

the Photographers' Formulary

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MARCH 2012 NEWSLETTER CHEN PENG - EMERGING PHOTOGRAPHER



Chen Peng and Paul Climb to
Jian Kou
©Anthony Mournian

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CHEN PENG - EMERGING PHOTOGRAPHER

The photographs in this article were taken as Chen Peng of Beijing, China, traveled to the remote areas of Shan Xi, Shann Xi and He Bei from winter 2008 to 2009.

Chen Peng, now in his mid-thirties, has been hauling around



Farmhouse and Pots
©Chen Peng

cameras and equipment for most of his life. His father, Chen Changfen, took Chen Peng with him as he traveled the length of [China's Great Wall](#). Chen Peng became part of the team of assistants, carrying tripods, film ers, and assorted pieces of equipment up and down the spine of the Great Wall, from the desolate deserts of north-western China to the precipitous rocky slopes of Jian Kou near Beijing.

There's nothing quite as satisfying as a well composed, perfectly

exposed piece of 8x10" film. Detail unheard of on a frame of 35 mm black and white film jumps out on an 8x10 piece of Tri-X 400. That's what Chen Peng uses for his growing body of work documenting the lives and customs of Buddhist monks and of people in remote villages far from urban life. In winter of 2008, rather than simply observe and record, Chen

Peng decided to try live the life of Buddha as closely as possible to better understand the way of Buddha, and by doing so to change his way of thinking and way of life.

As he moved about



Outside the Farmhouse
©Chen Peng

the countryside, often traveling hundreds of miles in his small sedan, Chen Peng looked for ways to capture the monks to best illustrate their lives.

Many temples are owned by the monks who live in them. The monks dedicate their lives to prayer and to worshipping Buddha and depend on the kindness of strangers, and of those who come to worship with them in their temple. Intensely private, they are reluctant to allow photography of their temples, or of themselves.

Before he ever pulled out his camera in a new village Chen Peng



Monk Before Temple
©Chen Peng

would find out who owned or was in charge of the temple. He would ask the appropriate way to show respect, then try to find an offering which would reflect this understanding. Taking his photographs of monks, then, required tact and patience.

Chen Peng says, *"In those small villages, people are pure and simple. They stick to their beliefs, whether it is Buddha or a local deity.*

No matter which religion they follow, they simply wish their family, their lives and every grain and plant to continue to become better and better.

The quest for wealth and welfare is the same in the city and the countryside, but as the geo-environment changed with city modernization, people living in the



Men Beside Road
©Chen Peng

city changed, as well as their beliefs.

The people in country villages have remained much the same as the "old days" while the surroundings and scenery there made me feel

welcome. It was like visiting my dreams because I still needed to go back to the city and to use modern techniques to process my images and pieces of memory."

Chen Peng got his first computer for processing images in 1996.

Remember: This is an interactive newsletter. Click on any thumbnail image and a larger version will download immediately. Click on any **BLUE** text and your browser will open a new link outside the newsletter

From the beginning, the work of transforming those images with a program such as Adobe's Photoshop became easier and easier. While this new technology was exciting for anyone who could use or benefit from it, there was a downside. Even with the advances in technology it became more and more difficult for photographers to create digital work which felt truly original.

This puzzled Chen Peng, a talented photographer in every format from 35 mm to 8x10, until 2008 when he decided to return to the use of the traditional film based image as his way of expressing his depth of feeling in the people and places he photographed.



Fading Portion of Great Wall
©Chen Peng

Chen Peng came to realize using traditional photography simply as a means to annotate ideas, or as a visual notebook, made the creative process more complicated. As he put it, *"It was like throwing a man from a flourishing modern city into a dark forest and expecting him to survive."* In his mind, traditional photography is instinctive. With an uncanny ability to go from pitch black darkness to the faintest light, it seemed to him that every part of the body grows an eye as it seeks the light. This, he says, is a feeling difficult to understand for anyone who is

not a serious photographer.

For the serious

photographer, working in the darkroom, waiting for the image to come up in the developer, time passes slowly. Waiting for the image, or to turn on the white light to inspect your efforts is a struggle, and can be irritating.

But anyone who has spent time in the darkroom knows the growing magic of inspiration as you work with each developing image. It's a feeling much different from



Man on Motorbike
©Chen Peng

working with a computer to process an image on the monitor in a well lighted room.

"Perhaps there's not such a big difference in the early stages of photography between the traditional and the

digital in composing and capturing the image," he says, but the later stages of image processing makes

them radically different.

In the business world results are often more important than the journey to get there. With art, however, it is the other way around. "The dark room is my Zen room

where I do not exercise 'zazen', (Zazen is 'the study of self,') but the darkroom is a place where I am surrounded by an atmosphere of void and a feeling of meditation. When I step out of the darkroom I return to reality." Isn't this, he asks, "[A] feeling many people seek, but are afraid to face?"

Chen Peng has chosen the subject of "Belief" for his traditional photography, and with his photographs he asks, "What is your belief or



Men in Square Before Temple
©Chen Peng

to the spirit. When the spirit is overweighted the scale will incline to the material. It is an endless cycle until the end of life itself."

"Taking these photographs in the "Belief" project has been part of my own

journey of "Belief." Through the ordinary places, ordinary people and their ordinary languages, I have captured feelings as they form segments in life."

The film begins to react to light at the moment Chen Peng opens the lens cover of his 8x10. On one hand he relies on techniques of photography to capture images; on the other he tries to make his images capture his feeling. Some exposures are longer than others, but shorter or longer the feelings of the moment are caught in the process of shooting and developing.

Chen Peng blends film based photography for "image capture" with Epson V750 flatbed scans of his 8x10" negatives to produce some of his digitally printed images. This allows Chen Peng to make very large digital prints of exceptional quality. Some prints are as large as eight feet long and forty inches wide.

Some moments of photographing are peaceful, some tremble and some are exciting. Every time Chen Peng begins his journey of shooting the sun is shining, but as he dives beneath the Dark Cloth of his 8x10 camera he feels a sense of entering a dark room, moving

gingerly at every step. Whether at the top of nameless hills, in the fields or at the entrance of a small village, the feeling is the same. The marks or the media of "Belief" may be only pieces of bricks, but they strongly attract Chen Peng's curiosity. He sees people's beliefs and faith embodied in those bricks.

In keeping with this imagery he has developed a technique of applying images digitally printed on rice paper bonded to silk to bricks

of clay which he molds from specially formulated mud. Each "brick" is a one of a kind piece of art, capturing within its hand painted framework an expression of Chen Peng's "Belief" project.

The media of Chen Peng's photographs, whether of the majestic spaces of the universe, or a single grain of sand of the Mandala,

mingling in the air. (In the Buddhist and Hindu religious traditions, the Mandala is sacred sand painting art, often in the form of a circle,) From one belief system to another, Chen Peng says, the media shoot off sparks of belief like sparks of electrical energy from a transmission tower. Nothing has ever stopped these sparks of belief from working, even though the conflict and phenomenon between belief and interference is common.



Mixing the Mud
©Judy Zhu



Joyful Monk
©Chen Peng

your faith?" He sees the material world and the world of the spirit at opposite ends of an unbalanced but continuous scale. To this he says his surroundings, the people and the material world are what add to the scale, making it a non-stop, ever changing movement.

Belief, he feels, is "[L]ike a balanced rider, gliding between the two ends of the scale. When the material world is overweighted, the balance will incline



Artists Painting Brick Frame
©Chen Peng

Chen Peng is convinced new belief systems are constantly evolving from this conflict, a conflict which never ends.

The images of his photographs form the basis for Chen Peng's own beliefs. He feels and experiences their existence throughout the photographic process and says he knows his passion to follow his art will continue. Many have



Chen Peng in his Studio
©Judy Zhu

helped Chen Peng in his art journey, and though they may have no interest in his photographs or his subject matter, they remain part of his audience, and part of his subject - *Belief*.

In early 2012 Chen Peng was offered a summer residency fellowship at [Art Farm outside Lincoln, Nebraska](#). The artist residency program is for professionals, emerging or established, in all areas of the



Chen Peng at Jian Kou
©Anthony Mournian

arts and offers accommodations and studio space to pursue their art in exchange for a contribution of labor of 12 hours per week to help renovate and maintain Art

Farm's buildings and grounds as well as other projects, suited to skills and temperament. This will be a small price for Chen Peng to experience life in the United States, and to have freedom to develop his "*Belief*" portfolio.



Hand of Buddha
©Chen Peng



Monk Before Temple
©Chen Peng



Buddha by Candlelight
©Chen Peng



Shrouded Buddha
©Chen Peng



Boys Playing Basketball
©Chen Peng

the Photographers' Formulary

M A R C H 2 0 1 2

NEWSLETTER SPECIALS

DEVELOPING TRAYS:

MOST SIZES

Special Pricing: 15% off
Sizes from 8x10 to 20x24.
Some ribbed bottom, some
flat bottom - limited to
stock on hand.



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Cat. No.: 14-0251 Special Price: \$39.91
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Cat. No.: 14-0252 Special Price: \$39.91
Promo Code: Tray5

Cat. No.: 14-0255 Special Price: \$10.16
Promo Code: Tray6

Cat. No.: 14-0256 Special Price: \$10.16
Promo Code: Tray7

The Doran Developing Tray is made for hard daily professional use. This tray can be used for developing, processing, hypo, etc. It is constructed of white virgin styron, and is acid and stain resistant. These trays feature a cross-rib or flat bottom, a tapered shape for convenient stacking, and a pour-spout corner for easy handling of chemicals and water.

<http://stores.photoformulary.com/-strse-836/>

FORMULARY SEPIA SULPHIDE 221 TONER

1 Liter Kit

Cat. No.: 06-0035
Promo Code: M0035
Regular Price \$12.95



Special Price 15% off: \$11.00

The Formulary's Sepia Sulfide Toner 221 is a replacement for one of Kodak's toners. It is a classic bleach and redevelopment toner that produces rich permanent sepia-brown tones. Most types of paper tone well with this process, including resin coated paper. The bleach contains potassium ferricyanide that changes the metallic silver to a silver salt. After bleaching, the print is then redeveloped in sodium sulfide.

<http://stores.photoformulary.com/-strse-192/Sepia-Sulfide-Toner/Detail.bok>

FORMULARY THIOUREA TONER

Cat. No.: 06-0045
Promo Code: M0045
Regular Price \$12.95



Special Price 15% off: \$13.18

The Formulary's Thiourea Toner is a replacement for one of Kodak's toners and will give beautiful rich brown sepia-like tones. The print is first bleached using a ferricyanide-bromide bath then redeveloped in a sulfide bath. During this process, the silver metal in the print is first converted to silver bromide, then to brown silver sulfide. The end result will give the impression of a print made in the late 1800's.

<http://stores.photoformulary.com/-strse-960/Thiourea-Toner/Detail.bok>

FORMULARY REDUCER III FOR NEGATIVES 2-4 LTR KIT

Cat. No.: 05-0030
Promo Code: M0030
Regular Price \$14.95



Special Price 40% off: \$8.97

The Formulary's Reducer III for Negatives is a potassium permanganate-ammonium Persulfate reducer that removes silver metal from the negative in approximate proportion to its existing density. In this respect, the action of Reducer III is like development in reverse. The net effect is that the **overall density of the negative is diminished**. The kit contains chemicals to make two stock solutions of 1 liter each. The working solution is prepared just prior to use. Sodium Metabisulfite is included in the kit for an after-bath.

No shipping by mail or outside the USA, UPS Ground only!

<http://stores.photoformulary.com/-strse-173/Reducer-III-For-Negatives/Detail.bok>

DELTA 200 ML PLASTIC GRADUATES - SETS OF 6

Cat. No.: 75-1145K
Promo Code: Delta
Regular \$1.95



Special Price 25% off: \$1.46

Light weight, disposable, and inexpensive. Buy several sets at this excellent price.

<http://stores.photoformulary.com/-strse-817/Del>

NEW**	Week 1	May - June Introductory	Our Introductory Workshop Series Intro-Silver Gelatin B&W-May 18-21 Variable Contrast Print-May 25-28 Silver Gelatin Lith Printing-June 1-4 with Ray Nelson		Week 9	August 5-10 2012	Gum Printing Then and Now with Christina Z Anderson	
		June 10-15 2012	Large Format and The Digital Negative with Steve Anchell			August 12-17 2012	Platinum Printing in the 21 st Century with Tillman Crane	
		June 17-22 2012	iPhone and iPad Art Creative Vision with Theresa Airey			August 19-24 2012	Carbon Transfer with Sandy King	Introduction To Polymer Gravure with Diane Alire
		June 24-29 2012	Infrared and Pigment Transfers with Theresa Airey			August 26-31 2012	Environmental Portraiture: Photographing The Book and It's Cover with Kurt Fishback	
		July 8-13 2012	The Wet Plate Collodion Process with Will Duniway			September 2-7, 2012	iPhone Photography with Dan Burkholder	
		July 15-20 2012	Fiber Arts and Bookmaking with Laura Blacklow	Image Transfers and Photo Encaustic with Anna Tomczak		September 9-14, 2012	Gum Plat Print & Making Digital Negs Using QTR with Kerik Kouklis	
		July 22-27 2012	Traditional Silver-Halide B&W Photography with David Vestal & Russ Hepworth			NEW**	October Introductory	Our Introductory Workshop Series B&W -35MM or Med Format Sept 28-Oct 1 Intro-Silver Gelatin B&W-Oct 5-8 B&W Large Format – Oct 12-15 Silver Gelatin Lith Printing – Oct 19-22 with Ray Nelson
July 29-August 3 2012	Daguerreotype: a Contemporary Approach with Jerry Spagnoli	Alternative Process Crash Course with Tom Persinger	Treat Yourself to a Fabulous Opportunity! Workshop Details and Pricing Info on the website www.workshopsinmt.com Click on the workshop icon or please call 800-922-5255					



The Photographers' Formulary 19th Century Processes

APPLICATION FORM

MAIL OR FAX TO: PHOTOGRAPHERS FORMULARY INC.
P.O. BOX 950 • CONDON, MONTANA 59826-0950
Ph: (800) 922-5255 • Fax: (406) 754-2896 www.workshopsinmt.com • formulary@blackfoot.net

Name _____ Male ___ Female ___ Age ___

Permanent Mailing Address _____

City State/Prov. Zip/Postal Code _____

Bus. Phone () _____ E-mail _____

Home Phone () _____ Fax: () _____

How did you hear of our Workshops? _____

Occupation _____

Years in Photography ___ Camera Formats used _____

I would like to stay on site at the B&B for 5 nights (NON-SMOKING) all amenities.

___ \$250.00 per person, Double Occupancy (+ Tax) ___ \$450.00 Single Occupancy (+ Tax)

___ I will find my own housing ___ Camping (\$50.00 includes showers + Tax)

Prefer to share a room with a friend in a workshop? ___ Yes ___ No Friend's name _____

Do you require a vegetarian lunch and dinner? ___ Yes ___ No

Do you request the roundtrip shuttle from Missoula A/P ___ Yes ___ No

WORKSHOP TITLE & INSTRUCTOR	DATE	TUITION	HOUSING	Total
Subject to change		\$100.00 ROUNDTRIP SHUTTLE from Missoula Airport =		
Subject to change		** MEALS Required \$275.00 x	(number of workshops) =	
LAB FEE (Determined by the chemistry used during the week and the amount of students) =				

Alternate Workshops:	Application Fee (required) ** \$20.00	
	Subtotal	
___ Visa ___ MasterCard ___ Discover ___ AMEX ___ Check or Money Order enclosed payable in US dollars Exp. Date: _____ Security Code _____ Credit Card No.: _____ I have read the terms applicable to my workshop concerning payment, liability and Cancellations. Signature for deposit _____ Date: _____	7% Lodging Tax** Total Due	
	Less Deposit Enclosed	-\$220.00
Signature for remaining balance: _____	Balance due 30 days Prior to start of workshop	



PHOTOGRAPHERS' FORMULARY 4TH ANNUAL HANDCRAFTED PHOTOGRAPHS ALTERNATIVE PROCESSES CONTEST

Third Call for Entries!

Get your entry ready now. *April 2, 2012 is the last day on which entries will be received* for the *Fourth Annual Photographers' Formulary Handcrafted Photographs Alternative Processes photography contest*.

NOW WE NEED YOU!

The contest is our way to thank our faithful customers and former students, so we hope you'll join the fun, and we hope that you win!

Your entry can be from *any handcrafted photograph alternative process, though it cannot be purely digital*. This means it can include a digital negative used to produce an image in any photographic process, non-silver or silver, invented before 1995.

Who can enter: Any amateur or professional who is not or has not been an employee or instructor at the Photographers' Formulary or at the Workshops in Montana.

What's it all about? Tuition for a free workshop of your choice during the summer of 2012. Additional prizes will be awarded for Second and Third place winners.

What's the entry fee? Not a penny to enter. Just follow the rules below for acceptable entries, and send yours in now. Please, *no more than three (3) entries* per contestant. More than three entries by a single contestant will not be judged.

Last day to enter: *All entries must be RECEIVED at the Photographers' Formulary not later than April 2, 2012*. No late arrivals will be accepted for judging. No exceptions. **Winners will be notified on or before May 1, 2012** to give the winner choice of *any workshop during the summer of 2009*, and to make appropriate travel plans.

The Grand Prize: The winner receives *free tuition* to the **2012 workshop of choice**. All other costs remain the responsibility of the entrant.

Acceptable entries: Original works only. NO entries on CDs will be accepted. Prints must be properly mounted; matting is not required. *Treat your prints professionally. If you win, your entry will be on display for a full year, and you want it to speak well of your abilities. Dry mount your entry so that you can be proud of it.*

All entries must be sent with return postage or shipping pre-paid. Any entry received without pre-paid shipping or postage will not be returned. All entries *must be insured* by the entrant to the value of the work claimed by the entrant. The Photographers' Formulary and the Workshops in Montana shall be held harmless for any damage or loss to each and every entry.

Winning entries will be displayed in the gallery of the Workshops in Montana for one year. License to use copies of the winning images for advertising and/or publicity purposes is granted to the Photographers' Formulary and the Workshops in Montana. Original copyright to the images remains in the entrant photographer.

This offer is void where prohibited.

Mail your entry here:
THE PHOTOGRAPHERS' FORMULARY, INC.
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Condon, Montana, USA 59826-0950

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Fax: (406) 754-2896



Photographers' Formulary Handcrafted Photography Contest Submission Form

Name of Entrant: _____

Address: _____

City _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

E-mail: _____ Phone #: _____

Photo 1 Title: _____

Please describe the photographic process used to produce your image: _____

Photo 2 Title: _____

Please describe the photographic process used to produce your image: _____

Photo 3 Title: _____

Please describe the photographic process used to produce your image: _____

PHOTO RELEASES

- I have read, understand, and accept the rules of the Photographers' Formulary Handcrafted Photo Contest.
- By entering the Photographers' Formulary Handcrafted Photo Contest, I give my permission for my photo(s) to be used in the Photographers' Formulary print and online publications and marketing initiatives.
- I certify I have written permission from each readily identifiable person in my photo(s) - or their parent/legal guardian for children under the age of 18 - to use and/or reproduce for public display the submitted photograph.
- I authorize the Photographers' Formulary to duplicate, distribute, alter, and/or publish any of the photos I have submitted to help promote the Photographers' Formulary.
- I certify that the information I have submitted is complete and accurate to the best of my knowledge and that the photo(s) I submitted are my own original work.
- Except as agreed above, I understand that I retain ownership and copyright of each photograph I submit.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Questions? Contact us at 800-922-5255 or
Handcrafted@Blackfoot.net

THANK YOU FOR ENTERING!!!

(see attached for rules, criteria, and prizes)

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