

**NEWS RELEASE****FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****July 7, 2010**

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213 237-2873 | dwyenn@calarts.edu**Chen Chieh-jen*****Empire's Borders II - Western Enterprises, Inc.*****Exhibition dates: July 9 - September 5, 2010**

(Los Angeles, CA) Chen Chieh-jen's powerful and haunting body of films examines the history of Taiwan within the larger context of globalization. On exhibition at REDCAT July 9, 2010 through September 5, 2010, Chen presents a newly commissioned work entitled *Empire's Borders II - Western Enterprises, Inc.* Inspired by his own difficulties in acquiring a visa to enter the United States, this multimedia video installation explores ideas of borders and boundaries within a shifting geopolitical landscape while also reflecting on the history of Taiwan-U.S. relations.

Empire's Borders II - Western Enterprises, Inc. takes its cues from the political context of the 1950s Cold War when U.S. interests in Taiwan overlapped with the Chinese civil war. Cooperating with the Taiwanese Nationalist government, the American CIA established what was called Western Enterprises--agents responsible for training an Anti-Communist National Salvation Army (NSA) for a surprise attack on communists in

Mainland China. The three-channel film installation begins here and weaves the biography of the artist's father, a member of NSA, who upon his passing left an autobiography, a list of NSA soldiers killed during the China offensive, an empty photo album and an old army uniform. Through Chen's characteristically charged re-enactments, the figures in the film encounter the ghosts of history and move through the vacuous spaces of struggle, absence and erasure, which echo present-day realities.

The first iteration of *Empire's Borders*, Chen's critical response to the convoluted systems implemented as a result of Cold War policies, was featured in the Taiwanese Pavilion at the 2009 Venice Biennale. For his exhibition at REDCAT, Chen has since developed the work by incorporating his own family history. The artist, who grew up in Taiwan in the 1980s during the martial law era, says his films engage with history in relation to current political and economic forces. As such, Chen notes, the films constitute actions that "depict memories of marginalized places, present ways of opening up to the other, and thereby subvert both external and internal mechanisms of colonialism."

Born in Taoyuan, Taiwan in 1960, Chen Chieh-jen's work has been the subject of solo exhibitions at Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid; Asia Society, New York; De Hallen Haarlem, Haarlem, The Netherlands; among others. He has participated in The 6th Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art, Brisbane; the 53rd, 51st, 48th Venice Biennale; the 2004, 2002 and 1998 Taipei Biennial; the 5th Biennale de Lyon, Lyon; the 15th Biennale of Sydney, Sydney; the 3rd Guangzhou Triennial, Guangzhou; Prospect.1 New Orleans, New Orleans and The 6th Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art, Brisbane. Chen lives and works in Taipei.

The exhibition is made possible with support by the National Cultural and Arts Foundation of Taiwan.

REDCAT is located at the corner of W. 2nd and Hope Streets, inside the Walt Disney Concert Hall complex in downtown Los Angeles (631 West 2nd Street, Los Angeles, CA 90012).

The Gallery at REDCAT is open Tuesday through Sunday from noon to 6:00pm or until intermission. It is closed Monday and major holidays. Admission to the Gallery at REDCAT is always free. For information on current exhibitions call 213-237-2800 or visit www.redcat.org.

For additional information about the exhibition, high-resolution images, media and interview requests, please contact Diana Wyenn at 213 237-2873 or dwyenn@calarts.edu.

About Gallery at REDCAT

Gallery at REDCAT aims to support, present, commission and nurture new creative insights through dynamic projects and challenging ideas. The Gallery presents five exhibitions every year, often of newly commissioned work that represents the artist's first major presentation in the U.S. or Los Angeles. The Gallery also maintains an active publishing program producing as many as two major monographs per year. Proceeding from the geographic and cultural specificities of Los Angeles, its program emphasizes artistic production of the Pacific Rim--namely Mexico, Central and South America and Asia--as regions that are of vital significance to California. The Gallery aims to facilitate dialogue between local and international artists contributing to a greater understanding of the social, political and cultural contexts that inform contemporary artistic practice.

About REDCAT

Opened by CalArts in 2003, the Roy and Edna Disney/CalArts Theater introduces diverse audiences, students and artists to the most influential developments in the arts from around the world, and gives artists in this region the creative support they need to achieve national and international stature. REDCAT is the newest partner in an international network of adventurous art and performance centers, which together are playing a vital role in the evolution of contemporary culture. REDCAT is a center for experimentation, discovery, and lively civic discourse.

REDCAT sponsors include The Standard, Yamaha, Ovation TV, Los Angeles magazine and KCRW. For REDCAT acknowledgments, visit www.redcat.org/acknowledgements.

Image: Chen Chieh-jen, *Empire's Borders II - Western Enterprises, Inc.* (2010), video installation, courtesy the artist.

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