

Snap to it

The inaugural Photo Taipei is already the largest art fair of its kind in Asia

BY HO YI
STAFF REPORTER

A new type of art fair has been popping up all over Asia. Photo Beijing and Seoul Photo started last year. Tokyo Photo followed this September. And now there's Photo Taipei 2009, an international art fair that, like its counterparts, focuses on photo-based, video and new media art.

The three-day event starts on Friday at the Westin Taipei (台北六福皇宮) with 33 participating galleries from Taiwan, China, Japan, Australia, France and the U.S. Event organizer Taiwan Contemporary Art Link (台灣當代藝術連線), a group consisting of four local galleries including Dynasty Art Gallery (朝代藝術) and Aki Gallery (趣畫廊), is also the brains behind Young Art Taipei, a contemporary art fair that held its first show in May.

With 33 participating galleries showing photographs and video works by some 120 artists, Photo Taipei 2009 is already the biggest of its kind in Asia. Photographic and video works usually play minor roles in larger art fairs, but they dominate Photo Taipei 2009.

"Few galleries want to bring photo-based and new media art works to big fairs. Galleries want to sell mainstream works, which in Asia means oil paintings," says Galerie Grand Siecle (新苑藝術) owner and Photo Taipei chairman Richard Chang (張學孔).

Though photography has long history in Taiwan, the local market for it is too small to have been affected by the recent global financial crisis, says Chang. And video art has only recently begun attracting the attention of collectors. "Four years ago when we started to promote video art, collectors were virtually nonexistent. Now there are around 10 galleries that showcase video art in Taiwan, and together we have cultivated some 50 collectors," says Chang.

According to Chang, photographic and video art account for roughly one to two percent of the local art market, compared to the 20 to 30 percent internationally. Photo Taipei's aim is to cultivate the market and foster exchanges between artists and collectors and, ultimately, become one of the world's biggest photo-based and new media art fairs.

Photo Taipei 2009 will be of particular interest to novice collectors. "While oil paintings often fetch millions and millions of NT dollars, Long Ching-shan's (郎靜山) photographs are priced between NT\$300,000 to NT\$400,000, says Chang. "Large contemporary photographs can go a little higher, but they are unlikely to surpass NT\$700,000."

Most pieces at Photo Taipei are priced at less than NT\$100,000, with the average photo-based piece likely to set collectors back only a few thousand NT dollars.

In addition to the works on sale, there will be three curated exhibitions, one of them on younger Taiwanese artists including Long Ching-shan, Chang Tsai (張才), Wu Shao-tung (吳紹同), Lee Ming-tiao (李鳴暉), Yu Cheng-ta (余政達) and Lin Guan-ming (林冠名).

A special exhibition in collaboration with Japanese gallery Zeit-Foto Salon features works by renowned artists such as May Ray, Nobuyoshi Araki and Daido Moriyama.

Two forums on contemporary photography and digital art will be held at the hotel on Saturday. Participating speakers include Shigeo Goto from Tokyo Photo, artist Wang Jun-jieh (王俊傑) and scholar Kuo Li-xi (郭力昕).

EXHIBITION NOTES:

WHAT: Photo Taipei 2009

WHEN: Friday to Sunday from noon to 8pm

WHERE: The Westin Taipei (台北六福皇宮), 133, Nanjing E Rd Sec 3, Taipei City (台北市南京東路三段133號). The art fair is on the 4th and 5th floors of the hotel

ADMISSION: NT\$150

ON THE NET: www.phototaipei.com



Butchart

Tseng Yu-chin's (曾御欽) video series *Who Is Listening?* (有誰聽見了?, 2003-2004) from Butchart Contemporary Art Space (布查當代藝術空間). Tseng, who works mostly in photographs and video, is one of Taiwan's brightest talents on the international art scene. In 2007, the then 27-year-old became the youngest participant at the prestigious Documenta 12 in Kassel, Germany with the *Who Is Listening?* series.

PHOTO COURTESY OF PHOTO TAIPEI 2009

Chi-Wen

Karaoke, Taichang by photographer and photojournalist Chang Chien-chi (張乾琦) from Chi-Wen Gallery, Taiwan's foremost gallery for new media art. Chang is a member of the Magnum Photos cooperative and his photographs have been published in the *New York Times*, *Time* and *National Geographic*. Notable works include a photo essay documenting a mental institution in Taiwan and another on the lives of illegal immigrants in New York's Chinatown.

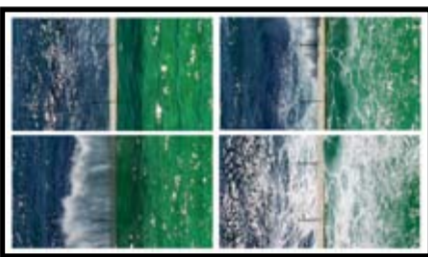
PHOTO COURTESY OF PHOTO TAIPEI 2009



Gallery Barry Keldoulis

Gallery Barryu Keldoulis from Sydney presents digital video *The Wall* (2009) by Jess MacNeil, a young Australian artist working predominantly in video and painting. Established by artist Barry Keldoulis in 2003 upon his return to Sydney after 15 years in Europe and New York, the gallery focuses on contemporary art created by young, emerging artists.

PHOTO COURTESY OF PHOTO TAIPEI 2009



Gallery Kogure

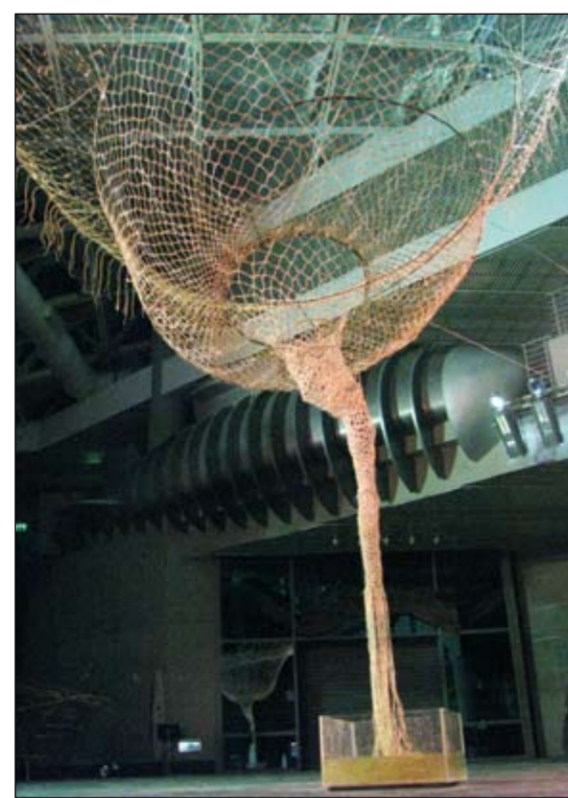
Tokyo's Gallery Kogure presents the late master photographer Shoji Ueda's 1981 color photo series *Brilliant Scenes*. Ueda is known for atmospheric images that combine realistic depictions with surrealist compositional arrangements.

PHOTO COURTESY OF PHOTO TAIPEI 2009

Caught in a net

A trio of artists wants the public to feel like marine creatures to foster a greater appreciation for the oceans and our environment

BY DIANE BAKER
STAFF REPORTER



PHOTOS COURTESY OF NATIONAL MUSEUM OF MARINE BIOLOGY AND AQUARIUM

wouldn't let us use it for security issues ... so it ended up that the Waters of the World pavilion was the only space we could use. But it turned out to be the best place," Allen said. "It's really funny. There are several entrances to the pavilion but everyone has been choosing to enter through the trap. You really have to bend down to get out. I saw some kids are doing the limbo, people with strollers trying to get through, it was really crazy."

"Then the first thing they are confronted by is the huge net by Karen. It's four or five floors up, really big, but it had to be big to fill the space," Allen said.

Van der Molen's net, titled *The Trap*, was woven of sisal and other natural rope materials and is connected to a container of seawater on the floor so that salt crystals will form on it over time. The idea is to show what humans have done to the oceans through careless pollution.

Hanging from the ceiling is Kang's *Skeletons*, made from driftwood, plastic bottles and other garbage, all encased in plastic sheeting to resemble the exoskeletons of marine creatures. Kang wanted to draw attention both to endangered sealife and the problem of human garbage in the oceans.

"Kang's is a soft sculpture. We went to a nearby beach where there was a shipwreck to collect garbage. We got plastic waste from the ship, from the beach, everything, even flip-flops," Allen said.

"We had six student volunteers from Tainan National University [of the Arts]. They came for two days and were really wonderful, really dedicated," Allen said. "The artists did much bigger works than they had originally planned because of the space and the volunteers' help."

EXHIBITION NOTES:

WHAT: Turning the Tide

WHEN: Until Jan. 10. Open Tuesdays to Sundays from 9am to 5pm

WHERE: National Museum of Marine Biology and Aquarium (國立海洋生物博物館), 2 Houwan Rd, Checheng Township, Pingtung County (屏東縣車城鄉後灣村後灣路2號). Tel: (08) 882-500

ADMISSION: NT\$450 for adults, NT\$250 for children, students and senior citizens

ON THE NET: www.nmmba.gov.tw



Origino Art Space

Long Chin-san's (郎靜山) 1942 *Celestial Mountain and Pavilion* (仙山樓閣), presented by Origino Art Space. One of the world's most recognized Chinese photographers, Long is best known for his photographs that look like Chinese landscape paintings. Also showing at the gallery's booth are works of master photographer Ko Si-chi (柯錫杰).

PHOTO COURTESY OF PHOTO TAIPEI 2009

Soka

Soka Art Center presents young Taiwanese photographer Chen Ching-yao's (陳擎耀) *Dim Sum Go Go, Chinatown* and his playful *I Love NY — Restaurant Project*, created during his 2008 residency at Location One in New York. Established in 1992, the gallery promotes both traditional and contemporary arts and has branches in Taipei, Tainan and Beijing.

PHOTO COURTESY OF PHOTO TAIPEI 2009



Superstore

Tokyo's Superstore Inc presents Honjo Naoki's *Small Planet* (2006). At first glance Honjo's works look like miniature models of urban landscapes, but closer inspection reveals that they're photos of actual street scenes. The celebrated Japanese photographer specializes in shooting from tall buildings and helicopters using a tilt shift lens that allows maximum control of depth-of-field, restricting its focus to a single, narrow band to create the miniature effect.

PHOTO COURTESY OF PHOTO TAIPEI 2009

Yasunori Hoki

Naruki Oshima's photographic work *Reflections — With Upright Greenery* (2009) from Yasunori Hoki Photo Arts of Japan. The gallery will exhibit works by six photographers at Photo Taipei including Eikoh Hosoe, one of the most recognized Japanese fine-arts photographers who emerged from the experimental art movement after War World II.

PHOTO COURTESY OF PHOTO TAIPEI 2009



EXHIBITIONS

Embroidery, knitting, weaving and painting are among the variety of media Lo Tsen (洛貞) uses in her series of installations called *Gradual Rebirth* (冉冉 再生). The works found in the solo show are abstract ideas about the relationship between the artist's concern for environmental issues and her ongoing quest for her creative voice.

■ Angel Art Gallery (天使美術館), 41, Xinyi Rd Sec 3, Taipei City (台北市信義路三段41號). Open daily from 10am to 9pm. Tel: (02) 2701-5229
■ Until Dec. 20

The motifs and themes found in Japonism, a style of 19th century Japanese art that influenced European artists during the same period, is considered and expanded on by Japanese painter Toru Otsuki in his solo show *The Floating World of Fetishism* (戀物花濺浮世繪). Otsuki's visual style, reminiscent of Gustav Klimt, shows attractive young women who appear as symbols of beauty and desire. The two-dimensional figures share space with elements drawn from nature such as flowers and birds, which also become design elements on the clothes worn by the women. Otsuki updates the tradition with the addition of manga and anime forms and figures.

■ Ever Harvest Art Gallery, 2F, 107, Renai Rd Sec 4, Taipei City (台北市仁愛路四段107號2樓). Open Tuesdays to Sundays from 11am to 6:30pm. Tel: (02) 2752-2353
■ Until Dec. 31

Chung Chiun-hsiung (鍾俊雄) seeks to express his inner world at a solo exhibit of his work at Fun Year Art Gallery. Chung's acrylic and multi-media paintings of built-up pigment follow in the style of abstraction.

■ Fun Year Art Gallery (凡亞藝術空間), B1, 16, Ln 301, Henan St, Sec 2, Taichung City (台中市河南路二段301巷16號B1). Open Tuesdays to Fridays from 2pm to 6pm, Saturdays and Sundays from 10:30am to 6pm. Tel: (04) 2703-2424
■ Until Dec. 20

Destiny Curve (軌跡大化) is a father and son joint exhibition by Yung Yu-yu (楊英風) and Arthur Yung (楊泰琛). Yung Yu-yu's bronze sculptures are geometrically abstract creations that evoke nature's many shapes — whether undulating waves or triangular mountains.



Lo Tsen, *Microorganism* (No. 3).

PHOTO COURTESY OF ANGEL ART GALLERY

Arthur Yung's digital images of setting suns and outer space evoke a timeless beauty beyond the mundane.

■ Modern Art Gallery, B1, 9, Ln 155, Kungyi Rd, Taichung City (台中市公益路155巷9號). Call (04) 2305-1217 for viewing
■ Until Jan. 12

Deloks (回廊人) is an exhibit by contemporary artist and filmmaker Lin Tay-jou (林泰州). The title refers to the Tibetan Buddhist concept of a person returning to life after death. The show features five short films created by Lin between 2005 and 2009 that interweave reality and fiction, narration of facts and strong visuals. The films incorporate myths, fables and real-life interviews to explore death and the tragic nature of human existence.

■ Museum of Contemporary Art, Taipei (MOCA), 39 Changan W Rd, Taipei City (台北市長安西路39號). Open Tuesdays to Sundays from 10am to 6pm. Tel: (02) 2552-3720
■ Until Jan. 17

Painter Lee Kuen-lin (李昆霖) continues his examination of isolation and loneliness at his solo exhibit at Lee Gallery. Painted in stark colors and simple shapes — a single tree on a mountaintop or a face peering through a desolate forest — Lee's images conjure up a world where everyone has to individually examine their own mortality and their tenuous ties to others.

■ Lee Gallery (黎畫廊), 10, Ln 175, Da-an Rd Sec 1, Taipei City (台北市大安路一段175巷10號). Open Tuesdays to Sundays from 11am to 7pm. Tel: (02) 2325-6688
■ Until Dec. 27

