

Temporary exhibition  
Level -1

LU NAN  
TRILOGY

Photographs  
[1989-2004]

10/10/2017 — 14/01/2018

LU NAN  
Biography

1962 - Born and lives in Beijing.

Solo Exhibitions

2011: *The Forgotten People*, VISA POUR L'IMAGE, Perpignan, France; *On The Road*, Loyola University Museum of Art, Chicago, USA.  
2010: *Heaven and Hell*, St. Thomas Royal Monastery, Avila, Spain; *Prison Camps in Northern Myanmar* Art Museum of Central Academy of Fine Arts (CAFA), Beijing.  
2009: *The Hidden Spiritual World: 15-years Photography by Lu Nan*, Art Museum of Tianjin Academy of Fine Arts, Tianjin; *Prison Camps in Northern Myanmar*, Inter Art Center, Beijing.  
2008: *The Eternal Measure: 15-years Photography of Lu Nan*, Guangdong Museum of Art, Guangzhou; China's Independent Photography, Houston FotoFest, Texas, United States.  
2007: *15-years Photography of Lu Nan*, Songzhuang Museum of Art, Beijing; *Four Seasons*, Inter Art Center, Beijing.  
2005: *15-years Photography of Lu Nan* (slide show), Lianzhou International Photo Festival, Guangdong; *15-years Photography of Lu Nan* (slide show), Pingyao International Photography Festival, Shanxi.

Group Exhibitions

Between 1997 and 2016 Lu Nan was represented in many Group Exhibitions, namely: Yokohama Museum of Art, Japan (1997), Sifang Museum of Art, Nanjing (2006), Guangdong Museum of Art (2006), CAFA Museum of Art, Beijing (2006), China National Convention Center, Beijing (2010), Taiwan National Gallery, Taichung (2010), Photo España, Madrid, Spain (2012), Hive Center for Contemporary Art, Beijing (2014 and 2016) and Shanghai Center of Photography (2015).

Books

- *The Forgotten People: The Condition of China's Psychiatric Patients* (editions 1993/2008/2014/2017)  
- *On The Road: The Catholic Faith in China* (editions 2000/2008/2014/2017)  
- *Four Seasons: Everyday Life of Tibetan Peasants* (editions 2007/2014/2017)  
- *Prison Camps in Northern Myanmar* (editions 2009/2015)

LU NAN  
The man and his work

Lu Nan is more than a photographer; he is also an exceptional artist. The human dimension of his creations, his humanist culture, the aesthetic concepts that guided the preparation of each of his photographs, and the sensitivity and respect with which he captured the tremendous reality portrayed in his work prove this conclusively.

Lu Nan's work is the modern projection (now dated too) of the classical trilogy symbolically represented in the *Divine Comedy* by Dante Alighieri. Each of its parts is also an exemplary projection of what might be, on earth, hell, purgatory and heaven.

The only difference is that the photographs that make up the three parts of Lu Nan's *Trilogy* – one portraying life in mental hospitals (taken between 1989 and 1990), another following Catholic communities in the most isolated areas of rural China (1992 to 1996) and the third observing daily life in Tibet (1996 to 2004) – are not merely part of some fantasy, nor do they contain the allegories of that immortal poem by the famous Florentine poet.

The work carried out by Lu Nan over 15 years – and which is shown in part in this exhibition – depicts a realism that is at times painful, disturbing, that brands itself on our eyes and clings on to our memories for a long time. It might be a China from another age, but it is a life that may well be reality in many other countries and places throughout the world.

This exhibition is a tribute to the work of Lu Nan and a sign of great respect for the man who, with refinement and coherence, knew how to prepare, carry out and complete a project on such an immense, almost epic scale – not something that can be achieved by just anyone.

João Miguel Barros  
Curator

**LU NAN**  
**Trilogy**

The photographs by Lu Nan which are displayed by the Museu Coleção Berardo form part of a trilogy which he began in 1989 and was concluded fifteen years later in 2004.

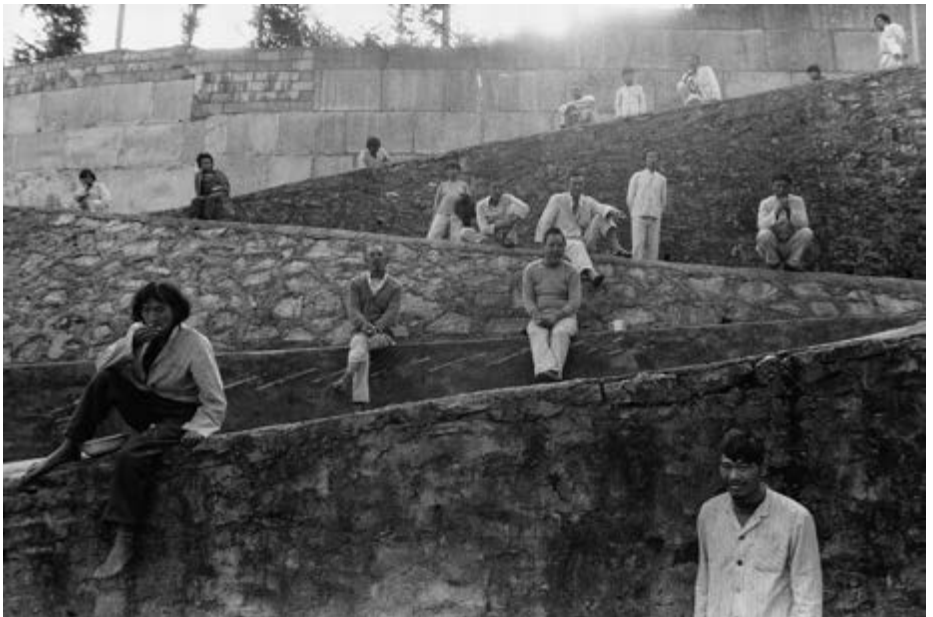
Liu Dan

**1**

**The Forgotten People: Living Conditions of China's Psychiatric Patients**

From 1989 to 1990, Lu Nan came in contact with 14,000 mental patients in 38 hospitals across ten provinces and major cities. He sought out over 100 families of sufferers as well as mentally ill vagrants. The photographs taken for *The Forgotten Ones* marked Part One of Lu Nan's overall *Trilogy*. In this first photo essay Lu Nan truthfully and powerfully presents the living

conditions of a forgotten social stratum. These reminders of the forgotten ones may also point to certain reversals in our own course of growth toward longed-for perfection.



**Mental Hospital (Guizhou), 1990**  
Silver gelatin print on fiber glossy paper

# 2

## On the Road: The Catholic Faith in China

From 1992 to 1996, Lu Nan photographed *On the Road*, which is Part Two of the *Trilogy*, across ten provinces and major cities. During this period, Lu Nan set foot in over 100 churches, but his emphasis was on how love and faith are actualized in the everyday lives of believers. He shows that inner divinity is integrated into the everyday lives of these believers, and that deep in their hearts this is the true Church. Their time on earth is a tempering process, subjecting them

to life's trials and challenging them to affirm their own values, so they can discover and contemplate their own inner light.



A Franciscan Friar on the Road of Proselytization (Shaanxi), 1995  
Silver gelatin print on fiber glossy paper

# 3

## Four Seasons: Everyday Life of Tibetan Peasants

From 1996 to 2004, Lu Nan photographed *Four Seasons*, which is the third and final part of his *Trilogy*. This photo essay is tightly structured around the cycle of seasons, from sowing in spring to reaping in autumn, from waiting for harvest in summer to getting through harsh months of winter. Impelled by nature's laws, these people go about their labors with unstudied poise, leading lives of peace and transcendence. Like the first two parts of the *Trilogy*, *Four Seasons* eschews major life events to concentrate on fate

itself. Here “everyday life” provides a basic way for people to measure fate. As they proceed toward realization of utter goodness, subjects of these pictures use this scale to gauge their past, present and future lives.



**A Family Finishing Work for the Day (Tibet), 1999**  
Silver gelatin print on fiber glossy paper



**Sisters Sowing Seeds in Spring (Tibet), 2004**  
Silver gelatin print on fiber glossy paper

**Texts by João Miguel Barros and Liu Dan**

João Miguel Barros was born in 1958. He is a lawyer by profession, in Lisbon and Macau. He was co-director of the SEMA culture and visual arts magazine (1972-1982). He recently began to exhibit his work, having also published the photography book *Between Gaze and Hallucination*. He is a freelance curator in the area of contemporary photography. In recent years, he has studied the main contemporary Chinese artists.

Liu Dan is a well-known artist of Chinese ink painting, who had many influential exhibitions all over the world, like in British Museum, Musée Guimet, Harvard Museum of Art, among others. His works are collected by many important institutions and private collectors.

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