

PRESS RELEASE

**"Long March Project: Yanchuan Primary School Papercutting Art Education Project"**

**2009.09.26**

**Long March Space, Beijing**

An exhibition of collected works, showcasing methodology and development of 'Yanchuan Primary School Papercutting Art Education Project' will be on view at Long March Space from 26<sup>th</sup> September. On display will be examples of curriculum textbooks with feedback from paper-cutting researchers on curriculum structure, paper-cutting teaching DVDs, manuscript from teachers and researchers and photographic and video documentation of the overall project.

The *Yanchuan Primary School Papercutting Art Education Project* has been a 3-year Long March program that established an education model for the transmission of folk culture focusing on a particular region. Yanchuan County is situated northeast of Yan'an city in Sha'anxi Province, China, a region celebrated for its paper-cuts - a vital folk practice that thus far has been given little attention in local education policies in China. This pilot program sought to demonstrate how folk art can re-enter daily life through art education, utilizing ethnic cultural resources to mobilize folk artists within the villages, as well as art educators, researchers, scholars, and artists. In developing this curriculum, undertaking critical fieldwork and research in Yanchuan County, the Long March Project cultivated an awareness of folk art as a form of contemporary practice that should be recognized as essential to younger generations' sense of cultural consciousness.

The *Yanchuan Primary School Papercutting Art Education Project* follows a previous Long March undertaking titled 'The Great Survey of Paper-cutting in Yanchuan County' (2004). The results and raised dilemmas of this survey gave birth to the research and development of this program. Over the course of the following two years, the Long March Project team regularly visited and studied the folk art education system in Sha'an Xi Province, seeking to observe, learn

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and subsequently develop a curriculum for paper-cutting that directly focused on the basic symbols found in this traditional art form. Training seminars amongst school teachers and 20 local artists were subsequently held in Yanchuan, in 2007. Since March 2008, over 3700 students at 6 different schools and youth centres in the region have been learning the art of the paper-cut through this curriculum. In autumn 2009, the curriculum was reviewed by respected paper-cutting researchers in Beijing, facilitated by Long March Project.

As the most critically engaged, independent art organization in China, the Long March Project seeks to challenge presumed understanding of contemporary art production, by curating and facilitating artistic projects, with variable exhibition and education focus, by demonstrating the essential relationship between art and life, culture and education.

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