

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

STEPHEN WILKES **C H I N A**

April 5 – May 12, 2007

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In the Project Room

ClampArt is proud to present two exhibitions of work by artist, Stephen Wilkes—a selection of his new photographs from China in the main gallery and a suite of his renowned Ellis Island images in the project room.

Traveling throughout old and new China, Stephen Wilkes has expertly portrayed a nation amidst rapid and vast transformation. Focusing on both rural and industrial settings—and the increasing number of areas where the two collide—the artist draws our attention to a changing way of life. The large, spectacular imagery speaks of not only a new era in China, but also a shift in global economies already felt in the United States.

Wilkes, however, unlike other artists who have concentrated on similar imagery (like Edward Burtynsky and Andreas Gursky, for example), is always sure to include a human element in his photographs. Conscious of the individual lives affected by such a riptide of industrialization, the artist hopes to remind his audience of the real implications of such drastic economic and social shifts.



In ClampArt's secondary gallery space, Stephen Wilkes' dramatic Ilfochrome prints of the "dark side" of Ellis Island will be displayed in conjunction with the release of his new monograph, "Ellis Island: Ghosts of Freedom" from W.W. Norton & Company. For five years, 1998-2003, Wilkes had free reign of the hospital complex that comprises the south side of Ellis Island. Neglected for nearly fifty years, the buildings were in an extreme state of disrepair: lead paint peeled from the ceilings and walls of rooms, vines and trees grew through the floorboards of once-cramped wards, detritus and debris littered the hallways. In spaces long abandoned, Wilkes manages to capture undeniable evidence of life. His is an alternate and breathtaking vision of this gateway to freedom. And through his artwork, Wilkes inspired and eventually helped raise six million dollars in funding towards the restoration of the south side of the island.

Stephen Wilkes has been widely recognized for his artwork for over two decades. His images have been reproduced on the covers of such top publications as *Sports Illustrated*, *Time*, *Life*, and *The New York Times Magazine*. His work is represented in the permanent collection of the George Eastman House in Rochester, New York.

For more information and images please contact Brian Paul Clamp, Director, or see www.clampart.com. Gallery hours are Tuesday through Saturday, 11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Image: © Stephen Wilkes, "New Construction: Shanghai," 2006, Archival pigment print, 48 x 60 inches.