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PREFACE

Professor Deng Wei FRPS is a prolific photographer and writer, well known and highly regarded in China and beyond. He has been taking photographs for almost thirty years. It is my very great pleasure, as President of The Royal Photographic Society, to provide Professor Deng with the opportunity to make his work better known in the UK through his exhibition 'Wind from China' and the publication of this catalogue.

He is a graduate of Beijing Film Academy which he entered in 1978. After graduation, he worked as a lecturer in the photography department of the Academy and made a number of motion picture films. His photography began in the 1970s with taking pictures of some well-known scholars in China at that time which continued in to the 1980s when his Photographs of China's Scholars were first published in 1986. These portraits were regarded as epoch making and in the Foreword to Deng Wei's book *Selection of Photographic Works*, the Chairperson of the Chinese Photographers Association, Shao Hua, described his work: *as being distinct, with their fresh conception and special ambience. Adopting dark colours and local lighting, he focused on his subjects' faces at a particular moment, attempting to bring forth their inner world. This unique feature expresses deep meaning through simple forms.* Anyone who views his work will agree with this description of a very gifted photographer who is able to reveal the character of his subjects by the complete mastery of the key techniques of composition, lighting and the right moment.

In the 1990s he embarked at his own expense on a very ambitious project photographing eminent people around the world. In doing so he suffered many physical and financial hardships in pursuit of excellence in his photographic work. He invited 100 well known political figure, artists and scientists to be the subject of his photographs. His subjects included a number of Presidents of the USA, many primeministers, Nobel laureates, explorers and international figures from the arts and sciences, including the photographer Yosuf Karsh. His work is very much concerned with his desire for different cultures to achieve a mutual understanding through photography.

I was privileged to meet him recently in Beijing and be presented with his book *Deng Wei and Fifty Faces*, published in 2004, that contains 53 portraits selected from his exhibition of photographs of the world's leaders who created and shaped the modern world. He not only is a portrait photographer who ranks amongst the best in the world but his work embraces fine art photography, as well as photojournalism in colour and monochrome. The photographs reproduced in this catalogue are representative of his work as a whole and span many photographic genres all of which are imprinted with his own unique and characteristic style.

He was awarded a Fellowship of The Society in 2004 which is The Society's highest distinction, awarded for excellence and distinguished ability in submitted work. He is the author of more than 11 books, a man of boundless energy with a passion for photography that is unlimited. I am delighted that The Royal Photographic Society is in a position to provide this eminent photographer with the means and opportunity for many more people to become familiar with his work and act as a catalyst for an even wider recognition that he so richly deserves.

Professor Ralph Jacobson ASIS Hon FRPS
President