



Media Information

## IN BETWEEN FATE AND DESTINY

**The photographer Stefanie Schweiger and the author Phoebe Hui ask how thousands of years of traditional Chinese knowledge can be reconciled with the country's situation today. Their search for spirituality, ancient knowledge, faith, and superstition has led them to some of the most remote corners of China. Schweiger and Hui have taken part in mysterious ceremonies, spent days hiking with their protagonists across mountaintops, and stopped over at cloisters. They have now published a book about their journey, titled *The Magic of Yuanfen*.**

Bielefeld/Berlin, 2020 – “Follow your heart, look for healing with the heart”—The photographer Stefanie Schweiger (\*1979) and her co-author, Phoebe Hui (\*1983), have followed this advice.

Their search for spirituality, ancient knowledge, faith, and superstition has led them to some of the most remote corners of China. Schweiger and Hui have participated in mysterious ceremonies, spent days hiking with their protagonists across mountaintops, stayed in cloisters, drunk self-brewed herbal medicines, and have tried to remain as open as possible toward all of the people they have encountered, including healers and sages, secretive Buddhist societies, shamans, hermits, Taoists, homeopaths, Tibetan doctors, *bimos*, Feng Shui masters, and monks.

These meetings were always accompanied by questions, such as whether the wisdom or the culture that has been handed down over centuries or even millennia can be reconciled with modern life in present-day China? And to what extent can this also be an inspiration for our Western lifestyles?

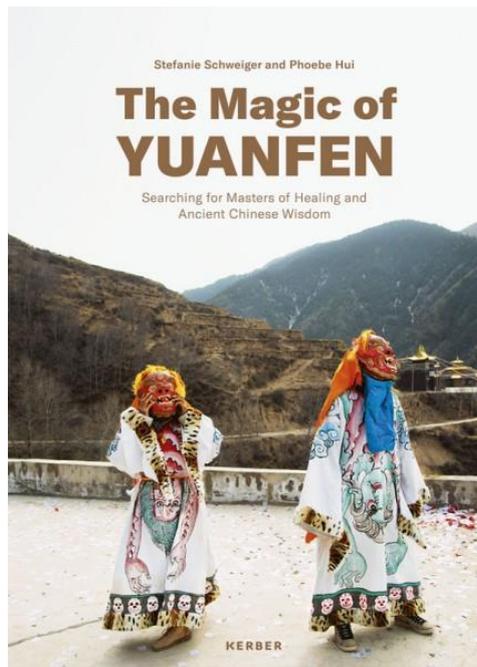
There are many in China who have taken on the task of helping their fellow humans. Often they use a variety of methods or are fueled by diverse motivations. All of the encounters on this journey occurred thanks to fate or coincidence, depending on what you want to call it. Because anyone who undertakes a search is rewarded with a path.

In Chinese this is called *yuanfen*—fate, coincidence, or the connective force that brings a person into contact with other people or objects.

Even today *yuanfen* plays an essential role in the Chinese economy and politics. Rapid developments in science and technology have modernized and westernized lifestyles all across the country. Yet, beneath the surface of modernity in this gigantic country—which covers a surface of 9.6. square kilometers and contains 56 ethnic groups—lies a history that goes back more than 3500 years. Is everything really the way we perceive it?

The newly released *The Magic of Yuanfen: Searching for Masters of Healing and Ancient Chinese Wisdom* now offers a nuanced panorama of this impressive journey.

A podcast accompanies the book.



**Stefanie Schweiger, Phoebe Hui | The Magic of Yuanfen**

ISBN 978-3-7356-0648-8

16,8 × 24 cm

272 Pages

127 colored illustrations

Hardcover

Languages: English

**Text by**

Phoebe Hui, Stefanie Schweiger

**Design by**

Lisa Schweizer, Berlin

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**PRESS CONTACT**

Sara Buschmann

PR & Marketing

+49 (0)521-95 00 814

[sara.buschmann@kerberverlag.com](mailto:sara.buschmann@kerberverlag.com)