

# 视觉课 Visual Lesson



## 吞烟吐雾的城市： Aram Tanis 镜头下的北京 Smoke and Seahorses: Aram Tanis' Beijing

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图片提供 / Photo courtesy of Aram Tanis

一位摄影师在一个陌生的地方居住半年，会选择拍摄什么？  
—— 这问题不容易作答，好像人说在一个全新的地方两周可能写一本书，两个月也许可以写一篇文章，但停留两年就不知从何开始写了。这对于以视觉书写的摄影师也适用，观看和选择是最重要的过程。来自韩国，现居荷兰的摄影师Aram Tanis在北京驻扎了半年，他的作品提供绝对独特的答案。北京的半年作品命名为“吞云吐雾和海马”（Blowing Smoke and Seahorses），正在欧洲展览。吞云吐雾尚好理解，海马的由来就很匪夷所思了——艺术家说，这种在自然界中很不易被侵袭又无害的小动物，那么优雅，那么单纯，在中国沿海地区被大量捕杀以制成药。有些忧郁，黑色，但异常敏锐，艺术家的特质为我们呈现了不一样的北京，甚是宝贵。

**Abitare** 如果说“观”是摄影的核心程序，你如何“观”？

**Aram** 我在摄影时经常注意到别人忽略的细部，人、动物和物件，尤其对那些有点不搭调的东西感兴趣。这些日常的小东西时刻发生并且环绕着我们——衣着光鲜的人与乞丐的对比，道具服装下招引客人的女人，街边人们习以为常的广告牌，我们却看不到他们，也不会把自己同路边的乞丐换位思考。

**Abitare** 你认为观众、读者应该怎样观看你的作品呢？

**Aram** 我的作品对于他们也许来得太直接了些。有时他们不愿去看，因为观感太强烈了。我认为好的作品应该带给人某种影响，所谓负面的感受亦是一种影响。更重要的问题是出于什么原因我们才有被唤起的情感。

我希望观众和读者用心去看，而不仅仅是审视的眼光，这样才能体会我的用意。

**Abitare** 你在中国有什么体会，你所观察到的是不是一个“景观社会”？

**Aram** 我在中国感受很复杂，美妙的事物中总有些阴暗面。我的经历不仅反映我的性格和想法，也反映社会的本来面目。同属一个国家，北京的经历就与香港、澳门大不相同。

我在北京的日程主要是观察。去同样的地点看几乎是同样的人，观察让人看到更多，理解更深。

**Abitare** 是不是无论在哪里社会都变成景观了呢？

**Aram** 恐怕是的。每个人有自己观看事物的方式和评判原则，但是现在的观看和评判很大程度上被商业、广告和主流文化所



What will does a photographer photograph, in a city he is strange to and given half a year to explore? Some people maintain that, when you are in a city for two weeks, you could make a book out of it. For two months, you could probably write an essay. But for two years, it may be too overwhelming to start. The same is true with photography, the art of writing in visuals. The process of looking and selecting is critical. Photographer Aram Tanis, originally Korean, now based in the Netherlands, offers a unique perspective. His Beijing series "Blowing Smoke and Seahorses", outcome of a half year residence program, is now exhibiting in Europe. Blowing smoke is no surprising phenomenon for Beijing, what about seahorses then? The artist claims, such a harmless and elegant animal is seized in vast numbers along the Chinese seashore, for use in traditional Chinese medicine. Slightly melancholic, darkly but surprisingly sharp, Aram Tanis' Beijing is different from what we see, and precious in its own rights.

**Abitare** How do you "see", if "seeing" is the foundational mechanism of photography?

**Aram** When I photograph I look at details, people, animals and objects that others often ignore. I am drawn to those who don't fit in. What I am interested in are the smaller everyday things that are happening and surrounds us. The beggar ignored by people in

there fancy clothing, the woman wearing a costume while giving a tour, the commercials that we are so used to, that we sometimes forget how manipulating they are. We are used to all of it, we don't see it anymore, we don't try to understand how it would be to sit on a stair and beg for money while people try hard not to see you.

**Abitare** How do you suppose your audience "see" your work?

**Aram** For an audience my work can sometimes be confronting. I think sometimes people choose not to look at my work, because it makes them feel uncomfortable. I think a work should make people feel something and that something can also be a 'negative' feeling. The more important question for me is why someone feels what she or he feels. I think it is important that an audience looks at my work with their heart, not just with their mind, to understand what I want to bring across.

**Abitare** How was your experience in China, and how does it relate to society of spectacles?

**Aram** My experience in China is mixed. There are always great experiences but also negatives ones. My experiences tell something about me, but I think also how society works. My experience in Beijing is completely different than the one in Macau or Hong kong. It is still China, but these cities are so

THE ISLAND IN THE LAKE, I CAN RECOGNISE, IS AN EYE; EYES WHICH CONTINUE TO LOOK AT YOU - FOREVER AND EVER



THE LAKE IS SURROUNDED BY A FLOWING LANDSCAPE, BLOWING TO THE EAST, CAUSED BY THE WESTERN WIND. THE ISLAND IN THE LAKE, I CAN RECOGNISE, IS AN EYE; EYES WHICH CONTINUE TO LOOK AT YOU - FOREVER AND EVER.

流动的风景包围着湖，西风令它向东方汹涌而去。湖中的岛，我很清楚，是它的眼睛，永远观看你的眼睛

THE WOMAN - STILL A GIRL - IS SENSUAL, EXPECTANT AND DESIRING; THE MAN - STILL A BOY - LOOKS TENDERLY, PASSIONATELY LOSING HIMSELF IN THE SECRET GARDEN OF WONDER OF THE OTHER



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女人——女孩，那么性感，让人欲求，男人——男孩，那么温柔，在对方美妙的神秘花园中迷失了

THE CITY OF WHICH I AM PART OF IS A LIVING ORGANISM, INHALING AND EXHALING TO THE HEARTBEAT OF TIME, SCREAMING AND WHISPERING, TAKING IN AND EXCRETING



THE CITY OF WHICH I AM PART OF IS A LIVING ORGANISM, INHALING AND EXHALING TO THE HEARTBEAT OF TIME. I CONNECT WITH THE WANDERING SOULS I MEET IN THE SENECHEN. FOR COINCIDENCE; CHARACTERS I RECOGNISE FROM CITY PICTURE STORIES I FAMILIARISED MYSELF WITH.

我身处的城市是个活生生的有机体，在时间的心跳中呼吸着，尖叫着窃窃私语着，消化着排出着

引导。批判性的和开放性的思维需要远远更多的时间来培养。

**Abitare** 那么怎样看待和观察社会才算公允？

**Aram** 我来自于韩国，定居于荷兰。我的文化背景让我以既定的眼光看待中国，但我也大量阅读，看纪录片，与当地人聊天以加强对这个国家的认识，形成观点。北京人需要与这个城市的变化保持同步节奏，几乎不可思议。但人们的思维模式不可能这么快转变，这需要几代人的时间。但我们同时应该关注当下的社会问题，并期待从中找到改善民生的方法。

**Abitare** 为什么选择黑白摄影？

**Aram** 黑白摄影中观众可以集中注意力在物体上。如果色彩不能传达重要的信息我就不会用它，我不认为色彩能让图像更美。我之前的作品有彩色的，并且也很有表现性。中国系列的作品我认为黑白更为合适。

**Abitare** 摄影中真实和虚构的界限在哪里，又从何寻觅呢？

**Aram** 荷兰艺术家Jacolijn Verhoef写过文章探讨纪录片和真实的界限，以及这条界限如何渐渐模糊。即使是选择图像（或影像）这一步骤已经显示了作者对结果的控制。

对于作为摄影师的我，这条界限还比较分明：凡是不经过摆拍的都是真实的。所以这次中国作品系列都是真实的。

**Abitare** 这次作品集的排版有何用意？

**Aram** 设计作品集时我考虑的是如何使表意更强烈。封面是没

有装订的，可以随时调换，每一页都可以取来作为封面。

我认为中国社会的复杂性使得外来者很难立即明白其精要，和你打交道的人也并不会很快向你敞开心扉。我们需要些时间，反反复复。这是我选择这样设计的原因。

这个作品集也反映我个人对社会的情感表达。这本书用白色松紧带绑定，可以随意变换封面，这样做也更有个人阅读的私密感。

**Abitare** 你如何定义摄影中的空间的品质？

**Aram** 可以从两方面回答这个问题。

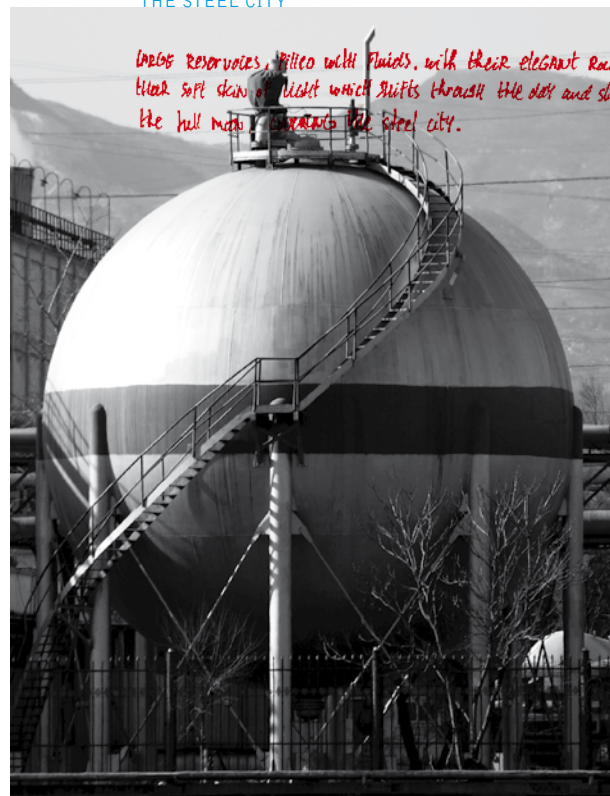
首先，我的作品中重要的一点尝试是展示一个城市如何不能良好运转。空间的品质有三部分：我们如何使用空间，如何体验空间，以及空间在未来的作用是什么。我的摄影作品中展示三者的失衡。比如北京的住宅老化速度那么快，经常好像是没有经过长远的考虑，现在盖的住宅在住家搬进去之前就已经看上去不好了。还有拆迁问题，这是城市规划真正应该考虑的。

我的作品仅仅展示了北京的现状，但也同时暗示了那些缺失的东西。

另外，我们可以从技术角度来看空间问题。

摄影的含义已经改变。在银板摄影的时代，处理时间很长，造价昂贵，被记录下的风景和人物几乎有遗迹的神圣感。现在我们用数码相机似乎可以随心所欲，看看那些走到哪拍到哪的游客就知道了。我感到很震惊：如果你问问他们看到了什么，他们其实什么也看不到。现在，从相机取景器回放照片是我们“经历”这些地点和时间的唯一途径。

LARGE RESERVOIRS, FILLED WITH FLUIDS, WITH THEIR ELEGANT ROUNDED STAIRS, THEIR SOFT SKIN OF LIGHT WHICH SHIFTS THROUGH THE DAY AND SLOWLY CHANGES INTO THE FULL MOON, COVERING THE STEEL CITY



*Large reservoirs, filled with fluids, with their elegant rounded stairs, their soft skin of light which shifts through the day and slowly changes into the full moon, covering the steel city.*

大水塔，有优雅的环境，它的表面随日光的观感变化，到晚上变成一轮圆月，盖住钢筋的城市

different from one another. What I did a lot in Beijing is observing. Go to the same places and watch the (same) people. I think that by observing you see more. You can get a better understanding of things.

**Abitare Isn't it true that everywhere society are surrendering to spectacle?**

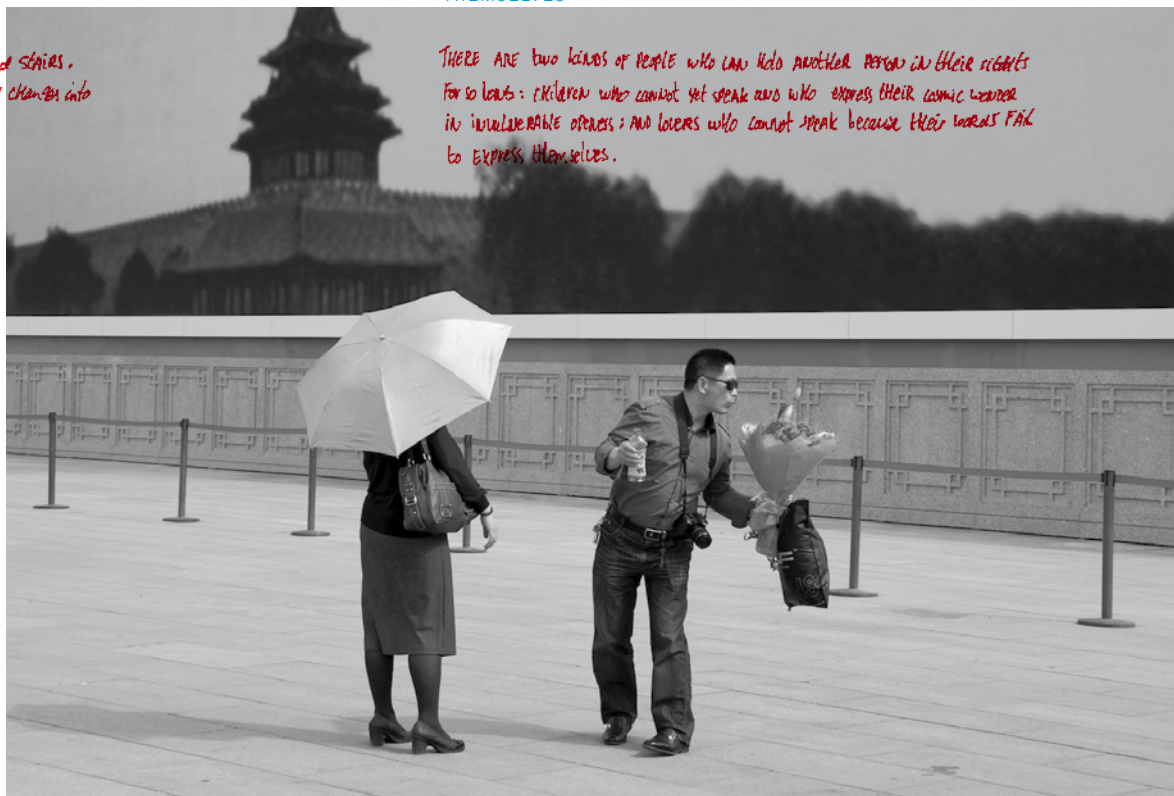
**Aram** That is true. Everybody has a way of looking at things and 'judges' it in their own way. These days however our way of looking is influenced a lot by commercials, advertisement and what became mainstream. If we want to look critical and open minded it takes time and an effort to do so.

**Abitare What is then a critical attitude of looking at the society?**

**Aram** I come from South-Korea and live in The Netherlands. I look at things a certain way because that is what I am used to. But I also read books, watch documentaries, talk to Chinese to get to know more about the country and the Chinese society. This way I try to form an opinion about subjects. I think it is important to realize how fast Beijing people have to change with the changes the country is going through and that this is nearly impossible. The mindset of people cannot be changed that quickly, this will take more generations. Realizing all of this doesn't mean however that we cannot focus on how tough Chinese society is. I think it is important to do so, because then people will hopefully come up with a solution to better the lives of people.

**Abitare Why Black and White?**

THERE ARE TWO KINDS OF PEOPLE WHO CAN HOLD ANOTHER PERSON IN THEIR SIGHTS FOR SO LONG: YOUNG CHILDREN AND LOVERS WHO CANNOT SPEAK BECAUSE THEIR WORDS FAIL TO EXPRESS THEMSELVES



*THERE ARE two kinds of people who can hold another person in their sights for so long: children who cannot yet speak and who express their cosmic wonder in invariable, blank stares; and lovers who cannot speak because their words fail to express themselves.*

只有两种人能够持续的吸引别人的注意力：还不能说话的小孩，他们无畏的对世界的一切开放，和恋爱中的人

**Aram** With black-&-white you focus on the object I photograph. When I think colour doesn't provide any important information I won't use it. I am not a great believer in colour just because it makes an image pretty. The series I shot in colour are stronger because of it. Colour gives extra information that is important for the viewer in those cases. In this work I don't feel it was important.

**Abitare What is between real and fictional in photography? How does one judge?**

**Aram** Jacolijn Verhoef, a Dutch artist, wrote an essay that talked about the thin line between documentary and fiction and how the line between those two mediums have become blurry. By choosing the images you will show you are manipulating and so on. For me there is a clear line. When I as a photographer don't stage anything it is real. The work in 'Blowing Smoke and Seahorses' is in that way real.

**Abitare What is the consideration of the layout of the book?**

**Aram** For a book I try to look at what makes the story I want to tell stronger. The cover is loose and can be changed by another one. On the inside of each page is a different cover, a page can be taken out of the book and replace the existing one. The reason why we did this, is because Chinese society is one you don't understand that quickly. It takes time. People are friendly but don't open up that easily. The book also shows my personal view on society, this is why the book comes with a thin white elastic, same colour as the paper. This way, when you take out covers, the book will stay together, but also because it gives it a more personal feeling to the whole.