



Press information

Leica is once again photography partner of PHOTOFAIRS Shanghai

In its role as official photography partner at the leading Asian fair for art photography, Leica Camera AG will be presenting impressive works by Frank Horvat and Alexvi Li.

Wetzlar, 11 September 2018. As the official photography partner for the fourth time in succession, Leica Camera AG will be presenting a multifaceted exhibition of images from the genre fashion photography at this year's PHOTOFAIRS Shanghai (from 21 to 23 September 2018).

With the works by Frank Horvat, Leica Camera AG is exhibiting photographs by one of the most influential photographers of the 20th century, whose fame is above all founded on his innovative contribution to fashion photography. His first fashion shot was published as long ago as 1951. In his own inimitable way, Horvat was one of the earliest to integrate moments of reportage photography into his staged fashion images. In retrospect, the photographer admits that, 'Without the stories that can be told, fashion would never really have interested me.' His models were not motionless statues; they had personality. And, not least of all, a repertoire of new poses and the in-your-face reality of his pictures very soon helped to establish his international success. His pictures are often reminiscent of stills from movie sets and offer even clearer proof of his diverse, and especially cineastic, cultural interests. Fashion and advertising photography remained the mainstay of his professional work until the late nineteen-eighties. Later, increasing numbers of free and personal projects came to the forefront of his work.

The presence of Leica Camera AG at the PHOTOFAIRS Shanghai is further highlighted by

the work of Alexvi Li – one of China’s best-known fashion photographers. Li is also known for his portraits of celebrities, for example, Oscar-winning director Ang Lee, the British rock singer Ozzy Osbourne and the Chinese contemporary artist Zeng Fanzhi, from Beijing. Despite this side of his work, fashion photography remains his principle genre. He is multi-talented and ambitious, and also devotes himself to documentary photography, with which he earned the appreciation of the fine art photography scene in London. Alexvi possesses a rationality, which he made his own during his studies in engineering, and a sharp eye for art that enables him to recognise inconspicuous beauty in scenes of everyday life. This explains his passion for the creation of documentary fashion photography. The stars he portrays appear less dazzlingly glamorous and his camera reveals their authentic character, with all the rough edges. His subjects’ souls are revealed, and they radiate a distinct aura of serenity and, above all, honesty. ‘I believe that honesty in photography can motivate people to appreciate beauty and to face up to the darker moments of life. If I succeed in depicting honesty in my work, people will be interested in the pictures or, perhaps, even be impressed by them’, explains Li. He constantly seeks sources of inspiration. He likes the various genres and themes of photography and does not like to be thought of as a proponent of a particular style.

Frank Horvat

Born in Italy on 28 April 1928 in the town formerly known as Abbazia (now Opatija, in Croatia). His family fled to Switzerland in 1939 to escape from racial persecution. Horvat studied in Milan from 1947 and began work as a self-taught freelance photographer. He discovered 35 mm photography with the Leica at an inspiring meeting with Henri Cartier-Bresson that paved his way to the future. In 1955, after a year in London, he moved to Paris, the city that has remained his home until today. Horvat’s work has appeared in all prominent magazines. He received numerous accolades and realised numerous publications and exhibitions.

Alexvi Li

Alexvi’s portrait and fashion photography graces the covers of the big fashion and art magazines, for instance the Chinese edition of GQ, Esquire, Vogue, Bazaar Art, ELLEMEN, Traveller and Kinfolk. Nevertheless, his artistic photography is by no means overshadowed by his commercial work. For his series of portraits titled ‘Back to Black’, he photographed more than 100 celebrities, including actors, artists and directors from around the globe. In

2016 and 2017 he used Leica cameras for his ongoing project 'Peking Apartment', which documents the living conditions of foreign girl models in Beijing and earned him first place in the category 'People' at the '2nd Fine Art Photography Awards' in London. In the same year, Li was the curator of an exhibition of creative photography shown at the UCCA – one of China's most famous art galleries.