

9-16-2009

## The Landscape Within: Shanghai Photography by Howard French

Follow this and additional works at: <http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/chinabeatarchive>

 Part of the [Asian History Commons](#), [Asian Studies Commons](#), [Chinese Studies Commons](#), and the [International Relations Commons](#)

---

"The Landscape Within: Shanghai Photography by Howard French" (2009). *The China Beat Blog Archive 2008-2012*. 620.  
<http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/chinabeatarchive/620>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the China Beat Archive at DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln. It has been accepted for inclusion in The China Beat Blog Archive 2008-2012 by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln.

# The Landscape Within: Shanghai Photography by Howard French

September 16, 2009 in [Photo](#) by [The China Beat](#) | [Permalink](#)

Howard French, former Shanghai bureau chief for the *New York Times*, has recently posted a new collection of black-and-white photographs on [his website](#). The photo gallery, entitled "Disappearing Shanghai Part Two: The Landscape Within," is accompanied by an essay written by French. Below, an excerpt from "The Landscape Within" and a sample of French's photography to whet your appetite:

As many times as I have tread those asphalt streets, my mission this summer was altogether different from my photographic explorations of the past. It was inspired, in part, by a suggestion from a friend, the photographer Danny Lyon, that sounded innocent-enough but hit me with the force of an explosion.

Danny had been very generous in his comments about my street work, but something was nagging him. "Howard, I want to know more about the lives of these people. Where do they live? I want to see them at home."

In the course of four years of street photography, I had been in the homes of some of the people I have photographed, but it had never occurred to me to make those cramped, often ill-lit spaces the focus of any extended work, especially not given my rapture over the streets.

Inspired by Danny's insight, though, I revisited my old haunts nearly ever day for two and a half months, forcing myself at first to resist the familiar seductions of the street to go a step beyond into the truly private worlds of hundreds of ordinary people.



Thither and Yon



Dorothea



Ancestors

French also wrote about his experiences working on this project in a ["Letter From China"](#) published last month in the *New York Times*. Readers of [China in 2008](#) will find an extended essay on "Disappearing Shanghai" and more of French's photos there as well.

**Tags:** [Shanghai](#), [urban China](#)