

PRESS RELEASE

**"Chen Chieh-jen: Empire's Borders I & II"**

**2010.12.4 – 2011.1.10**

**Long March Space, Beijing**

"Chen Chieh-jen – Empire's Borders" is the first exhibition by the artist in China. The exhibition, on view at Long March Space from Dec. 4, 2010 through Jan. 10, 2011, includes his single-channel video "Empire's Borders I" (2009), "Empire's Borders II – Western Enterprises, Inc." (2010) his recently completed three-channel video, photography and documentation.

Chen Chieh-jen is Taiwan's most internationally recognized artist. Chen's artistic practice is fueled by an ongoing examination of hidden political powers and power relationships, in order to reflect upon today's neo-liberal empire built upon the alliance of nation and capital. Through art, Chen seeks to create an action that eliminates imperial consciousness.

The video "*Empire's Borders I*" is based on Chen's *The Illegal Immigrant* blog, and is divided into two segments of dramatized reportage. The first segment presents eight typical cases of Taiwanese applicants enduring a consular officer's abuse at AIT (American Institute in Taiwan), and then being denied a nonimmigrant visa for inexplicable reasons. The second segment presents the stories of eight Mainland Chinese spouses immigrating to Taiwan on marriage visas, who, starting from their arrival interview at the airport, suffer all manners of discrimination and rigorous scrutiny from Taiwan's National Immigration Agency. Chen Chieh-jen compares these two situations to explore global hierarchies of border control policies, and the disciplinary tactics dominant countries deploy when dealing with people of other nations. The video also critiques the Taiwanese government's domineering attitude and use of Cold War ideologies in dealing with weaker individuals from other regions.

By making the interview rooms at AIT and Taiwan's National Immigration Agency seemingly visible and audible, the stage sets created for "*Empire's Borders I*" subvert the national authority that conceals these spaces from public

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The inspiration for Chen Chieh-jen's "*Empire's Borders II – Western Enterprises Inc.*" arose from items left to Chen by his father, a former NSA soldier, when he passed away. In this three-channel video, Chen investigates his father's training as a member of the Anti-Communist National Salvation Army, which was co-organized by the CIA and Nationalist Government of Taiwan. The video reflects on the United States' long-term domination of Taiwanese society, and the formation of Taiwanese society as one without historical records or a collective consciousness, using a "re-writing" and "re-imagining" of this history to emphasizing the necessity of "people's memory" and "people's writing."

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