

PRESS RELEASE

**"Xiao Xiong: Iron Curtain"**

**2008.6.14 - 7.11**

**Long March Space, Beijing**

"Iron Curtain" is Xiao Xiong's first major solo exhibition. It is an assemblage of installation and video works from his recent practice and theoretical thinking that is grounded in an investigation of reality, exploring the conflicting relationship between the social, the international and the local.

The title "Iron Curtain" refers to the term popularized by Winston Churchill after the Second World War that describes the ideological divide between Eastern and Western Europe until the end of the Cold War. It also points to the main work in the exhibition, a solid rusting steel wall, inscribed with the German phrase: "Proletarier aller Länder, vereinigt euch?" (Proletariat of the World, have you united?) and the logo of the Fourth International (a communist international organization made up of followers of Trotsky, in opposition to both capitalism and Stalinism). Should the viewer lean in close to the surface of this installation, the reverberating sound of this iron wall being beaten can be heard. Behind this 'Iron Curtain' are a series of smaller installations composed of fragments of various organic and man-made materials, where moving imagery zooms in repeated loop of familiar urban landscapes. This grouping of works, strategically placed by the artist in order to posit particular relationships between materialism and social theory, questions the stereotypical imagination of an 'iron curtain'.

This body of work calls to mind such keywords and individuals as International Labor Movement, Leon Trotsky, Fourth International, Cold War and ideology, seeking to create constructive tension between historical discourse and contemporary critique. In fact, the artist harbors his own reserved opinions about the "fact" that the Cold War is over, for him, ideology can never have a conclusion.

Having worked arm in arm with "Long March Project" for many years as Artistic

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LONG MARCH SPACE

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Director, Xiao Xiong's work continues Long March Project's investigation of historical consciousness and cultural memory, his work offering a powerful statement concerning ideas of ideology and the ways in which particular principles are lived, perpetuated, or forgotten in contemporary society.

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