

# The Laowai Eye

## China through a Western Lens

◆ *By Lowell Bennett*

↓ In Lhasa, this dapper gent just completed his pilgrimage to Potala Palace. Though you would never know it from this angle, he is on the downward steps exiting that ancient and revered place of Tibetan faith and culture. My back is against the exterior wall, the smell of ceremonial yak butter candles is still fresh in my nostrils.



*At the far points, I've been south to Nanning and beyond to the border of Vietnam, southwest to Yunnan's rainforests and the border with Laos and Myanmar, east to the Taiwan Straits, north to Dandong and the riverine border with the DPRK, to the far deserts of the northwest, and to the mountains of Tibet, with stops in between at many vibrant and charming cities, towns and villages.*

*During my travels I have seen and photographed places of great natural beauty, remarkably preserved ancient townships and wildly booming ultramodern metropolises. Along the way, always, I met many gracious and welcoming people.*

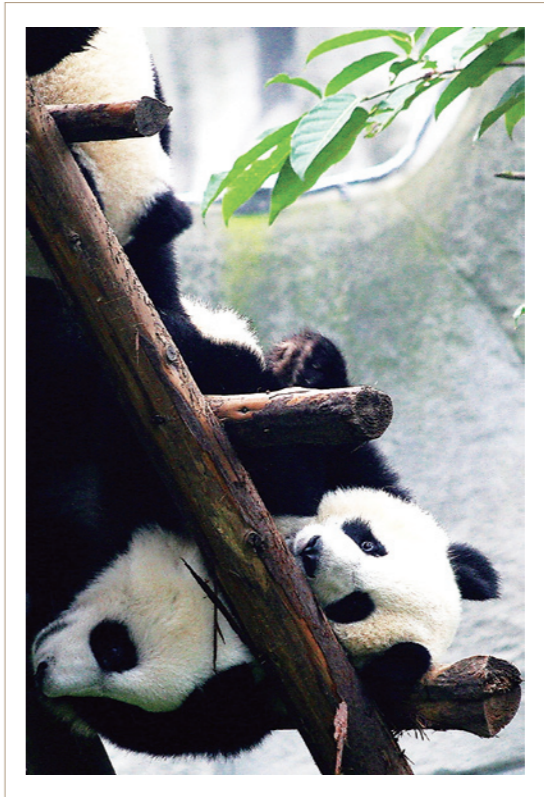
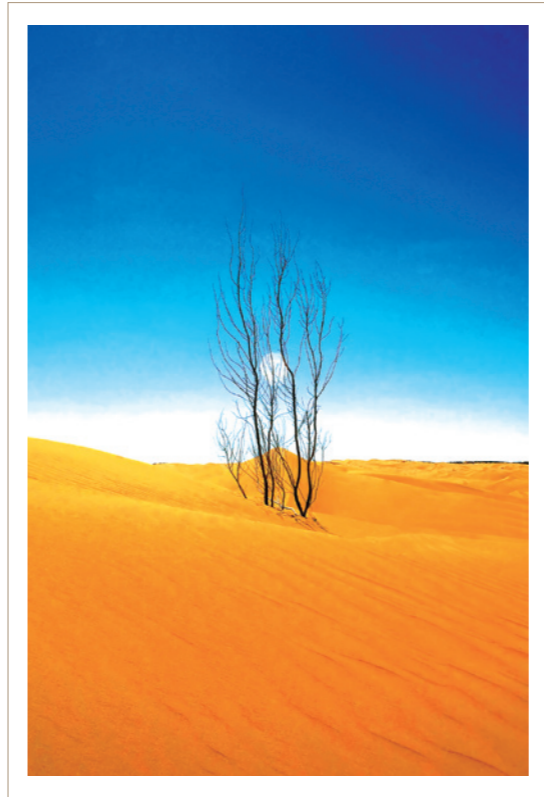
*Here are a few of the thousands of photos I have taken with brief observations based on my personal perspective.*

A US writer and photographer based in Beijing since 2005, Lowell Bennett has traveled widely through the cities, across the countryside, and to the remote hinterlands of China. Here at a mountain-top monastery in Tibet. by Daniel Allen





The textural and societal qualities of this image are emblematic on several levels: Grace, elegance; spirituality; culture; nature; history. This was shot at the Da Zhao Temple (founded 1579) in what is now the city of Hohhot, Inner Mongolia.



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1. A reminder for some: China is not all booming cities and rice paddies. Here is the desert, Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region.

2. What can I say? Pandas. Here I humbly submit my addition to the millions of photos in print and on the web. These particular subjects are adolescents, romping, rocking and rolling at the Chengdu Panda Breeding Research Center, Sichuan Province.

3. A societal symbol of progress, modernity and reverence for culture, the National Centre for the Performing Arts in Beijing.

