

# CHEN MAN

## 東-西 EAST-WEST

### PHOTOGRAPHS AND PAINTINGS

10 December 2014 – 24 January 2015 // Reception for the artist: Wednesday, 10 December, 7–9 pm



*Five Elements: Water*, 2011, c-print (diptych)  
panel 1: 64 3/8 x 55 in. (163.49 x 140 cm), panel 2: 33 1/4 x 31 1/2 in. (84.5 x 80 cm)  
Edition of 7, 3 A.P.

**Venice, CA** – For its second international presentation of *Rogue Wave Projects*, L.A. Louver is pleased to announce an exhibition of works by the Chinese artist Chen Man. In her first exhibition at L.A. Louver, Chen Man will present iconic photographs and a suite of her traditional Chinese paintings, all created over the past 10 years.

Pushing the boundaries of photography, Chen Man has rapidly evolved into a leading cultural voice of China's post-'80s generation. At only 34 years of age, she is widely recognized as one of Asia's preeminent photographers, developing a singular style of imagery that is metaphoric of contemporary Chinese culture.

In the early 2000s, Chen Man rose to prominence as a fashion photographer, distinguished by her sensational and stylized use of post-production techniques and hands-on manipulation. Treating the initial untouched photographic image as a blank canvas, she employs digital tools in a painterly fashion to build a narrative or concept. This process of layering strokes, textures and imagery provides the artist full creative freedom to construct a fantastical world entirely her own. Drawing from an immense and prolific visual vocabulary, Chen Man imposes traditional Chinese iconography onto modern subjects, creating compositions that are both contradictory and harmonious, in a celebration of the past and the present.

In the *Vision* series (2003), Chen Man layers Chinese elements onto the faces of stunning Asian models. *Vision: Year of the Monkey* alludes to the monkey mask, a reference to the 16th century Chinese novel *Journey to the West*. The *New China* series (2006) places elegant women, clothed in fashionable red garments, against symbolic Chinese settings – ranging from an industrial

complex to Tiananmen Square. *Five Elements* (2011) juxtaposes models transformed into divine interpretations of fire, water, metal and wood, alongside images of real-life Chinese women who work as fishmongers or metalsmiths. “I mix tradition with modernity and make it kitsch,” explains Chen Man. “In the past, Chinese artists have always looked abroad for inspiration as opposed to looking domestically. I’m one of the first people to actually look to China for inspiration.”

In counterpoint to these photographs are a series of traditional Chinese paintings and calligraphic works created by Chen Man from 2012-2013. Minimal and poetic, these paintings derive from the artist’s earliest art training in classical forms, and her own devotion to Taoist philosophy. This is the first time these paintings will be exhibited in the United States.

Born in 1980 in a rural region of Inner Mongolia, Chen Man grew up in Beijing among the one-child generation in the wake of Mao Zedong’s Cultural Revolution. She attended the prestigious Central Academy of Fine Arts in Beijing where she studied painting, architecture, graphic design and set design before pursuing photography and post-production. Her fashion editorial work has been seen in style magazines such as *Vogue*, *Harper’s Bazaar*, *Elle*, *Vision Magazine*, *i-D Magazine*. She has also photographed campaigns for brands such as *Dolce & Gabbana*, *Coach*, *MAC Cosmetics*, *Adidas*, *Nike* and *Guess*, among many others. Select solo exhibitions include *Man, Visual Arts Exhibition*, Museum of Contemporary Arts, Shanghai, China (2011); *Chen Man: Elan*, Today Arts Museum, Beijing, China (2011); *A New Photography Show by Chen Man*, Chinese Art Centre, Manchester, UK (2012); *Chen Man Visual Art Exhibition*, Museum Pecci, Milan, Italy (2012); and *A New Attitude: Chen Man’s Provocative Interpretations of Contemporary Chinese Women*, Redline, Denver, Colorado (2014). Prominent group exhibitions include *The Demolition Party*, Le Royal Monceau, Paris (2008); *Design China*, Victoria and Albert Museum, London, UK (2008); *The Exhibition of China Photography of 100 Years*, Shanghai World Expo, Loft Gallery Paris, Shanghai (2011); and *China, An Uncommon Journey*, Powerstation Museum Shanghai and Atron Images, Shanghai, China and London, UK (2014).



*Waiting with Respect*, 2013  
Chinese ink on paper  
14 1/4 x 15 3/4 in. (36 x 40 cm)



### Artist Lecture

Join us for a lecture with Chen Man on **Tuesday, 6 January 2015, 7pm.**






The event is free, but reservations are required.

RSVP to (310) 822-4955 or [rsvp@lalouver.com](mailto:rsvp@lalouver.com).

### About Rogue Wave Projects

L.A. Louver initiated its *Rogue Wave* program to present emerging talent in Los Angeles, mounting group exhibitions in 2001, 2005, 2007, 2009 and 2013. The gallery has also organized *Rogue Wave Projects* solo activities with Eduardo Sarabia (2009), Olga Koumoundoros (2010), Matt Wedel (2010) and Heather Gwen Martin (2014). In 2013, the gallery launched its first international project with Australian artist, Grant Stevens. *Rogue Wave Projects* will continue to create a project-based platform for local and international contemporary artists.

For more information and visuals, please contact Christina Carlos, L.A. Louver, 45 North Venice Boulevard, Venice, CA, USA, [www.lalouver.com](http://www.lalouver.com)  
tel: 310-822-4955; fax: 310-821-7529; e-mail: [Christina@lalouver.com](mailto:Christina@lalouver.com) Gallery Hours: Tues - Sat, 10 - 6 PM; Validated parking available

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