



**Shangri-La** is a series of photographs made in Yunnan China in 2004-05. The work is a collaboration between artists Patty Chang and David Kelley. *Lost Horizon*, the 1933 novel by James Hilton was the modern origin of concept of Shangri-La. In the genre of colonial-era adventure narratives his story of Shangri-La was made ubiquitous by Frank Capra's film *Lost Horizon* from 1937. Such imaginaries of the far-east came full-circle in 2003 when the Chinese government renamed Zhongdian, a small Tibetan town in Yunnan to Shangri-La. Since then Shangri-La County has become a popular tourist destination, showcasing Tibetan communities and their cultural sites.

The project produced hybrid icons, based on images *Lost Horizon* and popular cultural lore, in collaboration with local artisans and craftspeople. Between highly-produced costume weddings, rural home stays with Tibetan families and the use and re-use of Tibetan stupas, sacred mountains and monasteries, there exists an economy of the imagination of a paradise on earth.

### **Shangri-La**

25 color photographs

dimensions variable

David Kelley and Patty Chang

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