



Dan Miller
Mongolian Summer
17 July - 15 August, 2010

Artist Statement

This series, made during the Mongolian summer of 2009, explores the consequences of rapid modernisation in Mongolia. Two decades after the democratic revolution which brought an end to communist rule, Mongolia is today more prosperous yet more fractured politically and socially. As in any society, some of these fractures present themselves visually, as clues rich with suggestive potential.

Being more interested in suggestion than description, I am naturally drawn to signs. Concentrating on the capital, Ulaanbaatar, and its surrounding area, I focus on those things that begin to suggest the complexity and contradictions of contemporary Mongolia. We see urbanisation yet decay and neglect, nationalist symbology yet the re-emergence of religious belief, and a growing middle class which has turned its back on a nomadic past. A closer look also reveals a more sinister underside to daily life: urban poverty, sex trafficking and political conflict.

Here I explicitly reject the didacticism of traditional documentary photography. While the images are often formally straightforward, they are not necessarily easily read. They have no intention of 'telling a story', rather, their strength lies in their suggestion of a complex political and social environment, without offering a definitive 'problem' or 'solution'. I acknowledge (often explicitly, through the return of the photographic gaze) the photographer's position as an outsider, yet maintain that outsider status can often provide insights not otherwise readily available.

Biography

Perth born, Melbourne based photographer, Dan Miller completed a Bachelor of Political Science & International Relations at the University of Queensland in 2005 before completing his Honours (First Class) in International Relations in 2008. Since then Miller has exhibited at the Perth Centre for Photography as well as the Brunswick Street Gallery, Melbourne. In 2009 Miller won the International Photography Competition held by the School of Political Science and International Studies and gained second place in *Picture This 09* held by the Brunswick Street Gallery. This year Miller was named a finalist in the CLIP Award 2010 (Contemporary Landscapes in Photography) while *Mongolian Summer* marks his first solo exhibition.

danmiller.com.au

Related artists

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