



# Asian American Arts Centre

26 BOWERY • NEW YORK, NY 10013 • (212) 233.2154/766.1287

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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CONTACT PERSON: Robert Lee  
(212) 233-2154

## Witnesses: China-June 4, 1989

May 10 to June 29, 1990 Opening Reception: May 10, 5:30 to 7:30PM

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Asian American Arts Centre will mount an exhibition at 26 Bowery from May 10 to June 29, 1990 of three artists who witnessed events in China from April through June, 1989. The first artist from China documents his personal perspective in oil on canvass from inside the Democracy Movement. Two western photographers Stefan Umaerus from Switzerland and Alan Chan of New York, provide a counterpoint to these works in the record of their observations. Stefan Umaerus personal diary written during this period will also be exhibited.

A Beijing artist, who will be referred to here as "Deng", witnessed the daily developments of the Student Movement, and painted fifteen oil paintings before and after the Tiananmen massacre. Deng painted these because, as he says, "to make people remember what happened". This may be the only personal, visual statement that has come to light from within China. The paintings, in a fauve, expressionist mode, include several self portraits, studies of soldiers & police officers faces, sketches of scenes, and symbolic and allegorical compositions. "Oil painting is not Chinese, only my source, my inner source in the painting is Chinese."

An American friend arranged for the paintings to leave China since it was a risk for the artist to keep them in his possession. Deng himself may have left China, but no other information about him is available, except for the paintings that express the personal sacrifice that faced him and all those like him.

"...we are the children who grow up under the red flag. Those people who are willing to die for our generation, a lot of them will die and that's how our generation feels ...all the Beijing citizens including aunts, children, grandmothers, those workers there supporting the students...Its the oppressed feeling that the people are under.... We grow very afraid and we say something in support of the 'dead' people standing in front of us. (Though) they die we kind of follow and march forward." - Deng.

This exhibit is part of the 1990 International Memorial Arts Festival and is an adjunct to "China: June 4..." at P.S. 1 Museum in L.I.City where over 260 artists participate.