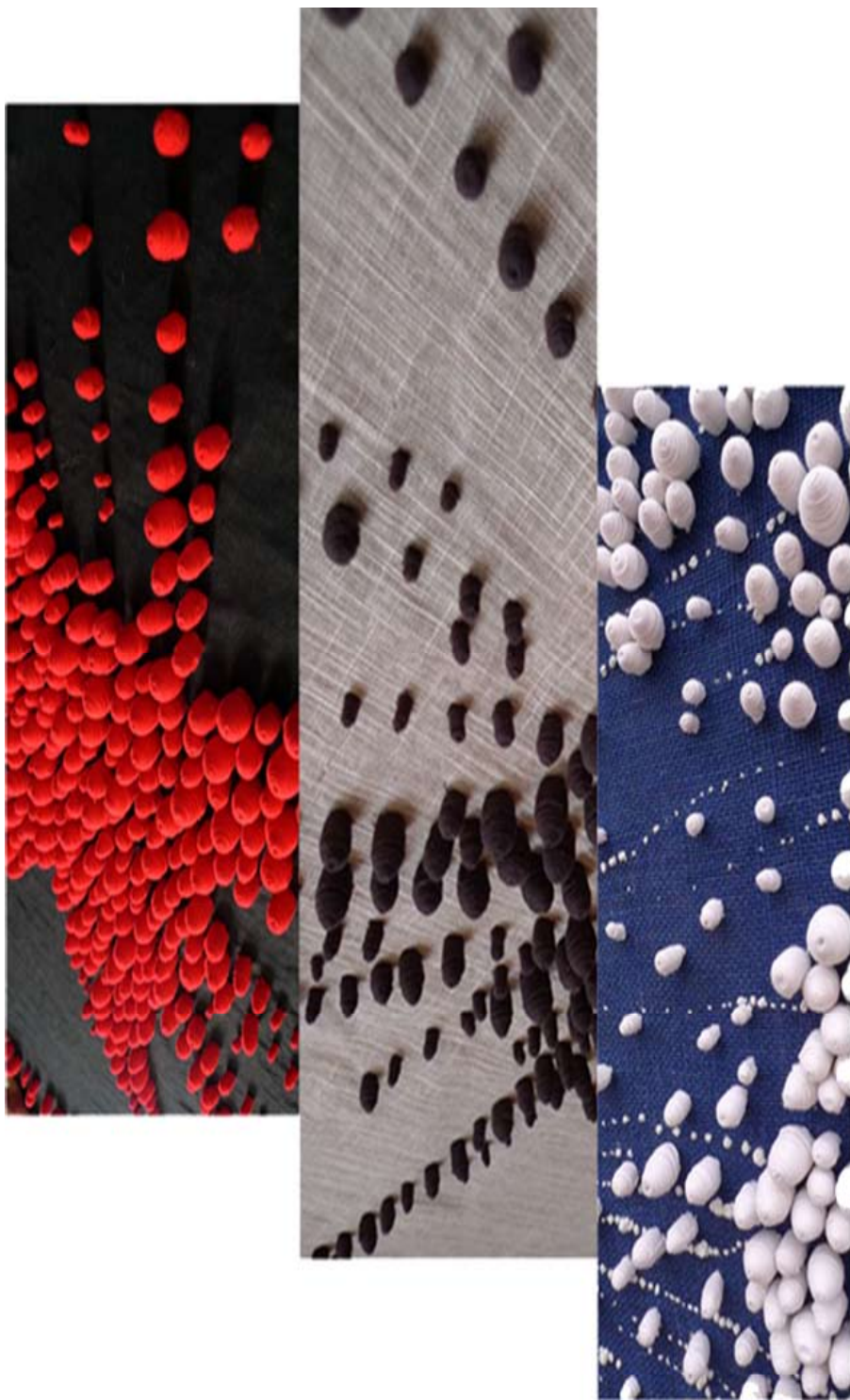


# « Textile Dreams »

## Wen Fang



# PRESS KIT

## EXHIBITION

Of contemporary art

Yishu 8 Gallery  
From May 27 to June 19, 2010

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# The artist, Wen Fang

Born in Beijing in 1976, Wen Fang grew up in the Chinese capital. At 18, she was already passionate about photography, clicking away frantically at the city and its people: photos of friends in derelict buildings, rubble or construction sites; shots of homeless people or random subway passengers, whom she photographed stealthily, her camera hidden behind an umbrella.

She went on to study at the Beijing Central Academy of Fine Arts, and worked as a web designer for 6 years. But Wen Fang could not help dreaming about France, to her mind the cradle of Art. She took French language classes in Beijing's Alliance Française for a year, before joining the Ecole Louis-Lumière, the photography and cinema school in Paris.

There, Wen Fang became captivated by Man Ray's surrealist works, which pushed her to « see beyond what can be seen ». When she came back to China in 2004, she resolutely wanted to become a photographer. But finding work was not easy...

She decided to leave for Tokyo, where one of her friends lived, to undertake a project on Japanese youth focusing on the links between tradition and modernity. An issue with which China was also struggling.

Back in China again, she started using new media to expose her photographs. The *mingong* brick was born.

## Exhibitions

- 2009** Birthday Present, Paris-Beijing Gallery, Beijing, China  
Isabelle Huppert, la femme aux portraits, Ullens Center for Contemporary Arts, Beijing, China
- 2008** Dior & Chinese artists (50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of DIOR), Ullens Center for Contemporary Arts, Beijing, China  
Our Future, Ullens Center for Contemporary Arts, Beijing, China  
Foundations, Paris-Beijing Gallery, Beijing, China  
Chinese Women Photographers Exhibition, Ravenna, Italy  
The Golden Brick: What are you looking at ?, Olympic Museum of Lausanne, Switzerland
- 2007** The Dream of the White Mansion, Paris-Beijing, Beijing, China
- 2006** Walls, Beijing 798, Beijing, China
- 2005** Get it louder, Beijing-Shanghai-Guangzhou, China  
First place for the Marie-Claire Prize in international reporting
- 2004** Fémis Photography Festival, Paris, France  
L'oeil intercontinental, Paris, France  
Pink Ribbon Public Welfare Photography Exhibition, Redgate Gallery, Beijing, China
- 2002** Asia Art Festival, Fukuoka, Japan

## Selected works

- 2008** Louis Vuitton Moët Hennessy Foundation for Creation (LVMH), Paris, France
- 2008** Ullens Center for Contemporary Arts, Beijing, China



# The Exhibition

“Textile Dreams” lies at the crossroads of traditional handicrafts and art. It is the expression of a fruitful encounter between an artist and a group of women. Wen Fang, a young Chinese artist committed to social advancement, decided to help the development of the Hundred Flowers of Magaozhuang, a handicraft cooperative created under the aegis of Femmes du Ningxia.

**“Art is about resolving problems through creative ways”**

**Wen Fang**

After producing several pieces inspired by destitution and isolation (migrant workers, orphans, homeless people), Wen Fang wanted to go beyond the social criticism voiced by artistic creation. She was looking for an art project capable of directly addressing the needs of the men and women who inspire her.

*“Apart from realizing these works, what else could I do? As an artist, I ask myself whether I can do more for these people beyond raising questions and criticisms? How to address the needs of the destitute before those of collectors?”*

Bridging Chinese traditions and modern art, the 23 artworks designed by Wen Fang and embroidered by local craftsmen reveal the unique alchemy between two worlds: the tradition-soaked rural world with its age-old craftsmanship, and the creative energy of a young urban artist

The colors and materials in the exhibition are thought provoking as well as a pleasure for the eyes. Each stitch and piece of fabric carries hopes for a better future. Piece by piece, these women are creating their own independence and liberation. Like invisible hands guided by the artist’s inspiration, they create a world of forms and colors that hint of their own isolation. An airplane in the sky crafted in fake fur; traditional latticework soles forming shadowy footprints of wandering steps; colorful patchworks resembling spaces to rebuild and unify...

## Embroidery for a better future

Beyond her will to combine her art and her commitment to help the destitute, Wen Fang also wishes to use handmade embroidery to create artworks linked to sustainable development. In addition to 18 major works, 5 pieces embroidered with red silk thread focus on sustainable development and represent pervasive garbage, such as a plastic bottle or a disposable food box. They play on the strong contrast between modernity and tradition, mass production and traditional handicraft, garbage and artwork.

*All the works exposed will be open for sale. 50% of revenues will be transferred to a fund destined to organize training programs for the Hundred Flowers’ members and/or to finance new art projects; the other 50% will go to the artist and the gallery.*

This exhibition is supported by EDF and Femmes du Ningxia



CHANGER L'ÉNERGIE ENSEMBLE



# The non-profit organization

## *Femmes du Ningxia*

Established in January 2007, Femmes du Ningxia (“Women of Ningxia”) is a French non-profit organization working in the field of international development. Its mission is to accompany women living in extremely precarious conditions to create and sustain an economic activity based on their existing skills: traditional hand-made embroidery.

Because of its democratic mode of operation (one member, one vote) and its sustainable effects on the development of communities, the cooperative has appeared as the best organization form to carry out this development project.

With the support of the International Committee for the promotion of Chinese Industrial Cooperatives (“Gung Ho”) and the local government, over 60 women from the Tongxin county created their own embroidery cooperative on October 14<sup>th</sup> 2007: the Hundred Flowers Cooperative of Magaozhuang.

**In 2008**, thanks to the financial support of its members and the French Embassy in Beijing, Femmes du Ningxia organized the first training programs for the members of the Hundred Flowers Cooperative; it also purchased necessary equipment such as sewing machines, an iron and a board, furniture, etc.

**In 2009**, with the continued support of its members, the French Embassy and the Raja Foundation, Femmes du Ningxia further developed the members’ skills and autonomy through a round of training programs (management, embroidery technique, design, etc.)

**In 2010**, Femmes du Ningxia maintains its actions to accompany the development of the cooperative

Femmes du Ningxia promotes participatory methods to enable the cooperative’s members to become actors of their own development.

For more information, please contact:

### **In France**

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President

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### **In China**

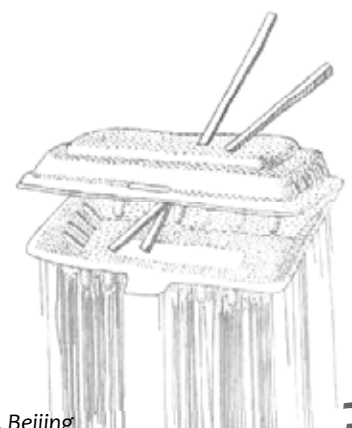
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### **Website:**

[www.femmesduningxia.org](http://www.femmesduningxia.org)



# The Hundred Flowers of Magaozhuang

Far from the economic miracle of Beijing, Shanghai or Guangzhou, bordering Inner Mongolia, lies the province of Ningxia. One of the poorest regions in China, with an annual income per capita averaging 175 euros, Ningxia is also severely affected by drought.

The Hundred Flowers' workshop is situated in Yuwang, a small town in Tongxin County rousing an utterly remote feeling. This is where Wen Fang stayed with fifteen members of the cooperative from March 15 to April 15 to realize the works exposed at *Textile Dreams*.

During one month, Ma Xiaohua, Shi Mei, Chen Guiqin, Ding Ting, Lui Yinxia, Ding Linghua, Zhang Xuefang, Zhao Xinxia, Liu Zhongli, Ding Chengxia, Xie Tianfang, Xi Yaoxiang, Liu Xueqin, Shen Yinglan and Wang Xiaohua worked relentlessly under the leadership of Wen Fang.

**Website:** [www.baihuahezuoshe.com](http://www.baihuahezuoshe.com) (launch scheduled for May 27<sup>th</sup>, 2010)

## Words from the members



**Ma Xiaohua,**  
President of the Hundred Flowers,  
3 children, Hui, Liumiao,  
illiterate.

*“Embroidery is the basis of young girls’ education. In our village, few had the chance to go to school. I only attended primary school myself. I have always felt sorry about it. But, since I was 12, I have practiced embroidery. To this day, I devote a lot of time and energy to it. I love embroidery.*

*The action of Femmes du Ningxia and the creation of the cooperative have had a significant impact on our lives as women. It created the hope of a better future for ourselves and our families. Of course, there is still a long way to go before we can live off this activity. We need to improve our organization and production methods to be able to meet customers’ requirements. But I am convinced that, one day, our skills and our effort will be acknowledged and valued. We will see the cooperative grow and our handicraft endure.”*



**Shi Mei,**  
Vice-President of the Hundred Flowers,  
2 children, Han, Zhangjiayuan.

*“Due to my mother’s disability, I had to drop out of school at a very young age. While lacking education, I have always been naturally determined and ambitious. In 2007, when I heard about the creation of an embroidery cooperative in Liumiao, I immediately contacted the people in charge to enquire about participation requirements. Since I was young, I have enjoyed making traditional embroideries and was thus highly motivated to join the team.*

*In the last two years, with the support of Femmes du Ningxia, we have taken part in training programs in embroidery and realized several orders for local and foreign customers. Unfortunately, we live in one of China’s poorest and most remote regions. It is therefore very difficult to find clients for our products. Despite these obstacles, I believe in this project. It gives us the hope to spare future generations hardship and poverty.”*

# Yishu 8

Yishu 8 is a space dedicated to the arts - an unexpected place in a converted factory called Cable 8, and an oasis of creativity and culture in the heart of Beijing's CBD.

Founded by Christine Cayol and her partner Xue Yunda (Max), this former factory bath-house has been transformed by interior designer Caroline Odinet (Paris).

Today, Yishu 8 is an open space exuding warmth and offering fresh cultural experiences. Art and sculpture exhibitions, conferences, seminars and events are held in its tasteful, elegant surroundings for discerning people to whom art and the art of living are second nature.

Yishu 8 holds seminars on Art and Management organized by Synthesis, a training and consulting company for business executives and leaders, led by Christine Cayol and her French and Chinese team.

Yishu 8 opens out on a courtyard garden, away from the hustle and bustle, where you can sit and talk and refine your appreciation of art through the unique works of art on display there.

The combined space can accommodate up to 150/200 people.

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## Access:



**Opening hours:** Monday-Friday 11.30 am to 18.30 pm,  
Saturday and Sunday 14.30 to 18.30 pm

## Website:

[www.yishu-8.com](http://www.yishu-8.com)



# VISUALS AVAILABLE

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Other visuals are also available on request:  
[wenfang1949@gmail.com](mailto:wenfang1949@gmail.com)





Textile Dreams / Wen Fang – From May 27 to June 19, 2010 / Yishu8, Beijing