

ART IN REVIEW

'One to One'

'Visions — Recent Photographs From China'

Chambers Fine Art

210 11th Avenue, near 24th Street
Chelsea

Through May 29

Feng Boyi, who organized this show of eight Chinese photographers, says he hopes viewers will gain from it a deeper understanding of contemporary Chinese experience. But the artists he has selected, all born after 1960, show more interest in familiar formal or narrative photographic conventions than in real life.

Four artists toy with the grid. Guan Shi's diaristic montages have one snapshot of himself or his immediate environment for every day of a given year; Lin Jingjing's "My 365 Days" has a picture of a plain bowl with some wispy hair in it, also for every day of the year. Ma Han's "Plan of the Ants" is a grid of small bird's-eye views of a busy city intersection. Bai Yiluo shapes grids of thumbtack-size portraits of ordinary people into the silhouettes of Chinese zodiac animals.

Wen Ling's color pictures of anonymous people and street scenes printed end to end on long bands of paper also have the serial continuity and noncentered composition of the grid.

The others construct narratives. Chi Peng's pictures of naked young men pursued by bright red, bird-size airplanes call to mind the surrealist photographs of Sandy Skoglund. Yi Deer's color pictures of himself in an entirely gold costume emerging from a cornfield or a street manhole are like updates of Tseng Kwong Chi's 1980's self-portraits as a Maoist tourist. Xu Lei's photographs of blue gauze curtains covering photographs of ancient statuary and buildings meditate on photography, history and the veils of perception. **KEN JOHNSON**