

Galerie Rüdiger Schöttle

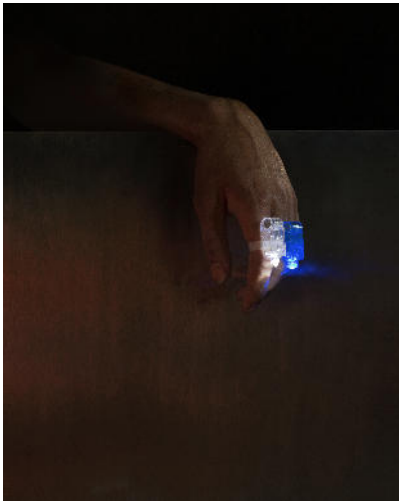
Chen Wei

Falling Light

09 Feb – 07 Apr 2018

Opening: Thursday, 08 Feb 2018, 7 – 9 pm

The artist will be present.



Chen Wei, *Two Lights*, 2016, Archival Inkjet Print, 40 x 50 cm, © Chen Wei.

To kick off the 50th anniversary of Galerie Rüdiger Schöttle the rising position of Chinese artist Chen Wei and Thomas Ruff will be presented. Chen Wei was shown in Germany for the first time in 2010 by Rüdiger Schöttle, Thomas Ruff has long since been closely associated with the gallery, where he had his first solo show in 1981.

The works shown in Chen Wei's new exhibition *Falling Light* unite the motifs and issues of his oeuvre of the past several years and develop them further: urban spaces devoid of people, stage-like settings with strong lighting effects, wet ground, sporadic individuals or just their hands in scenes of isolation, symbolically charged elements, like the sparkling coins. The unfinished crops up in the half-laid paving stones in *Fresh Paint*, while what has been and gone is expressed in *Fragment* through the tiled floor of a late-night bar, across which are strewn the shards of broken bottles, the remains of a party. Promise is the theme of *Sharing Apartment*, in which the open door and the warm light behind it evoke, in conjunction with the emptiness of the room in the foreground, an uncanny atmosphere.

Chen Wei's *mises-en-scène* address human existence with all its yearnings, with all its helplessness. Human bodies, whether present or absent in the picture, are represented in their attempt to escape the conditioning to which they are subjected in society. It is this theme that the artist brings out so well in his *Nightclub Series*. Some of the individuals thirsting for moments of freedom seem, precisely in these places of hopeless yearning, to be torpid and stupefied. Where can we find spaces and ways of liberating ourselves? When will we be really free? In his work *Two Lights* two rings on an index and a middle finger are attached to small white and blue lights. What is their function? Are they modern pieces of jewellery in technoid style or are they digital measuring instruments of the kind used for health tracking? If such is the case, where does our personal health data ultimately land? Chen Wei leaves us with questions about our highly technicized world, as in *Mike*, where a male figure, his anonymity preserved by deep shadows, thumbs the screen of his Smartphone.

Chen Wei was born in the Chinese province of Zhejiang in 1980. He lives and works in Beijing. In 2017 he had a solo exhibition at the *Centre for Contemporary Photography* in Melbourne and, in 2016, at the *JNBY Foundation in Hangzhou*. In 2015 his work could be seen in the group exhibition *Contemporary Chinese Photography* at the *Museum Folkwang* in Essen and in a solo exhibition at the *K11 Art Space* in Shanghai. Chen Wei's works also belong to numerous internationally prestigious collections. (S. Kunz)

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