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ART NEWS

Paradise Lost: Solo Exhibition by Christian Houge Opening Nov. 14 at Three Shadows Photography Art Centre

by SUE WANG on Nov 2, 2015 • 4:29 pm

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CAFA NEWS



主办: 三影堂摄影艺术中心 // 开幕: 2015年11月14日16时 // 展期: 2015年11月14日至12月6日 // 地点: 北京朝阳区麦子店街155A 100015
Host: Three Shadows Photography Art Centre // Opening: 4pm, Nov. 14, 2015 // Duration: Nov. 14, Dec. 6 2015 // Address: Caohangli 155A, Chaoyang District, Beijing, China
www.threeshadows.cn

For almost twenty years Christian Houge has used photography and film as tools in his art projects. He has been drawn to explore themes relating to nature and culture that have dealt with taboos arising from the juxtaposition of man and environment, and ultimately ourselves. In exploring this relation between nature and culture, he touches

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upon the human condition. At the moment, Houge is well into a large China tour with his extensive exhibition *Paradise Lost*. The concept, *Paradise Lost*, derives from the late poet John Milton and revolves around how Man lost his innocence with nature.

The three series shown (in all 85 images and three films) are made over the past fifteen years of extensive work. *Arctic Technology 2000-2015*, *Barentsburg 2000-2015* and *Shadow Within 2011-2013* are all represented in this non-profit museum tour and have been funded partly by the Norwegian Embassy in Beijing, The Norwegian Artist Council and private sponsors. This tour stands out in China because of its content, size and content of awareness. All three series in the exhibition represents three sides of Norway dialectically, which the Chinese can very much relate to when it comes to our current ecological crisis. The exhibition has already been seen by over 100 000 visitors with considerable response.



Christian Houge, Coal Tornado 2000

Christian Houge, Embankment 2014

Houge invites the viewer into the borderlands that exist between the artificial order of the human race and our relation to our surroundings both physically and metaphorically. Climate and the consequences of Mans impact, relation and conflict on the planet is defining in these projects.

Asking the questions 'Is nature with us or against us?' and 'Are we with or against nature?' Throughout his work, Christian invites the viewer to disclose concepts in another light, marking our constant bordering on the other. Through years of solo exhibitions in galleries and museums both nationally and internationally, Houge has been dwelling speculatively on the contradictions in which human beings dwell.



Christian Houge, Spheres in Moonlight, 2000



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Christian Houge, Therapy room 2006

It is vital to his process to learn as much as possible about each subject he works with. A project may last for many years. Houge deeply involves the ability to step outside immediate surroundings and culture to confront our non-integrated horizon. Houge has received several photographic awards and recognitions. He has received art grants on three occasions on the *Barentsburg and Arctic Technology* series, awarded by the Norwegian Artist Fund, and the Culture Council of Norway. During the past three years, his series have been nominated twice by the world's most prestigious photography award on sustainability, 'Prix Pictet', on his series *Barentsburg and Shadow Within*. In 2014, Houge was invited to Johnson Museum in New York to exhibit and talk in *Beyond Earth Art*. Exhibitions at Hosfelt Gallery in New York/San Francisco, films and installation in museums as well as public speakings and publications such as *(Haydens Review and the books 'Altered Landscape'(Rizzoli), 'Landscape Futures'(Actar and Nevada Museum of Art)*), SNU (Cappelen Damm) help bring my work out to a larger audience to spread an awareness of a bigger picture much larger than ourselves. Sales to museum collections such as Nevada Museum of Art with their human impact and environment collection has been important for me. Work from his 'Arctic Technology' series toured with a travelling exhibition in the US and Canada called 'Vanishing Ice' last year, curated by WhatCom (Museum of Washington, USA). The show included art exploring and commenting on climate issues from some of the world's leading artists. His largest climate research work in panorama from Svalbard was a key element in the exhibition 'AntArctica' at Haugar Museum, Vestfold, Norway in 2009. This show looked at the effects of climate change and also included artists like Sonja Braas and Lucy/Jorge Orta.

His images have been purchased by large government establishments and art collectors. Houge's work are part of museum collections both in his native country and the US/China. Other institutions such as the Norwegian Ministry of Climate and Environment the Norwegian Ministry of Defence has commissioned his work on a large scale for their new buildings. His work has also been auctioned at Sotheby's in London. In 2005 he was shortlisted at the BMW Prix at Paris Photo for his Arctic series (Scout Gallery London).

About the exhibition

Host: Three Shadows Photography Art Centre

Curator: Lian Chunhai

Opening: 4p.m., Nov. 14, 2015

Duraton: Nov. 14 – Dec. 6, 2015

Venue: Three Shadows Photography Art Centre (Caochangdi 155A, Chaoyang District, Beijing 100015, China)

Website: www.threeshadows.cn

Tel: 86 10 64322663

Courtesy of the artist and Three Shadows Photography Art Centre, for further information please visit

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