

Hai Bo

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Hai Bo, "Passing Traveller" 2008

That is no country for old men wrote Yeats so very many years ago. He might have been talking about modern China. Or just about anywhere, really. For the old have become universally personae non grata. But in China where the one child policy has denied the elderly of the traditional consolations of family, grandchildren, and a place of honor in the home, this pervasive tragedy is particularly affecting.

With quietude and compassion Bo explores the loneliness of old men in his show at Pace/Macgill. The image of an old man leaning his head against an even older tree as if only there could he find comfort underscores the poignancy of the entire project.

Often photographing them in isolation, in an empty room or on an open road, as if to emphasize that indoors or out, they are always alone, Bo presents the unadorned truth of aging. One does it alone.