

Liu Shiming *Art* Gallery

PRESS RELEASE

Archives

February 24 - May 17, 2026

The Liu Shiming Art Foundation is pleased to present *Archives*, an exhibition featuring found photography by Thomas Sauvin alongside sculptures and sketches by Liu Shiming. The show brings together seventeen works by Sauvin and eighteen by Liu, inviting viewers to explore everyday life through the lens of memory, observation, and artistic interpretation. Both artists share a focus on ordinary gestures and moments, transforming them into lasting expressions of emotion and collective memory.

Thomas Sauvin's photographs, drawn from his ongoing Beijing Silvermine project, capture discarded negatives recovered from a recycling factory in Beijing. These images, created by amateur photographers between 1985 and 2005, document street scenes, family portraits, celebrations, and everyday objects. Sauvin's hand-printed C-type silver prints give each image a singular presence, bringing forgotten moments back to life. By carefully selecting and presenting these images, he not only preserves collective memory but also offers a sensitive, analytical perspective on vernacular culture and social transformation in contemporary China.

Liu Shiming (1926–2010), a revered Chinese sculptor, complements Sauvin's photographic practice with works that focus on modest figures and gestures, including children, workers, and animals. Through his sculptures and sketches, Liu prolongs ordinary moments of intimacy, love, and human interaction, creating a personal archive of lived experience. Born in Tianjin and trained at Beijing's Central Academy of Fine Arts, Liu combined traditional Chinese art with modernist influences, developing a distinct style that celebrates the expressive power of simplicity.

Presented together, the works of Sauvin and Liu enter into a subtle dialogue. Certain gestures captured in Sauvin's photographs echo in Liu's sculptures, revealing the persistence of human behaviors across time and medium. This conversation between photography and sculpture underscores the exhibition's central theme: the beauty and significance of the everyday. *Archives* celebrates the traces we leave behind and honors the choice to preserve and remember.

The exhibition also coincides with the 100th anniversary of Liu Shiming's birth. The Foundation will mark this milestone with additional exhibitions and programs throughout 2026.

About Thomas Sauvin

French artist, archivist, and collector Thomas Sauvin has spent more than a decade salvaging discarded photographic negatives in Beijing, assembling one of China's largest contemporary photographic archives. His Beijing Silvermine project, encompassing over 850,000 images, has been exhibited internationally and published widely. His work is included in the collections of major institutions, including the Tate, the V&A, and the Pompidou.

About Liu Shiming

Liu Shiming's career as a sculptor spanned decades, shaping modern Chinese sculpture with works that blend tradition and modernism. His sculptures are held in prominent collections worldwide and continue to be exhibited internationally, celebrating both public and private life in China through expressive, everyday gestures.

About the Liu Shiming Art Foundation

Founded in 2021, the Liu Shiming Art Foundation supports contemporary art globally while preserving Liu Shiming's legacy. Based in New York, the Foundation curates exhibitions and provides scholarships, grants, and exchange programs to promote cross-cultural dialogue and the shared human experience.

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