

EDWARD BURTYNSKY

CHINA IN AFRICA

23 May – 12 July 2025

Private View: Thursday, 22 May, 6–8 pm

Artist Talk & Film Screening: Friday, 23 May at M+ Museum, Hong Kong

49 TUNG STREET, SHEUNG WAN,
HONG KONG

T: +852 2576 5088

hongkong@flowersgallery.com

www.flowersgallery.com

Flowers Gallery Hong Kong is pleased to announce Edward Burtynsky: *China in Africa*, opening 23 May 2025. The exhibition explores China's evolving role in global manufacturing, from the transformation of its domestic production systems to the expansion of its industrial footprint across the African continent. Captured between 2018 and late 2024, the works in this show continue Burtynsky's decades-long engagement with the infrastructures of extraction, energy, and logistics, offering a visual record of China's pivotal influence on the contemporary industrial landscape.

With a deep historical understanding of twentieth-century industrial processes, Burtynsky uses his aerial and wide-angle lens perspective to create sweeping images that reveal the scale of industrial development and its impact on the environment. Inside China, a new generation of robotics and vast battery assembly lines stretch across the frame, as seen in Burtynsky's 2023 photographs of the BYD manufacturing facility in Jiangsu Province – a major producer of lithium batteries for electric vehicles. In works such as *BYD Manufacturing Facility #2, Changzhou, Jiangsu Province, China, 2023*, rows of yellow components and minimal human presence signal a shift toward automation and the industrial scale of the energy transition.



BYD Manufacturing Facility #2, Changzhou, Jiangsu Province, China, 2023

This transformation is contrasted with scenes photographed in Ethiopia and Namibia, where Chinese-owned rail crossings, warehouses, and apparel factories reflect a different phase of industrialisation: slower-paced, less mechanised, and still reliant on manual labour. Now, two decades on from Burtynsky's earlier documentation of China's rise as the world's manufacturing engine, the pace of globalisation has accelerated, and the country's influence across the African continent is profound. The exhibition offers a glimpse into this evolving relationship, capturing the infrastructure and mega-factories established by Chinese companies and the broader impact of these collaborations on African landscapes and labour systems.

As curator and former Director of the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal, Marc Mayer writes in *Extraction/Abstraction*, the Steidl monograph produced for Burtynsky's monumental 2024 survey exhibition at Saatchi Gallery, London, Burtynsky's practice moves fluidly between artist, journalist, and technician – “delivering awareness of a fast-creeping circumstance that affects every living thing” through a visual language that is as poetic as it is precise.

The exhibition coincides with a special event at M+ Museum, Hong Kong, on Friday, 23 May: a screening of *Manufactured Landscapes*, the acclaimed 2006 documentary by Jennifer Baichwal that follows Burtynsky through industrial sites across China. Shot on Super 16mm film, the documentary captures the vast scale of China's rapid development, from sprawling factories to the monumental Three Gorges Dam, and extends the narrative of Burtynsky's photographic work into moving image. The screening will be followed by a conversation between Edward Burtynsky and Ikko Yokoyama, Lead Curator of Design and Architecture at M+, where three of Burtynsky's works are currently on view, in the group exhibition, *Making it Matters*, as part of the museum's permanent collection.

From 19 June - 28 September 2025, The International Center of Photography (ICP) will present *The Great Acceleration*, the first solo institutional exhibition of Edward Burtynsky's work in New York City in over twenty years. Curated by David Campany, the exhibition will reveal the depth of his investigation into the human alteration of natural landscapes around the world.



Silver Spark Apparel #1, Hawassa Industrial Park, Awassa, Ethiopia, 2018

ABOUT EDWARD BURTYNSKY (b 1955)

Edward Burtynsky is regarded as one of the world's most accomplished contemporary photographers. His remarkable photographic depictions of global industrial landscapes represent over 40 years of his dedication to bearing witness to the impact of humans on the planet.

In 2024 Saatchi Gallery, London staged a major retrospective, *BURTYNSKY: EXTRACTION / ABSTRACTION*, the largest exhibition ever mounted in Edward Burtynsky's 40+ year career, supported by a series of film screenings of *The Anthropocene Trilogy* at BFI, London, and an immersive experience of *In the Wake of Progress* at Outernet, London. The acclaimed exhibition then commenced touring to M9 - Museum of the 20th Century, Mestre.

Burtynsky's photographs are included in the collections of over 80 major museums around the world. Major (touring) exhibitions include *Anthropocene* (2018); *Water* (2013) organised by the New Orleans Museum of Art & Contemporary Art Center, *Louisiana*; *Oil* (2009) at the Corcoran Gallery of Art in Washington D.C.; *China* (2005 five-year tour); and *Manufactured Landscapes* (2003) at the National Gallery of Canada. Burtynsky's distinctions include the inaugural TED Prize in 2005, which he shared with Bono and Robert Fischell; in 2006, he was awarded the title of Officer of the Order of Canada; the Governor General's Awards in Visual and Media Arts; the Outreach Award at the Rencontres d'Arles; the Roloff Beny Book award; and the 2018 Photo London Master of Photography Award. In 2019, he was the recipient of the Arts & Letters Award at the Canadian Association of New York's annual Maple Leaf Ball and the 2019 Lucie Award for Achievement in Documentary Photography. In 2020, he was awarded a Royal Photographic Society Honorary Fellowship and in 2022 was honoured with the Outstanding Contribution to Photography Award by the World Photography Organization. In 2022, he was inducted into the International Photography Hall of Fame and was named the 2022 recipient for the annual Pollution Probe Award. Most recently he received the 2023 PHotoESPAÑA Award for Professional Career and was awarded with the 25th edition of the Pino Pascali Prize.

Exhibition Opening Hours: Tuesday - Saturday, 11 am - 6 pm

PRESS ENQUIRIES

For more information and images please contact Leighanne Murray: leighanne@atelierpublicrelations.com or press@flowersgallery.com / +44 (0) 207 439 7766

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