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CONTACT: Lydia Han, lydia@c-c-c.org
Michael Thurin, michael@sfcamerawork.org

回 *Retrieved*

3 artists in a dual-sited exhibition untangle and re-present the story of China in the last century,
Co-curated by the Chinese Culture Foundation and SF Camerawork
Exhibition Dates: February 19 to April 16, 2016

SAN FRANCISCO, December 2015- 回 *Retrieved* is a photography exhibition at two sites, a unique collaboration and partnership between the Chinese Culture Foundation of San Francisco and SF Camerawork. Both exhibition sites will present complementary bodies of work by 3 artists, capturing personal, human, and living portraits of China in the last century. The exhibition portrays the cosmopolitan and shifting parameters of the Chinese experience as a global trend of cultural expansion and universality, one in which viewers are certain to find glimpses if not revelations of personal lives and histories.

回 *Retrieved* brings together three distinctive photographic projects: a personal photo history of one Hong Kong Family; a growing archive of discarded negatives salvaged from a junkyard on the outskirts of Beijing; and a selection of portraits of African migrants taken by itinerant street photographers in the mega-metropolis of Guangzhou. The exhibition reflects on the transition and movement of time, place, and people in modern China, and is based on either abandoned or neglected photographs that were gleaned by artists with varied relationships to the source material.

Artist Kurt Tong's series "The Queen, The Chairman, and I" adroitly incorporates original work with the artist's family photographs, tracing his familial journey from Shanghai, to Hong Kong, to England, and back to Hong Kong. This push-pull relationship to China, and what it means to be Chinese, is at the heart of the project. Accompanying his carefully curated archive will be an installation of a Chinese tea house at the Chinese Culture Foundation's Visual Art Center, which provides the viewer an opportunity to sit, sip tea, and consider the project and its connections to viewers' own family histories.

Kurt Tong

"Beijing Silvermine," another archive sourced project, is the title French photographer and editor Thomas Sauvin has given to his vast cache of salvaged photographic negatives. In 2009, Sauvin purchased the negatives, by the kilo, from a recycler's warehouse on the outskirts of Beijing. Sauvin then sorted, digitized, and catalogued the collection of several million images. The result is an amazing archive of often bizarre but revealing images documenting the changing lives of Beijing residents from 1985 to 2005, and spanning the period from the first introduction of Kodak film in mainland China to the advent of digital photography.

The third project in the exhibition, Daniel Traub's "Little North Road," takes its title from the shorthand name of a pedestrian footbridge connecting two parts of a busy commercial neighborhood in the heart of Guangzhou. Here Traub encountered two itinerant photographers selling instant portraits to international traders doing business in Gaungzhou, many of them African. Traub began collecting the digital files from the photographers and developed a collaboration, with complex implications of authorship, and amassed a collection of more than 20,000 images. The exhibition will include a selection of prints, featuring the work of Traub and both itinerant photographers, and presenting an entirely contemporary visualization of cultural influence in China.

Beijing Silvermine / Thomas Sauvin

Daniel Traub

The title of the exhibition, referring to the retrieval process shared by the three constructed archives, describes the intentionally artistic gesture of retrieving found photographs in a context far beyond the simple action of accumulation. Though these three projects have previously been exhibited independently, ⧈ *Retrieved* will be the first presentation of the work both to a San Francisco audience and as a collective, dynamic panoramic of China in the last century.

Free and open to the public
Reception: Friday, February 19
Date: February 19 to April 23, 2016
Location: **Visual Art Center, Chinese Culture Center,** 750 Kearny St. 3rd Floor
Tuesday–Saturday, 10 a.m – 4 p.m.; closed Sun. & Mon.
SF Camerawork, 1011 Market Street, 2nd Floor
Tuesday — Friday, Noon to 6:00 pm; Saturday, Noon to 5:00 PM; and by appointment

Artists Bios

Kurt Tong

Born in Hong Kong in 1977, Kurt Tong was originally trained as a health visitor at the University of Liverpool. He has worked and traveled extensively across Europe, the Americas and Asia. In 1999, Kurt co-founded Prema Vasam, a charitable home for disabled and disadvantaged children in Chennai, South India. He gained his Masters in documentary photography at the London College of Communications in 2006. His series "In Case it Rains in Heaven,' exploring the practice of Chinese funeral offerings, has been widely exhibited including a solo exhibition at Compton Verney and features in several public collections. A monograph of the work was published by Kehrer Verlag in 2011. Much of Kurt's recent work, while remaining photographic in essence, has moved towards installation and sculpture, pushing the boundaries of the medium. *Echoed Visions*, a series of installations questioning the medium of photography, made its debut at the Identity Art Gallery, Hong Kong in February 2014.

Daniel Traub

Daniel Traub (b. 1971) is a New York-based photographer and filmmaker, originally from Philadelphia. Traub lived in China from 1998 to 2007, working as a cinematographer on documentary films. He was also engaged in long-term photographic projects, including *Simplified Characters*, a series of street pictures that explore the vast changes at the beginning of the 21st century in urban China, as well as the series *Peripheries*, which looks at the landscape at the outskirts of several major Chinese cities. His photographs have been exhibited internationally, including solo exhibitions at the Catherine Edelman Gallery in Chicago, Slought in Philadelphia and the Lianzhou photo festival in China. His work can be found in public and private collections, such as the Margulies Collection at the WAREhOUSE and the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art. His work has also appeared in publications including Aperture, European Photography and The New York Times Magazine. Traub has published two monographs with Kehrer Verlag: *North Philadelphia* and *Little North Road*.

Thomas Sauvin

Thomas Sauvin is a French photography collector and editor who lives in Beijing and Paris. Since 2006 he has worked as a consultant for the UK-based Archive of Modern Conflict (AMC) for whom he collects Chinese work, from contemporary art photography to period publications and anonymous photography. A glimpse into this collection is presented in the photobook *Happy Tonite* published by AMC in 2010, and in the photobook Quanshen published in 2013. Sauvin's project 'Beijing Silvermine', an archive of half a million negatives salvaged over the years from a recycling plant on the edge of Beijing, has been presented by Singapore International Photo Festival (2012); FORMAT Photo Festival, Derby, UK (2013); The Salt Yard, Hong Kong (2013); and Lianzhou Foto Festival (2013), China's premier international photography festival, where it received New Photography Award of the Year, 4A Centre for Contemporary Asian Art, Australia (2014), Chicago Museum of Contemporary Photography, US (2014), Vevey's Festival Images, Switzerland (2014) and Brussel's Paris-Beijing Gallery, Belgium (2014).

Auxiliary Programming

Opening Reception
Date: February 19th, 2016
Time: 6-8 PM
Location: Chinese Culture Center Visual Art Center, 750 Kearny St. 3Fl.
AND SF Camerawork, 1011 Market Street, 2nd FL

Artists' Talk & Book Signing
Date: February 23rd, 2016
Time: 6 – 8 PM
Location: SF Camerawork, 1011 Market Street, 2nd Floor

About the Group Exhibition

Retrieved is co-curated by Abby Chen of the Chinese Culture Foundation and Heather Snider of SF Camerawork. Major funding for the project is provided by the Andy Warhol Foundation for Visual Arts and the Wyng Masters Award/Foundation, with additional support from the San Francisco Arts Commission, San Francisco Foundation, and Grants for the Arts.

The Chinese Culture Foundation of San Francisco

A leader in the arts, the Chinese Culture Foundation's mission is to spark intercultural discovery through art, education, and engagement. The organization provides engaging experiences with contemporary art at the intersection of social justice and culture. Having recently celebrated 50 years, the organization frequently exhibits and participates in experimental art projects to activate the community and tell a contemporary Chinese American narrative.

It is one of the few organizations in the country promoting artists of Asian descent. Engaging a growing international and national audience through art exhibits and public art, the CCF has curated at Asian Art Museum, Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, Miami Beach Urban Studios, and in Hangzhou and New York among other locations. CCF has also developed deep ties in the community through educational and engagement activities. Over 148,000 constituents engaged in CCF programming last year.

San Francisco Camerawork

Founded in 1974, SF Camerawork's mission is to encourage and support emerging artists to explore new directions and ideas in the photographic arts. Through exhibitions, publications, and educational programs, SF Camerawork strives to create an engaging platform for artistic exploration as well as community involvement and inquiry.

IMAGES/INTERVIEWS:

For images and to schedule interviews contact:
Lydia Han, Program & Communications, Chinese Culture Foundation of San Francisco
lydia@c-c-c.org, 415.986.1822x32
Michael Thurin, Gallery Manager, michael@sfcamerawork.org, 415.487.1011