

Asian American Arts Centre  
Presents

## **China: June 4, 1989**

**The 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Exhibition**

**In Commemoration of the Tiananmen Square 1989 Student Movement**

**June 1<sup>st</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup> 2014**

**Opening Sunday, June 1 all day**

**5:00PM-8:00PM refreshments**

**Closing Tuesday, June 10 5:00PM-7:00PM**

**Whitebox Art Center**

**329 Broome Street, NY, NY 10002**

In collaboration with Whitebox Art Center, Asian American Arts Centre presents, "China: June 4, 1989", an art exhibition. The public is welcome to this beautiful gallery on the lower level, which is open from 11:00AM-6:00PM on weekdays and 12:00PM-6:00PM on weekends, from June 1st through June 10th. Curated by Robert Lee, the exhibition features works from artists that were part of the original 1989-90 exhibition. The white walled gallery with its high ceiling will be transformed into a commemoration of this much-celebrated exhibition.

Fifty artists will be participating. Some of the artists included are: Vito Acconci, Luis Cruz Azaceta, Betty Beaumont, Luis Camnitzer, Mel Chin, Agnes Denes, Lotus Do, John Duff, Leon Golub, Billy Harlem, Edgar Heap of Birds, Kunio Izuka, Ik Joong Kang, Barbara Kruger, Donald Lipski, Kenneth Noland, Lilliana Porter, Rumiko Tsuda/Daniel Georges, Dolly Unithan, Martin Wong, Sofia Zezmer, and Zhang Hongtu. A full listing of artists can be requested. Alongside these works there will be a wall of clippings displaying news articles and mementos for those who want to learn exactly what happened - many of these will be in Chinese.

The original exhibition, which accumulated over 300 artists at Blum Helman Warehouse in SoHo, then later at PS 1 in LIC, eventually encompassing 174 standing panels (doors) linked to form a freestanding expandable wall. Over 80 small works were also on display. Artworks represented artists from Argentina, Sweden, Britain, Italy, France, Greece, Japan, and Korea. Every piece was created in the moment of this terrible incident. Thus each piece reflects an artist's immediate response from their own artistic and cultural stance, articulating peoples' outcries in vivid, powerful art forms. Multiple perspectives gathered here, reflecting a truly diverse American, and in this sense, global response to expanding political horrors. Many of the artworks and the history of this terrible confrontation can be seen at [http://www.artspiral.org/past\\_exhibitions/june4/june4.php](http://www.artspiral.org/past_exhibitions/june4/june4.php)

In conjunction with the exhibition, there will be a special screening of “Portraits of Loss and the Quest for Justice”, a documentary produced by Human Rights In China with footage shot by the Tiananmen Mothers – a group of family members of those killed during the violent crackdown on the 1989 Democracy Movement. The documentary will be on view during the opening and closing receptions, at which time a staff person from HRIC will give a brief introduction of the video. Light refreshments will be available. For more information on the Tiananmen Mothers and HRIC resources, please visit: <http://www.hrichina.org/en/june-fourth-25-resisting-enforced-amnesia-building-just-future>

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As the twenty-fifth anniversary of the 1989 Tiananmen Square student massacre approaches, the erasure from history of this incident in China seems complete. For the peoples of every other nation in the world, however, the Tiananmen Square Massacre remains an open question. Many in China have courageously stood up against this enforced amnesia—foremost among them are the Tiananmen Mothers—to press for truth, accountability, and compensation. Twenty-five years ago, in their peaceful protests, the students laid bare their yearnings for a clean government and a more just and open society. In response, the Chinese authorities used weapons to declare to their own people and the world how unwilling they were to heed these calls, and how definitively they would try to silence them.

As a human question the tragedy and premeditation of this incident is incalculable, impacting China as well as the world. The humanity of the students was clear, and their murder by authorities an incalculable outrage. Yes, they did shoot the students. A horror magnified a thousand times by the media for the watching world. It focused and transformed the clash of Chinese political destinies into a televised drama of global proportions, imprinting itself on the human imaginary in epic dimensions. Never before was such violence turned into a spectacle with weeks to prepare a global viewership for the unspeakable to become suddenly - reality.

Now, more than ever, the international community needs to recognize this human tragedy, this global trauma for what it was and remains - a human spectacle of incalculable proportions, buried and awaiting resurrection. The end of official impunity needs to be achieved concretely. Tiananmen Mothers have devoted the past two decades to documenting the lives snuffed out by the government’s guns, and to remind us all that this national wound needs healing, and a just resolution. To resist enforced amnesia, expose the truth and bring justice to the Tiananmen Mothers is to undo the basis for so much of the corruption that is flourishing today. However what is not concrete, the reverberations still echoing throughout the world, in the hearts of the people who were there, concretely and vicariously, they watched and saw. Their grief and outrage and humanity are still to be addressed – with justice, and with space - public space to recognize openly and remember, resolve this crime, to grieve, restore and to reconcile.

AAAC and Whitebox Art Center welcome student groups, educators and the general public to the exhibition space in their visit to the Lower East Side. AAAC staff will be available to answer questions from the public as well as the press, by appointment. More can be found about



AAAC & its programs at [www.artspiral.org](http://www.artspiral.org) <http://www.artspiral.org> and at <http://artspiral.blogspot.com/>

### Organizational Background

Asian American Arts Centre (AAAC) was founded in 1974. It is a 501(c)(3) that engages with artists, students, organizations, and community groups to enable the creative encounter, and preservation of their visions and knowledge through the arts. In this way the continuum of cultural values & artistic traditions – particularly those of Asia and the West – as they engage each other in local and community arenas, find vitality and renewal. The annual Visual Art Exhibition series, and the AAAC Artists Archive begun in 1983, grew until its collected materials could be processed into a professional archival environment. Its digital component – [artsiamerica.org](http://artsiamerica.org) <http://artsiamerica.org/> – went public in 2009 and serves an online historical image and document archive focused on Asian American visual culture from 1945 to the present.

Asian American Arts Centre Inc., its exhibition and education program is supported by The Bay and Paul Foundation. The support of Asian Americans For Equality and Manhattan Mini Storage/Edison Properties Inc. continues to be vital, along with the support of others like Pearl River Mart, New York Cosmopolitan Lions Club and Materials for the Arts. AAAC recognizes the support of individuals, namely Wing Tek Lum, Jody and John Arnhold, Germane Wong, John Yu, Fay Torres Yap, Charles Yuen, Susan Switzer/Daniel Orlow, Norma Tam, Jeanne Lee Jackson, Edward Ma, Dennis Donohue, May Jew, Pam Lee & Tom Chin, Roudy Leath, Wing Lee Yee, Paul O'Neill and Liz Young, Arthur Neis, Richard Kenny Esq, and the many generous friends of the Asian American Arts Centre. Special thanks to Whitebox Art Center and to Human Rights In China, and to all the artists who participated in this effort, their support helped make this exhibition possible.

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