

Press Release-Chimera

Chimera**A solo exhibition by Michael Ryan & Propellor Girl & Other Tales book launch**

Organizer: Don Gallery

Duration: Mar 6-Apr 11, 2010

Add: 1863, Huaihai Zhong Lu, Shanghai

Opening Reception: 15:00-19:00, Mar 6, 2010

Press Release

Propellor Girl & Other Tales is a book created by the photographer consisting of ten stories featuring his daughter as the main protagonist in surreal adventures and dark tales inspired by Victorian era literature. Don Gallery is honoured to organise the launch of the book and exhibition of the photographs featured within.

Michael Ryan's beloved daughter was featured as the Propellor girl of the new book in the photographic illustration. The influences for Michael Ryan's photography stem mostly from his childhood, when he loved reading the tales of Alice in Wonderland and other traditional Victorian stories frequented by ghosts and strange dreams and populated by anthropomorphic creatures – especially illustrated editions. This has influenced his choice of painted backdrops, stiff poses and sepia tones as his visual language, in which there is a duality in their aestheticism: an arcane sense lurking under the nostalgic propriety and charm.

In the book, the illustrations called “photographic evidence” by Michael Ryan are interwoven with text, which enriches the imagination and interpretation of his work. Just as the stories he read in his childhood like the Aesop's Fables which were written as allegories to both adults and children, the “Propellor Girl” stories as well as the photographs have many layers of meaning with an elemental eeriness that escapes definition.

A fine art graduate of Crawford Art College in Cork, Michael Ryan now lives in Shanghai with his wife and daughter. Over the years he has won many awards from Japan to America while his work has been featured in magazines around the globe. Most recently he was awarded the title of Photographer of the Year 2009 by UK based Black & White Photography magazine.

Michael Ryan was also awarded its Portrait Photographer of the Year 2008 for his photo “Girl with Butterflies in her Hair” and Still Life Photographer of the Year 2008. Besides, Michael Ryan was one of 60 photographs chosen from 3,000 to be featured in the Renaissance foundation book and exhibition, whose judges include professionals from Magnum Photo Agency.