territory. The retrospective exhibition will feature selected works of Wong dated from the 1980s, including photographs of Hong Kong’s historical and notable landmarks, such as Lai Yuen Amusement Park and the Eu family mansions that were now demolished, and the Main Building of the University of Hong Kong.

Since the 1980s, Wong took all possibilities to photograph historical architecture threatened by demolition in Hong Kong. “I paid particular attention to landmarks or buildings that were not considered 'built heritage', but carried historical significance or were once frequented by locals. Because their demolition was inevitable, the only thing I could do was to document them photographically. It was for me of paramount importance to

capsulate them in the photographic space¹,” Wong says. Yet Wong’s photographs of these architectures are not merely documentary of history, they are also the artist’s subjective narrative of her personal experiences at these sites, as well as depiction of traces left behind by others.

As curator Eve Tam rightly described, “In their (Wong’s architectural photographs) refusal to capture places in a formal documentary manner, Wong’s photographs are more like spontaneous, free-flowing narratives recounted in a stream of consciousness. Sometimes the images evoke the psyche of the building/site representative of the cultural and mental reality of its time and inhabitants. At times, they recall a world lost, forgotten, abandoned. And at still other times, they exist as fragments of an immediate world transformed into rich fantasy².”



Greatly influenced by filmmaking, Wong stretches her creativity to manipulate the environment or settings for her photographs. This directorial approach has been a consistent thread in Wong's diverse body of work. Flash of light and long exposure are always used to create tangible and intangible effects, transforming the reality into fiction.

Wong has dedicated a majority of her photography series to the subject of architecture over the years, perhaps, as she finds architecture and photography are both functional and cultural in form, creative and imaginative in concept. They also both relate the individual to the collective, and form part of a visible memory and history.

Wong Wo Bik will be present at the opening reception. Interviews with the artist are welcomed and can be arranged.

About Wong Wo Bik

A truly multifaceted artist, Wong received her BFA in sculpture and printmaking from the Columbus College of Art and Design, Ohio in 1977 and MFA in photography (minor in filmmaking) from the Tyler School of Art, Temple University in the United States in 1979. Wong has had a long and active career as a photographer, curator, researcher and art educator. She is the fellowship recipient of Asian Cultural Council (ACC) and Institute of International Education (IIE) in 1994 and 1995 respectively. Wong is one of the founding members of Hong Kong Photo Festival (Hong Kong Photographic Culture Association), and she has been the Museum Honorary Advisor for the Leisure and Cultural Services Department since 1996. Her work is collected by the Guangdong Museum of Art and the Hong Kong Heritage Museum. Wong currently lives and works in Hong Kong.



About Blindspot Gallery

Blindspot Gallery is set up to bring contemporary photography, an art form that has entered the blind spot of the Hong Kong art market, to a higher degree of visibility. We feature both established and emerging photographers and artists, mainly from the region but also beyond.

For enquiries and media interviews, please contact Ms. Lesley Kwok at 2517 6238 or by email info@blindspotgallery.com.

Image captions:

Wong Wo Bik, *Man Descending From Spiral Staircase, HKU Hostel*, 1990, Fine art inkjet print, 127 x 101 cm (Edition of 5) / 98 x 76 cm (Edition of 8).

Wong Wo Bik, *Beauty and Snow, Lai Yuen Amusement Park, Hong Kong*, 1997, Fine art inkjet print, 172 x 96 cm (Edition of 5) / 120 x 68 cm (Edition of 8).

Wong Wo Bik, *Window, Euston Mansion, Bonham Road, Hong Kong*, 1984, Fine art inkjet print, 101 x 101 cm (Edition of 5) / 76 x 76 cm (Edition of 8).

(Image courtesy of the artist and Blindspot Gallery)

Footnotes:

1 & 2. *Hong Kong/China Photographers Four: Wong Wo Bik* by Eve Tam. Asia One Product & Publishing Limited, 2009, p.6